



OSPAR Commission
The Aspect
12 Finsbury Square
London, EC2A 1AS

17 June 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

The EIHA Committee is responsible for ensuring that uses of the marine environment are sustainable, through the integrated management of current and emerging human activities. It has a very broad scope including: the assessment and/or management of pressures from marine litter, underwater noise, offshore renewable energy, deep seabed mining, dumping and disposal of dredged materials, munitions, non-indigenous species, and pollution from shipping; OSPAR's



OSPAR produced a document showing how it is contributing towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including SDG [life below water](#) : [OSPAR and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#)

OSPAR's new NEAES [has](#) a greater emphasis on addressing the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification including a new Strategic Objective to achieve seas that are resilient to the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification. The operational objectives that support this strategic objective include developing a regional approach to applying nature-based solutions for carbon storage and implementing specific measures to protect and restore relevant carbon sequestration and storage habitats, such as seagrass beds, kelp forests and saltmarshes.

OSPAR also reviewed its Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and has now produced a second Regional Action Plan (RAP ML2) that will be agreed at the OSPAR Commission meeting in June 2022. The RAP ML2 will contribute towards achieving the ambitions target that OSPAR has agreed:

By [2025](#) OSPAR will reduce by at least [50%](#) the prevalence of the most commonly found single-use plastic items and of maritime-related plastic items on beaches in order to contribute to the achievement of relevant regional and EU threshold values building upon requirements for EU Member States in the EU Single Use Plastics Directive (Directive [2019/904](#)), and by at least [20%](#) by [2030](#).

At the OSPAR Ministerial Meeting on 1 October OSPAR agreed to designate a new high seas Marine Protected Area (MPA) for seabirds which is larger than the land mass of the United Kingdom and Germany combined. The designation of the high seas North Atlantic Current and Evlanov Sea basin (NACES) MPA, which covers nearly 600,000 km² protects a vitally important area for seabirds. Based on tracking data, the Site was found to be an important feeding and foraging area and is used both by seabirds breeding on the coasts of the North-East Atlantic, and by those migrating across the globe or nesting in other parts of the world.

By establishing the NACES MPA OSPAR has achieved the United Nations Convention for Biodiversity 2020 Aichi target of designating 10% of marine waters as MPAs.

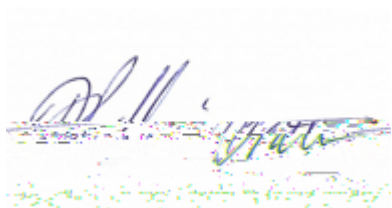
In addition to this, by 2030 OSPAR will further develop its network of marine protected areas (MPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)¹⁸ to cover at least 30% of the OSPAR maritime area to ensure it is representative, ecologically coherent and effectively managed to achieve its conservation objectives.

The new OSPAR Strategy also recognises the importance of tackling anthropogenic underwater noise and commits OSPAR to reduce it to levels that do not adversely affect the marine environment. To support this commitment, by 2023, OSPAR will agree a regional action plan setting out a series of national and collective actions to reduce noise pollution. This will be underpinned by a coordinated monitoring and modelling programme for continuous sound.

OSPAR continues cooperate both bilaterally and multi-laterally with other Intergovernmental Organisations and competent bodies to improve the protection of the North-East Atlantic, in particular with relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the International Seabed Authority (ISA), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the Arctic Council.

To underline this cooperation OSPAR agreed two new Memorandum of Understanding in the period covered by this report. One with the Caribbean Environment Programme and one with the Bonn Agreement to strengthen collaboration and partnership working on shared activities and to promote cleaner and healthier seas and to conserve marine ecosystems.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'D. H.', is written over a horizontal line of colorful, multi-colored ink. The signature is positioned on the left side of the image.

