

# Key messages / text for MSFD reporting sheet on regional coordination – 2018

## Introduction

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) reporting requirements specify that EU member states need to report information on regional cooperation together with their spatial information, in 2018. This document contains the text agreed by ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties that can be used for reporting purposes.

## Background

1. The EU MSFD spatial information reporting file contains questions on regional cooperation that need to be completed by EU member states; table 3 from the MSFD4GEO file.
2. In 2012 a regional coordinated text was agreed and used by most OSPAR Contracting Parties for this purpose (OSPAR 12/21/1, Annex 5). There had not been any coordination for these texts for the 2018 reporting.
3. The Netherlands proposed updating the text so that all Contracting Parties that are EU member states can use the same text, as a sign of cooperation, particularly highlighting the work done for the OSPAR Intermediate Assessment 2017.
4. The text in the tables at **Annex 1** has been developed and agreed by ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties during two rounds of a written procedure.

Annex 1: Key messages / text for MSFD reporting sheet on regional coordination – 2018

Ref.	Geographic information	Format	Enter information	Enter information	Enter information
<b>Art 5.2, 6, 8.3</b>	<b>Regional/sub-regional coordination</b>	<b>Countries involved</b> (EU MS, others in region)	<b>Nature of coordination</b> ( <i>free text, max 500 words</i> )	<b>Level of coherence, common and consistent methodologies achieved</b> (e.g. full, partial, incomplete)	<b>Description of problems with regional coordination (if applicable)</b> ( <i>Free text, max 500 words</i> )
		<i>Applicable to all three rows below: BE, [CH], DE, DK, ES, [FI], FR, IC, IE, [LX], NL, NO, PT, SE, UK</i>			
<b>Art 8</b>	For initial assessment	Enter 2-digit ISO code for each country involved in coordination (see code list in 'Reference Lists' file)	SEE TABLE 'Field "Nature of coordination"	SEE TABLE 'Field "Level of coherence..."	SEE TABLE 'Field "Description of problems ..."
<b>Art 9</b>	For determination of GES	Enter 2-digit ISO code for each country involved in coordination (see code list in 'Reference Lists' file)			
<b>Art 10</b>	For targets and associated indicators	Enter 2-digit ISO code for each country involved in coordination (see code list in 'Reference Lists' file)			

**Field "Nature of coordination"**

Art 8 (500 words)	Art 9 (500 words)	Art 10 (500 words)
<p>1. There has been a high level of information sharing and joint assessment in the North-East Atlantic through the work of the OSPAR Commission.</p> <p>2. The OSPAR Intermediate Assessment (IA) 2017 provides a basis for coordination of national assessments across the North-East Atlantic. OSPAR Contracting Parties (CP's) that are also EU Member States have the opportunity to use the information presented in the IA 2017 for their update in 2018 to the EU on the</p>	<p>1. There has been a moderate level of information sharing in the development of coherent good environmental status (GES) determinations at descriptor and criteria level through the OSPAR Commission.</p> <p>2. OSPAR supports the cooperation between EU Member States towards coherent and measurable determinations of GES - where possible and appropriate - based on the best available knowledge. The ICG-MSFD will</p>	<p>1. There has been a low level of information sharing on the development of coordinated environmental targets and indicators.</p> <p>2. OSPAR aims to contribute to strengthening regional coordination in the implementation of the MSFD and to ensuring coherence with regard to the establishment of environmental targets.</p> <p>3. In 2018/2019 ICG-MSFD will share</p>

Art 8 (500 words)	Art 9 (500 words)	Art 10 (500 words)
<p>initial assessment (2012) for the MSFD. However, it should be noted that at this point in time, OSPAR IA 2017 indicator assessment values are not necessarily equivalent to EU MSFD criteria threshold values.</p> <p>3. The IA 2017 is a summary of the current understanding and knowledge supporting the implementation of the OSPAR Thematic Strategies. It is a compilation of 47 assessments that demonstrates the close cooperation and coordination between OSPAR CP's, as well as with other regional organisations.</p> <p>4. The IA 2017 builds on assessment processes developed by OSPAR over many years and includes the assessment of recently developed new indicators e.g. in the field of biodiversity, marine litter and underwater noise. The EcAprHA project, co-financed by the EU DG Environment, has significantly contributed to the development of regional indicators for pelagic habitats, benthic habitats and food webs.</p> <p>5. The IA 2017 presents new and developing aspects in the areas of socio-economics and ecosystem assessment of the OSPAR area. Both areas are of increasing relevance, but a common typology and methodology among OSPAR CP's needs further development. The next OSPAR Quality Status Report (QSR) could capture such descriptions.</p> <p>6. OSPAR has developed an assessment portal and a data and information portal, which will enable better collaboration and data exchange between CP's and other organisations, and support the EU MSFD-reporting obligation.</p> <p>7. There is still a lack of harmonized valuation methods and indicator assessment values for a number of indicators. Therefore the national Initial Assessments are not always comparable. However, so far no country has flagged major inconsistencies in the conclusions of neighbouring national initial assessments.</p> <p>[341 words]</p>	<p>continue to identify opportunities for (sub)regionally coherent GES determinations and common GES determinations where appropriate inter alia on the basis of the agreed common indicators..</p> <p>3. In the process of updating the EU GES Commission Decision (2017/848/EU) OSPAR Contracting Parties have collaborated and jointly contributed to the process from the OSPAR perspective.</p> <p>4. The current assessment values that have been proposed during development of the OSPAR indicators as part of IA 2017, remain exploratory, and may be revised in advance of any subsequent OSPAR assessment. Furthermore, such values are not systematically indicative of GES under the MSFD.</p> <p>5. In 2017/2018. an analysis was conducted in order to assess the fit of the existing OSPAR indicators with the GES Commission Decision. Mismatches and gaps were identified regarding criteria, lists of elements, threshold values and integration / aggregation rules. Resources needed to develop the required solutions have been estimated. The OSPAR Commission agreed the priority is to address the Primary Criteria as described in the Commission Decision. From 2018 onwards OSPAR Committees will be working to address the requirements of the Commission Decision.</p> <p>[241 words]</p>	<p>information on national targets for five Descriptors, or parts of Descriptors (marine litter, mobile species, non-indigenous species, underwater noise and nutrients) and develop a way forward towards coherent environmental targets in the third cycle of the MSFD.</p> <p>4. OSPAR strives towards more coordination between its North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy and environmental targets set for the implementation of the MSFD.</p> <p>[111 words]</p>

**Field “Level of coherence, common approach and consistent methodologies achieved (e.g. full, partial, incomplete)”**

Note: this field only allows the choice between ‘full’, ‘partial’ or ‘incomplete’ – there is no space for text entry.

Art 8	Art 9	Art 10
Partial	Partial	Incomplete

**Field ‘Description of problems with regional coordination (if applicable)’**

Art 8 (500 words)	Art 9 (500 words)	Art 10 (500 words)
<p>As the IA2017 lacks regionally agreed threshold values for some indicators, GES determinations and the integration of indicator assessment results, it does not always provide robust conclusions on the quality status of OSPAR waters. Therefore, EU Member States had to strike a balance between the need to nationally express the extent to which GES has been achieved, in order to meet MSFD requirements, and the degree to which the regionally coordinated IA2017 could be used in this process.</p> <p>[78 words]</p>	<p>After the adoption of the GES Commission Decision there was no time left for joint work on GES determinations because member states were focusing efforts on national reporting.</p> <p>There is lack of scientific knowledge, consensus on methodologies and/or political support for setting coordinated, quantified threshold values and GES determinations.</p> <p>[49 words]</p>	<p>OSPAR aims to contribute to strengthening regional coordination of implementation of the MSFD and to ensuring coherence with regard to the establishment of environmental targets. However, the timing of a joint effort was not because CP’s that are EU Member States were focused on the update of the Commission Decision (2017/848/EU).</p> <p>After the adoption of the Commission Decision there was no time for setting joint ambitions because member states were focusing efforts on national reporting.</p> <p>There is lack of scientific knowledge, consensus on methodologies and/or political support for setting coordinated quantified and specific targets. Furthermore, each CP may have specific process to involve local stakeholders in environmental targets definition. It can be challenging to converge on common environmental targets that are endorsed both at a local, national and (sub)regional level.</p> <p>[130 words]</p>