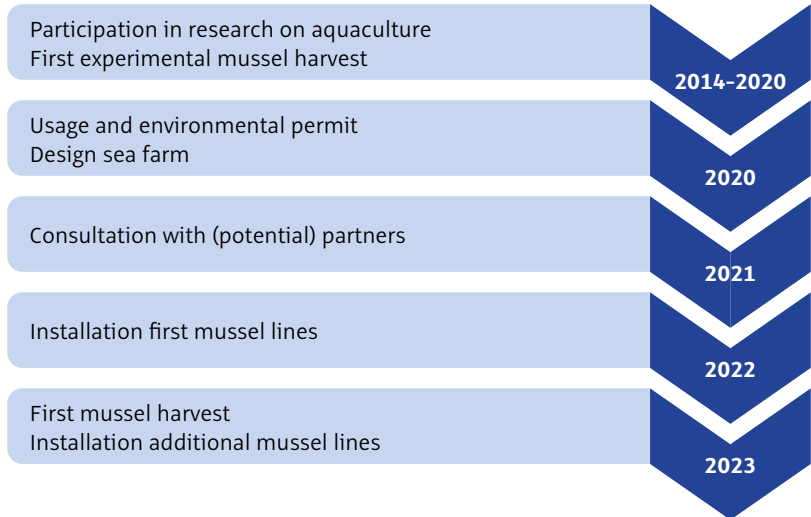


Construction of the sea farm

In a nutshell



Safety first

2020

Supported by broad public consultation and engagement, the new **Marine Spatial Plan** (2020-2026) for the North Sea guides the development of sustainable economies and public responsibilities. With respect for nature and for the benefit of social welfare. When the plan came into force, Colruyt Group obtained the necessary **permits** to grow mussels in the Westdiep zone.

January 2022

Colruyt Group starts the construction of the first commercial sea farm in project zone C, better known as the 'Westdiep zone'. It is one of the five zones for commercial and industrial activities provided in the Marine Spatial Plan (2020-2026) for the Belgian North Sea. The first few months focused on safety, with the installation of a **buoy system indicating no boating is allowed within the demarcated zone.**

1st Belgian sea farm

Westdiep zone

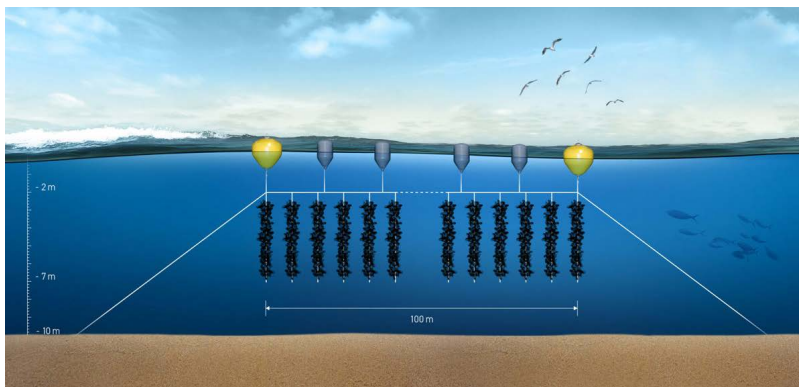
Demarcated area in phase 1

- ¼ of the project area = 1 km²
- Safety perimeter: **10 cardinal buoys**
Around the breeding area: **6 special marker buoys**
- 2022 → **31 mussel lines**
Potential → **150 mussel lines**

Step-by-step approach

March 2022

Colruyt Group starts installing the screw anchors and base construction for the **first 31 mussel lines**. **Mussel ropes** are attached to each line: vertical ropes to which the mussel seed can attach to grow into mussels ready for consumption. The weather and harsh conditions inherent to the North Sea make working anything but evident. The project is truly pioneering in Belgium.



Simulation of 1 mussel line with 12 mussel ropes



The demarcated breeding area of 1 km² may contain **150 mussel lines**. In the first years, Colruyt Group can gradually expand the sea farm without expanding the breeding area.

First Belgian mussel season

April 2023

New mussel ropes are suspended to the existing mussel lines to capture mussel seed and continue to harvest mussels in 2024.

July 2023

First modest **mussel harvest** of 10 to 15 tonnes. By 2024, it will be a larger volume.

