

GUIDANCE

QSR template for Thematic Assessments

Submitting thematic assessment material

In order to assist the Secretariat in producing the online layouts of the thematic assessments, information should be submitted in the associated **MS Word** document template.

The thematic assessment template includes an **excel** Addendum for summary results of relevance to those Contracting Parties that are also EU Member States. The addendum is to be completed by the thematic assessment experts and provided to the Secretariat.

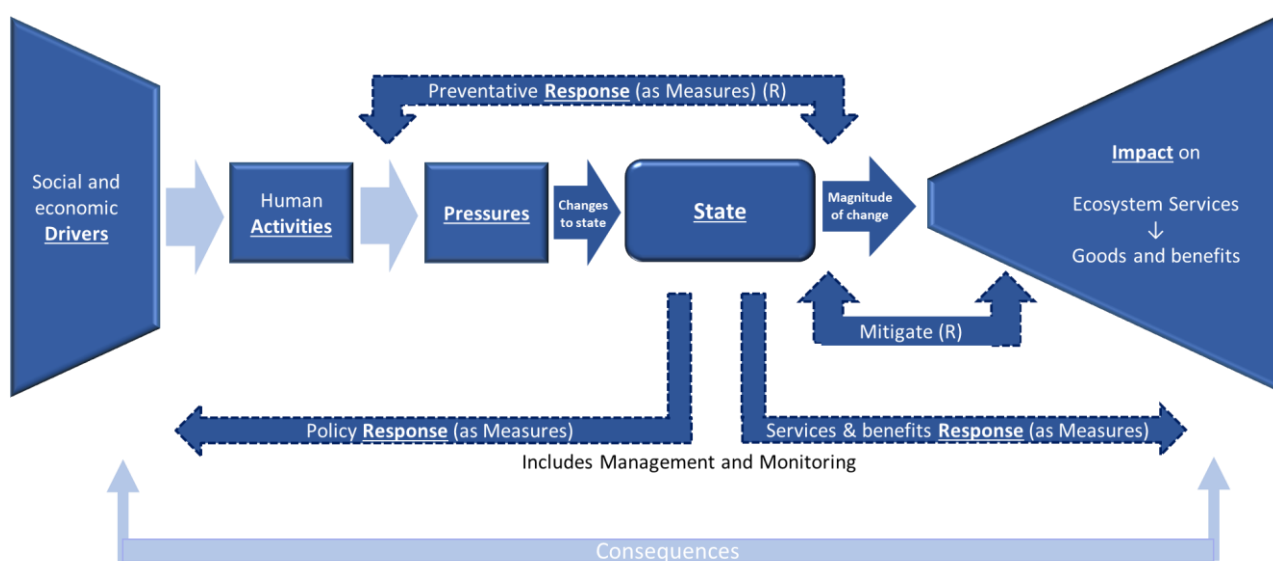


Figure 1. Framework to underpin thematic assessments¹. This schema is compatible with the European Commission Staff Working Document DAPSES-MMM framework.

The boxes underlined in Figure 1 correspond to DAPSIR elements or chapters that will have to be populated at the level of thematic assessment – see below.

¹ (Developed by Cefas (Judd & Lonsdale, 2021) within the OSPAR ICG-EcoC - this amalgamates thinking from NCC¹, UK NEA¹, Elliot et al., 2017¹, Hooper et al., 2019¹, Maes et al., 2013¹, CICES¹)

Content

Field name	Data type: text
Executive Summary	[The executive summary should pull together the key findings from the main body of text. It should provide a generic introduction, highlight particular issues and areas of interest and ensure continuity with the QSR 2010. It should make clear the link between DAPSIR components and the answers to the five questions. This box should contain a brief overview (300 words).]
	Q1. Identify the problems? Are they the same in all OSPAR regions? [Summary of the current state of knowledge on the threats to (pressures on) the marine environment, which should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include both threats to human health and to the environment; • bring out the links between the driving forces (uses and human activities) and pressures behind those threats, their actual and potential impacts and their relation to economic benefits and costs of degradation; • refer back to QSR 2010 and consider future developments in uses and activities that are likely to lead to new or changed threats in these fields; and • consider the differences between the OSPAR regions.]
	Q2. What has been done? [Brief description of the programmes and measures in place, under the OSPAR Convention or otherwise, for implementing the Thematic Strategies and the progress made with their implementation.]
	Q3. Did it work? [Evaluation, in the terms of the OSPAR Convention, of “the effectiveness and adequacy of the actions and measures taken and planned for the protection of the marine environment”. The section should look at the objectives of North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy (NEAES) 2010-2020 and give an estimation of whether the current measures are sufficient for achieving the objectives of NEAES 2020- 2030. (Guidance on this aspect of the evaluation is being developed by the TG-MAP reporting to CoG).]
	Q4. How does this affect the quality status? [Assessment of the effects of these driving forces, pressures, impacts and responses on the overall state of the marine environment; and evaluation of how far the status is from the NEAES quality objectives.]
	Q5. What do we do next?

	[Identification of the priorities for action (linking up with the objectives of the NEAES 2020-2030).]				
Body Text	<p><u>Style guide</u>: The headings used in the body text of thematic assessments are not specified and, as long as the DAPSIR framework is applied, assessors are free to formulate appropriate headings using the placeholders in the template.</p> <p>The thematic assessments will be published in OAP (online) and should therefore be drafted in a style that is compatible with an online publication, and accessible to the intended target audience (E.g. experts for the main body of the assessment applying the DAPSIR framework).</p> <p><u>Content</u>: Each thematic assessment is foreseen to cover all elements of the DAPSIR framework, however the amount of information to be presented for each element will differ between thematic assessments. There can be overlap between various DAPSIR elements i.e. Drivers and Activities. Where the elements overlap, it will be possible that going to either element will take you to the same text box when looking at it online on OAP.</p>				
D - Driver(s)	[Heading]				
	<p>[Chapter summary for the OSPAR Maritime area]</p> <p><u>Content and Process</u>: to be populated towards the end of drafting based on extracts from the Driver ‘Process’ [Content] narrative. A summary statement is requested for each chapter to improve communication of results when publishing electronically on OAP and to support drafting of the synthesis report.</p>				
	<p>[Content]</p> <p><u>Definition</u>: Drivers are social and economic requirements that “drive” the need for a particular activity, e.g. the need for food, energy, transport, trade, materials.</p> <p><u>Process</u>: ICG-EcoC and ICG-ESA are producing a standard set of driver descriptions which can be utilised for all thematic assessments. ICG-EcoC will pre-populate the chapter on Driver(s) for all thematic assessments, it would be up to the assessment leads to double check that the information used by ICG-EcoC is the most relevant.</p>				
A – Activity(ies)	[Heading]				
	[Chapter summary per [OSPAR Region] or [OSPAR Maritime area]]				
	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V

	<p>NOTE: to be populated towards the end of drafting based on extracts from the Activity 'Process' and 'Content' [Content] narrative. Provide a summary statement using traffic-light messaging (good: pressure decreasing / moderate: pressure stable / poor: pressure increasing) for each OSPAR Region separately if there is sufficient spatial resolution available in information presented in the chapter, alternatively give one statement for the entire OSPAR maritime area. A summary statement is requested for each chapter to improve communication of results when publishing electronically on OAP and to support drafting of the synthesis report.</p>				
	<p>[Content]</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> This chapter refers to human activity / activities undertaken to meet the Drivers and which generate Pressures that have the potential to impact negatively on the marine environment or human health.</p> <p><u>Process:</u> Activities should follow the categorisation set out in in OSPAR's Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme (JAMP – see list in page 19 of Agreement 2014-02). It is recommended that where possible reference is made to the MSFD categories, while noting how these relate to the JAMP's OSPAR list (for MSFD list of activities, please refer to Table 2b of the of Commission Directive (EU) 2017/845 - Uses and human activities in or affecting the marine environment). Based on this list, the ICG-EcoC Bow Tie Analysis has identified an initial set of activities as the starting point for consideration in each thematic assessment. It is then up to the assessment leads to double check that the information used by ICG-EcoC is the most relevant.</p> <p><u>Content:</u> EIHA has produced a set of feeder reports for human activities. The activities were selected based on the JAMP list of activities which EIHA foresaw to be of most relevance. Other Committees are invited to lift relevant content from the feeder reports, published in OAP. The reports include §§ numbers for ease of reference to specific content. The human activity feeder reports bring together information at the regional scale of OSPAR based on previously published assessments. The QSR 2023 aims to ensure coherence between assessments and messages, therefore all thematic assessments should make use of feeder report content whenever the available information describes relevant activities.</p>				
P – Pressure(s)	[Heading]				
	[Chapter summary per [OSPAR Region] or [OSPAR Maritime area]]				
	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V

	<p>NOTE: to be populated towards the end of drafting based on extracts from the Pressure ‘Process’ and ‘Content’ [Content] narrative. Provide a summary statement using traffic-light messaging (good: pressure decreasing / moderate: pressure stable / poor: pressure increasing) for each OSPAR Region separately if there is sufficient spatial resolution available in information presented in the chapter, alternatively give one statement for the entire OSPAR maritime area. A summary statement is requested for each chapter to improve communication of results when publishing electronically on OAP and to support drafting of the synthesis report.</p> <p>[Content]</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> Pressures are the stressors acting on an ecosystem component within the marine environment resulting from one or more Activity. A Pressure is a mechanism of change, first to the natural system (State changes box) and then to the social system (Impact box)</p> <p><u>Process:</u> Pressures should follow the categorisation set out in OSPAR’s Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme (JAMP – see list in page 19 of Agreement 2014-02). It is recommended that where possible reference is made to the MSFD categories, while noting how these relate to JAMP’s OSPAR list (for MSFD list of pressures, please refer to Table 2a of the of Commission Directive (EU) 2017/845 - Anthropogenic pressures on the marine environment). The ICG-EcoC Bow Tie Analysis has identified an initial set of pressures extracted from this list - as the starting point for consideration in each thematic assessment. It is then up to the assessment leads to double check that the information used by ICG-EcoC is the most relevant.</p> <p><u>Content:</u> The guidance varies depending on whether the assessment is pressure or biodiversity focussed.</p> <p>For pressure-focussed assessments (e.g. marine litter) the content of this box/chapter on Pressure(s) will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ narrative in trends in pressures ✓ outputs from any indicator assessments ✓ outputs from any integrated assessments <p>The indicator assessment outputs will link to the State box (see below) which describes these combined trends in the context of their potential impacts on the marine environment.</p> <p>For biodiversity-focussed assessments (e.g. marine birds) this will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ narrative in trends in pressures
S – State	[Heading]

	chapter summary per [OSPAR Region] or [OSPAR Maritime area]				
	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V
	<p>NOTE: to be populated towards the end of drafting based on extracts from the State 'Process' and 'Content' [Content] narrative. Provide a summary statement using traffic-light messaging (good: pressure decreasing / moderate: pressure stable / poor: pressure increasing) for each OSPAR Region separately if there is sufficient spatial resolution available in information presented in the chapter, alternatively give one statement for the entire OSPAR maritime area. A summary statement is requested for each chapter to improve communication of results when publishing electronically on OAP and to support drafting of the synthesis report.</p>				
	<p>[Content]</p> <p><u>Process:</u> The current status of an ecosystem component is based on the best available knowledge and / or expert judgment to describe the effect and consequence of the Pressure(s) on the ecosystem component.</p> <p><u>Content:</u> In this case the information provided should relate not only to the 'State' box, but also to the 'Changes to state' and 'Magnitude of change' arrows in Figure 1 (see at the top of this document).</p> <p>For pressure-focussed assessments (e.g. marine litter) this will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ trends in state change, e.g. since previous QSRs ✓ state changes associated with pressures exerted by human activities (i.e. describing ecological / environmental 'impacts') <p>For biodiversity-focussed assessments (e.g. marine birds) this will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ outputs from any indicator assessments ✓ outputs from any integrated assessments ✓ trends in state change, e.g. since previous QSRs ✓ state changes associated with pressures exerted by human activities (i.e. describing ecological / environmental 'impacts') 				
I – Impact (on Ecosystem Services)	[Heading]				
	[Chapter summary per [OSPAR Region] or [OSPAR Maritime area]]				
	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V

	<p>NOTE: to be populated towards the end of drafting based on extracts from the Impact 'Process' [Content] narrative. Provide a summary statement using traffic-light messaging (good: pressure decreasing / moderate: pressure stable / poor: pressure increasing) for each OSPAR Region separately if there is sufficient spatial resolution available in information presented in the chapter, alternatively give one statement for the entire OSPAR maritime area. A summary statement is requested for each chapter to improve communication of results when publishing electronically on OAP and to support drafting of the synthesis report.</p> <p>[Content]</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> The effects that state changes have on ecosystem services, goods and benefits.</p> <p><u>Process:</u> ICG-ESA (in collaboration with ICG-EcoC) are progressing work on this component. The intention is for ICG-EcoC to identify the most relevant ecosystem services. ICG-ESA would then provide information describing the change to the ecosystem services under different impact scenarios.</p> <p>[It could also include the effects (consequences) on the drivers.]</p>										
R – Response	<p>[Heading]</p> <p>[Chapter summary per [OSPAR Region] or [OSPAR Maritime area]]</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <th>Region I</th><th>Region II</th><th>Region III</th><th>Region IV</th><th>Region V</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>NOTE: to be populated towards the end of drafting based on extracts from the Response 'Process' and 'Content' [Content] narrative. Provide a summary statement using traffic-light messaging (good: pressure decreasing / moderate: pressure stable / poor: pressure increasing) for each OSPAR Region separately if there is sufficient spatial resolution available in information presented in the chapter, alternatively give one statement for the entire OSPAR maritime area. A summary statement is requested for each chapter to improve communication of results when publishing electronically on OAP and to support drafting of the synthesis report.</p> <p>[Content]</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> The actions to prevent, minimise or mitigate environmental impact and improve State (management response / measures). These include existing management measures (R(M) in Figure 1) and their effectiveness but could also identify proposals for future management (the 'Develop practical plans' component of Figure 1).</p>	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V					
Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V							

Bow-tie analysis	<p>[Content]</p> <p><u>Process:</u> ICG-EcoC will populate this section for those thematic assessments where a bow-tie analysis will be completed – not all the thematic assessments will include a bow-tie analysis. This content will be created AFTER all other sections of the thematic assessment template has been populated. The bow-tie-analysis will describe the cumulative impact of pressures. The analysis is foreseen to respond to a specific question, which ICG-EcoC would define in cooperation with the experts developing content for the thematic assessments and would use the values and information presented in the thematic assessment to run the analysis. For more details, please contact ICG-EcoC.</p> <p><u>Content:</u> ICG-EcoC have produced an initial bow tie analysis for each thematic assessment (loaded into the relevant SharePoint folder) from which they have extracted a skeleton DAPSIR narrative to pre-populate the thematic assessment template as a starting point. The pre-populated information (bullet-point lists) should be checked and modified as relevant by thematic assessment leads. ICG-EcoC will modify the bow-tie schema accordingly before developing the analysis output.</p>
Climate change	<p>[Content]</p> <p><u>Context:</u> Climate change is an important issue for OSPAR to address through the QSR 2023. Climate change is a major thread in the development of the NEAES 2020-2030, and therefore it is important that the topic of climate change is assessed as a stand-alone issue as well as an issue having an effect on all areas of work of OSPAR.</p> <p><u>Content:</u> Each thematic assessment must include a section discussing the impacts, risks and consequences of climate change on the issue covered by that thematic assessment. It could, for example, be a description of spatial shifts in the species or increased risks to be addressed in a certain human activity. It is important to clearly indicate whether effects are observed or projected.</p> <p><u>Content 2:</u> Some areas of OSPAR’s work, such as the Offshore Industries Committee, may in fact have a direct effect on Climate Change. In this case any anticipated effects on climate change should also be included in the section. The heading should be clearly defined and added with corresponding content.</p> <p><u>Process:</u> The Climate Change Expert Group are developing the climate change thematic assessment and request that all other thematic assessments contribute in responding to questions, as below, for each of the parameters assessed in QSR 2010 tables 3.1 and 3.2 (https://qsr2010.ospar.org/en/ch03_01.html). In the prepopulated templates provided to assessors, the Secretariat has listed the proposed parameters for each thematic assessment.</p>

	QSR 2010			QSR 2023			
	Impact	What might happen	What has been observed	Did the foreseen change happen?	How has the change happened?	What has been the impact?	Confidence (guidance document annex 1)
	[QSR 2010 text]	[QSR 2010 text]	[QSR 2010 text]	[Yes/No/Not possible to know] [Comment]	[faster/slower than anticipated, more drastic/very mild change] [Comment]	[strong negative / mild positive etc] [Comment]	Evidence [Robust/medium/limited] Degree of agreement [High/medium/low] Has confidence increased over 10 years? [Yes/No] [Comment]

Thematic Metadata

Field	Data Type	Explanation
Summary Results (template Addendum 1)	URL	Link to MSFD results table, including: Descriptor, Criterion, GESComponent, Feature, Marine Reporting Units, etc.
Contributor	Text	Lead author organisation / Individual name
Linkage	URL	<p>Weblinks to additional information about the assessment e.g. link to Publication, common indicator agreement</p> <p>Where available links to other references, e.g. scientific journal papers, can be provided.</p> <p>The items in the list should be line-separated</p>
Relevant OSPAR Documentation	Text	<p>OSPAR-relevant Publication, Decision, Recommendation or Other Agreement.</p> <p>Use the following naming protocols:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">[OSPAR Publication] [YYYY]- [publication number] [title] [OSPAR Recommendation] [YYYY]-[number] [title] [OSPAR Decision] [YYYY]-[number] [title]</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">[OSPAR Agreement] [YYYY]-[number] [title]</p> <p><u>For example:</u></p> <p>OSPAR CEMP Guidelines e.g. Agreement 2016-09 CEMP Guideline: Common Indicator – Marine Bird Abundance (B1)</p> <p>OSPAR Publication 2008-379 CEMP Assessment Manual: Coordinated Environmental Monitoring Programme Assessment Manual for contaminants in sediment and biota</p> <p>OSPAR Recommendation 2015-04 on furthering the protection and conservation of the Allis shad (<i>Alosa alosa</i>) in Regions II, III and IV of the OSPAR maritime area</p> <p>OSPAR Decision 2012-1 on the establishment of the Charlie-Gibbs North High Seas Marine Protected Area</p> <p>OSPAR Agreement 2004-15 Provisional JAMP Assessment Criteria for TBT – Specific Biological Effects. Amendments agreed by ASMO 2008</p>

Additional Guidance for completion

Figure/Table naming

The numbering of the figures/tables/formulae/charts etc. in the “brief” sections, will follow a Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3, etc. structure;

For the online only “extended” sections, the figure/table numbering will follow a Figure a, Figure b, Figure c, Table a, Table b, etc. structure.

To be supplied to the Secretariat in a zip file.

Photos

As jpeg A minimum of 2 photographs should be supplied and all photos must be fully accredited with permission for publication and online use. If no accreditation is necessary, please make this clear. Images must be at a resolution of 300dpi and in jpeg format – screenshots are not suitable

Graphs

As jpeg All graphs need to have clear, brief titles and be provided as a high-resolution jpeg. All data used to make the graph must be supplied in Excel or readily accessible format

Formulae

As jpeg For example

$$y_t = \frac{1}{n_t} \sum_i c_{ti}$$

Tables

As Excel file

All tables need to have a clear, brief title. All data used to make the table must be supplied in Excel or Word format.

Infographics

As jpeg All infographics need to have a clear, brief title and be provided as a high resolution jpeg. All information used to make the infographic must be provided in a suitable and accessible format.

Maps

As jpeg

All maps need to have a clear, brief title. All background data used to make the maps, such as shapefiles, need to be supplied in the assessment snapshot data package.

Use of language

Scientific names – try to avoid using scientific names if at all possible. If this is not possible, be consistent e.g. do not use scientific names in tables and common names in text. Scientific names can be used in the extended online text, provided the common name is referenced in the first instance it is used. In translating between scientific and common names use the World Register of Marine Species, available from <http://www.marinespecies.org/>.

Avoid acronyms or explain them – avoid the use of acronyms in the summary text, in the extended text they can be used but written in full in their first instance.

Referencing

References should be placed within the references section using the following layouts for peer reviewed and grey literature publications respectively:

Author, X.Y., Date YYYY, Title. Organisation or Journal, Location, Number of pages (e.g. 123 pp) or pages (12-15)

Title. Organisation, Location, date YYYY. Publication Ref. Number of Pages