|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Agenda Item 12 | RSC 24/12/01-Annex 06  Original: English |
| OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic | |
| Meeting of the Radioactive Substances Committee (RSC)  Lisbon, Portugal: 6–9 February 2024 | |

Intersessional Correspondence Group to consider the assessment methodologies required to evaluate progress against NEAES 2030 (ICG-RAM)

**Introduction**

1. ICG RAM was first convened by RSC(2) 2022 to consider whether existing assessment methodologies and reporting approaches are fit for purpose for NEAES 2030 or whether new arrangements are required.
2. ICG reported to RSC 2023 as in RSC 23/04/01 and RSC 23/05/01 and RSC agreed to reconvene the ICG to finalise the work taking into account the input from the meeting and report back to RSC in 2024. RSC23 also noted that the issue of good enough Minimum Detectable Activity (MDA)s remained unresolved and that there would be benefit in collating information on national approaches to setting and reporting MDAs.
3. RSC 2024 considered documents RSC 24/03/01, RSC 24/04/01 and RSC 24/04/02 which were reports from ICG RAM on discharges, environmental concentrations and MDAs respectively.
4. RSC 2024 agreed that the ICG should continue its work to define common indictors for radioactive substances
5. This intersessional work will also contribute to task S3:01-T6, S3:02-T4, S3:04-T1 of the NEAES implementation plan.

**Objectives**

1. Define common OSPAR indicators related to radioactive substances, in a form suitable for publication as an OSPAR Agreement and to submit to RSC for approval.

**Scope of work**

1. By RSC 2025 define OSPAR common indicators on:
   1. discharges of radionuclides from the nuclear sector;
   2. environmental concentrations of artificial radionuclides.
2. Continue to develop an OSPAR common indicator for ‘discharges of radionuclides from the non-nuclear sector’.
3. In taking forward its work the ICG shall have regard the previous discussions and agreements of the radioactive substances committee as detailed in the summary records of RSC 2022, RSC 2023 and RSC 2024, including:
   1. The agreement to accept the recommendations on selecting MDAs set out in RSC 24/04/02, subject to any refinements necessary as a result of ICG-RAM’s ongoing work;
   2. The agreement at RSC 2024 agreed not to develop a common indicator for environmental concentrations of naturally occurring radionuclides;
   3. The need to include information on quality assurance.
4. Develop an operational definition of close to zero that can be used in future assessments taking into account the responses to the questionnaire on MDAs completed in 2023.
5. Consider the structure and format of the annual assessment reports and indicator assessment reports in conjunction with RSC EAP and the OSPAR Secretariat.

**Participants and mode of work**

1. The ICG will be co-convened by France (Nathalie Reynal) and the United Kingdom (Adam Stackhouse), with participation from Belgium, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, World Nuclear Association and the IAEA. In accordance with OSPAR Rules of Procedure, the ICG will be opened to all Contracting Parties and Observers.
2. The ICG liaise with the RSC EAP on potential changes to the current indicators, assessment methods and reporting requirements and assessment products.
3. The ICG will work via correspondence and virtual meetings. Face-to-face meetings, if appropriate. It is also anticipated to hold a face-to-face meeting in 2024.

**Timetable**

1. Key milestone of the ICG including:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date | Action |
| April | Virtual meeting focussed on developing and finalising the work timetable. |
| September | Face to face meeting to discuss outstanding issues and further develop draft Agreements. |
| December | Virtual Meeting to finalise documents for RSC 2025. |