Contents of the Summary Record

Agenda Item 0 – Opening of the Meeting .......................................................................................................... 3
   Representation at the meeting ................................................................................................................ 3
Agenda Item 1 - Adoption of the Agenda .......................................................................................................... 3
Agenda Item 2 – Assessment of human activities in the context of Annex II to the Convention .............. 5
   Dumping of wastes or other matter at sea ................................................................................................... 5
      Annual report on dumping of wastes and other matter at sea ............................................................... 5
      Force majeure ................................................................................................................................ 5
   Pollution caused by dredged material ....................................................................................................... 6
   Conventional and chemical munitions ..................................................................................................... 7
   Sand and gravel extraction ...................................................................................................................... 7
Agenda Item 3 – Assessment of human activities in the context of Annex V (biodiversity and ecosystems) ....................................................................................................................................................... 8
   Offshore wind-farms ............................................................................................................................... 8
      Current state of knowledge .................................................................................................................... 8
      Annual update of the OSPAR windfarm database ............................................................................. 9
   Platform lighting ................................................................................................................................. 9
   Cables ................................................................................................................................................... 10
   Artificial Reefs ....................................................................................................................................... 10
   Maritime transportation ........................................................................................................................ 10
   Carbon Capture and Storage ................................................................................................................ 12
   Mariculture ............................................................................................................................................. 13
   Impact of human activities on threatened and declining species and habitats ...................................... 13
Agenda Item 4 – Management of specific human pressures ........................................................................ 14
   Marine litter .......................................................................................................................................... 14
   Underwater noise .................................................................................................................................... 16
   Hydrographic conditions ....................................................................................................................... 18
Agenda Item 5 – Integrating Management Actions ..................................................................................... 19
   Economic and social analysis ................................................................................................................ 19
   Cumulative effects .................................................................................................................................. 19
OSPAR Commission

Summary Record – EIHA 2012

EIHA 12/10/1-E

Marine spatial planning ......................................................................................................................... 20
Climate change................................................................................................................................. 21
Agenda Item 6 – Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme ....................................................... 22
 Specification for an OSPAR Information System ............................................................................... 22
 Assessment sheets and OSPAR Monitoring Framework ..................................................................... 23
 JAMP Implementation Plan ................................................................................................................ 23
 The onward role of EcoQOs ................................................................................................................ 23
Agenda Item 7 – Organisational Issues ................................................................................................. 24
 Work programmes for 2012/2013 ........................................................................................................ 24
 ICES work programme ..................................................................................................................... 24
 Future meeting arrangements ........................................................................................................... 25
Agenda Item 9 – Any other business .................................................................................................... 25
Agenda Item 10 – Adoption of the summary record ........................................................................ 25

Annexes

List of participants ............................................................................................................................. Annex 1
Agenda and list of documents ............................................................................................................ Annex 2
Actions arising from the meeting ........................................................................................................ Annex 3
Draft Terms of Reference for a workshop on the further development of common indicators
for the MSFD within the remit of EIHA ............................................................................................. Annex 4
Proposed Glossary for the Dredged Material Guidelines ................................................................. Annex 5
Questions from the EAP on Dredged Material, to be addressed to the Group of Jurists Linguists ...... Annex 6
Ballast Water Management Strategy for North West Europe – Ballast Water Management
on ships operating between ports in the North-East Atlantic ............................................................... Annex 7
Terms of Reference for ICG Marine Litter (ICG-ML) ....................................................................... Annex 8
Draft Terms of Reference for developing Guidelines for mitigating potential effects
of underwater noise ............................................................................................................................ Annex 9
Terms of Reference for ICG-Cumulative Effects (ICG-C) ................................................................. Annex 10
Terms of Reference for ICG-Marine Spatial Planning (ICG-MSP) ..................................................... Annex 11
Development of an OSPAR monitoring framework .......................................................................... Annex 12
Proposals from EIHA for requests to ICES for inclusion in the 2103 ICES Work Plan ....................... Annex 13
Draft Programme of work for the Environmental Impacts of Human Activities Committee, 2012/13.. Annex 14
Summary Record

Agenda Item 0 – Opening of the Meeting

0.1 The 2012 meeting of the Environmental Impact of Human Activities Committee (EIHA) was held from 16 – 20 April 2012 in The Hague, at the kind invitation of the Dutch Government. The participants were welcomed to The Hague by Mr Johan Jacobs, Head of the North Sea Directorate of Rijkswaterstaat. He acknowledged the important role of OSPAR in protecting the marine environment and promoting sustainable use and specifically recognised EIHA’s work relating to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive with its focus on marine litter, noise and hydrographic conditions all of which he considered to be important issues in the Dutch part of the North Sea. He mentioned that the implementation of OSPAR’s Dredged Materials Guidelines had resulted in reducing contaminant levels and that Best Environment Practices and Best Available Techniques were important tools to reduce the impact of human activities and that all Contracting Parties should learn from each other. Finally, he acknowledged OSPAR as a valuable and longstanding platform for dealing with cross border challenges and wished the delegates a very fruitful week.

Representation at the meeting

0.2 The meeting was chaired by Mr Lex Oosterbaan (The Netherlands) and was attended by representatives from the following:

a. Contracting Parties
   Belgium, Denmark, the European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK).

b. Non-Governmental Observer Organisations
   the Central Dredging Association (CEDA), Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation (KIMO), the International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (OGP), Seas at Risk and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The list of participants is at Annex 1.

Agenda Item 1 - Adoption of the Agenda

EIHA 12/1/1; EIHA 12/1/1 Add.1; EIHA 12/1/2 Rev.1; EIHA 12/1/3; EIHA 12/1/Info.1-Info.5; EIHA 12/2/Info.1

1.1 The draft agenda (EIHA 12/1/1) was adopted without amendment. The meeting noted that there were some documents which had been submitted late, but agreed to discuss all the documents. A copy of the
agenda and documents submitted to the meeting is at **Annex 2**. A list of actions arising from the meeting is at **Annex 3**.

1.2 EIHA noted those items of the 2011/2012 Programme of Work for the Biodiversity Committee (EIHA 12/1/Info.1) that required action by the meeting, together with the relevant key findings of the QSR 2010 and timeframe for implementation of the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy (EIHA 12/1/Info.2).

1.3 The Secretariat also updated the meeting on work carried out under other OSPAR bodies including:

   a. the OSPAR Coordination Group (CoG) in connection with the development of an OSPAR monitoring framework (EIHA 12/6/4); consideration of draft specifications for an OSPAR information system (EIHA 12/6/1); and discussion of progress on the development of more regular OSPAR assessment products in the form of Assessment Sheets, the first of which will be produced for publication in the meeting cycle 2013/2014 (EIHA 12/6/2);

   b. issues raised by and feedback provided by other Committees within OSPAR (HASEC, BDC and OIC) (EIHA 12/1/2 Rev.1), which were taken into consideration by EIHA under relevant agenda items. EIHA **agreed** that where matters discussed during EIHA related to work programmes of other OSPAR Committees, these would be noted and forwarded as appropriate;

   c. in line with the commitments made at its Dublin Ministerial Meeting in 2010, the Bonn Agreement has received funding from DG ECHO’s Civil Protection Financial Instrument to undertake an area wide risk assessment of marine pollution focusing on marine oil. The project BE-AWARE was introduced by the Secretariat and noted (EIHA 12/1/Info.4). The project has links to Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and will bring together data and information on marine activities in the North Sea region. EIHA **agreed** to assist with responding to the forthcoming data requests when these are circulated;

   d. a letter from NEAFC inviting the engagement of OSPAR in the process for review of the regulation of bottom fishing and closures in the North East Atlantic, that will start in June 2012. EIHA **agreed** that the Secretariat should confer with the Chairs of EIHA and BDC to decide how OSPAR might wish to contribute, and in the meantime instructed the Secretariat to draft a letter to the effect that the NEAFC Bottom Fishing closures should be continued.

   e. areas of mutual interest between the International Navigation Authority (PIANC) Environmental Commission and OSPAR were presented by the Secretariat (EIHA 12/2/Info.1), in particular the revision of the dredging guidelines, MSFD implementation, underwater noise, Ecosystem services and the working with nature philosophy. Attention of EIHA was also drawn to the initiation of a new working group within PIANC WG157 to develop guidelines for dredging and port construction around coastal vegetative habitats. The interests of PIANC were represented at EIHA by CEDA, as a partner organisation of PIANC. The report and interactions were noted.

1.4 EIHA noted the latest developments with respect to the implementation of the EU MSFD (EIHA 12/1/Info.3) as presented by the Secretariat. The outcomes of the recent meeting of the ICG-MSFD for Descriptors 7, 10 and 11 were brought forward and relevant issues discussed under appropriate agenda items, including the progress of regional coordination. ICG-MSFD will next meet in November 2012 (subject to confirmation).

1.5 The Secretariat presented document EIHA 12/1/3 on the recent developments on the level of preparation of indicators for the MSFD which fall within the remit of EIHA, namely Descriptors 2, 7, 10 and 11. Available information from WG GES and ICG-MSFD on regional coordination to date was circulated and the approach being taken by ICG-COBAM for the development of potential common indicators shared.
1.6 It was noted that the deadline for reporting against Articles 8, 9 and 10 of the MSFD is mid-July 2012, and as a result the only practical opportunity is for EIHA to ensure they are liaising with ICG-MSFD colleagues to further complete the indicator inventory. However Member States have been advised by the European Commission that it had a preference for receiving as much information as possible on all indicators that are under consideration and not just a minimum number that are already well developed, including those that require further technical specification up to 2014 or even 2018. This approach provides a window of opportunity for EIHA to usefully contribute to the further development of indicators beyond July 2012. Further to discussion it was agreed that:

a. it would be appropriate to hold a workshop to review the consolidated overview analysis of indicators within EIHA’s remit, and adopted the Terms of Reference for the workshop, as set out in Annex 4;

b. the workshop would be held in January 2013, after the submission of the national reporting packages and the winter meeting of ICG-MSFD.

Agenda Item 2 – Assessment of human activities in the context of Annex II to the Convention

EIHA 12/2/1-EIHA 12/2/4; EIHA 12/2/4 Add.1 and Add.2; EIHA 12/2/5; EIHA 12/2/6; EIHA 12/2/Info.1

Dumping of wastes or other matter at sea

Annual report on dumping of wastes and other matter at sea

2.1 The Secretariat presented the draft annual OSPAR report on dumping of wastes or other matter at sea in 2010 (EIHA 12/2/1). Following examination of the draft report, EIHA agreed:

a. to request Contracting Parties to check submitted data and footnotes for corrections by 18 May 2012;

b. to request Portugal to submit their 2010 data by 18 May 2012;

c. to recommend to OSPAR 2012 the publication of the report on the OSPAR website, subject to any necessary data correction and inclusion of outstanding data and after having been verified by the Expert Assessment Panel;

d. to request Contracting Parties to submit data for the 2011 report by 1 October 2012.

2.2 The Secretariat noted that EIHA 2011 had postponed the triennial assessment of dumping data and the trend assessment for the period of 1995 – 2010. The 2012 EIHA meeting suggested that the EAP on dredged material should consider as part of their work the arrangements that would be necessary to undertake these assessments (cf. 2.9).

Force majeure

2.3 The UK presented document EIHA 12/2/2, the outputs from the meeting of the Group of Jurists and Linguists (JL) on 25 October 2011 in response to questions posed by EIHA 2011 regarding implementation on formulation of the draft guidelines on force majeure and emergency powers for dumping activities: Implementation of Articles 7 and 9 of Annex II to the OSPAR Convention.

2.4 A drafting group met to consider the value of including examples to illustrate what was meant by emergency, however after some consideration it was decided that this would not help improve understanding of the concept and these were therefore not included. Examples were however elaborated for inclusion in the
format for force majeure reports (cf. Appendix 1 to the draft guidelines). Other minor changes were proposed for Appendix 1: the line for chemical composition was deleted and pH and density were added as examples to “physical properties”.

2.5 Following discussion and on the basis of the advice from JL, EIHA adopted the draft Guidelines and recommended that they be forwarded to OSPAR 2012 for adoption subject to minor editorial changes. It was agreed to make arrangements to review the guidelines in 2014.

Pollution caused by dredged material

2.6 The draft guidelines for the management of dredged material, prepared by Spain and the Netherlands were presented by the Netherlands (EIHA 12/2/4). Written comments were received in response to this document and introduced by the UK (EIHA 12/2/4 Add.1) and CEDA (EIHA 12/2/4 Add.2).

2.7 The draft reporting format for the management of dredged material was presented by Ireland, (EIHA 12/2/6) highlighting the changes that had been proposed, and explaining that most of the changes were to increase the application of standards to the data and reduce the amount of information being held in footnotes.

2.8 The Expert Assessment Panel was convened in the margins of the meeting with terms of reference to finalise the text of the draft guidelines for the management of dredged material, including the development of a glossary, consideration of how to deal with reference to the Waste Framework Directive and whether it was relevant to retain this in the guidelines, to identify questions for JL in their consideration of the guidelines. The EAP were also requested to consider the finalisation of the draft revised reporting format for dredged material. Finally the group were requested to consider whether a joint HELCOM/OSPAR workshop would be a useful approach to work towards common guidelines.

2.9 On the advice of EAP on dredged material, EIHA agreed:

a. that the references to the Waste Frame Directive should be removed from the main text of the guidelines and possibly added as an Annex. In the first instance it was proposed that a communication to the EU regarding the Waste Frame Directive would be drafted, but on reflection the EAP decided that this information would more usefully be incorporated into a next draft of the draft guidelines;

b. on a glossary of terms (cf. Annex 5) which is subject to further clarification by JL(2) 2012;

c. that it was not possible at this time to conclude on the text and submitted comments pertaining to the draft management guidelines, and that the finalisation of the guidelines should be postponed pending the outcome of JL in October 2012. Once the comments from JL are available, the EAP will review these comments and revise the finalised management guidelines for circulation to EIHA 2013;

d. that the draft reporting format should be finalised following the results of JL’s deliberations, but this should be completed by written procedure to be presented at EIHA 2013.

e. to develop a series of questions to be forwarded for consideration by the Group of Jurists and Linguists (JL) in order to clarify the interpretation of the definition of dredged material with the OSPAR Convention. These questions are set out in Annex 6. The Netherlands (Anne-Marie Svoboda) have indicated that they would be available to present these questions to JL in October 2012;
that the next trend assessment for data on dumping of wastes or other matter at sea will be included in future annual reports. The arrangements for these future annual reports have yet to be agreed upon;

g. that the periodic assessment of dredging data and other wastes would be done every six years, with the first one due to be started in 2014 and building on the last JAMP assessment.

Conventional and chemical munitions

2.10 The annual report on encounters with dumped conventional and chemical munitions (EIHA 12/2/3) was introduced by Ireland highlighting that this was the first assessment under the new Recommendation (2010/20) and covered data from 2009 and 2010. Some anomalies had been identified within the database and Contracting Parties were invited to check their data and provide comments on the assessment format. The Secretariat also gave a short presentation on visualisation of the data, which had been undertaken by the newly appointed OSPAR Data Analyst Chris Moulton, as an example of how further analysis could be undertaken on a regular basis.

2.11 During the discussion EIHA noted the following updates from Contracting Parties on their data:

a. The UK informed that they included all encounters with munitions in their data, including encounters on land, and that these could be removed for the database if it was appropriate;

b. Sweden highlighted that they had now submitted data and suggested that the reporting format could be improved by adding data about the found objects models and types as well as the difference between an objects original position and the position in which it was discovered;

c. France confirmed that they would check their data and provide additional updates as soon as possible.

2.12 Regarding the content and format of the assessment (EIHA 12/2/3, Annex1) several Contracting Parties suggested that improvements could be made and EIHA agreed that:

a. Contracting Parties should check their data and provide any updates to the Secretariat before 18 May 2012;

b. Comments on the content or format of the assessment should be forwarded to Ireland (Eugene Nixon, enixon@marine.ie) by 18 May 2012.

c. Contracting Parties should submit data reports under Recommendation 2010/20 for the year 2011 to the OSPAR Secretariat by 1 September 2012;

d. to invite the Secretariat with the assistance of Ireland to update the database on encounters with munitions with the 2011 data and to report to EIHA 2013.

Sand and gravel extraction

2.13 Belgium introduced the annual report from ICES Working Group on the effects of extraction of marine sediments on the marine ecosystem (WGEXT) and 2010 data on sand and gravel extraction (EIHA 12/2/5). A general pattern of reduced amounts of extracted marine sediments across member countries was identified by WGEXT, though this was likely to be as a result of the current economic climate. During the discussion on the document the following points were raised:

a. the term N/D (No data) was not clearly defined in table 3.1;

b. how the information on EIA’s for individual projects added to table 3.1 was not clear;
c. the licenced extraction area and the area where extraction actually occurs can vary significantly and therefore it is important to collect geospatial data on the actual extraction locations.

2.14 The meeting recalled that the last assessment of sand and gravel extraction data was for the QSR 2010 using data up to 2007. EIHA agreed to undertake a new assessment on data from 2008-2011 according to the arrangements identified in §2.15 below. This assessment will be presented for publication as part of the EIHA assessment sheet series for 2012/2013, according to the structure and style to be agreed by CoG (1) 2012.

2.15 Following the discussion EIHA agreed:

a. to note the Terms of Reference for WGEXT for 2012;

b. to invite the chair of WGEXT to circulate the 2011 data to OSPAR contact points for confirmation by 18 May 2012;

c. to invite WGEXT to consider the collection of geospatial data on extraction locations in the form of shape files;

d. the following arrangements for the 2008-2011 assessment of sand and gravel extraction data:
   i. all Contracting Parties to submit shape files for sand and gravel extraction to Brigitte Lauwaert (BE) b.lauwaert@mumm.ac.be by 30 May 2012;
   ii. data analysis will be undertaken by the Secretariat by 1 July 2012;
   iii. Belgium to prepare the text for the assessment sheet, and to complete the Assessment sheet technical checklist by 15 July 2012;
   iv. Belgium with the assistance of the Secretariat to edit and lay out the assessment sheet ready for submission to CoG(2) 2012 for consideration and approval.

Agenda Item 3 – Assessment of human activities in the context of Annex V (biodiversity and ecosystems)

EIHA 12/3/1; EIHA 12/3/2; EIHA 12/3/2 Add.1 and Add.2; EIHA 12/3/3; EIHA 12/3/3 Rev.1; EIHA 12/3/4; EIHA 12/3/4 Add.1; EIHA 12/3/5 Rev.1; EIHA 12/3/6-E; EIHA 12/3/6-EIHA 12/3/11; EIHA 12/3/12 Rev.1; EIHA 12/3/13-EIHA 12/3/15; EIHA 12/3/Info.1; EIHA 12/3/Info.2

Offshore wind-farms

Current state of knowledge

3.1 EIHA noted a progress report from the UK on the preparation of an update to the 2006 overview on the current state of knowledge of the environmental impacts of the location, operation and removal/disposal of offshore wind-farms – Status Report [2012] (EIHA 12/3/1). Less progress had been achieved than intended but the exercise in 2006 had determined background, current knowledge, and collective understanding. The UK now recognised the need for an update and had made a preliminary analysis of where more work was needed, and proposed a suggested format/structure together with an updated list of references.

3.2 The Chairman suggested the overview might also be extended to cover other marine renewables.

3.3 During the discussion Contracting Parties expressed support for the update to cover the same scope and similar structure to the 2006 overview. Germany suggested the addition of a section on mitigation of environmental impacts. A majority of Contracting Parties did not wish to include other marine renewables as part of the same document, preferring that this should be a separate future task but with a similar logic and structure for the information to be collated.
3.4 EIHA agreed that:
   a. an updated overview should retain the same structure and scope as the 2006 overview with the addition of information on mitigation of environmental impacts;
   b. Contracting Parties should forward details of any new references to UK (adrian.judd@cefas.co.uk) by 18 May 2012 (where any such references were not published in English a summary of key conclusions in English was requested); and
   c. UK should present the updated overview to EIHA 2013.

3.5 In this context EIHA recalled the need for a continuous update of the website www.environmentalexchange.info. The site had been established by EIHA to provide a platform for the exchange of information on offshore wind-farms. EIHA encouraged Contracting Parties to submit references and/or web links to relevant reports or grey literature to the Secretariat as they become available.

**Annual update of the OSPAR windfarm database**

3.6 The Secretariat presented the annual update of the OSPAR database on offshore wind-farms for 2011. Updated information from all Contracting Parties (9) who regularly contribute to this process had been received. EIHA thanked Germany and the Secretariat for the preparation of the draft maps and the annual update and invited Contracting Parties to check their entries in the database and the associated maps. Any necessary corrections should be sent to the Secretariat by 18 May 2012. Both Germany and Denmark confirmed that their entries were correct. The Netherlands and Sweden identified some minor inconsistencies.

3.7 The meeting discussed access to the data in the windfarm database noting that, for a collective product such as this, all Contracting Parties should be able to download and use data in line with the OSPAR data policy. The Secretariat confirmed that this will be raised at CoG in the context of the information system.

3.8 EIHA invited the Secretariat to update the maps as necessary and agreed to recommend the annual update of the OSPAR wind-farms database and maps to OSPAR 2012 for publication (subject to a number of data corrections). Contracting Parties were invited to submit the data for the 2012 update to the Secretariat by 1 October 2012. France explained that the timing of their national tendering process would have implications for their data reporting. The maps for the new update will be prepared by the Secretariat and Contracting Parties expressed their thanks to Germany for work on these maps since 2003. EIHA noted that the Secretariat should also check explanatory notes when sending out the next annual update.

**Platform lighting**

3.9 The Netherlands presented the outcome of an OSPAR Workshop held in January 2012 on research into possible effects of regular platform lighting on specific bird populations (EIHA 12/3/8). Experts had found it difficult to define the effects of conventional lighting on birds at a population level but had concluded that there was a potential impact on a large number of birds and that North Sea harbours in particular hosted many structures including windfarms: thus in future cumulative impacts may grow.

3.10 The OSPAR Offshore Industry Committee (OIC 2012) had agreed that the Workshop report should be recommended to OSPAR 2012 for publication but there was no consensus at OIC for developing a specific measure with regards to the impact of regular platform lighting on birds or convening an ICG on platform lighting. Rather it had been agreed that Contracting Parties should consult with industry to find out whether any actions were being taken regarding bird mortalities and industry views on the feasibility of mitigation.

3.11 EIHA noted the actions decided by OIC and discussed whether there was merit in investigating the issue further for other man-made structures. It was stated that windfarm light emissions relate mainly to safety and security. EIHA agreed not to pre-empt the work in OIC but to consider the issue for other structures at a later date, if appropriate.
Cables

3.12 Germany presented Revised Draft Guidelines on best Environmental Practice (BEP) in Cable Laying and Operation (EIHA 12/3/3). The revision, which has restructured the Guidelines to make them more readable and made a distinction between the impacts associated with placement and those associated with operation, had incorporated comments from the Netherlands and UK. Germany explained that further comments had been received immediately prior to the meeting from a German coastal administration. Germany tabled a meeting document (EIHA 12/3/3 Rev.1) and worked through the detailed drafting changes proposed.

3.13 Further to a number of positive comments on the original document and following an opportunity during the course of the meeting for Contracting Parties to consult on the new detailed revisions, EIHA finalised the Guidelines and agreed to recommend them for adoption and publication by OSPAR 2012. However, the Danish delegation retained a study reservation.

Artificial Reefs

3.14 EIHA considered responses from JL to questions raised on the Guidelines on Artificial Reefs with regard to Living Marine Resources (Agreement 1999-13) (EIHA 12/3/9). On 25 October 2011, JL had examined the Guidelines and provided written clarification on questions raised by EIHA 2011. Concerning the relationship between the OSPAR Guidelines and the London Convention and Protocol/UNEP Guidelines, JL had concluded that the OSPAR Guidelines on Artificial Reefs in relation to Living Marine Resources and the London Convention and Protocol/UNEP Guidelines for the Placement of Artificial Reefs were not fully compatible and there was no need for full compatibility as long as they are not contradictory. Contracting Parties needed to fulfil their obligations under both instruments.

3.15 Following a discussion EIHA agreed to add a footnote within the Guidelines making it clear that, unlike the London Convention and Protocol/UNEP Guidelines, the OSPAR Guidelines relate specifically to Living Marine Resources. Contracting Parties felt confident with and committed to the existing agreed OSPAR Guidelines without further changes. However, EIHA also recalled that EIHA 2011 had agreed that in due course (2-3 years), EIHA should undertake a review of experiences from Contracting Parties on the use of both the OSPAR and London Convention and Protocol/UNEP Guidelines, at which point the JL advice should also be taken into consideration once again.

Maritime transportation

3.16 The Netherlands introduced document EIHA 12/3/4 on ballast water exemptions in the North Sea which highlighted the work of the North Sea Ballast Water exchange and exemptions group, in consultation with the North Sea Ballast Water Opportunity project and EMSA, in preparing for the issuing of exemptions in relation to the IMO Ballast Water Convention. The report highlighted that exemptions could be granted from the requirements of the Convention for ships on fixed routes for periods of up to 5 years and included a concept proposal for issuing exemptions, including identification of the required risk assessments.

3.17 The report also highlighted the complementary work being undertaken by HELCOM Maritime on this issue, including the project proposal on “Pilot risk assessment of alien species by ships on intra-Baltic voyages”. HELCOM proposed to establish close cooperation with the North Sea countries on the risk assessments and other relevant BWMC issues and had approached OSPAR to investigate possibility of organising a joint workshop on the issue with the view to establishing a joint working group.

3.18 The Secretariat also introduced EIHA 12/3/4 Add.1, which outlined the current state of play in relation to the Ballast Water Management on Ships operating between Ports in the North-East Atlantic project, informing the meeting that there had only been limited progress and input was needed from Contracting Parties to identify both major problematic invasive species and ports that should be included in the risk
assessment. The Netherlands highlighted the importance of the risk assessment with regard to the granting of the exemptions and encouraged Contracting Parties to contribute to the work.

3.19 Following discussion EIHA agreed:

a. to the updated timescale and work plan for the Ballast Water Management on Ships operating between Ports in the North-East Atlantic project (as in Annex 7) and to confirm the European Maritime Safety Agency (Brian Elliot, Brian.ELLIOTT@emsa.europa.eu) as task manager;

b. to invite input from ICG-COBAM on the identification and ranking of major problematic invasive species;

c. to instruct the Secretariat to investigate the possibility of organising a joint workshop with HELCOM with the view of establishing a joint working group in relation to risk assessments and other relevant ballast water management issues;

d. to note the kind offer from Germany to host such a workshop in their capacity as lead country of the HELCOM correspondence group on the Ballast Water Roadmap.

3.20 The Netherlands introduced document EIHA 12/3/5 Rev.1 regarding to ballast water exchange areas in the North Sea. The North Sea countries have proposed to designate ballast water exchange areas in the North Sea for intra North Sea traffic. The designation of areas of ballast water exchange is a temporary regulation that will be implemented when the Convention enters into force, and terminates when ships shall meet regulation D-2 of the Convention (ultimately 2016-2019 for all categories of ships). EIHA noted the importance of shipping as a vector for invasive species, and agreed to note the ballast water exchange areas within the North Sea and forward the document to OSPAR 2012 for endorsement.

3.21 The Joint Notice to Shipping on the adopted “General Guidance of the Voluntary Interim Application of the D1 Ballast Water Exchange Standard by vessels operating between the Mediterranean Sea in the North-East Atlantic and/or the Baltic Sea” (EIHA 12/4/14) was introduced by the Secretariat. Following a brief discussion, EIHA agreed:

a. to welcome the adoption of the General Guidance by REMPEC, allowing its entry into force;

b. to endorse the Joint Notice to Shipping and forward it to OSPAR for adoption;

c. to invite REMPEC to identify a Flag State in the Mediterranean to present the Joint Notice to Shipping to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), for adoption.

3.22 Denmark brought to the attention of the meeting the Copenhagen International Ballast Water Management Conference 2012, which was held on 8 March 2012. The conference brought together over 160 participants across industry, research and government and highlighted research that identified ballast water as the most important vector of invasive species. More information can be found at www.maritimecenter.dk/konferencerogarrangementervedemuc/8.marts.html.

3.23 The Secretariat introduced document EIHA 12/3/6 on the Coordination of the determination of GES characteristics, targets and indicators in relation to non-indigenous species (Descriptor 2), outlining current work within BDC, through ICG-COBAM, and highlighting that EIHA was responsible for pressure related targets and the identification and implementation of possible reduction measures. Following a discussion EIHA agreed:

a. to welcome the work undertaken by ICG-COBAM regarding the implementation of Descriptor 2 on non-indigenous species;

b. to nominate experts from France, Spain and the Netherlands, to support the ongoing work of ICG-COBAM related to the pressure aspects of Descriptor 2 and to invite the Secretariat to facilitate liaison between the two groups.
3.24 France introduced progress on a proposal for possible IMO protective measures in OSPAR High Seas Marine Protected Areas (HSMPAs) as outlined in document EIHA 12/3/7. The document collated the available data on the potential impact of shipping upon HSMPAs and the potential use of IMO’s spatial tools for environmental protection, such as Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs). During the discussion the following points were noted:

a. PSSAs were not the only protective measures that could be envisaged and that there should be a rebalancing of the document to take this into account;

b. there was a need to ensure that the data included in the document and the conclusion drawn from it was consistent;

c. the development of these types of measures in the high seas was breaking new ground as most PSSA’s were in coastal areas and related to the risk of groundings and collisions;

d. a potential way forward would be to focus on a pilot involving the HSMPA’s that had the highest density of shipping traffic and hence were most vulnerable;

e. any pilot involving one of the HSMPAs with joint jurisdiction would need to be agreed with Portugal;

3.25 Following the discussion EIHA agreed:

a. that Contracting Parties would forward comments on the report to France (Benjamin Ponge, benjamin.ponge@aires-marines.fr with a copy to Laure.Dallem@developpement-durable.gouv.fr) by 18 May 2012;

b. that France would present an updated document, including a pilot case study, to OSPAR 2012 for further consideration.

3.26 The Secretariat introduced document EIHA 12/3/12 Rev.1 in relation to the monitoring and assessment of the pressures from shipping within the OSPAR maritime area. The QSR 2010 concluded that OSPAR should assess the effectiveness of existing measures through improved data collection on, and continued monitoring of, key pressures and impacts of shipping on the marine environment. The document highlighted the need to evaluate the availability of data both within OSPAR and from other competent authorities as a first step in order to determine the scope of any future assessment of shipping pressure.

3.27 Seas-At-Risk agreed that it was important that OSPAR undertook monitoring and assessment of shipping pressure in order to ensure measures were effective and highlighting the example of the Port Waste Reception Directive. EIHA agreed that, although no Contracting Party had come forward to lead the work for the next intersessional period, the monitoring and assessment of shipping pressure should be retained on the work programme as future product.

3.28 EIHA welcomed the results of analysis of aerial surveillance data, within the Bonn Agreement, in relation to operational oil pollution from shipping in Belgian and Dutch waters (EIHA 12/3/Info.1). The report highlighted a significant reduction both in the slick numbers, surface areas and volumes as well as a significant increase of required flight time per slick observation from 5 to 30 hours in some cases.

3.29 The Netherlands updated the meeting on the development of a North Sea Nitrogen Emission Control Area (NECA) for shipping, under Annex VI of the IMO MARPOL Convention, outlining that the environmental impact assessment would be finalised in June 2012. The work was being undertaken by an ad hoc North Sea Consultation Group which would meet again in September 2012. EIHA also noted document EIHA 12/3/Info.2 on the development of a Baltic Sea NECA.

Carbon Capture and Storage

3.30 The Netherlands introduced document EIHA 12/3/13 which presented a brief status of research of the environmental impact of CCS projects in the OSPAR maritime area.
3.31 The report was welcomed by the meeting and the following points noted:

a. Sweden informed the meeting that placement of CO\textsubscript{2} is not currently permitted, although there are research projects underway with a view to developing a coordinated CCS infrastructure for Scandinavia. Any information available in English will be forwarded to the EIHA Heads of Delegation by Sweden;

b. it is anticipated that the reporting will be slow to start with, but that the amount of activity associated with CCS will increase in coming years.

3.32 Following discussion, EIHA agreed:

a. that the CCS review of research on environmental impact of proposed CCS within the OSPAR Maritime Area should continue to be undertaken annually;

b. to invite Contracting Parties to report any new information to the Netherlands by 28 February 2013 so that the update can be presented to EIHA 2013.

3.33 There is currently no implementation of CCS measures so the assessment required under EIHA 2011/2012 work programme product 16 was not possible.

Mariculture

3.34 EIHA considered document EIHA 12/3/10 presented by the Secretariat and recalling the conclusions of the QSR 2010 on the environmental pressures anticipated from the growth of mariculture in the OSPAR Maritime area.

3.35 In discussion Contracting Parties identified the following points:

a. this is a new and emerging area of work for EIHA and policy positions are not always clear as of yet;

b. there are linkages to work on MSP, NIS;

c. Ireland informed the meeting of ongoing research on interactions between caged fish stocks and wild stocks and offered to present this work to EIHA 2013.

3.36 In conclusion EIHA agreed:

a. mariculture and in particular the environmental pressures of mariculture should be included as a work product for the 2012/2013 EIHA Work Programme and that EIHA HODs would bring forward any pertinent information to EIHA 2013;

b. a proposed request for inclusion in the draft 2013 ICES Work Programme (cf. §1 Annex 13);

c. that Ireland would present the work outlined in § 3.35 c above to EIHA 2013.

Impact of human activities on threatened and declining species and habitats

3.37 The Secretariat introduced document EIHA 12/3/11 recalling OSPAR Recommendation 2010/5 on assessments of environmental impact in relation to threatened and/or declining species and habitats. The recommendation was adopted at the Bergen Ministerial Meeting in 2010 and came into effect on 24 September 2010. First implementation reports were due to be submitted by Contracting Parties by 31 December 2011. No reports were received by the Secretariat. Following discussion, EIHA agreed that:

a. Contracting Parties would deliver implementation reports to the secretariat (secretariat@ospar.org) by 1 January 2013;

b. reporting would then be undertaken every 3 years;
c. EIHA 2013 would consider arrangements for the development of an overview report as appropriate.

3.38 EIHA took note of document EIHA 12/315, presented by the Secretariat, highlighting the need for work streams on specific human activities to consider the implications of programmes and measures being developed for species and habitats on the OSPAR list of threatened and/or declining species (2008-6) under BDC. Given the ministerial commitment to have measures in place for all listed features by 2013 there is a considerable body of work underway in BDC to develop suitable measures to enhance the conservation and protection of listed features. There are currently three measures to be considered by OSPAR 2012 and it is anticipated 23 measures will be considered by BDC 2013.

3.39 In discussion EIHA noted:

a. that it is a logical step for EIHA to take a look at the relevance of measures under OSPAR and relate these to activities in their region;

b. the initiative of the Netherlands to review OSPAR Listed species and habitats that occur in the Netherlands, and whether these are covered by existing monitoring programmes or not.

3.40 In conclusion, EIHA agreed to:

a. note the development of programmes and measures for OSPAR Listed features;

b. invite the Netherlands to present the results of their analysis on current monitoring for OSPAR Listed species to EIHA 2013;

c. request BDC to bring to the attention of EIHA 2013 any measures that might have particular relevance for human activities.

Agenda Item 4 – Management of specific human pressures

EIHA 12/4/1; EIHA 12/4/1 Add.1; EIHA 12/4/2; EIHA 12/4/2/Add.1 and Add.2; EIHA 12/4/3-EIHA 12/4/6;
EIHA 12/4/6 Add.1; EIHA 12/4/7; EIHA 12/4/9; EIHA 12/4/Info.1-EIHA 12/4/Info.6

Marine litter

4.1 The Netherlands introduced document EIHA 12/4/1 on the work of the Intersessional Correspondence Group on Marine Litter (ICG-ML) highlighting progress in relation to EIHA work products 19 (progress report to EIHA), 20 (assessment of the implementation of the beach litter monitoring programme), 21 (development of GES characteristics, targets and indicators) and 23 (development of assessment sheets). Work was still ongoing within the ICG to develop statistical methodologies to analyse the beach litter monitoring data in order to get a better understanding of quantities and trends and therefore no assessment of the data was presented. The report also highlighted the lack of information on the status of marine litter inputs from rivers and concerns relating to the request from the European Environment Agencies “Eye on Earth” project to access OSPAR beach litter data, due to the intention to use the data to assess individual beaches rather than overall trends.

4.2 Following discussion EIHA agreed:

a. to welcome the confirmation from Belgium, Denmark (tbc), France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Spain Sweden and the UK that they would continue their beach litter monitoring programmes;

b. to put forward a proposal to CoG to include in the ICES Work Programme two products in relation to the inclusion of marine litter in the OSPAR data streams handled by ICES and to
request advice on the statistical methodologies to assess trends in beach litter monitoring data, taking into consideration the work undertaken by Germany (see Annex 13); c. to take a proactive approach to sharing published marine beach litter data with the “Eye on Earth” project to ensure that the use of the data does not have a detrimental impact upon the beaches involved in the monitoring programme; d. that the Chairman of EIHA would write to the European River Commissions requesting information on how they were addressing the issue of riverine litter; e. to the draft terms of reference for ICG-ML, as set out in EIHA 12/4/1 Add.1 (see Annex 8); 4.3 The advice document on GES Descriptor 10 marine litter (EIHA 12/4/Info.2) was introduced by the Netherlands who informed the meeting that it had been examined by ICG-ML, following the publication of the EU Technical Sub Group report on marine litter (EIHA 12/4/Info.6); however it was felt that there was no need to update it further as it had served its purpose. The advice document has also been shared with other EU Member States through CIRCA. 4.4 Seas-At-Risk introduced document EIHA 12/4/Info.3 outlining Environmental NGO advice on marine litter for public consultations on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive developed by their Members. Notably the document called for Member States to set an overarching target for reducing marine litter (in their waters) by a minimum of 50% by 2020. 4.5 A proposal for an OSPAR Regional Action Plan on marine litter, EIHA 12/4/2, was presented by the Secretariat on behalf of ICG-ML, including EIHA 12/4/2 Add.1 the Honolulu Strategy – A Global Framework for prevention and Management of Marine Debris and EIHA 12/4/2 Add.2 on the Hawaii Marine Debris Action Plan. During the discussion of these documents the following points were made: a. monitoring should also be included in the regional action plan to ensure that the effectiveness of any measures could be assessed; b. the regional action plan outline focused too much on marine litter specifics and therefore was less useful as a pilot for other aspects of MSFD implementation, as originally envisaged by CoG; c. the regional action plan on marine litter should follow more closely the structure outlined in the Honolulu Strategy. 4.6 Following the discussion EIHA agreed that: a. comments on the draft regional action plan outline should be submitted to ICG-ML (Stefanie Werner, Stefanie.Werner@uba.de) by 18 May 2012; b. an updated version of the outline would be submitted to CoG (2) 2012 for further consideration. 4.7 The Secretariat presented document EIHA 12/4/3 on the implementation of Recommendation 2010/19 on the reduction of marine litter through the implementation of fishing for litter initiatives, highlighting that implementation reports on the recommendation should be submitted to the Secretariat by 1 January 2013. Belgium, France, Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK confirmed that they were either currently operating schemes or in the process of developing them. Belgium informed the meeting that document EIHA 12/4/7 on Fishing for Litter initiatives in Belgium would constitute their implementation report. KIMO International also introduced document EIHA 12/4/Info.5 which provided information on Fishing for Litter initiatives which they were coordinating. 4.8 Seas-At-Risk presented document EIHA 12/4/9 on behalf of ICG-ML on the Waste Free Oceans marine litter removal scheme and the concern regarding the payment of fishermen to participate and the
effect that it could have on other voluntary schemes, such as those operated by KIMO, and the maintenance of overcapacity in the fishing fleet. The European Commission informed the meeting that they were considering a project evaluating the effectiveness of different fishing for litter initiatives in dealing with marine litter hot spots.

4.9 Following a brief discussion EIHA agreed:

a. the Secretariat, with the support of ICG-ML, would draft a letter from the Chairman of EIHA to the European Commission outlining the benefits of the implementation of voluntary fishing for litter initiatives, undertaken as part of normal fishing activity, as outlined in Recommendation 2010/19, as opposed to schemes involving the direct payment of fishermen, particularly those using public funds;

b. the letter would be circulated to EIHA HODs by 1 June 2012 for consideration, all comments to be returned to the Secretariat by 18 June 2012.

Underwater noise

4.10 Mr René Dekeling (Netherlands), in his capacity as Co-Chair of the EU Technical Subgroup on Underwater Noise and other forms of energy (TSG-Noise), presented the final report of TSG-Noise dated 27 February 2012 (EIHA 12/4/6 Add.1). He emphasised that this is a relatively new subject with many unknowns. For the MSFD GES Descriptor 11 the European Commission Decision on Criteria and Methodological Standards for GES (September 2010) had identified two indicators: low and mid-frequency impulsive noise (e.g. seismic surveys, marine piling, sonars, explosives) and continuous low frequency ambient noise (e.g. shipping, dredging). Work undertaken by TSG-Noise to make the impulsive and ambient noise indicators operational was summarised. For impulsive noise the intention was to establish a common register built on what had already been established by Member States. Data was needed to validate proposed indicators and Contracting Parties were requested to submit available data on impulsive noise sources (e.g. piling, seismic survey, explosives, sonars) to the Netherlands by 15 June 2012 to review the data and the way they are stored, in order to establish a common register. The TSG-Noise had a specific remit in 2012/13 to provide practical monitoring and noise registration guidelines for EU Member States that will enable assessment of the current level of the pressure. Mitigation would be addressed at a later time (yet to be determined).

4.11 The Netherlands introduced EIHA 12/4/6 considering possible next steps for EIHA, taking into account the work of TSG-Noise and JAMP Product B-25. EIHA took note of the TSG-Noise final report and the terms of reference for TSG-Noise for 2012/13. Descriptor 11 related ICG-MSFD outcomes (EIHA 12/1/Info.3) were also taken into consideration. EC stated that at ICG-MSFD most OSPAR Contracting Parties had confirmed their intention to set up a register for loud impulsive noises.

4.12 EIHA also noted complementary information papers:

a. Underwater sound in relation to dredging as submitted by CEDA, that described in detail the underwater sounds generated by various components of the dredging process and what is known about the potential effects of dredging sounds (EIHA 12/4/Info.1). Options for managing dredging-related sounds were identified together with an outline of future areas of research; and

b. Measurements of ship noise by MCR International on behalf of the International Fund for Animal Welfare, setting out the results of empirical ship sourced recordings (EIHA 12/4/Info.4).

4.13 UK welcomed the findings of the TSG-Noise report and stated that they:

a. supported the advice that the interim purpose of the indicator on impulsive sounds is a means of providing an overview of current activity;
b. are keen to work with any other Contracting Party in developing an appropriate registry of noise generating activities and would welcome OSPAR adopting a supporting role in facilitating Contracting Parties in establishing noise registries;

c. support the intention of TSG-Noise to continue developing an approach to setting a target for the impulsive sound indicator target in order to establish a threshold for GES which elaborates a proportion of days when impulsive sounds can occur and their spatial distribution; and

d. with respect to ambient noise, would like to see a pragmatic approach recognising the limitations in our current understanding and recognising that any measures deemed necessary to achieve GES must be taken at an international level (e.g. through the IMO), however OSPAR should give further consideration to putting in place appropriate ambient noise monitoring programmes where appropriate.

4.14 Following discussion EIHA agreed:

a. that JAMP Product B-25 is completed as far as possible but it could become a future product if needed;

b. no update of the OSPAR Advice document is currently required in order not to duplicate work undertaken in the TSG-Noise, although it remains a living document;

c. as appropriate Contracting Parties should deliver relevant data to TSG-Noise contact points, noting it is important to know what type of data is available for loud impulsive noises (e.g. explosives, pile driving, seismic);

d. to note future work needed on monitoring of ambient noise levels and cumulative effects of noise (and its relevance to ICG-C); and

e. to keep TSG-Noise informed on any progress within OSPAR on noise impact mitigation.

4.15 Germany presented EIHA 12/4/4 comprising a progress report on developing guidelines to reduce underwater noise emissions and considerations on a future framework for mitigation measures. Germany recalled the background and assessment work on noise undertaken to underpin the QSR 2010 resulting in a recommendation in the QSR 2010 that OSPAR ‘should increase efforts to develop, review and apply mitigation measures to reduce the impacts of underwater noise and develop guidelines on best environmental practices (BEP) and best available techniques (BAT) for mitigating noise emissions and their environmental impacts’. Germany had continued to coordinate work on guidelines, focussing initially on available techniques and subsequently on a framework for mitigation measures as requested by EIHA 2011, perceiving this as an important added value opportunity for OSPAR in line with the aspiration of the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy.

4.16 Intersessional work had made it clear that:

a. those Contracting Parties in the intersessional drafting group could broadly support the advanced structure as presented in Annex 1 of EIHA 12/4/4;

b. limited resources have been available to date to meet the ambition of this task and in future collective action and resourcing would be necessary to take the work forward, possibly on the basis of different Contracting Parties working on specific noise sources and/or selection of an individual noise source such as pile driving as a pilot example; however

c. within the drafting group there was a difference of opinion concerning the scope and timing of the work and the principal future direction such work should take, bearing in mind related work within other forums (TSG-Noise, CMS, ICES).
4.17 A number of Contracting Parties supported the German position that there is a need for practical management advice concerning a number of available techniques and environmental practices which are, or are in the process of becoming, accepted techniques and practices (e.g. big bubble curtain for the offshore wind energy sector) or subject to advanced testing (e.g. dewatered telescopic cofferdam). Other Contracting Parties and OGP questioned the timing of mitigation guidelines given the current level of knowledge and uncertainty about noise inputs and impacts.

4.18 EC made a clarification between considerations on noise for the MSFD (determining pressure at the ecosystem level) and mitigation (where guidelines will be particularly important at the local / environmental impact assessment scale).

4.19 During the meeting a drafting group, convened by Germany and comprising representatives of France, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, UK and OGP met to consider how to take this work forward with particular reference to clarifying and furthering understanding about available mitigation techniques and their feasibility; establishing the purpose and format of any OSPAR guidelines and how they should be used (i.e. relevance to the management of the OSPAR Maritime Area); work priorities and approach; and how to achieve a common understanding terms with respect to qualification of techniques and environmental practices.

4.20 The drafting group proposed that EIHA should:

a. consider draft terms of reference for developing guidelines for mitigating potential effects of underwater noise;

b. invite Contracting Parties and Observers to submit information relevant to developing guidelines to the drafting group via the Secretariat;

c. invite Contracting Parties, in particular France, Netherlands and Sweden, to confirm their contribution to the drafting work by 18 May 2012. The participation of Sweden in the drafting group is also subject to confirmation;

d. confirm that the drafting group is open for participation of other Contracting Parties and Observers.

4.21 EIHA endorsed the conclusions of the drafting group and agreed Terms of Reference to take forward work during 2012/13 as at Annex 9 placing an emphasis on establishing a detailed inventory of mitigation techniques and then developing selected mitigation strategies. EIHA took note of the need for interaction with ongoing and future work on underwater noise mitigation in other forums (e.g. TSG-Noise, CBD Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice).

Hydrographic conditions

4.22 The advice document on GES Descriptor 7, hydrographical conditions was introduced by the Netherlands (EIHA 12/4/5) in order to consider progress made with regards to the state of regional coordination.

4.23 EIHA noted the advice document and the recommendations set out in §26bis and §27 for improved coordination in the period up to 2013, welcomed the opportunity to consider how to take this work forward and reflected on the scope of this descriptor. The European Commission clarified that the intention was for the descriptor to focus on new projects and initiatives and not to restore all situations.

4.24 Seas at Risk were of the opinion that the advice document would not assist OSPAR EU Member States in achieving GES for Descriptor 7.

4.25 In a round table session Contracting Parties confirmed that there had been some use of the content and advice in the D7 Advice in the development of national marine strategies. The Chair urged EIHA Heads of Delegation to keep in regular contact with the representatives of ICG-MSFD.
4.26 The European Commission encouraged Regional Seas Conventions to review the work that would be submitted by Member States by the 2012 deadline in order to proactively identify where coherence might be lacking. The planned workshop on common indicators will provide an opportunity for such an analysis.

4.27 Following discussion in plenary, EIHA agreed:
   a. it would not be necessary at this stage to establish an intersessional correspondence group;
   b. that although no Task Manager had been identified during the meeting, Contracting Parties should consider whether they could take up this role to take forward a future work product on strengthening regional coherence in the implementation of D7; the absence of a task leader for this work would be brought to the attention of CoG;
   c. that the next milestone for discussion on regional coherence relating to D7 would be identified at the workshop on the further development of common indicators, planned for January 2013 (cf. §1.5).

Agenda Item 5 – Integrating Management Actions

EIHA 12/5/1; EIHA 12/5/2; EIHA 12/5/2 Add.1; EIHA 12/5/3-EIHA 12/5/6; EIHA 12/5/Info.1; EIHA 12/5/Info.2.

Economic and social analysis

5.1 The UK introduced document EIHA 12/5/1 on a regional socio-economic analysis of the use of marine waters and the cost of degradation outlining that the work was being undertaken by a consortium of consultants, with expertise in environmental economics, led by Eftec and overseen by ICG-SEA. Ian Dickie, from Eftec gave a presentation to the meeting, outlining the progress in relation to the draft interim report noting that there were several challenges relating to the data used by Contracting Parties, including a lack of a uniform baseline, different years for activity data and forecasts, the use of different types of data (gross value added vs turnover) and varied approaches to the cost of degradation. The interim report was due to be finalised by August 2012 and ICG-SEA met in parallel with plenary to give further consideration to the draft.

5.2 EIHA noted the following key parts from the reporting back by ICG-SEA:
   a. the next round of work from June 2012 would be based on, as a minimum, the consultation versions of economic and social analysis reports;
   b. the Final Interim Report would include more detailed information (including examples of methods and data collation);
   c. use would be made of data from the reporting sheets due in October 2012;
   d. a draft regional review report would be ready by December 2012.

It was proposed that ICG-MSFD may wish to consider at its next meeting how OSPAR Contracting Parties would wish to use economic and social analysis and the possible role of a workshop to help plan future work.

5.3 The UK and Sweden are also co-chairs of the EU Working Group on Economic and Social Analysis (WG ESA) and were currently discussing the group’s future mandate with the European Commission pertaining to the analysis of potential measures and updating the guidance for assessments.

Cumulative effects

5.4 The progress report of ICG-Cumulative Effects (EIHA 12/5/4) was presented by the UK on behalf of the group highlighting that due to the complexity of issue, only the list on environmental pressure descriptions and an initial investigation of methods for quantifying and mapping pressures undertaken in
other projects and regional seas had been undertaken. Presentations were given by the UK and Denmark
with regard to two of the projects that were developing methodologies which are of interest to evaluate for
use within the OSPAR context i.e. ODEMM and Harmony.

5.5 The UK as co-lead of ICG-C highlighted that there was a need to be more realistic with respect to what
could be achieved by the group given the complexity of the issue. The focus of the group had also changed
to implementing appropriate cumulative impact methodologies rather than developing new methodologies
and in particular through the development of case studies. There was also a need to work more closely with
ICG-COBAM in order to provide them with useful input and also to manage expectations of what could be
provided.

5.6 Following the discussion EIHA agreed:
   a. to revised terms of reference for ICG-C (see Annex 10);
   b. to confirm participation of experts in ICG-C by 18 May 2012;

Marine spatial planning

5.7 EIHA noted document EIHA 12/5/2, a report of progress made by ICG-MSP which was presented by
Titia Kalker (NL) as co-convenor. The meeting was informed that Eugene Nixon (IE) would be stepping down
from his role as co-convenor and was warmly thanked for his leadership in the work to date.

5.8 In the presentation to EIHA the following points were highlighted (N.B. the presentation is uploaded to
the EIHA meeting documents folder on the OSPAR website):
   a. it was felt beneficial in the informal multilateral platform that the ICG provides to discuss issues
      relating to MSP at the regional scale;
   b. Observers to OSPAR are encouraged to participate in ICG-MSP;
   c. members of ICG-Cumulative effects would be welcome to participate in ICG-MSP

5.9 In discussion it was noted that there are different drivers for different types of measures and activities
in the marine environment, the example being that of MPA designation, which are established on the basis of
ecological criteria, with other planning being driven by economic incentive. It was felt important to ensure that
the linkages between these two types of activities are linked through MSP.

5.10 The conclusions to the plenary discussion on marine spatial planning are presented in §5.16 below.

5.11 EIHA welcomed the outcomes of the joint OSPAR/HELCOM/VASAB/ICES workshop on
multidisciplinary case studies of marine spatial planning, held at the IPIMAR institute in Lisbon, Portugal from
2-4 November 2011. It was agreed that the workshop report should be recommended to OSPAR 2012 for
publication with a positive nod.

5.12 The Secretariat presented information on a funding call put out by the European Commission
(DG Mare MARE/2012/08) for Marine Spatial Planning in the Atlantic, including the Celtic Sea and Bay of
Biscay. The call was published on 26 March 2012 and the deadline for submitting proposals will be 15 June
2012. OSPAR, as the relevant Regional Seas Convention, is identified as a suitable potential partner in the
call. The document was noted.

5.13 EIHA noted information document EIHA 12/5/Info.2 on the North Sea Countries Offshore Grid
Initiative, presented by Germany as observer to the working group on planning and authorisation
procedures, on behalf of EIHA. The document presented an update of the most recent report of the working
group and progress being made on this initiative. A further update will be provided to EIHA 2013.

5.14 WWF highlighted the benefits of a stakeholder approach to marine spatial planning that was trialled in
the PISCES (Partnerships involving Stakeholders in the Celtic Seas Ecosystem) project (EIHA 12/5/5). The
EIHA 12/10/1

The project is a LIFE+ co-funded project which would be completed in 2012. The experiences of the project demonstrated that despite the significant challenges of working through a process of multi-sectoral stakeholder engagement, early engagement is a critical step to ensure the success of decisions relating to planning of human activities in the marine environment.

5.15 EIHA recognised the important role that stakeholders have in policy development and implementation and agreed that the PISCES guidelines on stakeholder engagement should be circulated to EIHA Heads of Delegation, recognising the role of PISCES and WWF in this area of work. The presentation given by WWF was made available on the EIHA 2012 meeting folder on the OSPAR website. Further information is available at www.picesproject.eu or from pisces@wwf.org.uk.

5.16 In noting the role of ICG-MSP as a regional platform for sharing experience two proposals were put forward for issues that may be pertinent to the work of the ICG in the coming meeting cycle:

a. The Secretariat recalled the relevance of an earlier document (EIHA 12/1/Info.1) on the BE-AWARE project to the issue of marine spatial planning. The project is undertaking a region wide risk assessment not only of pollution resulting from ships, but also from structures. Although OSPAR has information on the current locations of installations, the project requires future projections for activities up to 2020 to look at risk scenarios. The project time frame is over two years and will have a data collection phase up to October/November 2012. EIHA agreed that ICG-MSP would contribute to the implementation of the BE-AWARE project by facilitating contacts with national experts in relation to future projections of maritime uses;

b. Sweden noted that strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is an important tool for the operationalisation of the ecosystem approach and would value the opportunity to exchange experience for SEA with respect to MSP.

5.17 Based on the broader discussions concerning ICG-MSP, EIHA agreed:

a. to note the outcomes of the meeting held at the OSPAR Secretariat in London, 14 February 2012;

b. to bring forward and adopt the terms of reference from 2011/2012 (Annex 11), with only minor modifications for the next reporting to EIHA 2013;

c. that the next meeting of ICG-MSP will be held on 27 September 2012;

d. to urge Contracting Parties to consider the possibility of joining the Netherlands in providing a co-convenor role for the ICG-MSP and forward any nominations to the Secretariat by Friday, 18 May 2012.

Climate change

5.18 The Secretariat introduced EIHA 12/5/6 on climate change adaptation strategies and the potential for action at OSPAR level. It outlined the work being undertaken at National, European and International level and considered whether there was any added value in undertaking action within EIHA. The UK informed the meeting that they had recently published a climate change risk assessment looking at economic sectors, biodiversity, etc. and identifying the principal risks for government. The Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership (MCCIP) in the UK undertakes work synthesising latest scientific understanding for policy makers and was due to publish its most recent thematic report on fish, fisheries and aquaculture impacts in May of this year. France also informed the meeting that their national adaptation strategy had been recently

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2 http://www.mccip.org.uk/
updated and would cover the next 5 years with a mid-term review in 2013\(^3\). Norway also highlighted their national climate change adaptation programme\(^4\). Following the discussion EIHA agreed that currently the appropriate level of action within OSPAR was to continue with sharing information on climate change adaptation actions.

5.19 CEDA presented its views on climate change adaptation and the effects upon the dredging community in document EIHA 12/5/Info.1. The report highlighted the changes within the industry such as the development of new equipment, new methodologies (e.g. the sand engine) and the need for a more flexible regulatory system.

**Agenda Item 6 – Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme**

EIHA 12/6/1-EIHA 12/6/7; EIHA 12/6/Info.1

**Specification for an OSPAR Information System**

6.1 EIHA examined a report prepared by consultants setting out options for a specification for an OSPAR Information System (EIHA 12/6/1) and welcomed the findings of the report, noting the significance of this work as the foundation for assessment and monitoring within OSPAR.

6.2 Following discussion, EIHA agreed to forward the following views for the attention of CoG (1) 2012:

   a. Contracting Parties felt comfortable that the report was comprehensive, recognising that the consultants had undertaken the work on the basis of selected EIHA data streams, and not all of them. A number of typographical edits were noted and the Secretariat requested to amend these in the report;

   b. efforts taken to ensure that the specification had been developed taking into consideration information and data developments within the European context were welcomed;

   c. the benefit of developing a tool that will facilitate the integration of data across themes was acknowledged, however it was stressed that emphasis should be put on ensuring the data sets themselves are managed to the highest possible level and appropriate data standards are applied to facilitate interoperability;

   d. EIHA accepted the conclusions of analysis of data streams as presented in the Appendix 5 of the consultants’ report and that it would be beneficial to address the proposed improvements of the data sets as a pre-requisite to the development of an information system;

   e. in terms of ambition of the Information System Specification, it was agreed that continuing with business as usual was not acceptable. It was felt that given current resource constraints, the “do minimum scenario” would be a pragmatic start and that this should not preclude the phased evolution of the information system to the “do more” scenario based on the modular approach presented; EIHA did not feel in a position to make a selection on the individual modules required to evolve from “do minimum” to “do more” scenario.

6.3 On this basis, EIHA endorsed the investment by OSPAR in an information system and welcomed the further consideration by CoG. In addition CoG is urged to consider the information system as a mechanism in OSPAR to work towards the integration of other regional data systems (e.g. HELCOM, EMODNET, WISE-


Assessment sheets and OSPAR Monitoring Framework

6.4 The Secretariat presented document EIHA 12/6/2 on features and a roadmap for developing OSPAR assessment sheets. The document outlined the key features of the common assessment sheets developed by the Secretariat including objective, terminology, definition, features, style, etc. and following a discussion of Annex 1 of the document, which outlined potential assessment sheets with in the remit of committee, EIHA agreed to add two additional assessment sheets in relation to the EcoQO’s on plastic particles in Fulmars’ stomachs and oiled Guillemots as well as a fact sheet on Fishing or Litter.

6.5 Document EIHA 12/6/4 on the development of the OSPAR monitoring framework, which was introduced under Agenda Item 1, was presented by the Secretariat, including Annex 4 of the document which related directly to the questions set by CoG to each committee regarding their monitoring and assessment needs. The Secretariat and Chairman undertook a first attempt to answer the questions in order to facilitate consideration of the document. EIHA worked through Annex 4 in plenary and the answers are included in Annex 12. It was noted that further work would be needed to clarify the precise data requirements and how such data might be collected and assessed.

JAMP Implementation Plan

6.6 The Secretariat introduced document EIHA 12/6/3 on the JAMP implementation plan, highlighting the EIHA tasks within the Biodiversity Strategy and the need to advise CoG on any revisions to the JAMP 2010-2014. Following a brief discussion about timing of upcoming assessments, it was decided there were no additional items for inclusion and that the Secretariat would update the implementation plan in light of the outcomes of the meeting.

The onward role of EcoQOs

6.7 The Secretariat presented an overview of OSPAR EcoQOs, their current status of development and application (EIHA 12/6/5). The last such review was undertaken in preparation of the QSR 2010. The review was driven by the considerations being given to monitoring, assessment and data/information management during the current meeting cycle. Understanding the potential use of EcoQOs as indicators within the MSFD is another driver for this work.

6.8 The Netherlands introduced a complementary information document (EIHA 12/6/Info.1), which presented the results of a study commissioned by the Netherlands, as an overview of the possibilities to use OSPAR EcoQOs as indicators for the MSFD, focusing on seven of the EcoQOs, including two relating to EIHA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EcoQO</th>
<th>Suitability as MSFD indicator?</th>
<th>Relevant Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduced number of oiled guillemots</td>
<td>Yes, considered suitable although would need adaptation beyond Region II</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced level of litter (plastic particles) in seabirds stomachs</td>
<td>Yes, considered suitable although would need adaptation beyond Region II</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced level of imposex in dogwhelks and other gastropods</td>
<td>It was agreed that there may be potential, but this was not included in the Dutch analysis</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.9 EIHA noted and welcomed the review and analysis as presented, noting the suitability of EcoQOs for use as common indicators under the MSFD. Contracting Parties were urged to make use of the information for national MSFD implementation work. An overview of the current state of development, management and potential role of EcoQOs under the MSFD across all relevant descriptors and committees (EIHA, HASEC and BDC) will be presented to CoG (1) 2012.

6.10 Two draft assessment sheets for EcoQOs under the responsibility of EIHA were presented by the Netherlands on oiled guillemots and plastic particles in fulmars (EIHA 12/6/7). The assessment sheets had been prepared during the 2010/2011 meeting cycle and were brought forward with the proposal that they should be updated as joint assessment products with new data and according to the decision of CoG (1) 2012 on the structure and format of OSPAR Assessment Sheets.

6.11 EIHA agreed that the work of these two EcoQOs would provide an excellent example of EIHA work to share with a wider audience in the coming meeting cycle and confirmed the following arrangements for the preparation of these assessment sheets (cf. §6.4 on assessment sheets):

   a. Oiled Guillemots and plastic particles EcoQOs should be included in the list of potential OSPAR Assessment Sheets to be forwarded to CoG (1) 2012;
   b. countries using these two EcoQOs should forward data to the Netherlands (sandra.van.der.graaf@rws.nl) by 1 October 2012;
      i. Oiled guillemots: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and the UK;
      ii. Plastic particles in fulmars: France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and the UK
   c. the Netherlands would prepare a draft version of the assessment sheets to be submitted to EIHA 2013 for consideration.

6.12 The Secretariat introduced EIHA 12/6/6 highlighting the potential role for the Regional Seas Conventions in the context of the MSFD Article 12 (Notification and Commission’s Assessment) process.

Agenda Item 7 – Organisational Issues

EIHA 12/7/1; EIHA 12/7/2

Work programmes for 2012/2013

7.1 EIHA agreed to recommend the draft work programme for 2012-2013 as at Annex 14 to OSPAR 2012 for adoption.

ICES work programme

7.2 EIHA reviewed the contents of the 2012 ICES Work Programme and progress made, noting that there were no activities in the current work plan delivering advice to EIHA. It was agreed to forward three items to CoG (1) 2012 for consideration in the 2013 ICES work programme (cf. Annex 13):

   a. evaluation of pressures from mariculture, including interactions between wild and captive fish stocks;
   b. investigation of data handling options for beach litter monitoring;
c. a possible request for development of statistical methodologies for the analysis of OSPAR beach litter monitoring data, subject to further consultation by the Secretariat with marine litter experts from Germany prior to CoG (1) 2012.

7.3 EIHA noted a proposal for the development of an OSPAR Science (needs) agenda, presented by the Secretariat (EIHA 12/7/2). The proposal requests the consideration for the development of a more strategic view to set out OSPAR’s science information needs, in particular identifying where there may be opportunities to seek funding for discrete elements of work under the EIHA programme of work in the near and mid-term future. EIHA acknowledged the value of taking a long term view on priorities for filling knowledge gaps, however it was the sentiment of the meeting that this objective could best be achieved by establishing a structured and coordinated process to identify potential issues of interest and then establish priorities for OSPAR.

Future meeting arrangements

7.4 EIHA agreed that the work load of the Committee would require a five day meeting for 2013, however this should be kept under review depending on the agenda. Contracting Parties agreed that mid-April would be a suitable time to host the next meeting.

7.5 EIHA noted the following scheduled and proposed workshops and ICG meetings relevant to its work:
   a. the next meeting of ICG-MSP will be held on 27 September 2012
   b. the next meetings of ICG-Marine Litter, ICG-Socioeconomic analysis and ICG-Cumulative Effects have not yet been scheduled;
   c. a workshop on the further development of common indicators for the MSFD within the remit of EIHA will be held in January 2013.

7.6 EIHA welcomed the kind offer of Belgium to host the 2013 EIHA meeting, subject to formal confirmation, which will be provided to the Secretariat by 18 May 2012.

7.7 EIHA also welcomed the kind offer of Sweden to host the 2014 meeting of EIHA.

Agenda Item 8 – Election of chairman

8.1 Lex Osterbaan (The Netherlands) was re-elected as Chairman by acclamation for a term of one year. Philip Stamp (United Kingdom) was re-elected as vice-chairman for the next two meeting cycles 2012/2013 and 2013/2014.

Agenda Item 9 – Any other business


Agenda Item 10 – Adoption of the summary record

10.1 The meeting thanked the Netherlands for providing excellent meeting facilities and lunches.
10.2 The draft summary record was adopted as amended.