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| OSPAR Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic |

ICG-MSFD Programme of Work 2021-2023

# Introduction

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) requires EU Member States sharing a marine region or sub-region to cooperate to ensure that the measures required to achieve the objectives of the Directive are coherent and coordinated across the marine region or sub-region concerned. In order to achieve the coordination Member States shall, where practical and appropriate, use existing regional institutional cooperation structures, including those under Regional Sea Conventions.

OSPAR’s Coordination Group (CoG) is responsible for facilitating a regionally coordinated implementation of the MSFD, by making the best use of OSPAR, bearing in mind that OSPAR is not the implementation body of the MSFD.

One of CoG’s responsibilities is to facilitate a regionally coordinated implementation of the MSFD by making the best use of OSPAR, bearing in mind that OSPAR is not the implementation body of the MSFD. ICG-MSFD helps CoG to fulfil this task, but ultimately CoG (comprising of EU as well as non-EU Member States) decides where to go, what to do and instructs the Committees to match OSPAR’s activities for the Northeast Atlantic Environmental Strategy 2030 with the EU-member states coordination requirements for the MSFD.

ICG-MSFD’s Programme of Work products reflect its Terms of Reference (2021) and the tasks allocated to the ICG by CoG, HOD and the OSPAR Commission.

Based on the requirements of the MSFD the four working areas considered in ICG-MSFD’s programme of work are:

* 1. Assessment, GES and monitoring (MSFD art. 8, 9, 11 MSFD and Commission Decision)
  2. Environmental targets and measures (art 10, 13, 14 MSFD);
  3. Cross-cutting issues, including cooperation with other Regional Seas Conventions;
  4. Regular update of coherent MSFD implementation plan in relation to the EU CIS work programme.

In line with the Northeast Atlantic Environmental Strategy 2030, OSPAR will implement by 2023 [for those Contracting Parties that are EU Member States] the regional coordination requirements [to EU Member States] arising from Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848, including regional lists of elements, aggregation and assessment methods and threshold values for the North-East Atlantic region or its subregions.

# Working Area 1: Assessment GES and Monitoring (MSFD art. 8, 9, 11 MSFD and Commission Decision)

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| **Product 1**  **2021-2023** | **Provide policy-level advice to CoG on developing regional products to support Contracting Parties’ national implementation of Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848, including for use in the QSR 2023**. Including:   * North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy 2020-2030, Sx.O1 * Candidate indicators that are appropriate for adoption as OSPAR indicators * Assessment values / Threshold values and terminology * List of elements * Methodological standards * Aggregation rules |
| Based upon: | * The Intermediate Assessment 2017 products * Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848 |
| Task Manager: | * Co-convenors (lead) * Collaborating with ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties, ICG-QSR, supported by Secretariat |
| Target Date: | CoG meetings twice per year – report on progress and provide advice |
| Reference: | ICG-MSFD(2)2021 summary record §§xx |
| Resources | ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties’ work |

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| **Product 2**  **2021-2023** | **Provide advice to CoG on development of thematic assessments and closing knowledge gaps for the QSR**. Including:   * Aggregation and integration rules * Towards thematic assessments that integrate indicators/criteria at MSFD Descriptor level |
| Based upon: | * The Intermediate Assessment 2017 products * Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848 * OSPAR Science (needs) Agenda 2019 |
| Task Manager: | * Co-convenors (lead) * Collaborating with ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties, ICG-QSR, supported by Secretariat |
| Target Date: | CoG meetings twice per year – report on progress and provide advice |
| Reference: | ICG-MSFD(1)2021 summary record §§xx |
| Resources | ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties’ work |

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| **Product 3**  **2021-2023** | **Provide feedback on templates and guidance documents for QSR products, for alignment with Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848, as appropriate**. |
| Based upon: | * ICG-QSR’s templates and guidance * Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848 * EC’s reporting requirements |
| Task Manager: | * Co-convenors of ICG-MSFD and ICG-QSR * Collaborating with ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties, ICG-QSR and Secretariat |
| Target Date: | ICG-QSR meetings as appropriate |
| Reference: | ICG-MSFD(1)2021 summary record §§xx |
| Resources | ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties’ work |

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| **Product 4**  **2021-2023** | **Provide advice on aligning QSR products with Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848 as appropriate**. Including:   * Scale of assessments & national boundaries * Assessment units / Reporting units * QSR templates * QSR outputs and MSFD Art.8 reporting schema * Technical transfer of data to EEA |
| Based upon: | * Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848 * EC’s reporting requirements |
| Task Manager: | * Co-convenors (lead) * Collaborating with ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties, Secretariat Data Team and the European Environment Agency (EEA) |
| Target Date: | CoG meetings twice per year – report on progress and provide advice |
| Reference: | ICG-MSFD(1)2021 summary record §§xx |
| Resources | ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties’ work |

# Working Area 2: Environmental Targets and Measures (MSFD Art. 10, 13, 14)

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| **Product 5**  **2021-2023** | **Enhanced regional coordination of environmental targets and measures for non-indigenous species, marine litter and by-catch of mobile species that will be reported under the implementation of the MSFD**:   * Discussion of Art.14 (exceptions) in ICG-MSFD(1)2021 * An analysis of commonalities among Contracting Parties’ measures related to targets on non-indigenous species, marine litter and by-catch of mobile species, and the relation to NEAES work * Consider the feasibility of drafting common wording for use by Member States in their 2024 updates of Art.10 targets |
| Based upon: | * Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848 * MSFD requirements and Articles 10 and 14 |
| Task Manager: | Denmark (Asker Juul Aagren) and Sweden (Linda Rydell)  Supported by ICG-MSFD and Secretariat |
| Target Date: | ICG-MSFD(1)2021 |
| Reference: | ICG-MSFD(1)2021 summary record §§xx |
| Resources | ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties’ work |

# Working Area 3: Cross-cutting Issues

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| **Product 6**  **2020-2021** | **Update OSPAR regional plan to improve adequacy and coherence of MSFD implementation 2017-2019**. |
| Based upon: | * OSPAR’s Regional Plan to improve adequacy and coherence of MSFD implementation * European Commission’s Art. 12 assessment of the updates of Art. 8, 9 and 10 MSFD (2019) * Agreed outline and purpose by ICG-MSFD(1)2020 |
| Task Manager: | * Lead: Laure Ducommun (France) * Supported by Co-convenors NL and PT |
| Target Date: | * ICG-MSFD(1)2021 – final draft * CoG(1)2021 – final version for adoption |
| Reference: | ICG-MSFD(1)2020 summary record §§xx |
| Resources | ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties’ work |

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| **Product 7**  **2021-2023** | **Share information on cross-regional cooperation in relation to MSFD; in particular with other Regional Seas Conventions**. |
| Based upon: | * Information on HELCOM activities * Information on UNEP/MAP activities |
| Task Manager: | * HELCOM: Denmark, Germany and Sweden * UNEP/MAP: France and Spain |
| Target Date: | Regularly to ICG-MSFD meetings |
| Reference: | ICG-MSFD(1)2020 summary record §§xx-xx |
| Resources | ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties’ work |

# Working Area 4: Regular update of coherent MSFD implementation

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| **Product 8**  **2021-2023** | **Share national information on implementation and reporting of MSFD**:   * Art.8, 9 & 10 initial assessment, determination of GES and environmental targets * Art.11 monitoring programmes * Art.13 programmes of measures |
| Based upon: | * MSFD Articles 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13 * Questionnaires sent to Contracting Parties |
| Task Manager: | Secretariat |
| Target Date: | Regularly to ICG-MSFD meetings |
| Reference: | ICG-MSFD(1)2020 summary record §§xx-xx |
| Resources | ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties’ work |

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| **Product 9**  **2021-2023** | **Keep abreast of relevant developments in the EU MSFD CIS work that may affect the OSPAR contribution to the MSFD CIS**. |
| Based upon: | Information shared by the European Union, represented by the European Commission |
| Task Manager: | European Union represented by the European Commission |
| Target Date: | Regularly to ICG-MSFD meetings |
| Reference: | ICG-MSFD(1)2020 summary record §§xx-xx |
| Resources | ICG-MSFD Contracting Parties’ work |