

OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
Meeting of the Hazardous Substances and Eutrophication Committee (HASEC)

Hybrid meeting from Paris (France): 24-28 March 2025

Source: INPUT 25/01/02, Annex 3

Terms of reference for the Working Group on Inputs to the Marine Environment (INPUT)

1. The Working Group on Inputs to the Marine Environment (INPUT) is a subsidiary body of OSPAR Hazardous Substances and Eutrophication Committee 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). INPUT is a Working Group of HASEC.
3. The scope of work is to develop programmes and measures which include those related to:
 - a. all activities that result in a pressure on the OSPAR maritime area via discharges, emissions and losses of hazardous substances and nutrients;
 - b. monitoring and assessing the pressures of hazardous substances and eutrophication on the marine environment; and
 - c. keeping under review OSPAR measures and actions related to inputs of hazardous substances and nutrients;
 - d. advising the relevant OSPAR bodies on the inputs of other substances as appropriate.

Operation and organisation of work

4. INPUT shall hold at least one annual meeting.
5. INPUT shall report to HASEC on its work on key issues that require coordination/management by HASEC.
6. INPUT shall provide an annual progress report to HASEC.
7. INPUT shall ensure the exchange of information with other OSPAR expert and working groups, as required but specifically:
 - a. With ICG-Eut, ICG-EMO (in full) regarding nutrient inputs and their sources;
 - b. WG MIME (IN FULL) regarding hazardous substances;
 - c. with ICG-MaRE (IN FULL) on measures to combat pollution and their effectiveness and sufficiency;

- d. with the Offshore Industry Committee (OIC) in respect of quantifying inputs to the marine environment from offshore industries;
- e. with the Environmental Impacts of Human Activities Committee (EIHA) in respect of pressures on the ecosystem arising from human activities in the maritime area; and
- f. with the Working Group on Changing Ocean Climate and Ocean Acidification (WG-COCOA) in respect of the impacts of climate change on discharges, emissions and losses from the catchment;

8. INPUT may establish intersessional correspondence group to take forward an issue on which work has not been completed at the meeting which decides to set up that group in line with rule 41 of the OSPAR Rules of procedure.

Implementation of the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy 2030

9. INPUT will facilitate the implementation of the NEAES 2030, by:
- a. contributing to the strategic objectives S1, S2, S4, S5, S7, S9, S10, S11, S12 and SX.O1;
 - 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.
10. In doing so, INPUT shall pay particular attention to the conclusions and recommendations of the Quality Status Reports and Intermediate Assessments.

Measures and Actions

11. INPUT will periodically report and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of relevant OSPAR programmes and measures taking into account guidance from HASEC towards a structured and systematic approach within OSPAR, including taking into account measures taken in other relevant fora, such as the UN and EU.

12. INPUT will periodically review the applicability of its related measures in line with the NEAES 2030.

Monitoring and assessment

13. INPUT shall advise HASEC on the development and maintenance of appropriate monitoring and assessment in line with the Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme, and successor programmes, paying particular attention to:

a. for inputs of hazardous substances:

- i. quantification of regional sources, releases and pathways of hazardous substances associated with Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) descriptor 8¹ and those on the List of Chemicals for Priority Action;
- ii. effective regional coordinated monitoring and assessment, including development and implementation of indicators, targets and monitoring programmes associated with MSFD descriptor 8 and where possible assessment of progress towards achievement of good environmental status;

b. for inputs of nutrients:

- i. ensuring development and implementation of indicators, targets and monitoring programmes in order to achieve progress towards NEAES 2030 eutrophication objectives (SO.1).
- ii. quantification of regional sources, releases and pathways of nutrients associated with Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) descriptor 5² on eutrophication and NEAES 2030 SO.1.
- iii. evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of measures addressing eutrophication problems, including modelling of reduction scenarios;
- iv. coordinating the development of measures to reduce or eliminate anthropogenic eutrophication in marine waters in problem areas;

c. for both inputs of hazardous substances and nutrients:

- i. preparing appropriate environmental assessments and arranging for their publication;
- ii. ensuring assessments are based on results of monitoring, on related research and on data and information from other sources;
- iii. providing advice to HASEC on, and contributing and responding to, assessments undertaken by HASEC or by fora outside OSPAR;
- iv. developing analytical tools and criteria for assessment procedures linked to inputs of hazardous substances and nutrients, and developing assessment tools for the purposes of coherent conduct of assessments.

d. for ocean acidification:

- i. supporting the development of i) ocean acidification assessments and and ii) an ocean acidification specific monitoring programme in the context of the Coordinated Environmental Monitoring Programme (CEMP).

¹ Concentrations of contaminants are at levels not giving rise to pollution effects

² 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

Marine policy aspects:

14. INPUT 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 descriptors “Human-induced eutrophication is minimised” (MSFD D5 - Eutrophication),” Concentrations of contaminants are at levels not giving rise to pollution effects” (MSFD D8 - Concentrations of contaminants give no effects) and “Contaminants in fish and other seafood do not exceed [safe] levels” (MSFD D9³ -Contaminants in seafood are below safe levels).

15. INPUT shall take account of the need of Contracting Parties to prepare targets and/or draft measures or to support the development of measures in other fora as necessary, to control use and reduce discharges of chemicals (in particular those identified by OSPAR as being Chemicals for Priority Action) and nutrients.

16. INPUT 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 and hazardous substances.

17. INPUT shall be a regional cooperation platform for Contracting Parties to use and inform the further development of marine assessment products and projects within the EU Copernicus, Green Deal and Horizon programmes.

18. INPUT 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, 14.2, 14.3, 14a and 14c.

OSPAR Science Agenda

19. WG-INPUT 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.

³ Contaminants in fish and other seafood for human consumption do not exceed levels established by Community legislation or other relevant standards