



OSPAR
COMMISSION

Overview of information provided by Contracting Parties on pesticides from agriculture use

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OSPAR Convention

The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (the “OSPAR Convention”) was opened for signature at the Ministerial Meeting of the former Oslo and Paris Commissions in Paris on 22 September 1992. The Convention entered into force on 25 March 1998.

The Contracting Parties are Belgium, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Convention OSPAR

La Convention pour la protection du milieu marin de l'Atlantique du Nord-Est, dite Convention OSPAR, a été ouverte à la signature à la réunion ministérielle des anciennes Commissions d'Oslo et de Paris, à Paris le 22 septembre 1992. La Convention est entrée en vigueur le 25 mars 1998.

Les Parties contractantes sont l'Allemagne, la Belgique, le Danemark, l'Espagne, la Finlande, la France, l'Irlande, l'Islande, le Luxembourg, la Norvège, les Pays-Bas, le Portugal, le Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord, la Suède, la Suisse et l'Union européenne.

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Executive Summary

PARCOM Recommendation 94/7 on the Elaboration of National Action Plans and Best Environmental Practice (BEP) for the Reduction of Inputs to the Environment of Pesticides from Agriculture Use superseded PARCOM Recommendation 93/3 of the same title and was developed to encourage Contracting Parties to draw up national action programmes for the reduction of pesticide inputs from agriculture and codes for best environmental practice.

In 2010 PARCOM Recommendation 94/7 was reviewed to see if it remained applicable, and it was classified as a “measure that continues to be applicable without amendment”, because it contained additional elements such as financial instruments and training. However, reporting on implementation of the Recommendation had ceased in 2006. In 2019 OSPAR agreed to set-aside related Recommendations 2000/1¹ and 2000/2².

In 2021 the Hazardous Substances and Eutrophication Committee (HASEC) considered whether PARCOM Recommendation 94/7 could also now be set-aside. It was suggested that the elements of the Recommendation were sufficiently covered by existing EU and national legislation, but there were concerns about losing a mechanism for discussion and sharing of information on pesticides in OSPAR, particularly to provide the opportunity to address new problems that arise. It was agreed that the United Kingdom would circulate a questionnaire to help inform a proposal for a revised Recommendation (or alternative mechanism). Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, Luxemburg, Ireland and Belgium responded to the questionnaire.

The responses are summarised below.

Récapitulatif

La Recommandation PARCOM 94/7 sur l'élaboration des plans d'action nationaux et de la meilleure pratique environnementale (BEP) en vue de la réduction des apports à l'environnement des pesticides employés dans l'agriculture a été adoptée pour remplacer la Recommandation 93/3, et a été développée pour encourager les Parties contractantes à mettre sur pied des programmes d'action pour la réduction des pesticides employés dans l'agriculture et des codes de meilleure pratique environnementale.

Lors d'une revue des mesures OSPAR effectuée en 2010, la Recommandation PARCOM 94/7 a été classée comme mesure qui reste applicable sans besoin d'amendement, parce qu'elle comportait des éléments supplémentaires, tels que instruments financiers et des exigences de formation. Toutefois la notification de la mise en œuvre de la Recommandation avait cessé en 2006. En 2019, OSPAR est convenue de mettre à côté les Recommandations connexes 2000/1 et 2000/2.

En 2021 le Comité substances dangereuses et eutrophisation a étudié la question visant à savoir s'il conviendrait de mettre à côté la Recommandation 94/7. Il a été suggéré que les éléments de la

¹ OSPAR Recommendation 2000/2 on Best Environmental Practice (BEP) for the Use of Pesticides on Amenity Areas. Set aside 2019

² OSPAR Recommendation 2000/1 on Best Environmental Practice (BEP) for the Reduction of Inputs of Agricultural Pesticides to the Environment through the Use of Integrated Crop Management Techniques. Set aside 2019

Recommandation étaient suffisamment couverts par la législation européenne et nationale existante, mais des inquiétudes ont été exprimées quant à la perte d'un mécanisme de discussion et de partage d'informations sur les pesticides au sein d'OSPAR, en particulier pour permettre d'aborder les nouveaux problèmes qui se posent. Il a été convenu que le Royaume-Uni diffuserait un questionnaire pour contribuer à l'élaboration d'une proposition de Recommandation révisée (ou d'un mécanisme alternatif). La Suède, le Danemark, les Pays-Bas, la Norvège, la Suisse, la Belgique, la France, l'Allemagne, l'Espagne, le Luxembourg, l'Irlande et la Belgique ont répondu au questionnaire. Les réponses sont résumées ci-dessous.

Questionnaire

1. Do you consider pesticides in the marine environment a priority area for further investigation?
2. What legislation or measures are in place within your country to regulate the use of pesticides and minimise their impact on the marine environment?
3. Do you have plans to review regulatory approaches impacting pesticides and the marine environment? If yes, please provide details.
4. What existing evidence on the impact of pesticides in the marine environment and their sources does your country have?
5. Are you open to sharing findings and outcomes with OSPAR? If yes, please provide details of any existing evidence including links to available studies where possible.
6. Do you have plans to gather evidence on the impact of pesticides on the marine environment? If yes, please provide details (if content for this to be shared within OSPAR).
7. Do you think a mechanism to share information and issues on pesticides in the marine environment will add value? If no, please give the reason.
8. Do you consider a new OSPAR recommendation an appropriate place to share information on pesticides? If no, do you have any suggestions for an alternative mechanism?
9. Is there anything additional you would like a recommendation/mechanism on pesticides to cover? Please provide details.

Summary of responses

1. There were mixed responses as to whether Contracting Parties consider pesticides in the marine environment a priority area for further investigation. Some Contracting Parties highlighted that given the large volume of pesticides used within the OSPAR area there is potential for impacts on the marine environment, even though regulations are in place. Contracting Parties also noted the importance of assessing the implications of “newer” pesticides and new applications for them e.g. aquaculture.
2. The responses reiterated that the majority of the elements of PARCOM Recommendation 94/7 are now contained in EU³ or national legislation. It is also noted most national regulations are intended to protect the environment overall rather than specifically aimed at marine environmental protection. Several Contracting Parties noted that they are reviewing and updating their National Adaptation Plans. It was also highlighted that in June 2022 the European Commission adopted a proposal to replace the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive (SUD - Directive 2009/128/EC) with a new Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation (SUR) including additional measures to protect the aquatic environment. Discussions on the proposal are ongoing.
3. Generally, there is limited knowledge on the impacts of pesticides in the marine environment, however the value of the CONNECT⁴ project was highlighted. Some countries have national monitoring programmes

³ For example EU Directive 2009/128/EC which is transposed into UK law

⁴ **CON**taminants of **E**merging **C**oncern and **T**hreat in the marine environment (CONNECT)

that include a number of agricultural pesticides in marine sediment and/or biota e.g. chlorinated pesticides. Both target and non-target screening approaches linked to risk assessment are a valuable tool to assess both the prevalence and potential risk from pesticides and can provide a valuable steer to future monitoring direction. Additionally, the Water Framework Directive was highlighted as an important tool in pesticide (and other pollutant) monitoring and risk assessment.

4. Contracting Parties were happy to share any existing evidence with OSPAR and a compilation of the studies highlighted is available in Annex 1. There is information on pesticide active substances and product authorisations within EU available on the [EFSA website](#). Most countries do not have any additional evidence gathering planned and feel continued participation in the OSPAR CONNECT project (or similar screening/risk assessment initiatives) can provide a steer to support future monitoring direction.

5. Going forwards the majority of CPs did not feel a Recommendation was the correct mechanism for facilitating information sharing on pesticides in the marine environment. Some did not think there was any need for further cooperation on this issue given there is existing cooperation in OSPAR through the CONNECT project and updating the List of Chemicals for Priority Action and the List of Substances of Possible Concern. However, others thought a mechanism would be beneficial to encourage the continued sharing of evidence and information between countries, raising awareness if new problems arise.

6. HASEC has not yet concluded on the appropriate way forward.

Annex 1 – National evidence on pesticides

France

There is a study from INRAE-IFREMER 2020-2022 on the impacts of pesticides on biodiversity and ecosystem services, from the areas where they are applied to the marine environment, in metropolitan and overseas France.

<https://www.inrae.fr/actualites/impacts-produits-phytopharmaceutiques-biodiversite-services-ecosystemiques-resultats-lexpertise-scientifique-collective-inrae-ifremer>

Ireland

Netherlands

In our monitoring programme in the North Sea, we measure a number of agricultural pesticides. Mostly the concentration is below detection level. All available data are publically available on Waterinfo (www.rws.nl)

Norway

We have a national programme for soil and water monitoring in agriculture dominated catchment-areas in Norway. There are PPP samples taken from fish and other marine organisms in the monitoring program for pollution in the management plan areas in the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea and the North Sea/Skagerrak.

[Pollution in the Norwegian sea areas - the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea and the North Sea](#)

[The Norwegian Agricultural Environmental Monitoring Programme \(JOVA\)](#)

Spain

Some research institutions in Spain (e. g. IEO-CSIC) routinely measure chlorinated pesticides in marine sediment and biota and, although the use of some of them has been banned for the last decades, it is observed that they are still present in the environment due to their persistence.

It is also relevant to mention, due to its connection to the marine environment (as potential source of pesticide pollution) that evidence provided in research papers exist on the presence of pesticides active substances toxic to the aquatic environment in Spanish river basins and freshwater.

Marine environment (Atlantic and Mediterranean):

- Köck-Schulmeyer, M., Postigo, C., Farre, M., Barceló, D., López de Alda. M., 2019. Medium to highly polar pesticides in seawater: analysis and fate in coastal areas of Catalonia (NE Spain). *Chemosphere* 215, 515-523. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chemosphere.2018.10.049>
- León, V.M., Viñas, L., Concha-Graña, E., Fernández-González, V., Salgueiro-González, N., Moscoso-Pérez, C., Muniategui-Lorenzo, S., Campillo, J.A., 2020. Identification of contaminants of emerging concern with potential environmental risk in Spanish continental shelf sediments. *Sci. Total Environ.* 742, 140505. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.140505>
- Moreno-González, R., León, V. M., 2017. Presence and distribution of current-use pesticides in surface marine sediments from a Mediterranean coastal lagoon. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research* 24, 8033-8044. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-017-8456-0>

River basins (including coastal areas) and freshwater:

- Calvo, S., Romo, S., Soria, J., Pico, Y., 2021. Pesticide contamination in water and sediment of the aquatic systems of the Natural Park of the Albufera of Valencia (Spain) during the rice cultivation period. *Sci. Total Environ.* 774. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.145009>

- Herrero-Hernandez, E., Rodríguez-Cruz, S., Pose-Juan, S., Sánchez-González, S., Andrades, S., Sánchez-Martín, M. J., 2017. Seasonal distribution of herbicide and insecticide residues in the water sources of the vineyard region of la Rioja (Spain). *Sci. Total Environ.* 609, 161-171. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2017.07.113>
- Peris, A., Barbieri, M. V., Postigo, C., Rambla-Alegre, M., López de Alda, Eljarrat, E., 2022. Pesticides in sediments of the Ebro River Delta cultivated area (NE Spain): occurrence and risk assessment for aquatic organisms. *Environmental Pollution* 305. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envpol.2022.119239>
- Pico, Y., Belenguer, V., Corcellas, C., Diaz-Cruz, M. S., Eljarrat, E., Farré, M., Gago-Ferrero, P., Huerta, B., Navarro-Ortega, B., Petrovic, A., Rodríguez-Mozaz, S., Sabater, L., Santín, G., Barceló, D., 2019. Contaminants of emerging concern in freshwater fish from four Spanish rivers. *Sci. Total Environ.* 659, 1186-1198. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2018.12.366>



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Our vision is a clean, healthy and biologically diverse North-East Atlantic Ocean, which is productive, used sustainably and resilient to climate change and ocean acidification.

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