

OSPAR's Ministerial meeting 2021

IOGP Statement

Thank you distinguished Ministers, OSPAR Contracting Parties and OSPAR secretariat for the opportunity to engage with you today on behalf of the International Association of Oil & Gas Producers (IOGP) as an OSPAR Observer.

IOGP has a long history of over 20 years participation in the OSPAR Convention since the first meeting of the Offshore Industry Committee in 2001. IOGP, as global voice of the upstream oil and gas industry, and with experience of participating with other regional seas conventions and international organisations, has access to wide range of strong expertise from the industry. We contribute to OSPAR providing technical expertise, industry data and sharing of industry good practice and technological advances especially in the areas of environment and decommissioning.

We are delighted to participate in various OSPAR committees relevant to our industry in particular the Offshore Industry Committee (Radioactive Substances Committee, Environmental Impact of Human Activities Committee) and specialist Inter-sessional Groups (ICG-RBA, ICG-REACH, ICG-Noise, ICG-MOD). We strive to contribute constructively and actively and bring value to OSPAR meetings and to the products developed.

We value our ability as an OSPAR observer organisation to engage with the OSPAR Contracting Parties and other observer organisations to help to ensure that OSPAR is transparent and inclusive in its decision-making and to ensure OSPAR measures are practicable and realistic, to still allow blue economic activity to take place in OSPAR area.

Tackling climate change and achieving a low carbon future while meeting global energy demand is one of the greatest challenges of our lifetime. We all – the industry, governments, regulators, and society - have a responsibility to help achieve the Paris Agreement goals, and we take responsibility. As IOGP we are engaged in a variety of initiatives and projects for reducing our industry's own emissions, supplying cleaner energy, and developing long-term solutions that also help other sectors reduce their own footprint. The oil and gas industry has the experience, skills and resources necessary to take the lead in the transition to a low carbon future while meeting global energy demand. And IOGP is supporting its members in all these efforts.

IOGP are aligned and committed to the new OSPAR North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy 2030 (NEAES) and the Cascais Declaration, as demonstrated in the following selected examples:

- **Strategic Objective 12: Mitigate climate change** and ocean acidification by contributing to global efforts, including by safeguarding the marine environment's role as a natural carbon store.
 - The planned increase in carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects in the OSPAR area over the next decade will play a key role as a climate change mitigation technology, alongside renewables and other important tools in the climate mitigation toolbox in the coming decades.
 - OSPAR has an opportunity to show leadership and ensure that for the CCS facilities in the OSPAR maritime area we can learn lessons about any environmental impacts, ensure monitoring of cumulative effects and also to promote energy sector integration between technologies.

- The existing or planned CCS facilities in the OSPAR maritime area (currently 14) will capture CO₂ from a variety of industrial sectors; including waste incineration and waste to energy, Cement, Biomass and biofuel; Refineries; Steel; Natural gas; Hydrogen; Electricity; Fertilizers; Data centres; Direct Air Capture.
- IOGP will actively participate in the review of the results of monitoring of CCS projects to ensure that carbon dioxide streams are retained permanently in the storage complex and will not lead to any significant adverse consequences for the marine environment, human health and other legitimate uses of the maritime area.
- **Strategic Objective 8: Reduce anthropogenic underwater noise** to levels that do not adversely affect the marine environment.
 - IOGP will continue to actively participate in the development and implementation of appropriate OSPAR measures to reduce and manage noise pollution, in particular contributing expertise and outcomes from the IOGP Sound and Marine Life Joint Industry Programme (<https://www.soundandmarinelife.org/>)
 - IOGP are pleased to announce that their Sound and Marine Life JIP and Environment Genomics JIP have both been accepted by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) and endorsed as Ocean Decade contributions in June 2021.
 - The endorsement of our Science JIPs as Ocean Decade contributions is an outstanding opportunity to engage with other research programs working on similar topics, and we are proud to see this work recognized as part of the Ocean Decade.
- **Strategic Objective 5: Protect and conserve marine biodiversity, ecosystems and their services** to achieve good status of species and habitats, and thereby maintain and strengthen ecosystem resilience. And **Strategic Objective 9: Safeguard the structure and functions of the seabed/marine ecosystems** by preventing significant habitat loss and physical disturbance due to human activities.
 - Over the next decade there will be a considerable number of offshore installations decommissioned in the OSPAR area.
 - IOGP will contribute to the assessment of positive and negative effects of the removal and in situ decommissioning of manmade structures, including effects on biodiversity, biomass, species connectivity and the interaction of mobile species
 - IOGP will contribute to the review of OSPAR Decision 98/3 on the Disposal of Disused Offshore Installations, providing information on the advancement of decommissioning technologies and on the best available scientific knowledge.
- To further strengthen **observer involvement in the implementation of the NEAES 2030** (paragraph 21)
 - IOGP have provided proposals on how we can contribute to the implementation plan and specific tasks to deliver the NEAES 2030.
 - IOGP will continue to play an active role in delivering the OSPAR vision through their expertise and scrutiny of OSPAR work to help ensure that OSPAR remains transparent and inclusive in its decision-making and accountable for its actions.