

## OSPAR strategic approach to projects

*This document provides non-binding guidance to any actor planning to develop a proposal for an OSPAR project and a checklist for OSPAR engagement in external projects.*

### **OSPAR projects**

OSPAR should take a pro-active approach to projects by developing and maintaining a list of topics of work that could be seen as ‘on the shelf’ project proposals to be further developed if funding opportunities arise.

All Contracting Parties and/or expert groups are invited to inform the Secretariat of suitable calls for project as they appear or particular tasks that could be completed through a project structure. The Secretariat will also aim to identify suitable project calls.

When the Secretariat has identified a suitable call, it informs HODs of the appropriate Committee, as well as any relevant expert groups, to identify potential project ideas, lead partners and the consortium, early. Coordination among Committees may be relevant if there could be several project proposals to the same call so that prioritisation can be made.

### **Guidance for identifying topics for project proposals:**

- need to align with OSPAR priorities in general and/or OSPAR committee work programmes;
- need to align with OSPAR timelines for delivery of products, e.g. JAMP products;
- can be prioritised based on the OSPAR Science Agenda;
- can be focused on specific OSPAR work areas and/or Regions if particular needs have been identified, or where particular topics have long been lacking targeted resources to progress;
- can be prioritised based on needs to meet international agenda requirements e.g. to meet EU requirements in relation the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, or to deliver work for UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Checklist for developing project proposals:**

- need to identify a lead partner for the project consortium at an early stage of the project development and application phase, the lead partner takes on the financial and managerial responsibility of the project;
- where the Secretariat is lead partner, a project manager and additional part time financial and administrative support post would be included in the project management, and if necessary the Secretariat may investigate the cost and availability of specialist consultants or specialist agencies for developing the project applications;
- need to engage OSPAR committees, and as relevant expert groups, at the drafting stage to ensure coordination and communication on the OSPAR level;
- need to have clear and early Contracting Party engagement and securing of national contributions for OSPAR projects seeking external funding;
- need to recognise the mandate for the lead partner to determine the partners of the consortium, noting that there will be a trade-off between involving as many Contracting Parties as possible for example to reach a wide geographical spread and executing and managing the project efficiently through a small number of partners;
- should aim for focused consortia with clear task allocation between engaged parties;
- should ensure efficiency of OSPAR work by building on relevant projects in other organisations;
- should allocate resources for one person directly involved in the project to be stationed at the Secretariat to ensure optimal communication with OSPAR community and uptake of products;
- can propose project management to be carried out by the OSPAR Secretariat if specific funds are allocated;
- can be based on project outlines developed by the Secretariat based on identified needs that the Contracting Parties could fund, or direct resources to/from other projects they had secured.

## Checklist for OSPAR involvement in external projects

The OSPAR 'checklist' for endorsing external projects (including providing letters of support) questions to ask in relation to a proposed project to prioritise projects where more 'yes' answers are given:

- a. have the project leads engaged with the Secretariat during development of the project proposal? The Secretariat will not provide letters of support at very short notice (less than 4 weeks) and where no previous engagement with the Secretariat on the project's development has taken place.
- b. does the project support the OSPAR North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy?
- c. does the project develop products that are identified as priority needs by OSPAR, e.g. in the OSPAR Science Agenda or in Committee work programmes?
- d. does the project commit to providing updates on development of project deliverables to relevant OSPAR subsidiary bodies according to the OSPAR meeting schedule with the aim of receiving and taking up any feedback given by the OSPAR subsidiary body?
- e. does the project engage stakeholders of relevance to OSPAR work that can support OSPAR needs but may not be directly engaged with the OSPAR community or be aware of OSPAR needs and standards?

could a Contracting Party that is already engaged in the external project e.g. through a scientific institute, represent OSPAR needs on the project advisory board or similar, or should the OSPAR Secretariat