

OSPAR STATEMENT, BBNJ, 4 April 2019

Thank you Madam President,

I'm very grateful for the opportunity to recall the example of OSPAR as a regional cooperation mechanism for the NEA which provides knowledge on its state and on impacts from human pressures, playing a major role in ensuring its CPs work together to deliver on collective commitments.

Our Assessment Portal consists of a repository of information, providing comprehensive assessments built upon measurable indicators with regard to a variety of marine features, including those under protection and associated conservation objectives.

OSPAR is committed to prevent/eliminate pollution and to protect the NEA against the adverse effects of a huge range of human activities, like cable-laying, dumping, dredging, scientific research, as its mandate comprises the conservation of marine biodiversity and the restoration of marine areas adversely affected. When and where human activities impacting on OSPAR maritime area fall outside its mandate, OSPAR consults competent organisations, through bilateral MoUs, but also through a multilateral dialogue platform which has been established together with NEAFC in 2014.

The objective of the collective arrangement is to promote the sharing of knowledge, in full consideration for respective competences of different bodies, and to enlarge the dialogue to as many competent authorities as possible. As mandates are specific to regions and sectors, OSPAR believes cross-sectoral and interregional communication is fundamental towards the implementation of the ecosystem approach, its main guiding principle.

With regard to ABMT, OSPAR has so far designated MPAs amounting to 6% of its maritime area, of which almost 9% are located in ABNJ. Currently OSPAR is working on a new MPA in ABNJ, aiming at protecting seabirds populations (in a vast area in the mid-Atlantic). Alongside with the internal development of its scientific foundation, a public process of "seeking the views" was launched by OSPAR last year. International and sectoral organisations competent for activities outside the scope of OSPAR (like fishing, shipping and deep-sea mining) were invited to provide information on current or potential activities having impact on the specific features in need of protection (seabird populations) and on possible management measures they may consider in the future under their respective mandates. Their input will contribute to reinforce the conservation objectives that OSPAR will determine for the MPA in question.

Finally, Madam President, OSPAR is currently assessing achievements of its decadal Environmental Strategy, whilst defining future directions for a new Strategy after 2020. The discussions under the guidance of this Conference are thus of utmost relevance to OSPAR's future work in the NEA.

Thank you

Susana Salvador

Executive Secretary OSPAR Commission
