

OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic

Fourth Meeting of OSPAR Inter-Sessional Correspondence Group on Marine Litter (ICGML) – Nigrán, Spain, 10th & 11th May 2009

Report of the meeting

Agenda 1, participants and documents

1.1 The fourth meeting of the Intersessional Correspondence Group on Marine Litter (ICGML) took place on May 10th & 11th 2009 at the kind invitation of Spain in Nigrán and was chaired by Mr Rick Nickerson. Six Contracting Parties (Belgium, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Spain and United Kingdom) 2 Observer organisations (Marine Conservation Society (MCS) and KIMO International) took part in the meeting; see the List of Participants at **Annex 2**.

1.2 The Chairman thanked Spain for hosting the meeting and welcomed the new delegates. The agenda was adopted (ICGML (4) 09/1/1) including four late documents (ICG ML (4) 09/6/2 – E (L) ICG ML (4) 09/7/1 – E (L) ICGML (4) 09/09/01 - E (L) ICGML (4) 09/12/1- E (L). The UK suggested that documents should be available at least 2 weeks before the meeting date so they could be given proper consideration. This was agreed. The Chair then outlined the timeframe for the meeting highlighting that Chapter 8 would be discussed on May 11th.

1.3 The meeting report from the third meeting in Ross on Wye – UK (ICGML (4) 09/1/1 Annex 3- E) had been adopted by correspondence. The list of Documents is at **Annex 1**.

Agenda Item 2 – Terms of Reference (TOR)

2.1 Group Members were invited to note the final ICGML TOR (ICG ML (4) 09/2/1 – E) and discuss the new elements and how to include them in ICGML Work Programme. (2(h) & 2(i))

Agenda Item 3 – Update on Task List

3.1 The Chair went through the outstanding tasks in the list asking for updates on uncompleted tasks (ICG ML (4) 09/3/1).

3.2 There was discussion on how to handle the question of developing a floating litter protocol. It was decided, for the moment, to use the UNEP Protocol to gain experience and if appropriate develop an OSPAR version at a later stage.

3.3 Germany gave a short presentation on the work that had been undertaken on aerial surveys of marine litter in the German EEZ stating that there was a correlation between litter densities and shipping density.

3.4 The Chair reported back that he had contacted the Portuguese HOD for BDC in relation to monitoring beach litter in the Azores to give coverage of OSPAR Region 5 - the High Seas but had received no information. KIMO agreed to follow up on a contact at the University of the Azores to investigate monitoring.

CEMP/ASMO

3.5 A discussion was held on how to include marine litter monitoring in the CEMP. The EC stated that if the Group wanted to have marine litter monitoring included in an extended CEMP that a plan should be developed including work on quality assurance, methodology, etc. to ensure it was at the standard of other

monitoring programmes. It was agreed this should be developed and that the Chair should invite an ASMO representative from one of the Contracting Parties to the next meeting.

UNEP

3.6 The Netherlands still had to investigate what was happening with OSPAR data once it went to UNEP.

3.7 The MCS asked if CEFAS and DEFRA were looking into using UK research vessels to undertake litter monitoring however the UK stated that the UNEP guideline was not proving to be practical as a tool. Germany said that in German studies it was easier to note down every item individually. The UK informed the Group that there was already information for much of the North Sea area from the International Seabed Surveys and that this data was being transferred to an electronic format and analysed.

Agenda Item 4 – Feedback from OSPAR

4.1 The Chair introduced the paper on the discussions at BDC (ICGML (4) 09/4/1). KIMO International updated the Group on the potential changes to the structure of BDC and that it was likely that litter issues would be referred to EIHA. The Netherlands updated the Group and stated that Sweden had confirmed that they would continue monitoring in 2009. France stated that 3 beaches were monitored in France in 2008 but that he was unsure of the programme for 2009. The Chair raised the issue of the EcoQO on Fulmars and was disappointed that Contracted Parties had not yet agreed to implement it.

Agenda Item 5 - OSPAR QSR Chapter on Marine Litter

5.1 The Chair stated that, since the meeting documents had been prepared, a new draft of the QSR had been produced by ASMO. Further amendments were suggested on Chapter 8 the section on marine litter. The latest version was available as (ICGML (4) 09/5/1) and that if Contracting Parties wished to add anything else to the marine litter text they would have to do so through their MAQ representative rather than through this Group.

5.2 The Netherlands and KIMO agreed to follow the development of the QSR and report back to the next meeting.

Agenda Item 6 – Statistical Analyses of OSPAR Beach Litter Data (2001 – 2008)

6.1 The final draft report on statistical analyses of OSPAR beach litter data (2001 – 2008) (ICG ML (4) 09/6/1) was presented by The Netherlands who believed that it would be possible to finalise the TAUW report at this meeting. Following the last meeting in Ross-on-Wye Germany The Netherlands had met with consultants undertaking this work to discuss the outstanding issues in the report and that this report had been produced following that meeting. The Netherlands went through the conclusions and recommendations in Section 5 of the report, as the Group was familiar with the contents of the previous sections.

6.2 The UK highlighted that cotton bud sticks had been included in the list of items below 2.5 cm but that they were larger and that needed to be looked into also that they were included in sanitary however 90% of them were plastic. The Netherlands stated a footnote could be added to clarify the list.

6.3 The Netherlands outlined the Mann-Kendal technique and also highlighted that the information in the beach survey forms had not proved accurate enough for a correlation analysis.

6.4 Germany stated that the consultants had omitted data where surveys had not been undertaken for two consecutive periods but that he thought that gap-filling techniques used in bird population statistics could possible be used to include this data. However the Group was unsure and needed more professional advice on this subject. The report would be sent for a second opinion to two (UK) experts.

6.5 The Netherlands suggested that, although the consultants suggested monitoring fewer categories, it was appropriate that all categories should be continued to be monitored to maintain the data set and this was agreed.

6.6 The UK suggested that Tetra Packs being used as indicators of galley waste could be problematic as they were not unequivocal indicators of the shipping and fishing sources as they could also come from tourism. KIMO International suggested that plastic bottles used for cleansing products had also been suggested and perhaps this could be used instead. Germany was unsure about the quality of some of the indicators and thought they could provide the wrong conclusions. It was agreed that the Tetra Pack category would be split into two categories (milk and others) as it was decided that milk Tetra Packs were more indicative of the shipping and fisheries sources.

6.7 The UK highlighted that, in the Annexes, galley waste was not included as a source and that this would need to be changed.

6.8 The Netherlands asked if a second opinion on the statistical method was required and the EC suggested that it might already exist within Contracting Parties and that perhaps contact with Rob Fryer from the UK would be useful.

6.9 Belgium suggested that an assessment from the contractor on how long monitoring would be needed to get a reliable trend might be useful. The UK thought that the confidence in the trends should be greater than 80% before they were included in regional aggregation of data. The EC reminded the Group that there was a need to cross reference the monitoring to the requirements of the OSPAR CEMP.

6.10 Germany thought that the report did not highlight all the data and more analysis should be undertaken on the composition of the litter in relation to each region.

6.11 The Chair felt that the document needed an Executive Summary to highlight the main points of the report. KIMO, Germany and the UK thought that there needed to be some more interpretation of the data as the results in the report could be used out of context.

6.12 It was agreed that textual changes should be submitted in one week, Germany and MSC would draft a 2 page Executive Summary and the UK would investigate peer reviewing the document with UK colleagues.

6.13 The Chair thanked the Netherlands and Germany for all the extra work they had undertaken on this issue.

Marine Litter Index

6.14 The Netherlands presented the discussion document on the Development of the Marine Litter Index (ICG ML (4) 09/6/2).

6.15 The EC suggested that Patrick Roose from Belgium had been through a similar process for hazardous substances and may be able to help in this area. The EC reminded the Group that they needed to think about mainstreaming the index in the future and that possibly ICES could give advice on indicator items.

6.16 Germany believed there was a difficulty in using individual beaches and that it would need to be done at a regional scale and the UK was unsure if the beaches were representational.

6.17 The Netherlands suggested that there was a need for further discussion on this issue with the consultants and the Chair advised it would be useful to have a common view of what the Group required before asking them to report back to ICGML.

6.18 It was decided to leave the discussion until after Agenda Item 9 MSFD as that may have an influence on the choice of index.

6.19 The Netherlands stated that the current options were not perfect and that instructions for the consultants on their further development were needed to be developed. Germany thought that a focus on trends rather than total amounts was needed. The EC asked whether there was any existing scheme for absolute litter values and was informed by the Chair that the National Aquatic Litter Group (NALG) in the UK had established a rating scheme for when action was needed to be taken to cleanse beaches but that it had not been widely taken up. Germany thought the MLI should be presented as a work in progress to the proposed workshop and that consultants should be invited to test them more thoroughly with historic data.

6.20 The Netherlands invited the Group members to forward any other points that needed further work by consultants. Germany thought that they should analyse the difference between the different seasons.

6.21 It was agreed that KIMO International would set up a write board in Base camp to collect ideas, which would be uploaded before the end of May 09.

Item 7: Monitoring and Data Handling

7.1 The Netherlands highlighted the changes that needed to be done to the monitoring guidelines. Group Members were invited to review the final OSPAR Guidelines and with a view to finalising this document for publication. It was agreed to include the UNEP requirement of a minimum separation of 50m between sampling units, as this did not affect the OSPAR monitoring. Germany requested that “amounts” be included in Section 2 so it read “sources and amounts of marine litter. The MCS stated that they had additional editorial comments but that these would be forwarded directly to The Netherlands.

7.2 The draft Litter Survey Form was discussed and MCS thought that exceptional tide should be changed to spring tide. Germany was unsure why item 19 was just one item and thought that gloves should be split up into industrial and washing up. Spain were content for them all to be classed as plastic. There was some discussion about how to distinguish between what should be considered an item and what was a piece of plastic and how that might affect the results. KIMO stated that it did not make any difference to the trends as long as a consistent approach was applied to all items. Germany stated that plastic items should be entered under their category unless they were unrecognisable in which case they should be recorded under pieces of plastic. Germany thought that a proper audit trail to monitor changes in the items should be considered.

7.3 After some discussion the follow amendments were agreed:

For the 100 meter survey:

- Gloves are split into: industrial/professional gloves and typical washing up gloves, both items in the plastic/polystyrene category. The item gloves in the rubber category are removed.
- Tops is added to the Crab/lobster pots
- Plastic stopper is added to the Oyster nets or mussel bags
- Rope, string, cord, net is further defined into 5 items: 1. rope (diameter more than 1 cm) 2. string and cord (diameter less than 1 cm) 3. Nets and pieces of net (>50 cm) 4. Nets and pieces of net (<50 cm) 5. Tangled nets and rope and string and cord
- Plastic and polystyrene pieces <50 cm is further defined into 2 items: 1. 0-2,5 cm 2. 2,5 <50 cm
- Oil drum (new not rusty) and oil drum (old/rusty) is merged as one items as it was to much subject to interpretation
- Human and Animal faeces is replaced by bagged dog poo.

For the 1 km survey:

- Rope, string and cord are divided into 2 items: 1. Rope diameter more than 1 cm 2. string and cord diameter less than 1 cm
- Cloth rope is removed

7.4 To ensure that all surveyors register items in a similar way the following was decided:

All pieces of litter that are recognisable as an item should be counted as one item. A few examples:

- Pieces of plastic that are either recognisable as a (shopping) bag or a small plastic bag should be registered as such.
- All pieces that are recognisably part of a balloon (including the plastic valves and the plastic ribbons or string tied to the balloon) should be registered as “balloon”
- All pieces of string and cord should be counted. Often a piece of string or cord is found with smaller pieces lying around it that were obviously part of this rope. However, all these pieces should be counted as single items.
- Pieces of glass that are recognisable as for example bottles should be registered as such.

7.4 In relation to an additional question about the UNEP protocol that could be included in the Beach Questionnaire Germany thought that the beach slope/shape should be removed as it did not provide relevant information and was difficult to monitor consistently. Spain raised the point that prevailing currents and winds could change from season to season however it was important these were included.

7.5 It was agreed to include bullet point 1 (access to beach by vehicle, pedestrian, boat) but to omit 2 Beach slope and 3 shape of beach profile.

7.6 Germany and Spain had questions about the validity of the questions on the distance from towns, rivers, outfalls, etc. Spain thought that it did not provide useful information for Spain, as there were many areas with continuous development. Germany thought there was a need to standardise the data to make it useful. The UK was concerned that the wind and currents on the day could affect survey results. Spain wanted to be able to add additional site-specific information to the beach form and Germany thought that for some questions seasonal information would be helpful.

7.7 After further discussion it was agreed to:

- Include a box for seasonal population including options: Tourist, Residential, Tourist and Residential.
- Include a box for development projects near beach
- Include both local and regional maps (Google)
- Add a box for additional information
- Change the title to ensure it was only filled in by national coordinators

7.8 The Netherlands introduced the topic of new items for the survey form and after considerable discussion the following was decided,

that:

- Traffic cones, plastic detonators, distress flairs, wet wipes, tetra pack bottoms and sponge balls should be noted in the appropriate **other** item box although they would be added as regional items in the photo guide.
- Wooden fish boxes, disposable barbeques, lobster and cod tags and plastic bag ends were added as additional items.

7.9 KIMO International stated that the addition of items to the monitoring list should be done in a more systematic fashion by analysing the items that appeared least on the sheets and removing them and including items that had appeared most regularly in the other sections. It was agreed that the consultants should look into this as an additional question.

7.10 The Chairman has received hard copies of the Marine Litter Net and the old guide from Ardea Nova, the Swedish consultant that has been previously circulated. Group Members were invited to review the material from Sweden and discuss how to progress the development of a pictorial guide to support the Guidelines. The Netherlands would upload the list of items to Base camp so pictures could be uploaded for the picture guide and MCS and Spain would upload pictures of the new items.

Beach Litter Database

7.11 It was agreed at BDC 2009 that OSPAR would host the beach-monitoring database and ICGML in the revised TOR has been requested to maintain the database. The Netherlands explained that the data had been sent to the consultants for the last two years and that they had complied it however this would not continue. OSPAR had agreed to host the database but not to undertake any quality control therefore an entry system and quality control was required. KIMO International stated that national coordinators should undertake that quality control before the data was sent to the database. The Chair stated that a meeting was required with OSPAR to discuss data issues. This was agreed.

High Seas

7.12 The Chair stated that there was still a lack of information in relation to High Seas areas and invited KIMO to follow this up with contacts in the Azores. It was also agreed that whilst the Fishing for Litter monitoring data provided interesting additional data it was not of sufficient quality to be a useful tool for OSPAR.

Aerial Surveys for Marine Litter

7.13 Germany gave a short presentation on the work that had been undertaken on aerial surveys of marine litter in the German EEZ stating that there was a correlation between litter densities and shipping density. They would investigate if the PhD the research was from could be circulated to the Group. Germany agreed to produce a report on aerial surveys of litter to the next meeting.

Agenda Item 8 – Microscopic Plastics

8.1 KIMO International gave an update on the applications for funding for a research project on micro plastics, which was being developed by Plymouth University with assistance from KIMO. The outcome would be known by September 2009 with a potential start date for the project set as Jan 09. Belgium stated that there was also some research being undertaken in Belgium and that information would be uploaded to Base camp once it was available. The UK stated that CEFAS and NERC had also funded a study into the effects of micro plastics on sediment biota. Spain stated that a scientific research institute in Spain was investigating the possibility that micro plastics could also be a vector for alien species. It was agreed that information on these and any other research should be made available on Base camp.

Agenda Item 9: Developing Good Environmental Status on Marine Litter (OSPAR/MSFD)

9.1 ICGML was invited to investigate options for providing advice to EU on OSPAR experience relating to the marine litter GES descriptor (ICGML (4) 09/09/01 (L).

9.2 The EC gave a presentation on the MSFD outlining the Directive and the timeframe explaining that the QSR 2010 would feed in as an initial assessment. Good environmental status (GES) needed to be defined by 2012, including targets and indicators, followed by a comprehensive monitoring program and programme and measures. The GES could illustrate that the trend is going in the right direction rather than a specific target. The Directive has a 6-year review cycle where these issues can be refined.

9.3 In order to ensure consistency throughout the EU there needed to be common methodological standards however there can be regional differences. A Group of independent experts will provide advice on each of these for each of the descriptors of GES. Descriptors such as litter, which are not considered under the WFD coastal waters, will also be included in the MSFD.

9.4 The Chair pointed out that for the first time there was also a focus on social and economic considerations including the valuation of marine ecosystems goods and services, which would link to the Maritime Strategy.

9.5 KIMO International asked why the descriptor on litter had not been included in the package of descriptors that were being considered by JRC/ICES? The EC explained that ICES did not feel that they had the expertise and that there were resource issues that needed to be addressed. KIMO and The Netherlands were disappointed that the marine litter descriptor had not been taken up in the JRC/ICES process and now resources to undertake this work were limited. They were, however, prepared to assist the EC setting up an expert group and although they thought that ICG Marine Litter could not facilitate such a group they felt it could provide some members and expertise.

9.6 The UK thought that a workshop/seminar on marine litter issues might be the best way to start the process of developing an expert group and that we might need expertise in impacts on populations. Spain stated that there was currently no monitoring or work taking place in the Barcelona Convention on marine litter. The Netherlands suggested asking the scientific committee of the London Convention if they had any potential experts.

9.7 The Chair addressed the points under paragraph 12 of the report:

- (a) Several experts were suggested including Dr Jan Andreas van Franeker and Dr Richard Thompson.
- (b) The UK asked if there was a precedent where a task group had been set up regionally?
- (c) There was no immediate answer on the issue of additional resources.

9.8 The EC said that these issues would be taken forward at the next GES Working Group and the Marine Strategy Coordination Group.

9.9 The UK stated that any development of GES should take into account potential programmes and measures but was informed by the EC that this was not the case and that GES would be independent of any consideration of potential programmes and measures.

9.10 KIMO, UK, Germany and the Netherlands offered to assist the EC in developing a seminar and Task Group

Agenda Item 10 Revision of MARPOL Annex V

10.1 The Chair introduced the agenda item stating that there was currently no document but that the Group had been tasked to look into the review of Annex V from an OSPAR perspective as part of its new TOR. A paper will be presented to MEPC 59 in July however it is unlikely that the review will be finalised. The Netherlands agreed to upload the MEPC documents to Base camp and KIMO International agreed to consult with the OSPAR Secretariat to see how they want to handle the issue.

Agenda Item 11 Programmes and Measures

11.1 In addition to the work that will be required to contribute to the OSPAR QSR 2010 a further discussion took place on what measures should be considered to reduce marine litter. The Netherlands presented a discussion document (ICGML (4) 09/11/1) and the *UNEP Guidelines on the use of market-based instruments to address the problem of marine litter* was also available for discussion (ICGML (4) 09/11/2). KIMO International gave an update on the Fishing for Litter initiative. Group Members were invited to further discuss how to develop ideas on what programmes and measures might be considered to reduce marine litter with the aim to making a recommendation to OSPAR Ministers and others.

11.2 Germany highlighted that there were few measures that targeted fishermen. KIMO highlighted that the methodology outlined in the UNEP paper on Economic Instruments could be used to rank the measures. The Netherlands indicated that the document was not a definitive list and that it still needed to be updated.

11.3 Germany stated that there was a requirement to target measures that are related to the main sources of litter and that regional analysis of the data was required for this. The EC added that the focus should also be on what could be implemented within OSPAR. KIMO thought that there should also be a focus on what could be achieved for the Ministerial Meeting and more long-term objectives. The EC reminded the Group that under the MSFD actions were to be taken at a national level. The UK thought that the attractiveness column should be removed from section 5 of the document. The Chair reminded everyone that this was not within the Terms of Reference. It was agreed the Netherlands would rank the measures using the UNEP method and that KIMO would add a write board to Base camp for additional measures.

Agenda Item 12 Communications Strategy

12.1 The Chair introduced document ICGML (4) 09/12/1- E (L) and explained that the communication expert from the OSPAR Secretariat had been invited to attend the meeting but couldn't because of prior engagements. He asked the Group what should be the main focus audience for the strategy. KIMO International thought that engaging with the public directly was not the objective but targeting policy makers and providing information for Contracting Parties to use in their public awareness campaigns should be the focus. The UK thought that the press releases released after each meeting should be more targeted. It was agreed the primary audience should be policy makers and that the Chair should consult with the OSPAR Secretariat on mailing lists for press releases.

12.2 In relation to hosting an event, as outlined in the TOR, the UK thought that it should be separate from the EC event and should be used to disseminate our information. Germany thought it would be good to get some of the practitioners that were doing the monitoring together and the Chair suggested holding a side event at the 2010 OSPAR Ministerial Meeting. It was agreed that the Chair would follow this up and that any proposals for the event should be sent to him in within 6 weeks. The Chair also agreed to liaise with the OSPAR Secretariat regarding adding more information to the OSPAR website.

Agenda Item 13 AOCB

13.1 KIMO highlighted that the OSPAR/UNEP Assessment of Marine Litter in the North East Atlantic was now published. MCS showed the Group the report from this year's Beachwatch event in the UK.

13.2 The Chair enquired whether the Netherlands and Belgium were in a position to continue as Co lead Countries for ICGML beyond 2009. The Netherlands indicated that an internal assessment of the project was underway and any commitment would have to wait for the outcome of this process.

Agenda Item 14: Date and location of the next meeting

14.1 It was agreed to investigate if the next meeting could be held in Dublin hosted by Ireland and the date would be set in due course taking into consideration the OSPAR meeting schedule.

14.2 The Chair wished to express his thanks for the co-operative nature of the meeting and wished everyone a safe journey home.



**OSPAR
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*Protecting and conserving the
North-East Atlantic and its resources*

Document List

Agenda Item 1

ICGML(4) 09/1/1- ANNEX 1rev-E
English only

OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
Fourth Meeting of the Intercessional Correspondence Group on Marine Litter (ICGML)
Nigrán-Galicia - Spain: 11th – 12th May 2009

Agenda Item 1 - Adoption of the agenda

ICG ML (4) 09/1/1 E - Draft agenda and annotations
ICG ML (4) Annex 1- E - List of meeting documents
ICG ML (4) Annex 2 – E - Draft list of participants
ICG ML (4) Annex 3 – E – Summary Record from the ICG meeting (Ross on Wye - UK) November 2008

Agenda Item 2 - Terms of Reference (TOR) for OSPAR ISCG on Marine Litter

ICG ML (4) 09/2/1 - E – Terms of Reference (TOR) for OSPAR ICG on Marine Litter

Agenda Item 3 - Update of progress on Task List

ICG ML (4) 09/3/1 - E - Draft action task list from the last meeting in Ross on Wye, UK - November 2008

Agenda Item 4 – Feedback from OSPAR

ICG ML (4) 09/4/1 – E – Report by KIMO International on the Biodiversity Committee was held from 23 – 27 February 2009 in Stockholm

Agenda Item 5 – OSPAR QSR Chapter on Marine Litter

ICGML (4) 09/5/1 info 01 – Draft Sections of Chapter 8 of the QSR 2010

Agenda Item 6 - Statistical Research Marine Litter (Tauw) and Marine Litter Index

ICG ML (4) 09/6/1 – E - Draft Final Report Statistical Research Marine Litter (Tauw)

ICG ML (4) 09/6/2 – E (L) – Discussion Document on a Marine Litter Index

Agenda Item 7 - Monitoring Guidelines and Data Handling

ICG ML (4) 09/7/1 – E (L) - Development of Guideline for Monitoring Marine Litter on Beaches in the OSPAR Area

Agenda Item 9 - Developing Good Environmental Status on Marine Litter (OSPAR/MSFD)

ICGML (4) 09/09/01 - E (L) - To what extent can OSPAR work on litter contribute to the elaboration of 'criteria and methodological standards' for MSFD 'good environmental status' descriptor (10) on marine litter?

Agenda Item 11 - Programmes and Measures/ Regional Action Plan

ICG ML (4) 09/11/1 – E - Programmes and measures to reduce marine litter in the North-East Atlantic

ICGML (4) 09/11/2 – UNEP Guidelines on the use of market-based instruments to address the problem of marine litter

Agenda Item 12 - Communication Strategy

ICGML(4) 09/12/1- E (L) - Discussion Document on Developing an ICGML Communication Strategy

SPAIN – Participation List

ICGML(4) Annex 2

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