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| OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic |
| Meeting of the Working Group on Changing Ocean Climate and Ocean Acidification (WG COCOA)Online, 7-8 February 2024 |

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Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Changing Ocean Climate and Ocean Acidification (WG COCOA)

**Context**

1. OSPAR is aware that the effects of climate change and ocean acidification are apparent throughout the OSPAR Maritime Area and that pressures on the marine environment from climate change and ocean acidification are set to grow. Therefore, OSPAR is committed to monitoring and assessing the nature, rate, and extent of the effects of climate change and ocean acidification on the marine environment, particularly on species, habitats, and ecosystem functioning and services; and to considering appropriate ways of responding. The impacts of climate change and ocean acidification as well as the need for adaptation, resilience and mitigation in all aspects of OSPAR’s work is of great importance, and is therefore deeply embedded in the [2030 North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy](https://www.ospar.org/convention/strategy) (NEAES 2030).
2. The Working Group on Changing Ocean Climate and Ocean Acidification (WG COCOA) has been established to deliver on Strategic Objective 10 within the NEAES 2030, to contribute to the delivery of Strategic Objectives 11 and 12, and to support delivery of the climate change and ocean acidification-related aspects of Strategic Objectives S1(O5), S6 and SX, and to ensure the integration of climate change and ocean acidification throughout the OSPAR structure.
3. The scope of work of WG COCOA aims to advance OSPAR’s work on climate change and ocean acidification, specifically but not limited to:
	1. Monitoring and assessment;
	2. Adaptation and resilience;
	3. Response and mitigation;
	4. Awareness-raising and communication.

The Working Group will consider both current and future climate change and ocean acidification.

1. WG COCOA will coordinate with other Committees and groups within OSPAR on the topic of climate change and ocean acidification.

**Operation and organisation of work**

1. WG COCOA shall hold at least one annual meeting. WG COCOA will work through a mixture of correspondence and virtual/face to face meetings.
2. WG COCOA shall maintain a list of actions for short-term tasks to be completed within a meeting cycle.
3. WG COCOA shall report to the Coordination Group (CoG).
4. WG COCOA will actively reach out to relevant committees and subsidiary bodies of OSPAR to further their discussions on climate change and ocean acidification and offer knowledge and products that may aid in delivering the climate change and ocean acidification-related aspects of their work. These OSPAR groups include *inter alia*: BDC, EIHA, OIC, HASEC, RSC, AOWG, ICG-EUT, WG INPUT, ICG-COBAM, ICG-POSH, ICG-ORED, ICG-MPA, ICG-EcoC.
5. WG COCOA will coordinate with relevant Committees and their subsidiary bodies to keep track of the NEAES tasks on the cross-cutting climate change and ocean acidification-related tasks and will invite their input and feedback.

**Implementation of the 2030 North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy**

1. WG COCOA will facilitate the implementation of the NEAES 2030, by:
	1. Delivering Strategic Objectives S10, contributing in particular to the Strategic Objectives S11, and S12, and also supporting Strategic Objectives S1.05, S6 and SX;
	2. leading or supporting those operational objectives for which WG COCOA has a leading or supporting role as set out in the Implementation Plan;
	3. identifying and specifying tasks to be recommended to CoG for inclusion into the Implementation Plan under those operational objectives for which it has a leading or supporting role; and
	4. ensuring progress reporting on implementation of NEAES 2030 tasks as set out in [OSPAR Agreement 2021-02](https://www.ospar.org/documents?v=46382) and identifying any issue that should be brought to the attention of CoG.
2. In doing so, WG COCOA shall pay particular attention to the conclusions and recommendations of the Quality Status Reports and Intermediate Assessments.

**Measures and actions**

1. WG COCOA will evaluate, as appropriate, the implementation and effectiveness, in respect to climate change and ocean acidification, of relevant OSPAR programmes and measures taking into account guidance from CoG towards a structured and systematic approach within OSPAR, including taking into account measures taken in other relevant fora, such as the United Nations and European Union.
2. WG COCOA will review new or amended products from OSPAR Committees, Working Groups, and ICGs to make sure they are climate proof.

**Monitoring and assessment**

1. WG COCOA shall, based on an evaluation of the current monitoring, develop and maintain guidelines and recommendations for appropriate monitoring and assessment in line with the JAMP, and any successor programme.
2. WG COCOA shall contribute to the development or application of tools for integrated management, including socio-economic analysis and cumulative effects assessment (led by CoG), marine spatial planning and ecosystem-based management.

**Engagement**

1. WG COCOA will also maintain appropriate interaction with other relevant (inter)national organisations when instrumental for the fulfilment of these Terms of References, in particular, but not limited to:
2. Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM);
3. International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), incl. its Working Groups and Strategic Group;
4. EU/CIS process;
5. Copernicus Marine Environment Monitoring Service (CMEMS);
6. Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON);
7. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);
8. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);
9. Arctic Council;
10. Copernicus Climate Change Service;
11. IMO’s London Convention and London Protocol;
12. GES4SEAS project;
13. Mission Atlantic project;
14. Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning leading to Ecosystem Services (MARBEFES) project.