



Distinguished Senior Arctic Officials, Permanent Participants, other members of the Arctic Council and observers. It is a privilege to give a statement as observer to the Arctic Council.

Mr. Chair,

OSPAR is pleased to be able to contribute to the protection of the Arctic marine environment, including the conservation of Arctic biodiversity.

OSPAR believes that our work in the North East Atlantic complements the work of the Arctic Council and its Working Groups. In that regard we are eager to actively engage with AMAP on ocean acidification, and transport of chemicals, assisting in any way to combat pollution from maritime disasters and chronic pollution from ships and offshore installations, that can impact the Arctic from the North East Atlantic in cooperation with EPPR. We also welcome the opportunity to contribute to the important work of PAME on protecting the marine environment, as co-lead on the desk-top study on marine litter in the Arctic.

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.

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. And will in 2023 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 these assessments can complement the work of the Arctic Council Working Groups and

give us all the opportunity to identify priorities for action for the protection of the marine environment.

OSPAR contracting parties will continuously reduce discharges, emissions and losses of hazardous substances, with the ultimate aim to achieve concentrations in the maritime area at background values for naturally occurring substances and close to zero for man-made synthetic substances.

As co-lead for PAME's project on "Desktop Study on Marine Litter including Microplastics in the Arctic", OSPAR can contribute with experience in developing the Regional Action Plan for the North-East Atlantic, which aim is to minimise marine litter and microplastics originating from the OSPAR Regions and ending up in the Arctic.

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

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

As I conclude my remarks, I would like to thank you all for granting OSPAR observer status to the Arctic Council. We will strive to contribute and complement the work of the Arctic Councils Working Groups.

Thank you

Susana Salvador

Executive Secretary

