

Minutes OSPAR Workshop – Exploring the Future of 2030 Together

28th of January 2021 10.30 – 16.30, via WebEx

See Annex for the list of participants

Index

1. Welcome and opening
2. Presentation: The relevancy of scenarios for the work of OSPAR (by Rob van der Veeren)
3. Presentation: Scenarios for the OSPAR region (by Kyra Bekhuis)
Break
4. Break-out sessions
5. Recap workshop



1. Welcome and opening by Ronald Lanthers

Ronald Lanthers welcomes the participants to the workshop on Exploring the Future together. The focus of the workshop is on exploring the potential drivers of future trends and developments in human activities in and around the North East Atlantic Ocean. Ronald is excited to see which developments are ahead of us and invites everyone to feel free to share contributions with an open mind and on a personal title.

Rob van der Veeren thanks all participants for joining. Rob is chair of the OSPAR working group on economic and social analyses, which assists OSPAR's work (among other things) by collecting economic data and conducting economic analyses, including scenario studies. The purpose of those scenario studies is to explore future trends and developments in economic activities that might cause an effect on the marine environment in the future. This type of analyses is relevant to support discussions on what additional measures might be necessary to protect the marine environment in the future. This workshop aids to this by exploring what these economic activities might look like in the future and what their influence might be.



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2. The relevancy of scenarios for the work of OSPAR by Rob van der Veeren

Rob shares that the ICG ESA and JAMP B14 wants to include future scenarios in the OSPAR Quality Status Report (QSR) of 2023¹. For many years, economic analyses did not really play an important role in OSPAR's activities and reports, but in 2017 economic aspects were included in the Intermediate Assessment. OSPAR collects lots of data on various aspects, but this is often done in isolation. Therefore as one of the activities to prepare QSR 2023, the JAMP B14 project aims to perform an integrated analysis of human activities, addressing their spatial distribution, the trends in the past (quality status report 2010, IA2017, recent data), and ideas on possible future trends.

Based on data from national reports, a first scenario study was performed as part of the economic analyses for the IA2017. While doing that analysis, it appeared that some countries are used to thinking about scenarios and future trends, but others not so much. This resulted in relatively limited and scattered information. Therefore, the idea was to improve this for QSR 2023 by asking Kyra Bekhuis to conduct a scenario study and organizing this workshop to collect additional input.

The scope of the QSR is the entire OSPAR maritime area. There are areas that are more intensively used than others and the same applies to monitoring and the availability of data. The QSR tries to cover the entire OSPAR area and assesses its environmental status. It assesses how far we are in achieving objectives, whether there is any need to update objectives towards 2030 and potential elements of action that OSPAR should work on. Another objective is to provide information that contracting parties can use for MSFD reporting.

This workshop and the report prepared by Kyra will contribute to the QSR by providing context for all activities in the QSR and OSPAR areas on the main social economic drivers, and by providing information on drivers of change and uncertainties for 9 human activities that are of interest to OSPAR. These 9 human activities will be discussed in the break-out sessions.

Reactions and questions

Lina Tode mentions that the Barcelona Convention aims to look at future developments in the Mediterranean Sea. She asks Rob how the working group was set up? Was this proposed by OSPAR or has the working group requested to work on future issues themselves? Rob mentions that it was both a bottom-up and top-down process. The economic and social working group is a relatively new branch in the OSPAR family and they tried to think about how to best support OSPAR in the broader sense. One of the ideas was this workshop on future developments, pressures, and measures. The economic working group has a mandate of both JAMP B14 and the OSPAR coordination group. Philip adds in the chat that their mandate focuses on delivering input to a thematic assessment of human activities.

Adrian Judd mentions the importance of looking at the connectiveness between impact, responses and effects. For example, looking into multiple human activities and indicators of ecosystem status, for example marine mammals and pressures by human activities. This requires a holistic view. He shares the DPSIR model as an exemplary tool: <https://hull-repository.worktribe.com/output/452702/and-dpsir-begat-dapsiwrn-a-unifying-framework-for-marine-environmental-management>. In addition, he asks if there is also Asian/Chinese influence in the OSPAR working area and if this is being considered under welfare? Rob responds that they are looking at the impact of various activities. Potential measures and policies, e.g. shipping is very much an international and global issue. Measures we would like to have,

¹ More info on QSR: www.ospar.org/documents?v=40951

should be discussed at the level of the IMO. Darius adds that there are no other fishing nations other than Norway and Iceland that are coming into OSPAR's fisheries waters.

Saravan Marappan asks how other future activities that will develop in the next 10 years are considered? For example, carbon dioxide storage. The technology is not mature yet, but in the future, it is likely to become one of the tools suggested to mitigate and combat climate change as hydrogen generation adaptives. Rob answers that other forms of energy production could be important in the future. We decided that the focus is on the 9 themes in today's break-out sessions. In addition, we are making use of existing public basic data. There is no information and data available yet on these future activities. But they might have a serious impact in the future and it is important to discuss them at some point. Philip Stamp shares that there will be a short section in the human activities thematic assessment listing new and emerging activities which are likely to require assessment in the coming years. This is also one of the objectives in the new strategy. Some emerging activities are referenced within the feeder reports².

3. Scenarios for the OSPAR region by Kyra Bekhuis

Kyra Bekhuis presents the results from the scenario study she conducted for OSPAR's economic working group. The scenarios are based on the quadrant setting off economic growth to environmental awareness. This resulted in four different scenarios: "consuming economy", "big blue economy", "economies of individuals" and "small blue economies". Each of these perspectives form a guideline for what the future might look like and how they can shape future decisions, by providing insight in the different assumptions in terms of the alignment of drivers. These drivers create different uncertainties and impact. Kyra presents the first scenario, consuming economy. In this scenario, with high economic growth and low environmental awareness, people believe that the climate crisis was not the most pressing concern due to the COVID-19 pandemic. People are indifferent towards the environment and they expect fast delivery and cheap prices. This leads to an increase in environmental pressure. The scenario big blue economy presents a scenario, with high economic growth and high environmental awareness, in which there is a transnational environmental movement. Environmental problems have a high global dimension and have to be tackled through global innovation. In economies of the individuals (a scenario with low economic growth and low environmental awareness) is little room for innovation. There is less willingness to adapt new ways of living. The feeling of being part of a bigger society is less than ever before. The primary aim of governments is to increase production levels. There is a low trust in science and society, and the focus is on fulfilling the individual needs. Small blue economies shows a future with low economic growth and high environmental awareness in which production and innovation have hampered due to money constraints. There is a stable supply of commodities and nations try to restrict global supply chains. People prioritize biodiversity above innovation and environmental pressure is reduced by a minimalistic lifestyle.

Kyra concludes her presentation by sharing the hope that these scenarios will help explore the future and how we could to think about how sectors respond to these economic scenarios.

Reactions and question

Wendy Brown compliments Kyra on her clear presentation. She asks what information sources have been used in the scenario study. She adds that several forecasting scenario studies have been conducted by several organizations looking into oil and gas, decommissioning and carbon capture. Those reports could also be used for this study, and she can share them. Kyra responses that she is open to investigate these reports. For her study she has spoken to quite some stakeholders to interview them about what the future might look like and which drivers have to be taken into account. Philip Stamp shares in the chat that the B14 feeder reports aim to summarise published forecasts

² Thematic assessment of environmental impacts of human activities

where they are available. Hopefully, the oil and gas feeder report done by the Offshore Industries Committee will compile those. He understands that that report should include CCS.

Jonas Palsson shares that there will probably not be a country that only follows one of these scenarios, but that it's more likely that a combination of these scenarios will take place. Kyra answers that the scenarios are not forecasts, but images of what the future might look like. They are based on assumptions following the axes and drivers. Kyra mentions that the breakout sessions will be very important to broaden the scenarios and to look more in depth in how economic activities could respond to these scenarios. Ronald adds that working with possible future worlds helps to prepare for these futures ahead.

Hans Peter Damian shares that it is important to look into several information sources. Information from industries can be biased. He strongly recommends to also use information from unbiased scientists and authorities. Rob van der Veeren shares in the chat that Hans-Peter raises a good point and that we need to be aware that we will not lean only on stakeholder information, since they might present their wishes. This is also why we would like to get as many views as possible during the workshop. Wendy brown shares in the chat that she was referring to publicly available data sources from recognised experts on forecasts and scenarios. The IOGP does not generate future scenarios.

Lina Todd compliments Kyra on her presentation. She mentions that some major decisions had to be taken to be able to develop the scenarios. She has two comments. Firstly, she mentions that decoupling environmental awareness from economic growth as done in this study is probably not possible: When the environmental awareness is high this does not necessarily lead to pro environmental behaviour. Reflecting on the small Blue Economy, innovation can also be in the form of social innovation. This does not solely have to focus on technology. Secondly, by looking into external and internal factors and actors, the position that is taken is a bit passive. The external side is comparative to the position of OSPAR. But OSPAR should not only be seen as a passive person that has to deal with things, but also as an actor in the scenarios. OSPAR can also be seen as an organization with a more strategic position; as an actor trying to steer things into the desired direction. Which foresight is desirable for the collective OSPAR region and what should be done to get there? Kyra answers that the scenarios are very explorative and focus on the socioeconomic drivers and responses. There is a paragraph in the report on how OSPAR could respond to these scenarios. What would their biggest aim be? What would be their role? Kyra likes Lina her ideas and will be in contact with Lina to explore this subject some more.

Keith Jeffery shares links to two papers in the chat function: one on scenarios for aquaculture (<https://academic.oup.com/icesjms/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/icesjms/fsaa066/5828449>) and one on the EEA publication on growth without economic growth (<https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/sustainability-transitions/drivers-of-change/growth-without-economic-growth>).

4. Break-out sessions

The afternoon program of the workshop consisted of two rounds of break-out room sessions. The participants were asked to create a list of drivers of change for the following nine human activities related to the marine environment: Fisheries, Aquaculture, Oil and gas production, Renewable energy, Mineral extraction, Shipping, Tourism and recreation, Plastic industry, and Agriculture. Creative methods including the use of Mural encouraged all participants to contribute and led to lively discussions. The participants were first asked to imagine how the human activity discussed in their group would look like for all the four scenario's by sticking notes on a shared space.

See appendix 1 for an overview of the Mural results created during the break-out sessions.

After this horizon broadening exercise, the discussions went more in-depth about relevant drivers of change and estimated economic growth and environmental awareness in 2030. Below a very short recap of the break-out sessions (the more detailed information that was shared in the breakout sessions has been used to enrich Kyra's report):

- The discussions during the break-out sessions were perceived as extremely lively and interesting.
- Overall, the big blue economy seems to be the most desired scenario for the various human activities. The big blue economy was also listed as the most likely scenario by the participants, followed by the small blue economy and the consuming economy. The economy of individuals was perceived as least likely to happen by the participants.
- The following drivers of change were frequently listed amongst the most impactful drivers of change during the break-out sessions: Climate change, COVID-19, economic development, population growth, technology, consumer behaviour, regulations, and globalisation.

5. Recap workshop

Ronald thanks all participants for their valuable contribution to the workshop. He stresses that it is important to keep on thinking about the kind of future we desire, and what we do not desire. Today has been a good reminder to be aware of the developments ahead, and the drivers that cause changes in the future.

Role OSPAR

OSPAR's potential role has been discussed during various break-out sessions. Many human activities within the OSPAR region take place on an international level. OSPAR is an international organization and could therefore have an influence in steering towards a desirable future. The following roles and activities were mentioned:

- Regulations;
- Sharing insights and research;
- Inspire others to head into a desirable direction.

Recap Richard Cronin

Ronald asks Richard Cronin to reflect upon the workshop. Richard mentions that he is incredibly impressed by the workshop. *"It would have been most beautiful if we would have been able to have this meeting in physical form, but it is beautiful to have this type of exchange of views."* Exchanging views is important since we are all OSPAR countries and share the same sea. Furthermore, he stresses that this type of horizon scanning workshops are really important and useful for all types of work, and also for the new North East Atlantic Strategy.

Recap Philip Stamp

Philip Stamp mentions that economic growth is not the only driver for future developments; it is important to encompass all of them. The future is more complex than a single story about economic growth or population growth. He also noticed that the big blue economy is a popular and common wanted future scenario and that one might think that OSPAR has a role in steering towards this direction.

Recap Rob:

Rob thanks the participants for enriching the knowledge and understanding about the future. The results of the workshop will be used for the JAMP B14 project and to enrich Kyra's report. The final version of that report will be sent to the participants as soon as it is available.

Annex: List of participants

Adrian Judd (CEFAS), Aernoud Willeumier (Port of Rotterdam), Amber Copley (DEFRA), Anne Gaëlle Collot (Plastic Europe), Arabelle Bentley (KIMO), Catharine Rubel (UBA), Catriona Jeorrett (Gov. Scott), Daiva (AAPC), Edi Interwies (InterSus), Freija Hauquier (Arcadis), Hans Peter Damian (German Environment Agency), Jacques Delsalle (European Commission), Kaja Lonne Fjaertoft (The Norwegian Environment Agency), Katharine Raupach (Ministry of Environment, Germany), Keith Jeffery (CEFAS), Laura de la Torre (OSPAR), Marjolein Lof, Lieke Alferink (Wageningen University & Research), Lina Tode (Plan Bleu, UNEP/MAP), Marijn Rabaut (I- Marine), Marine Julliand (IOGP), Mikael Malinovsky (Danish EPA), Patrick Roose (Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences), Philip James (DEFRA UK gov.), Phil Turner (Seascope Consultants Ltd), Terence Ilot, Richard Cronin, Philip Stamp, Lena Avellan (OSPAR), Pierre Reaud (Ministère de la Transition Ecologique), Rianne van Duinen (ACTeon), Ryan d'Arcy Metcalfe (KIMO), Saravan Marappan (Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning), Stefanie Werner (Federal Environment Agency UBA), Swaantje Bennecke (BioConsult), Therese Rist (Centre for the Ocean and the Arctic), Valentijn Bilsen (IDEA consultant), Wendy Brown (IOGP), Youssef Zaiter (ACTeon), Xander Keijser, Lex Oosterbaan, Kyra Bekhuis, Rob Gerits, Rob van der Veeren, Mareike Erfeling (Rijkswaterstaat), Ronald Lanthers, Els Wouda, Elsje Duimel (Bureau Wing).