

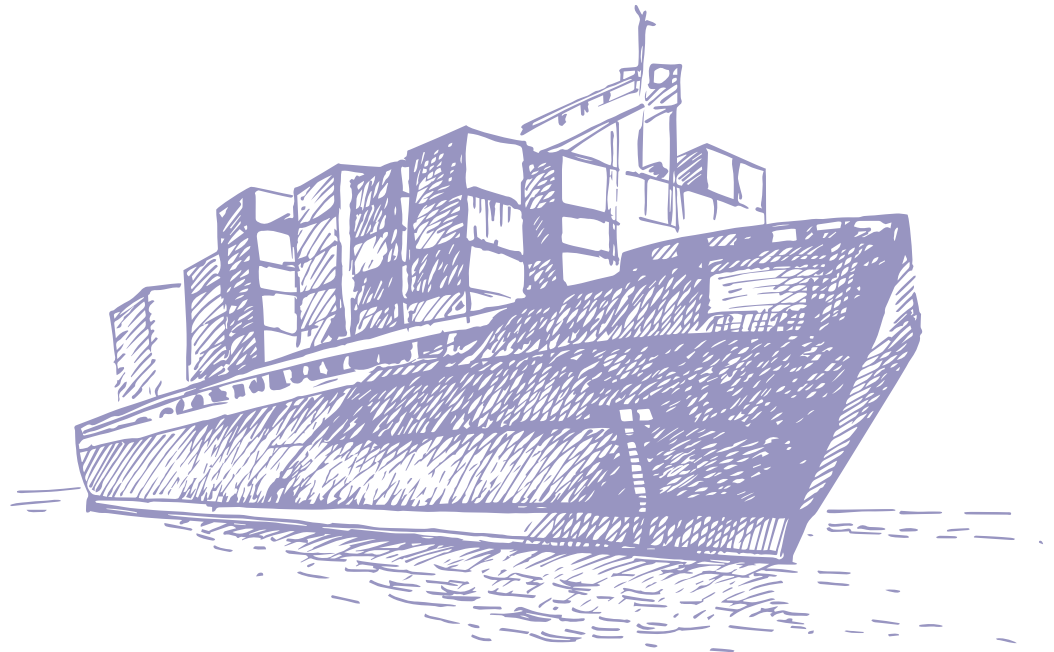
NON-INDIGENOUS SPECIES

OSPAR's QUALITY STATUS REPORT 2023 BRIEFING NOTE SERIES

Non-indigenous species (NIS) may cause unpredictable and irreversible changes to marine ecosystems, such as predation of or competition with indigenous species, modification of habitats, and trophic impacts. A variety of economic or human health impacts are possible through, for example, fouling, harmful non-indigenous algal blooms or damage to structures. Of the known pathways, shipping and mariculture are responsible for most introductions into the OSPAR Maritime Area.

The results of this assessment indicate that in the last assessment period (2015-2020) there was a statistically significant reduction in introductions compared with the first assessment period (2003-2008). This indicates that the range of management measures adopted since QSR 2010 might be having a positive effect. However, there are uncertainties around monitoring effort and the timing of the data reporting for the assessment, suggesting a higher rate of introductions than was assessed for this period.

It is therefore important for OSPAR not to become complacent. With ever increasing global shipping, and the effects of climate change warming the waters of the North-East Atlantic, there is a continued risk of new non-indigenous species being translocated and establishing themselves as our climate changes. Therefore, continued and strengthened monitoring are required.



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