

ICG-Eut Terms of reference for 2023-2026

1. The Intersessional Correspondence Group on Eutrophication (ICG-Eut) is a subsidiary body of HASEC comprising representatives of all Contracting Parties and OSPAR Observer organisations.
2. The function of HASEC is to coordinate the work under the OSPAR Convention on hazardous substances and eutrophication and contribute to the delivery of the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy (NEAES 2030). ICG-Eut is a group of experts advising HASEC.
3. The scope of work is to advise on programmes and measures which include those related to:
 - a. all activities that result in a pressure on the OSPAR maritime area due to discharges, emissions and losses of nutrients;
 - b. monitoring the state of eutrophication in the marine environment and evaluating any associated impact; and
 - c. mitigation of eutrophication.

Operation and organisation of work

4. ICG-Eut shall hold at least one annual meeting and intersessionally when required.
5. ICG-Eut shall report to HASEC on its work on key issues that require coordination/management by HASEC.
6. ICG-Eut shall provide an annual progress report to HASEC.
7. ICG-Eut shall ensure the exchange of information with other OSPAR expert and working groups, as required but specifically:
 - a. with the Working Group on Inputs to the marine environment (WG INPUT);
 - b. with Intersessional Correspondence Group on Eutrophication Modelling (ICG-EMO) on deriving maximum inputs of nutrients and effects of climate change;
 - c. with Intersessional Correspondence Group on Measures and Recommendations (ICG-MaRE) on measures to combat eutrophication and their effectiveness and sufficiency;
 - d. with the Intersessional Correspondence Group on the Coordination of Biodiversity Assessment and Monitoring (ICG-COBAM - Pelagic and Foodwebs Group) in respect of the further development of the pelagic indicators and eutrophication effects on pelagic habitats;
 - e. with the Working Group on Changing Ocean Climate and Ocean Acidification (WG-COAO) in respect of the impacts of climate change on eutrophication;
 - f. with the Environmental Impacts of Human Activities Committee (EIHA) in respect of pressures and impacts on the ecosystem arising from human activities in the maritime area; and

- g. with the Biodiversity Committee (BDC) in respect of the effects of nutrient pollution on ecosystems and biodiversity of the maritime area.

Implementation of the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy 2030

8. ICG-Eut will facilitate the implementation of the NEAES 2030, by:
 - a. contributing to the strategic objectives S1, S6, S10, S11, and S12;
 - b. supporting those operational objectives for which HASEC has a leading or supporting role as set out in the Implementation Plan;
 - c. maintaining its list of NEAES tasks and regularly updating on progress with these tasks, identifying and specifying tasks to be recommended to HASEC to submit to CoG for inclusion into the Implementation Plan under those operational objectives for which it has a leading or supporting role; and
 - d. ensuring progress reporting on implementation of NEAES 2030 tasks as set out in Agreement 2021-02 and identifying any issue that should be brought to the attention of HASEC.
9. In doing so, ICG-Eut shall pay particular attention to the conclusions and recommendations of the Quality Status Reports and Intermediate Assessments.

Monitoring and assessment

10. ICG-Eut shall advise HASEC on the development and maintenance of appropriate monitoring and assessment in line with the JAMP, and successor programmes, paying particular attention to:
 - a. further develop common indicator assessments on eutrophication and the Common Procedure, including the COMPEAT tool ;
 - b. prepare practical arrangements for the application of the next Common Procedure (reporting, data products, timing, assessment period, etc.) for endorsement by OSPAR;
 - c. ensuring implementation of the Common Procedure for the Identification of the Eutrophication status of the maritime area, in conjunction with development and implementation of indicators, targets and monitoring programmes associated with MSFD descriptor 5¹ on eutrophication and where possible assessment of progress towards achievement of good environmental status;
 - d. quantification of regional sources, releases and pathways of substances associated with MSFD descriptor 5 on eutrophication;
 - e. evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of measures addressing eutrophication problems, including modelling of reduction scenarios;
 - f. coordinating the development of measures to reduce or eliminate anthropogenic eutrophication in marine waters in problem areas;
 - g. preparing appropriate environmental assessments and arranging for their publication;

¹ Human-induced eutrophication is minimised, especially adverse effects thereof, such as losses in biodiversity, ecosystem degradation, harmful algae blooms and oxygen deficiency in bottom waters

- h. ensuring assessments are based on results of monitoring, on research related to monitoring and assessment, and on data and information from other sources;
- i. providing advice to the Commission on, and contributing and responding to, assessments undertaken by other Committees or by fora outside OSPAR;
- j. developing analytical tools and criteria for assessment procedures linked to eutrophication and developing assessment tools for the purposes of coherent conduct of assessments;
- k. identifying products for inclusion in the ICES annual Work Programme.

OSPAR Science Agenda

11. ICG-EUT will periodically review, and update as necessary, the knowledge gaps and science needs in the OSPAR Science Agenda, prioritising those that are more relevant to its work, and informing HASEC of the need of external resources and implementing the OSPAR Project mechanism as appropriate, including plans for cross-cutting development work between indicators and biodiversity components (e.g. pelagic, benthic, food-web, eutrophication linkages).

International engagement

13. ICG-Eut will also maintain appropriate interaction with other international organisations, when instrumental for the fulfilment of these Terms of Reference.

Marine policy aspects:

14. ICG-Eut shall facilitate, for those Contracting Parties that are also EU Member States, the coordinated and coherent implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and equivalent national policies. In particular, for the qualitative descriptor “Human-induced eutrophication is minimised” (MSFD D5 – Eutrophication is minimised).

15. ICG-Eut shall consider relevant links to 'good ecological status' under the Water Framework Directive and equivalent national policies.

16. ICG-Eut shall facilitate the work of Contracting Parties in the development and implementation of European and national law concerned with reducing discharges, emissions and losses of nutrients.

17. ICG-Eut shall support the coordinated implementation of common objectives of the international ocean governance related with these terms of reference, through the common implementation of Agenda 2030. In particular, Sustainable Development Goal 14 targets: 14.1 (NEAES 2030 S1.01).