

OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic  
Meeting of the Environmental Impact of Human Activities Committee (EIHA)  
Edinburgh (United Kingdom) and on-line: 21-25 March 2022

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## Terms of Reference for the Intersessional Correspondence Group on Marine Litter 2022-2023 (ICG-ML)

### Participants

1. ICG Marine Litter will be convened by the Netherlands (Mareike Erfeling), Spain (Jesús Gago) and France (Bénédicte Jenot) and will be open to all Contracting Parties and Observers of OSPAR.

### Organisation of work

2. ICG Marine Litter will have two meetings during the 2022/2023 intersessional period. The first meeting, on 16-18 May 2022 in Seville, back to back with the MARLICE conference, will be split between a segment on data, monitoring and assessment and a segment on the development of the implementation plan for the new RAP ML (to be agreed by OSPAR 2022). The second meeting, to be held in November 2022 (format to be decided), will focus mainly on the RAP ML but if necessary with a segment on monitoring and assessment.

3. ICG Marine Litter will strive to strengthen its cooperation with other Regional Seas Conventions and other relevant international organizations such as ICES, the IMO and Arctic Council to the extent possible considering the available resources. It will coordinate with MSFD TG ML, with a view to improving monitoring, assessment and effectiveness of measures against litter in the North-East Atlantic and support coordinated implementation of the MSFD and also actions against litter by OSPAR Contracting Parties which are also EU Member States. TG-ML are actively collecting research reports; these can be made available to ICG-ML.

4. ICG Marine Litter will be supported in its work by indicator expert groups covering each of the common (beach litter, seafloor litter, ingestion of litter by sea turtles and plastic particles in fulmar stomachs) candidate indicators (microplastics) and other possible indicators on impacts on biota. The main roles of the groups are:

- a. to facilitate and advise on the monitoring programme (CEMP guidelines or under the JAMP);
- b. to improve and develop methodologies for the indicator;
- c. to secure and if necessary improve data quality in cooperation with the OSPAR Secretariat;
- d. to support the lead and possible co-lead(s) in doing assessments according to the ICG-ML ToR;
- e. to support the lead and possible co-lead(s) to contribute to the QSR 2023 thematic assessment and its follow-up; and

f. to consider collaborative opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the work, for example through other relevant fora.

5. Based on these responsibilities the indicator expert groups will draft work programmes, which they report to ICG Marine Litter, including an indication of the workload. The indicator expert groups are encouraged to hold meeting(s) outside of the main ICG meeting on-line or face to face in accordance with the demands of the work and resource availability.

6. The indicator expert groups will be led by the relevant indicator task lead but should aim to have at least one co-lead. The leads will ensure the active involvement of the members of their group including through correspondence and on-line meetings. In turn, the members of the group will actively support the leads in their work. ICG Marine Litter will review the membership and leadership of the expert groups annually, with the aim of securing the necessary expertise in the groups.

#### Scope of work

9. For the effective delivery of its terms of reference and in particular the RAP ML it is recognised that ICG-ML should be supported by additional dedicated resource.

10. ICG Marine Litter will prioritise work on the QSR, Common Indicator Assessments and the RAP ML, and will coordinate the following specific marine litter issues as identified below:

#### *Beach Litter Monitoring (Common Indicator)*

- a. facilitate the monitoring programme for beach litter, including as necessary updating the CEMP appendix and data quality control;
- b. update the field guidelines to align them with the revised CEMP guidelines;
- c. oversee the database for beach litter monitoring data and submission of data to ODIMS;
- d. continue the work on litter source identification initiated by Germany and Spain;
- e. provide supporting analysis to enable the monitoring of progress against NEAES operation objective S4.03 and the development of additional regionally coordinated reduction targets under objectives S4.04;
- f. evaluate the new joint list of litter types (from TG-ML);
- g. make recommendations on an OSPAR threshold value;

#### *Floating Litter/impact on biota (Common Indicator Plastic Particles in Sea bird Stomachs for Region II and Common Indicator on Turtles for Region IV)*

- h. facilitate the monitoring programme, including updating the CEMP appendix and data quality control, for the fulmar Common Indicator in the Greater North Sea area;
- i. facilitate the monitoring programme, including updating the CEMP appendix and data quality control, for the Common Indicator on ingestion of marine litter by turtles;

#### *Seafloor Litter Common Indicator*

- j. facilitate the monitoring programme, including updating the CEMP appendix and data quality control, and follow up on data submission to ICES DATRAS database;
- k. improve Quality Assurance / Control of the data in conjunction with ICES;

### *Micro plastics*

- l. Develop a candidate indicator on microplastics in sediments including the development of CEMP guidelines;
- m. Further develop other microplastics candidate indicators in line with advice from EIHA (e.g. microplastics in mussels);

### *Other indicator and assessment work – impacts on biota*

- n. identify other biota and other assessment criteria for defining further impact indicators for ingestion of marine litter;
- o. investigate indicators for other relevant impacts, especially for the entanglement of biota in marine litter;

### *Regional Action Plan*

- p. carry out the actions associated to ICG-ML subject to availability of resources;
- q. complete any remaining actions necessary to enable the adoption of the new RAP-ML at OSPAR 2022;
- r. further develop the RAP-ML implementation programme, consistent with the requirements of the NEAES 2030, taking account of the NEAES strategic and operational objectives and Agreement 2021-02 on an NEAES Implementation Plan;
- s. initiate work to implement agreed RAP-ML actions and NEAES tasks and report on their progress to EIHA and CoG;
- t. develop additional NEAES tasks in support of the RAP-ML and NEAES 2030, to be submitted to EIHA and CoG, for inclusion into the NEAES Implementation Plan;
- u. seek ongoing cooperation with the implementation of Marine Litter Action Plans of other Regional Seas Conventions and other relevant international organizations such as the IMO, Arctic Council with the aim of prioritising and rationalising work;

### *Implementation of OSPAR Recommendations*

- v. facilitate the implementation of Recommendation 2016/01 on the reduction of marine litter through fishing for litter initiatives, including the submission of data, and investigating targets; on the basis of Contracting Party implementation reports (to be submitted by end 2021) and national reports on participation by vessels during 2021, prepare an overview assessment for submission to EIHA 2023; the assessment should include advice on whether the OSPAR target to double participation by 2021 (compared to 2017) was achieved and whether any revisions should be made to the Recommendation;
- w. facilitate the implementation of Recommendation 2019/01 on Education Programmes for Fishers, in particular to consider follow up to an overview assessment of Contracting Party implementation reports;
- x. facilitate the implementation of Recommendation 2021/6 on the reduction of plastic pellet loss into the marine environment.

### **Other Actions**

11. Review the implementation of JAMP Product B-1.
12. ICG- ML will report to EIHA 2023 on progress in relation to the terms of reference.