Petersen Scale Encyclopedia Article

Petersen Scale

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Petersen Scale

The Petersen Scale, a chart designed to help sailors assess weather conditions on the water, was devised by a German ship captain by that name. Adopted at the 1939 International Meteorological Conference in Berlin, Petersen's scale drew together the criteria used in the parallel Beaufort Wind Scale and Douglas Sea Scale.

By 1947, it was generally recognized that the state of the sea was all that really mattered to the ship masters. The hybrid scale was deemed unnecessary. The World Meteorological Conference in Washington replaced it that year with a single wave code.