



OSPAR Commission Statement to the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting

I have been trying to contact Norwegian colleagues to find an opportunity to include the enclosed statement from the OSPAR Commission, which I have agreed with my Chairman Mr Atle Fretheim, within your forthcoming Arctic Council biennial meeting on 29 April in Tromsø.

To date I have had no reply from Ms Irene Bauer who I emailed on 19 March so I would be very grateful for yStatement submitted by the Executive Secretary of the OSPAR Commission

On behalf of the OSPAR Commission I am thankful for this opportunity to address this important meeting of the Arctic Council.

The OSPAR Commission welcomes the long standing commitment of the Arctic Council to provide a high-level forum for international cooperation, coordination and interaction on issues s such as sustainable development and environmental protection. The common objectives and priorities of the Norwegian, Danish and Swedish chairmanships of the Arctic Council, such as climate change and the integrated management of resources, are also particular relevant for the OSPAR Maritime Area and its Arctic Waters.

OSPAR acknowledges the long track-record of high quality assessments produced by the Arctic Council such as:

- The 2004 Arctic Climate Impact Assessment
- The 2007 Arctic Oil and Gas Assessment
- The new 2009 Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment

They all form important sources of information for the OSPAR Commission and associated assessments of the quality status of the marine environment.

OSPAR noted with great interest the establishment of the joint Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme. Contacts between OSPAR's Biodiversity Committee and CAFF have highlighted various opportunities for a closer cooperation and possible synergies on biodiversity monitoring and assessment between both organisations.

Based on its extensive monitoring and assessment programme, OSPAR is currently preparing a holistic assessment of the quality status of the North-East Atlantic - the Quality Status Report 2010. The assessments undertaken by the Arctic Council are being considered and provide an important source of information for OSPAR. The Quality Status Report 2010 will provide OSPAR ministers with

the scientific basis to agree the next decade of assessment and monitoring in the OSPAR Maritime Area together with any associated legally binding protective measures.

OSPAR also noted with recent interest various international initiatives with regard to the Arctic, including the European Commission Communication on the Arctic, the intention of Sweden to promote Arctic issues within their forthcoming EU Presidency and the conclusions of the Arctic TRANSFORM Project.

The OSPAR Commission invites the Arctic Council to note the Memorandum of Understanding between OSPAR and the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), signed in September 2008. OSPAR and NEAFC have complementary competences for the segment of the Arctic region of the North-East Atlantic and will seek to further co-operate to deliver an ecosystem approach in association with ICES.