

# Instructions for Observers subject to review

## Introduction

This document provides the reporting template and accompanying instructions for Observers to be reviewed during the **Icelandic Chairmanship (2019-2021)**.

The deadline for submission is **1 June 2020**.

According to the "[Arctic Council Rules of Procedure](#)" (Annex 2), every **two years** Observers are requested to submit to the Chairmanship up-to-date information about relevant activities and their contributions to the work of the Arctic Council. Every four years, from the date of being granted Observer status, Observers will be reviewed at the Ministerial meeting. The following **20 Observers** will be reviewed at the next Ministerial meeting, and are requested to submit their review report by **1 June 2020**:<sup>1</sup>

- Germany;
- The Netherlands;
- Poland;
- Switzerland;
- United Kingdom;
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
- Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM);
- OSPAR Commission (OSPAR);
- Standing Committee of the Parliamentarians of the Arctic Regions (SCPAR);
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE);
- United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment);
- West Nordic Council (WNC);
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO);
- Advisory Committee on the Protection of the Seas (ACOPS);
- International Arctic Science Committee (IASC);
- International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES);
- International Union for Circumpolar Health (IUCH);
- Northern Forum (NF);
- Oceana; and,
- World Wildlife Fund for Nature – Global Arctic Program (WWF).

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<sup>1</sup> These include the Observers reviewed before the Fairbanks Ministerial meeting in 2017 as well as Observers admitted that year.

## Role of Observers

The role and responsibilities of Observers, as well as criteria for admission to the Arctic Council, can be found in the “Arctic Council Rules of Procedure” (Annex 2) and the “[Observer Manual for Subsidiary Bodies](#).”

The primary role of Observers is to observe the work of the Arctic Council. Observers contribute to the Arctic Council primarily through engagement at the level of Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups. Observers are invited to the meetings and other activities of the Arctic Council unless the Senior Arctic Officials decide otherwise. Observers may also propose projects through an Arctic State or a Permanent Participant.

## Report submission

Observer review reports should include the relevant information described below and in the template.

- (a) A description of the Observer’s contributions to the work of the Arctic Council since the time of the Observer’s most recent submission, or in the previous two years, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants;
- (b) If applicable, a description of the Observer’s future plans to contribute to the work of the Arctic Council, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants; and,
- (c) If applicable, a description of the Observer’s contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered in the previous sections since the time of the Observer’s most recent submission, or in the previous two years.

Observer review reports should be submitted electronically to the **Arctic Council Secretariat** via email: [acs@arctic-council.org](mailto:acs@arctic-council.org) not later than **1 June 2020**. Please bear in mind while preparing your report that all Observer reports will be published online in the *Observer* section of the [Arctic Council online Library](#).

If an Observer fails to submit a report during the review process, the Arctic Council will consider this to mean that the Observer **is no longer interested in maintaining its status** as an accredited Observer to the Arctic Council.

## Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

OSPAR Commission

Date of submission:

06 April 2020

Observer's website, if appropriate:

www.ospar.org

### Information for appropriate contact person

Full name:

Philip Stamp

Email:

Philip.Stamp@ospar.org

Telephone:

+44 (0)20 7430 5200

Organization or department:

Job Title:

Deputy Secretary

Full mailing address:

The OSPAR Commission  
The Aspect  
12 Finsbury Square  
London  
EC2A 1AS

**Is your state or organization interested in continuing as an Observer of the Arctic Council?**

**Yes  No**

# Observer Review Report

Please describe in no more than two pages your state's or organization's contributions to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years. Please highlight contributions to specific projects, such as through proposals, concept development, in-kind and financial support, and hosting of meetings. Please detail any collaboration with Permanent Participants, such as project proposal endorsement and support.

## 1. Introduction

The 1992 Convention for The Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (the OSPAR Convention) provides the mechanism by which fifteen Governments and the European Union cooperate to protect the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic (the OSPAR Maritime Area).

The Governments are Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom. OSPAR started out in 1972 with the Oslo Convention against dumping and was broadened to cover land-based sources of marine pollution and the offshore industry by the Paris Convention of 1974. These two conventions were unified, updated and extended by the 1992 OSPAR Convention. OSPAR, 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. Five of our Contracting Parties are Member States to the Arctic Council and OSPAR Region I is Arctic waters.

This report focuses on activities and contributions undertaken by the OSPAR Secretariat, acting on behalf of the Commission.

## 2. PAME

OSPAR was co-lead to the desktop study on marine litter within PAME, and the Secretariat contributed with our experience gained from developing and implementing the OSPAR Regional Action Plan (RAP) for the Prevention and Management of Marine Litter in the North-East Atlantic, adopted in 2014. Following finalisation of the study, we have contributed towards the initial development of the Arctic Council action plan on marine litter by joining the expert group; sharing relevant reports; participating in and presenting to the Arctic Plastics Pollution Workshop held in October 2019; and participating in the expert workshop held in February 2020. OSPAR has also been a co-sponsor of the marine litter Symposium, to be held in April 2020.

The Secretariat has continued to attend PAME working group meetings where we have strong interest in work on marine protected areas, climate change and ecosystem management. In several areas OSPAR has an opportunity to learn from and adapt experience acquired in the Arctic Council.

## MORE INFO ON OTHER WORKING GROUPS

### 3. CAFF

OSPAR has recently engaged with CAFF to identify areas of work where collaboration could deliver synergistic outputs. Experts working on seabirds in OSPAR first informed the OSPAR Secretariat of similar activities of assessment of the same species by Arctic Council and CAFF. In further discussions between the CAFF and OSPAR Secretariats, seabirds were identified as a suitable topic to focus on in the short-term with a handful of species and specific assessments and measures being relevant. Several activities in the respective organisations seemed to be quite closely aligned and synergies could be found through some small adjustments e.g. on delivery times and sharing information. The OSPAR Secretariat participated in a CAFF Board meeting where next steps on delivering synergistic outputs were considered and it was concluded that further discussions with OSPAR Biodiversity Committee (BDC) would be appropriate.

### 4. Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)

OSPAR's Working Group on Monitoring and on Trends and Effects of Substances in the Marine Environment (MIME) works on monitoring and assessment of hazardous substances in the OSPAR maritime area. The AMAP professional secretary, Simon Wilson, participates in the annual MIME meeting whenever possible, and engages with the experts throughout the year.

There is ongoing collaboration between MIME and AMAP on: (1) assessment procedures; (2) methods and process for providing AMAP's Region I information and data for the QSR 2023; (3) harmonising common guidelines; and (4) contaminant QA activities.

Regarding (1), MIME and AMAP have commissioned work by ICES to develop a common tool for assessing hazardous substances.

Regarding (2), in June 2019 ICES hosted an AMAP-OSPAR workshop on temporal trend analysis systems. The aim of the workshop was to gain more time series data in OSPAR Region I, Arctic Waters, including from AMAP Trends and Effects Monitoring Programme (ATEMP). It was well attended by MIME and AMAP experts, including from Canada and USA. There is a lack of data for OSPAR's Region I, Arctic Waters, because there are few OSPAR Contracting Party monitoring stations. However, the collaboration with AMAP means this will change for biota, with the inclusion of AMAP non-OSPAR data.

### 5. Emergency, Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR)

The work carried out by the Radioactive Substance Committee (RSC) may have common areas of interest with the just established Radiation Expert Group (RAD EG) under the EPPR. The leader of RAD EG was invited to the RSC 2020 meeting held in February in Paris, but it was finally agreed that the Chair of RSC, the leader of RAD EG and the Secretariats will discuss after the first meeting of the RAD EG in May 2020 future ways of collaboration.

OSPAR Secretariat is shared with the Bonn Agreement Secretariat. The Bonn Agreement (1983, as amended) is the mechanism by which ten Governments (eleven when the accession of Spain agreed in 2019 comes into force) together with the EU, cooperate in dealing with pollution of the North Sea by oil and other harmful substances covering the Greater North Sea and its wider approaches. The BA scope of work is focused on the prevention, preparedness and response of accidental and illegal pollution from shipping, offshore oil and gas operations and other maritime activities. Bonn Agreement's work is also closely related to EPPR's. Updates from EPPR are given in the annual OTSOPA and Bonn meetings by Norway. Common areas of interest are the research on new low sulphur fuels, risk analysis and the use of Remoted Piloted Aircraft Systems.

If applicable, please describe in no more than one page your state's or organization's future plans for contributing to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups. Please highlight intentions to contribute to specific projects and to collaborate with Permanent Participants.

OSPAR is in the process of developing a new ten-year North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy, for the period 2020–2030. This will help to prioritise areas of engagement and common interest with the Arctic Council.

OSPAR has also initiated preparations for a Quality Status Report to be produced in 2023. The report, and its supporting assessments, will include evidence on the state of the marine environment in OSPAR Region I, which covers a part of the Arctic. We will wish to draw on evidence acquired by the Arctic Council where relevant including on the effectiveness of measures.

Subject to resources, and the priorities set by the new OSPAR Environment Strategy, we expect to continue to contribute towards the work of the working groups mentioned in the section above.

If applicable, please describe in no more than one page your state's or organization's contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered by the previous sections since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years.