

Statement from the OSPAR Commission

The OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, aims to take all possible steps to prevent and eliminate pollution and to take the necessary measures to protect the maritime area against adverse effects of human activities while restoring marine areas which have been adversely affected so as to safeguard human health and to conserve marine ecosystems.

OSPAR believes that the Convention's work in the North East Atlantic complements the work of the Arctic Council and its Working Groups. In that regard OSPAR is actively contributing to the important work of the Protection of Arctic Marine Environment Working Group, as co-lead on the desk-top study on marine litter in the Arctic. OSPAR will continue to contribute to the work on marine litter, showcasing OSPAR's Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and the monitoring plan. OSPAR is also contributing, as co-lead to the work of PAME on underwater noise in the Arctic State, sharing the experience from OSPAR from the Impulsive Noise Registry and the on-going work to develop an indicator for ambient noise. Furthermore OSPAR engages with AMAP on microplastics, transport of chemicals, as well as sharing information with EPPR on ways to combat pollution from maritime disasters and chronic pollution from ships and offshore installations, that can impact the Arctic from the North East Atlantic.

The OSPAR Commission works to harmonise policies and strategies, including the drawing up of programmes and measures, for the protection of the marine environment. OSPAR undertakes and publishes at regular intervals joint assessments, the latest one was published in June 2017. In 2023 OSPAR will publish a quality status report of the marine environment, which will take into account the effectiveness of the measures taken and planned. OSPAR hopes that for the upcoming OSPAR Quality Status Report 2023, the Arctic Council Working Groups will be able to contribute with data from OSPAR Region 1 with the aim to identify priorities for action for the protection of the marine environment.

For OSPAR, cooperation with the Arctic Council Working Groups is key in protecting the marine environment, and to contributing to the sustainable use of the marine resources.

OSPAR is committed in any way to assist the Finnish Chairmanship in "Exploring Common Solutions" – to protect the Arctic marine environment.