OSPAR CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF THE NORTH-EAST ATLANTIC

MEETING OF THE BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE (BDC)

BRUSSELS (EUROPEAN COMMISSION): 26-30 MARCH 2007

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OSPAR CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF THE NORTH-EAST ATLANTIC

MEETING OF THE BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE (BDC)

BRUSSELS (EUROPEAN COMMISSION): 26-30 MARCH 2007

Summary Record

Opening of the Meeting

0.1 The 2007 meeting of the Biodiversity Committee (BDC) was held in Brussels at the kind invitation of the European Commission.

0.2 As a former representative of the EC to OSPAR and former Chairman of its Committee on Eutrophication (EUC), Mr Grant Lawrence, Director of Directorate D: Water, Chemicals and Cohesion, at DG Environment at the European Commission, was pleased to welcome delegates to Brussels.

0.3 Mr Lawrence informed the meeting about progress with the Marine Strategy Directive (MSD) which was currently undergoing the co-decision procedure in Council and in Parliament with the second reading taking place in the second half of this year. He pointed out that the work of the regional Conventions, such as OSPAR, will become increasingly important for the implementation of the Member States' obligations when this draft Directive becomes law. The draft Directive contains several provisions which are of direct relevance to the work of the Biodiversity Committee: the obligation to assess the status of the marine environment, including the impacts of human activities; the obligation to set out a determination of what constitutes 'good environmental status' in the regions, which could benefit from OSPAR work on EcoQOs; and the establishment of Marine Protected Areas, which can contribute to achieving the overall Directive's objective of 'good environmental status'.

0.4 Mr Lawrence noted that the protection of biodiversity in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction was receiving increased attention at both EU and international level and that existing possibilities for action should be fully exploited. In the longer term, the Commission considered that a specific legal framework should be developed on the basis of UNCLOS, to apply its general principles to the conservation of biodiversity and to specify actions and responsibilities. This work at global level should take into account the regional dimension not only for scientific but also for political reasons. The Commission would like to see that regional Conventions entitled to take action do so.

0.5 Mr Lawrence reiterated that the regional Conventions will be strongly involved in the implementation of the European Marine Strategy and he welcomed the initiative taken by OSPAR to prepare a discussion within OSPAR and with the other regional Conventions on how the work might evolve with the MSD.

0.6 He informed the meeting that at the Conference held in Brussels the previous week to launch the water information system for Europe there had been requests for action to protect waters against the effects of climate change. These efforts should not lose sight of the work developed by OSPAR on protection of water and biodiversity during the last 30 years.

0.7 Mr Lawrence wished BDC every success for its meeting and delegates a pleasant stay in Brussels.

Representation at the Meeting

0.8 The meeting was chaired by Dr Chris Vivian (United Kingdom), and was attended by representatives from the following:

a. ***Contracting Parties***

Belgium, the European Community (EC, represented by the European Commission), France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK);

b. ***Intergovernmental Observer Organisations***

the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);

c. ***Non-Governmental Observer Organisations***

BirdLife International, EUCC – The Coastal Union, the European Boating Association, KIMO International, the International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (OGP), the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Seas At Risk and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Apologies for absence had been received from Denmark. A list of participants is at Annex 1.

Agenda Item 1 - Adoption of the Agenda

BDC 07/1/1

1.1 The draft agenda for the meeting (BDC 07/1/1) was adopted without amendment. A copy of the agenda together with a list of documents presented to the meeting is at Annex 2. A list of actions arising from the meeting is at Annex 3.

Background Material

BDC 07/1/Info.1, BDC 07/1/Info.2, BDC 07/1/Info.3

1.2 BDC noted, as background information, the BDC 2006/2007 programme of work (BDC 07/1/Info.1).

1.3 The Secretariat drew BDC's attention to the summary of international meetings for the year 2006/7 within which a number of events of specific interest to BDC had been highlighted. Delegations were invited to introduce the outcome of these meetings at appropriate subsequent agenda items. Germany informed BDC that the Executive Secretary would be making a presentation at a European Expert Workshop "Countdown 2010 for Marine Ecosystems" organised by IUCN in Berlin on 18-20 April 2007 that would incorporate the outcomes of discussions held during BDC.

Agenda Item 2 –Ecological Quality Objectives (EcoQOs)

(BDC 07/2/1, BDC 07/2/1-Add.1, BDC 07/2/2, BDC 07/2/3, BDC 07/2/3-Add.1, BDC 07/2/4, BDC 07/2/5, BDC 07/2/6, BDC 07/2/7, BDC 07/2/8, BDC 07/2/Info.1, BDC 07/2/Info.2)

2.1 On the recommendation of BDC, OSPAR 2006 had adopted an agreement on the application of the EcoQO system in the North Sea setting out the actions to be undertaken in the period up to 2010 (BDC 07/2/Info.1)

Evaluating the results of the EcoQO system

2.2 BDC examined the progress made in relation to the arrangements agreed by MASH 2006 for work to produce evaluations of each EcoQO, which will form the basis of:

a. in 2008, a first evaluation of the results of the application of the EcoQO system, leading to

b. in 2009, an improved evaluation of the results of the EcoQO system, as a contribution to the QSR 2010.

2.3 BDC noted that the Secretariat had circulated guidance on reporting formats for the EcoQOs on seals and oiled guillemots in December 2006. The Netherlands reported that they had received data on oiled guillemots from Belgium and France but that the reporting deadline had been realigned to June each year for data collected in the preceding November to April period. The UK reported that they had received data on seals from France, Germany, Norway and the UK.

2.4 The UK had also received data from Norway on harbour porpoise. BDC noted that ASCOBANS were currently developing an assessment for harbour porpoise. However, the UK needed permission from

Contracting Parties before being able to make use of data collected under EC Regulation 812/2004. They suggested that each North Sea Contracting Party should submit to them data collected under EC regulation 812/2004 and give permission to use it.

2.5 The UK suggested that OSPAR should consider with ASCOBANS and the European Commission whether a joint request could be made to ICES to evaluate harbour porpoise bycatch (in the North Sea) and agreeing a frequency for such an evaluation. They pointed to periodic reviews undertaken by ASCOBANS of bycatch of all small cetacean species in the waters covered by that Agreement and the regular requests from the EU for advice from ICES on the status of small cetacean populations and bycatch issues. In the UK's view there appeared to be potential for saving resources and expert time by making these reporting processes more consistent and efficient. Given that relevant scientific expertise attends the ICES Working Group on Marine Mammals, and that group through the ICES Advisory Process provides bi-annual information to HELCOM on status and trends of seals in the Baltic, they suggested that ICES be asked to review seal populations in the North Sea on the alternate year to HELCOM.

2.6 During this discussion, Germany drew attention to the disparity between the current OSPAR EcoQO for harbour porpoise by-catch in the North Sea (below 1.7% of the best population estimate) and the commitment of North Sea Ministers under the Gothenburg Declaration to the development of fishing gear and fishing methods that will help minimise physical disturbance of the seabed and incidental by-catches of non-target fish, seabirds and other marine organisms and reduce by-catches of marine mammals to less than 1% of the best population estimate. The UK questioned whether the two targets were at the same level of aspiration and over the same time period and therefore whether there was any need to change the OSPAR target.

Further Development of the EcoQO system in the North Sea

2.7 The Netherlands presented on behalf of the Intersessional Correspondence Group on EcoQOs (ICG-EcoQO) proposals for the development of the EcoQO system in the North Sea covering the following issues (BDC 07/2/2):

a. embedding of monitoring of EcoQOs into the OSPAR Coordinated Environmental Monitoring Programme, i.e. the part of the monitoring under the JAMP that provides the framework to coordinate national marine monitoring programmes that are collecting information on a range of variables;

b. the development of EcoQOs in the context of the EC Marine Strategy Directive and the further development of the current suite of EcoQOs;

c. criteria for deciding on the status of an EcoQO (target, limit or indicator).

2.8 On the inclusion of EcoQOs in the CEMP, BDC noted that Contracting Parties were generally in support of the proposal. In discussion, the following points were noted:

a. the EcoQOs were intended to be based upon the OSPAR regions, yet the CEMP was a programme for the whole of the OSPAR area;

b. the EC reminded BDC of their interest in the process put in place by OSPAR for implementing and developing EcoQOs and their disappointment at the slow pace of progress. The idea of including monitoring in relation to specific EcoQOs in the CEMP was of interest but there might be benefit in using the period up to the next OSPAR Ministerial Meeting in 2010 to develop a more fully fledged integration of EcoQO monitoring into the OSPAR monitoring system both in the North Sea and the other OSPAR regions;

c. the Secretariat highlighted that any proposal for including EcoQOs or other aspects of BDC monitoring in the CEMP would require a careful consideration by ASMO of the current CEMP agreement.

2.9 On the relationship between the EcoQO system and the definition of good environmental status (GES) BDC noted that:

a. in the negotiations concerning the MSD, there were still some substantial differences between the Council and the Parliament positions on the generic descriptors of GES. It was therefore too early to draw any firm conclusions on how the current set of EcoQOs could be used within the

context of the MSD and whether, in the light of the MSD, additional EcoQOs were needed. However, within the next year the descriptors for GES were likely to become much clearer.

b. there are similarities between the EcoQO system and the GES of the MSD in that both systems aim to assess the quality of the marine environment and to set targets and objectives for different components of the ecosystem. The EcoQO system is therefore a natural starting point for any North Sea regional implementation of the MSD;

c. OSPAR's experiences in applying EcoQOs in the North Sea could be used to facilitate the definition of GES. This should give an added impetus to the development of evaluations of the results of the EcoQO system in the North Sea that OSPAR will prepare in 2008 and 2009. However it would also be important for there to be experience from other areas of the OSPAR maritime area on EcoQOs or other systems of objectives on which to build;

d. HELCOM were developing a set of Ecological Objectives to reflect a common vision of a healthy Baltic Sea in the context of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP), e.g. clear water, no excessive algal blooms and natural distribution of plants and animals, which would aim to provide a common understanding of good environmental status. The BSAP was intended to provide the basis for implementation of the EMS (BDC 07/2/Info.2); and

e. Iceland noted that, while they saw value in the work on EcoQOs in the North Sea, the application of EcoQOs in other parts of the OSPAR maritime area should be the result of work specific to those areas and decisions taken in connection with those areas.

2.10 BDC noted that further consideration of the proposed criteria for deciding on the status of the EcoQOs was needed by the ICG-EcoQOs, taking advantage of previous material developed by ICES in the context of the work on EcoQOs. It was noted that metrics on which all EcoQOs were based were indicators and that the main discussion should be on the definitions for targets and limits. There was also a need to consider how to harmonise the EcoQO lexicon with the MSD terminology..

2.11 BDC asked a drafting group to develop a working plan during the meeting for work by the ICG-EcoQO to address the issues raised in connection with GES and EcoQOs and the definitions of targets and limits.

EcoQO Handbook

2.12 BDC 2006 had agreed that an EcoQO Handbook should be developed to be used in connection with the agreement on the application of the EcoQO system. The handbook should be made available on the OSPAR website and be updated when new material becomes available. MASH 2006 had proposed that the handbook should be separated into two parts: an easily readable non-specialist guide to the EcoQO system and a more specialist technical handbook for those involved in implementation of EcoQOs.

2.13 Norway presented, on behalf of The Netherlands and themselves: "Ecological Quality Objectives – Working towards a healthy North Sea" (BDC 07/2/3), which had been developed as Part A of the EcoQO Handbook to inform non-specialists about the overall EcoQO process using non-technical language on the aims of each EcoQO and how they will collectively contribute to an overall assessment of the North Sea.

2.14 BDC welcomed the draft document and noted that the European Commission, Germany and ICES proposed editorial and technical improvements to the draft document.

2.15 The Secretariat presented Part B of the EcoQO Handbook, which had been developed as a more technical description of the implementation of the EcoQOs, on the basis of the implementation documents presented by lead countries at BDC 2006. MASH 2006 had suggested a restructuring and broadening of a first version of the document to include aspects such as the link with the EMS/MSD, quality assurance and consequences of not meeting the EcoQO. BDC noted that material on some of these items would come forward as part of the lead country evaluations to be presented at MASH 2007.

Conclusions

2.16 In the light of the above discussions on the application of the EcoQO system in the North Sea, BDC agreed:

a. on the terms of reference at Annex 4 for work by the ICG-EcoQO during the period 2007/2008;

b. on the **revised arrangements at Annex 5 for the preparation of the evaluations of the results of the application of the EcoQO system**;

c. to invite **the Secretariat to explore with ICES, the EC and ASCOBANS the possibilities for developing a standing bi-annual request to ICES to develop appropriate advice on seal populations in the North Sea and an evaluation of bycatch of harbour porpoises, including an estimate from ICES on the potential costs of such a request**. **The Secretariat indicated that they would report on progress to the HOD May 2007 meeting;**

d. to invite ASMO to explore how monitoring in relation to EcoQOs could be incorporated into the framework of the CEMP and to report to OSPAR 2007 on their conclusions;

e. to recommend to OSPAR 2007 that the document "Ecological Quality Objectives – Working towards a healthy North Sea" should be published on the OSPAR website, subject to the **further development of the report by the Netherlands and Norway to include the amendments proposed at the meeting by the European Commission, Germany and ICES.**

f. to recommend to OSPAR 2007 that the document presented as Part B of the EcoQO Handbook should be published on the OSPAR website as the EcoQO Handbook, subject to **further work by the Secretariat, in consultation with the relevant lead countries to address to the extent possible the additional sections proposed by MASH 2007.** Following publication, there would also be a need to update the document in the light of the evaluation of the EcoQO system in 2008.

EcoQOs under development

2.17 The Secretariat presented an overview of the state of play with EcoQOs under development (BDC 07/2/4). They drew attention to the need for further lead countries to take forward work on the EcoQOs for kittiwake breeding success and the density of sensitive (e.g. fragile) species in the North Sea.

2.18 BDC welcomed the confirmation from **the Netherlands that they would take forward the development of a background document on the EcoQO for plastic particles in fulmars**.

Seabird population trends

2.19 Germany as lead country presented a progress report on the development of the EcoQO for seabird population trends (BDC 07/2/5). In their work Germany were drawing on the work of the ICES Working Group on Seabird Ecology. They drew attention to the difficulties of addressing a variety of seabird species, with different ranges and feeding habits, which meant that the development of a seabird EcoQO was in fact the development of a suite of indicators for various seabird groupings, under a single umbrella. Thus, it was considerably more complex than the development of a single-species EcoQO. To help the work move forward Germany proposed that OSPAR request ICES to carry out work on the development of the EcoQO and noted that WGSE had commented that the best means of expediting the work would be a dedicated study group or workshop separate to the annual meetings of WGSE, which already had a busy agenda, with an enlarged set of delegates, taking into account participants at the 2006 European Seabird indicator Workshop.

2.20 Germany indicated that they were investigating the possibilities for making a financial contribution to such an event.

2.21 ICES indicated that before such an event it would be important for BDC to advise on whether they wanted to develop one EcoQO for seabird population trends or a range of metrics for various seabirds.

2.22 BDC agreed to propose to ASMO that a request for development work on the EcoQO for seabird population trends should be included in the 2008 ICES Work Programme (see § 9.3) and, noting the comments from ICES WGSE, invited **the Secretariat to investigate the costs of such an event**.

Contaminants in Seabird Eggs

2.23 BDC examined a draft Background document on the EcoQOs on contaminants in seabird eggs, which had been developed by the Common Wadden See Secretariat as a contribution to work under the ASMO work programme (BDC 07/2/6). The report included a proposal for a pilot project in 2008-2009 with the intention of developing results that could be used in the QSR 2010.

2.24 In discussion, the following comments were noted:

a. the conclusions of the document on the EcoQO could be set out better;

b. in response to questions over comments made by the UK at SIME on a national problem with the use of seabirds eggs as a matrix, the UK indicated that provided proper handling procedures were followed there were no national restrictions on the use of the matrix;

c. with regard to participation in the proposed pilot project:

(i) Belgium reported that they would start a pilot project on monitoring of organochlorines in seabird eggs in 2007. The study would be part of a larger project in which eggs from the Common Tern would be collected according to OSPAR guidelines, from a colony near Zeebrugge and analysed for a range of contaminants. The results would be made available for OSPAR purposes;

(ii) Germany would continue to contribute through the work in the Wadden Sea;

(iii) the Netherlands were prepared to do the monitoring for one year provided there was then an evaluation of the added value of this matrix in comparison to sediments and biota;

(iv) Norway would be in a position to provide samples but would not be able to carry out the analyses;

(v) Sweden were operating two monitoring sites which were not mentioned in the report and would check on the possibilities for contributing to the pilot project.

(vi) the UK would need to check on whether they had the capacity to participate.

2.25 BDC invited **the Secretariat to bring the comments above to the attention of ASMO 2007**.

Development of EcoQO systems in areas beyond the North Sea

2.26 OSPAR 2006 had noted that the BDC 2006/2007 work programme included the development of conclusions on whether to develop EcoQO systems for parts of the OSPAR maritime area other than the North Sea and had invited the Secretariat to prepare a preliminary analysis of the applicability of the North Sea EcoQOs in the other regions of the OSPAR Maritime Area for examination by MASH 2006. MASH had consolidated this analysis and drawn a number of conclusions on the use of the North Sea in other OSPAR regions and the development of other systems of EcoQOs. BDC noted that:

a. several of the EcoQOs developed for the North Sea do not apply to other regions;

b. the threats for some of the North Sea EcoQOs are not relevant to all the regions;

c. for some EcoQOs there may be a need to use different species as comparable indicators for different regions;

d. during the identification and selection of EcoQOs applicable to areas beyond the North Sea there was a need to consider in particular:

(i) the selection of those EcoQOs that might be applicable across the whole OSPAR maritime area;

(ii) the selection of those EcoQOs which may help EU Contracting Parties in fulfilling the requirements that may derive from the European Marine Strategy (EMS);

(iii) the costs and benefits of EcoQOs

2.27 BDC noted that at MASH Portugal had offered to lead further work on identifying the most appropriate EcoQOs in Regions I, III, IV and V, assisted by EUCC with Ireland, Norway and Spain and any

other relevant Contracting Party with a view to presenting first proposals at MASH 2007. EUCC had offered to seek funding to enable the development of a project to assist this work. BDC noted that EUCC had alerted Portugal, the incoming and outgoing chairs of MASH and the Secretariat of the opportunity to seek funding under the EC 7th Framework RTD Programme (Research theme: Dynamic of marine ecosystem in a changing environment) for a research project to support the work on developing EcoQO systems.

2.28 BDC noted that Portugal were not in a position to report at the meeting on the progress of their planning of this project and that it was probably too late to initiate the preparation of an effective proposal for funding under the 7th Framework programme before the May deadline.

2.29 BDC agreed to:

a. welcome an offer from **Ireland, Spain and Portugal to seek further possibilities for funding to assist this work and to report to MASH 2007 on any progress made**;

b. welcome the offer from **the Netherlands to assist this work with their experience on EcoQOs within the framework of the ICG-EcoQO**.

EcoQO Communications Strategy

2.30 The Secretariat introduced BDC 07/2/8 setting out an explanation of proposals for an OSPAR-wide Communications Strategy that will include specific elements on key OSPAR products, including EcoQOs, to be communicated to stakeholders. HOD November 2006 recognised the need for an upgraded website presence, together with other communications tools, in preparation for launching the QSR 2010. The meeting noted a proposal to make a presentation on EcoQOs at the ICES Symposium scheduled for November 2007.

2.31 In response to an invitation from the Secretariat to indicate communication priorities within a future OSPAR Communications Strategy, BDC noted the usefulness of a dedicated section within the OSPAR website. It was agreed that this should be attractive with images of marine species and habitats and appropriate links to other bodies and projects. For example, the MESH project (www.searchMESH.net/webGIS) provided an excellent overview of developments in marine habitat mapping. Germany stated that it was important to communicate progress in establishing the OSPAR MPA network with appropriate access to the OSPAR MPA database and links to mapping by UNEP and the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA-marine). The Netherlands suggested that the website should emphasise the ecosystem approach, using relevant images that would appeal to stakeholders. The intention for the Communications Strategy to highlight EcoQOs remains a key ambition and is linked to the aspiration to harmonise OSPAR work with the requirements of the proposed Marine Strategy Directive. BDC recognised the broad expertise of OSPAR Observer organisations in this area and noted the opportunity to encourage their further involvement. In the margins of the meeting Ireland kindly provided the Secretariat with details of a supplier of marine images.

2.32 The Netherlands introduced a fan/brochure, produced together with Norway, and printed in English, Dutch and Norwegian. This product features clear messages explaining EcoQOs and less advanced EcoQOs and is intended to enlarge support and awareness of the concept. It was agreed that a supply of the fan/brochures would be held by the Secretariat for distribution at appropriate events. Examples of simple, attractive EcoQO leaflets had also been produced and the intention to prepare a plan to design an EcoQO webpage for any new website was included within the ICG-EcoQO terms of reference for 2007/8.

Agenda Item 3 – Report of the Working Group on Marine Protected Areas and Species and Habitats (MASH 2006)

BDC 07/3/1-Rev.1, BDC 07/3/2, BDC 07/3/3, BDC 07/3/4, BDC 07/3/5, BDC 07/3/5-Add.1, BDC 07/3/6, BDC 07/3/7, BDC 07/3/8, BDC 07/3/9, BDC 07/3/10, BDC 07/3/11, BDC 07/3/12, BDC 07/3/13, BDC 07/3/14, BDC 07/3/15, BDC 07/3/15-Add.1, BDC 07/3/16-Rev.1, BDC 07/3/17, BDC 07/3/18, BDC 07/3/19, BDC 07/3/Info.1

General

3.1 The chairman of MASH, Dr Henning von Nordheim (Germany), presented the report on the outcome of MASH 2006 (BDC 07/3/1-Rev. 1), held in The Azores, Portugal (2-5 October 2006). BDC noted the issues specified in the report and agreed on the MASH activities and documents upon which BDC had been invited to take action as indicated below.

Species and habitats in need of protection

Actions and measures for the protection of species and habitats

3.2 Germany presented a document summarising international actions and measures currently being taken with regard to species and habitats on the Initial OSPAR List as a basis for the identification of priority actions and measures that could be taken by OSPAR (BDC 07/3/2). A draft list of possible actions which OSPAR could take was identified, such as developing monitoring guidelines (to improve assessment of the status of the feature across the Maritime Area); codes of conduct (which could, in some circumstances, be included as an OSPAR Recommendation or Decision for sector-oriented measures); guidance documents to relevant authorities; MPAs (to sustain species or habitats); EcoQOs (for improved monitoring and response, as well as monitoring ecosystem health), directed programmes and/or measures (species reintroduction, habitat recovery, etc.); and raising public awareness (media work). Germany invited Contracting Parties to provide comments on the document and consider how the work could be further developed

3.3 BDC welcomed the document prepared by Germany and thanked them for stepping in to take the lead on the work following the withdrawl of the Netherlands as lead country and noted that they would act as lead country only until the finalisation of the current document and its presentation at MASH 2007. In discussion the following points were noted:

a. there was a need to amplify further in the document the role of OSPAR in providing a framework for Contracting Parties to address common problems;

b. the UK were willing to assist Germany with the further development of the document and France had a number of comments, which they would submit in a written form.

3.4 The Netherlands presented a progress report on their work with the UK on analysing synergy in management measures for biodiversity (BDC 07/3/19). The work aimed to address the problem of having several policy instruments, directed towards one common goal, and to provide options for improving synergy between these policy instruments.

3.5 Following a short discussion, BDC agreed:

a. to invite **Contracting Parties to submit further comments to Germany by 30 June 2007, especially on missing information and the draft conclusions on key actions for OSPAR where there are no effective protections through other authorities**;

b. to invite **Germany to revise the document taking into account further comments with a view to its submission at MASH 2007**;

c. to invite **the Netherlands and the UK to take their work on synergy in management measures forward in consultation with Germany and to explore the possibilities for presenting the results to MASH 2007 as a contribution to the document prepared by Germany clearly illustrating the synergy and the added benefit of the two workstreams**;

d. to ask MASH to use the document prepared by Germany, together with the results of the project by the Netherlands and UK as the basis for identifying a priority list of actions and measures that could be taken to protect species and habitats on the Initial OSPAR List which are not being afforded effective protection through other authorities;

e. to ask MASH to develop to the extent possible arrangements for taking forward the development of most high priority actions and measures, concentrating on those actions and measures where OSPAR could add value;

f. to invite **Contracting Parties and Observers to actively consider how the work could be progressed following MASH 2007 and whether they could contribute to its further development**.

Code of conduct for Deep Sea/High Sea Research

3.6 BDC noted the progress made by Norway, in cooperation with other Contracting Parties, on developing guidelines for *in-situ* research and bioprospecting on cold-water coral reefs. BDC noted that the draft guidelines had been considered at a workshop on High Seas and Deep Sea Marine Protection organised by the Intersessional Correspondence Group on Marine Protected Areas which had included a number of active deep sea scientists as participants. As a result of this workshop, the ICG-MPA had developed a proposal for a correspondence group to extend the work being undertaken by Norway to cover all responsible marine scientific research in the High Seas/Deep Sea. (BDC 07/3/3).

3.7 BDC welcomed the proposal from the ICG-MPA and agreed to endorse the terms of reference at Annex 6 for the development of a Code of Conduct for responsible marine scientific research in the High Seas/Deep Sea and to include an appropriate product in the BDC work programme.

Protection of Cold-water corals

3.8 The Secretariat recalled the conclusions of BDC 2006 on the need to take further action with regard to the protection of cold-water corals on the Rockall Bank and to consider the case for the Hatton Bank. BDC noted that NEAFC had agreed at its 2006 Annual Meeting to close three areas within the NEAFC regulatory area on the Rockall Bank (the North West Rockall Flank, Logachev mounds and the West Rockall mounds) to bottom trawling and fishing with static gear from 2007 to 2009 to protect cold-water corals. NEAFC had agreed to implement a similar area closure on the Hatton Bank for the same period (BDC 07/3/4). NEAFC had also asked ICES to review the scientific evidence for cold-water corals in a further area on the Rockall Bank (SW Rockall) in the light of data from the Russian Federation. EC Regulation 41/2006 had closed both North West Rockall and Logachev Mounds (both within and outside the EEZ) on 20 January 2007.

3.9 BDC welcomed the progress on protection of cold-water corals on the Rockall and Hatton Banks and in the subsequent discussion the following points were noted:

a. the 2007 meeting of the ICES Working Group on Deep Sea Ecology had considered further evidence on cold-water corals on the Rockall and Hatton Bank. Their conclusions would be further considered at the ICES Advisory Committee on Ecosystems before being issued as official ICES advice to NEAFC;

b. WWF highlighted the need for BDC to keep a watch on all closures to protect cold-water corals in the OSPAR maritime area, not just those in the high seas and highlighted that WWF had produced a map of all cold-water coral closures. They also drew attention to the voluntary agreement on the closures in EC Waters adopted by the Scottish Fishermen's Federation;

c. the Executive Secretary drew attention to the continuing dialogue between OSPAR and NEAFC HODs indicating that a further meeting between the two sets of HODS was being considered for November 2007 and that the immediate concern for OSPAR were the four NEAFC closures in the deep seas of the OSPAR area (the Hekate seamount, the Faraday seamount, the Altair seamount, the Antialtair seamount, a section of the Reykjanes Ridge on the Mid Atlantic Ridge.), which NEAFC were due to review in 2007;

d. Germany, along with other Contracting Parties, welcomed the continuing dialogue between NEAFC and OSPAR and reported that the recent NEAFC performance review had recommended that one aspect that NEAFC needed to address was its relationship with OSPAR. However, one problem with the review of the NEAFC deep sea closures was the lack of scientific information on the habitats in the closed areas and it was important that a precautionary approach prevailed;

e. Vessel Monitoring System data indicated that fishing was still occurring in some of the five deep sea closed areas. ICES suggested that little pelagic fishing is known to occur over

seamounts in the deep seas and therefore there was a strong probability that some bottom trawling was still occurring;

f. several Contracting Parties were of the view that OSPAR should continue its dialogue with NEAFC on the inclusion of its closed areas in the OSPAR network of MPAs;

g. ICES highlighted that there was a distinction between the five deep sea areas and the Rockall and Hatton Bank where knowledge was relatively good;

h. the Netherlands highlighted that a more expert level dialogue between OSPAR and NEAFC might help to stimulate the discussions at HOD level.

3.10 Following this discussion, BDC considered the possibilities for organising a more expert-level dialogue between NEAFC and OSPAR and agreed to invite the **Executive Secretary**:

a. **to explore with his counterpart in NEAFC the possibilities for organising a joint expert level meeting between OSPAR, NEAFC and ICES representatives to consider, in particular, the four deep sea closures and the protection of other vulnerable deep water features** (see § 9.7);

b. **to consider whether such a meeting could be organised in conjunction with the next meeting of MASH**.

Nominations for the Initial OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats (IOL)

3.11 BDC 2006 had agreed arrangements for the further consideration of nominations for threatened and/or declining species. MASH 2006 had examined nominations for the addition to the IOL of nine bird species, ten fish species and two habitats. MASH agreed that the nominations should be revised to take into account any discussion at the meeting and forwarded to BDC 2007 to be considered further in the light of the results of the peer review by ICES.(BDC 07/3/5; BDC 07/3/5 Add.1). The review by ICES of the nominations was presented in BDC 07/3/6 Rev.1. A number of the supporting draft reviews prepared by ICES working groups were also provided to the meeting in paper form.

3.12 In an initial discussion on the review of the nominations a number of Contracting Parties expressed their concerns about an accelerated process for adding any new features to the IOL. The reviews by ICES were quite critical of some of the nominations received and there was a need to ensure that any addition to the list was properly evaluated and supported by the best available scientific evidence. There was also a need to give the appropriate priority to work on the management and protection of the existing features on the IOL and work on any additions.

3.13 Spain highlighted the need to consider species from the south of Europe which were relatively poorly represented on the IOL. The European Commission supported the work to extend the IOL and suggested that this should not necessarily mean additional work on management measures, as one measure might protect many species.

3.14 Following this discussion a drafting group comprising members of the delegations from Germany, Iceland, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, United Kingdom, BirdLife International and WWF with the support of ICES reviewed the nominations for additional threatened and or/declining species and habitats (BDC 07/3/5 Add.1) and the reviews of these prepared by ICES (BDC 07/3/6 Rev.1).

3.15 In the light of this review, BDC agreed on the conclusions indicated at Annex 7. These allocate the nominated features into three categories as follows:

a. *category A*: the species or habitat qualifies for inclusion in the Initial OSPAR List on the basis of fulfilling either decline criteria or being subject to threat;

b. *category B*: further evidence, or clarification of the evidence presented in the nominations, is needed;

c. *category C:* the evidence presented does not qualify the species or habitat for inclusion in the Initial OSPAR List and the nominations should not be accepted;

3.16 Iceland recalled that according to Annex V, OSPAR does not have competence nor authority to decide on recommendations or any management measures for fisheries. After studying ICES reviews of some of the

nominations to extend the initial OSPAR list, Iceland intended to put a study reservation on the following species: European eel; North-east Atlantic spurdog, gulper shark and the habitat coral gardens.

Arrangements for preparation of case reports

3.17 BDC noted the need for the inclusion of any species or habitats in the Initial OSPAR to be supported by the publication of case reports providing the justification for their identification as threatened and/or declining. In finalising these case reports there was a need to address the comments made by ICES to ensure that the case reports present the best available evidence. For the onward handling of the nominated species and habitats and the development of these case reports, BDC agreed on the following arrangements:

a. to inform OSPAR 2007 of the conclusions on species and habitats that qualify for inclusion in the Initial OSPAR List (category A) and that, given the importance of ensuring that any extension of the List is supported by the best evidence available, BDC has set in place arrangements to prepare the supporting case reports justifying the inclusion of these species in the Initial OSPAR List, with a view to the revised List and justification report being adopted by OSPAR 2008;

b. for species and habitats in category A, **the Contracting Party and/or Observer making the nomination should prepare a unified draft case report for further consideration at MASH 2007**, with a view to MASH recommending them to BDC 2008 for publication. In preparing these case reports the lead parties should seek to address the comments made in the reviews by ICES;

c. for the four bird species in category B:

   (i) **BirdLife International were invited to develop, with the support of information from Contracting Parties and other observers, revised nominations, including information on those issues where further evidence or clarification is required, and submit these to MASH 2007 for further consideration**;

   (ii) subject to approval by MASH, the revised nominations should be forwarded to ICES for a further peer review with the results to be made available six weeks before BDC 2008.

   (iii) to propose to ASMO that a request for peer review of the four revised nominations for threatened and/or declining bird species is included in the 2008 ICES Work Programme;

   (iv) BDC 2008 should consider, in the light of the review by ICES, whether the four bird species qualify for inclusion in the Initial OSPAR List;

   (v) to support the possible inclusion of the four bird species in the Initial OSPAR List, **BirdLife International, with the support of information from Contracting Parties and other observers, should be invited to prepare draft case reports for first consideration at MASH 2007**;

d. for the habitat "Coral Gardens", to invite **WWF to develop, in consultation with relevant experts, a more specific definition of the octocoral habitats as occurring or believed to occur in the North East Atlantic addressing the comments made in the review by ICES**. The revised definition should be submitted to MASH 2007 for approval. **WWF should also be invited to prepare a case report for the habitat for first consideration at MASH 2007.**

Use of the Texel- Faial Criteria in selecting species and habitats for the Initial OSPAR List

3.18 BDC noted the following questions over the application of the Texel-Faial Criteria, which arose during the ICES review process and the consideration of the nominations at BDC:

a. how to apply the decline criterion to populations of a species in areas at the edge of its geographical distribution range (where variance in abundance and occurrence might be expected than in the core of the range) or, one whose distribution is believed to be moving either in or out of the OSPAR maritime area;

b. the timespan over which evidence of a decline in population should be presented in order to satisfy the criteria, noting that ICES Working Groups found some of the analyses of decline in the nominations were based upon the use of inappropriate tools;

c. how to interpret whether an activity poses a clear threat to a feature;

d. whether evidence of either a decline in a feature or threats posed to a feature in one part of an OSPAR Region should qualify the feature for inclusion in the Initial OSPAR List;

e. improving the clarity of how the criteria should be applied to a sub-species or sub-divisions of a population of a species, noting that the Texel-Faial criteria do not refer to any sub-divisions of a species (e.g. sub-species, population or a stock);

f. how to make use of the remaining Texel-Faial criteria, i.e. for global importance, regional importance, rarity, sensitivity, keystone species/ecological significance;

g. how to encourage co-operation in the development of any future nominations in order to develop the best possible case.

3.19 BDC agreed to ask MASH 2007 to consider whether there is a need to revise the guidance on the use of the Texel Faial criteria to address these issues when selecting candidates for the Initial OSPAR List. If so, the timeframe in which the guidance should be revised should be specified

Compilation of further lists of species and habitats in need of protection

3.20 Germany presented a proposal developed with assistance from BirdLife International, for the development of a "second" list of priority species and habitats, that are not under threat or in decline, but meet the Texel Faial criteria for Global importance, Regional importance, Rarity, Sensitivity, Keystone species/Ecological significance(BDC 07/3/7). They suggested that the development of such list would contribute to other areas of BDC work on protection and conservation of biodiversity including EcoQOs and MPAs. Germany, Portugal, BirdLife International and WWF were prepared to take forward work on the development of this "second list".

3.21 BDC noted that several Contracting Parties did not see work on the development of a "second list" as a priority and were concerned that it would lead to further pressure on meeting time within the BDC framework. In discussion the following points were noted:

a. there were also concerns over the legal implications of developing a second list;

b. there was still a need to consider how to make use of the remaining Texel-Faial criteria which had taken several years to develop and had so far not been applied;

c. even though there had been no explicit use of the remaining Texel-Faial criteria they could contribute to the selection of management measures for the species and habitats on the IOL.

3.22 In the light of this discussion, BDC agreed:

a. there was insufficient support to include work on the development of a second priority list on the BDC work programme;

b. to ask MASH to consider how the remaining Texel Faial criteria could be applied and to invite Contracting Parties to consider this issue in advance.

Monitoring and assessment of species on the Initial OSPAR List

3.23 BDC noted that MASH 2006 had considered the organisation of work on monitoring and assessing the species and habitats on the Initial OSPAR List, including:

a. the assessment by 2009 of the status of the species and habitats that have been placed on the Initial OSPAR List (JAMP Product BA-4), for which final draft assessments of the species and habitats on the Initial OSPAR List would need to be ready by MASH 2008; and

b. monitoring strategies for the types of species and habitats that have been placed on the OSPAR List of threatened and/or declining species and habitats (JAMP Product BM-3b). These should outline data collection activities needed to enhance the information base in the period between the 2009 assessment and the next major JAMP assessment.

3.24 The Secretariat presented a guidance document, developed in collaboration with Germany, the Netherlands and UK, which was intended to assist lead countries for species and habitats in their work contributing to these products (BDC 07/3/8).

3.25 The UK presented a draft assessment of Horse Mussel (*Modiolus modiolus*) beds which followed the template for the JAMP BA-4 assessment set out in the guidance document (BDC 07/3/9). The assessment focused primarily on the status of Horse Mussel beds around the UK and needed to be augmented by data from other Contracting Parties.

3.26 In a short discussion, the following points were noted:

a. Belgium, European Commission and UK suggested amendments to the guidance document;

b. Germany suggested that the UK's assessment document would benefit from an executive summary;

c. BirdLife International offered to consider capacities to prepare a monitoring and assessment strategy for the Roseate tern (*Sterna dougallii)* by MASH 2007. Ireland offered to assist them with this work as a joint lead;

d. Belgium confirmed they would prepare a monitoring and assessment strategy for oysters and oyster beds.

3.27 Following this, BDC agreed:

a. to adopt the guidance document at Annex 8 on monitoring and assessment strategies for species and habitats on the Initial OSPAR List;

b. to urge **lead countries to make use of the guidance document in preparing monitoring and assessment strategies for MASH 2007**, **focusing on preparing an**:

(i) **initial "skeleton" outline of the assessment of the species/habitat to be prepared as a contribution to the JAMP BA-4 assessment in 2008/2009**;

(ii) **a recommended monitoring system, which would enhance the information base on the status of the species/habitat for the next JAMP assessment after 2009, identifying both the needs for further data and information to contribute to the 2009 assessment and the additional data streams that would enhance future assessments**;

c. in the light of these documents, to invite MASH to:

(i) develop initial conclusions on the recommended monitoring strategies for the species and habitats;

(ii) clarify arrangements for the finalisation of the draft JAMP assessments in time for MASH 2008, including those species and habitats for which there is currently no lead country, covering, as necessary, the exchange of data and information between Contracting Parties, and the development of the final JAMP assessment by BDC 2009;

d. to invite **Contracting Parties having Horse Mussel beds in their waters to submit the necessary information to the UK** to assist them in developing their assessment.

Framework for biodiversity monitoring and assessment

3.28 The UK presented a proposal for a strategic approach to identifying how the biodiversity monitoring and assessment requirements for the OSPAR area might be achieved, taking account of pressures from human activities, the EcoQO system, the IOL, the OSPAR network of MPAs and the proposed EC MSD (BDC 07/3/10). The document pointed to under-representation of biodiversity issues in the JAMP and a lack of unifying strategic approach towards the monitoring and assessment of the issues covered by BDC.

3.29 Following an initial discussion in plenary, during which a number of Contracting Parties welcomed the UK's proposal, a sub-group comprising Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, UK and the Secretariat considered how the proposal might be further developed.

3.30 In the discussion the following points were noted:

a. the sub-group agreed that the framework outlined in the paper offered a good basis on which to make progress;

b. the matrix of ecosystem components against impacts from human activities (annex to BDC 07/3/10) needed comment from MASH and EIHA to ensure the components listed are suitable for further use. Consideration of ecosystem functioning was necessary;

c. it would be helpful to include in the matrix suitable indicators from other forums (e.g. WFD) to reflect the wide range of other work that is already being undertaken;

d. to provide an improved illustration of how the work to identify priorities for monitoring could be achieved, it would be useful to develop some worked examples for particular ecosystem components and threats and to present these to MASH and EIHA;

e. it would be most important that EIHA contribute to this work as the approach is intended to better integrate biodiversity monitoring issues with those of human activities;

f. there needs to be a balance between monitoring against threats and monitoring the ecosystem to ensure that indirect effects and cumulative effects of human activities, and the influence of climate change are not missed in any overall monitoring strategy.

3.31 In the light of the work of the subgroup, BDC agreed that:

a. **BDC heads of delegation and observers should provide comments to the UK on the proposal in BDC 07/3/10 by 30 June 2007**. It is recommended that both MASH and EIHA delegates consider the proposal, particularly the set of ecosystem components and impacts of human activities;

b. the paper should be presented to ASMO 2007 for their consideration, particularly to reflect on the approach in relation to the work of other Committees;

c. the **ICG-EcoQO should comment on the paper by 30 June 2007** taking into account how the approach might contribute to their work to develop further the EcoQO system and;

d. on the basis of comments received from Contracting Parties and observers by 30 June 2007, and from ASMO, **the UK should further develop the paper, and prepare worked examples to illustrate how the process of identifying monitoring priorities could work and the additional indicators from other forums**;

e. a revised paper should be presented to EIHA 2007 and MASH 2007 and on the basis of their comments to MASH should consider whether there is a need for an expert meeting to further develop the approach.

Habitat mapping

3.32 The UK presented a report on the progress of the OSPAR habitat mapping programme, including improved maps of the distribution of *Lophelia pertusa* reefs, a description of the uses and limitations of the habitat mapping data and information on the progress with the Interreg funded project on Mapping of European Seabed Habitats (MESH) (BDC 07/3/11). A presentation on the MESH project and its major achievements was made by the UK. BDC welcomed the presentation and noted the usefulness of the mapping data that was now available to contribute to OSPAR's work including the QSR.

3.33 With regard to addressing gaps in the coverage of the programme, BDC noted that France were working on providing data and Spain were planning to submit records on deep sea sponge aggregations, *Zostera* beds and seamounts.

3.34 BDC welcomed the improved maps of the distribution of *Lophelia pertusa* reefs and agreed that they were now ready for use in communicating with other authorities.

3.35 In view of the need for habitat distribution data for the JAMP BA-4 assessments, BDC urged **Contracting Parties who had still to submit their data, or to confirm particular habitats did not occur in their waters, to do so by 31 July 2007** or as soon as practical thereafter.

Marine Protected Areas

3.36 BDC noted the report of the meeting of the ICG-MPA held at the offices of the OSPAR Secretariat on 5-7 February 2007, which had finalised the second report on the status of the OSPAR network of MPAs, considered the development of approaches for assessing ecological coherence and management effectiveness

and held a workshop with deep sea scientists on the identification of areas in the high seas in need of protection (BDC 07/3/Info.1).

Identification and selection of MPAs

3.37 Germany presented a second status report on the OSPAR Network of Marine Protected Areas describing the progress made by Contracting Parties in reporting on the identification and selection of MPAs during 2006 (BDC 07/3/12). The main development had been the reporting by Portugal of 6 new MPAs in the Azores, including 2 sites in the EEZ and one on the extended continental shelf.

3.38 BDC welcomed the report and noted that the following recommendations endorsed by OSPAR 2006 still applied:

a. that Contracting Parties should prioritise the work on identification and selection of OSPAR MPAs and endeavour to develop clear timelines for their reports of MPAs;

b. to achieve the aims set out for the OSPAR network of MPAs in Recommendation 2003/3:

(i) the size of the OSPAR network of MPAs needs to be increased substantially;

(ii) sites further offshore and especially in the Contracting Parties' EEZs should be selected;

(iii) to fully address the OSPAR selection criteria for MPAs, Contracting Parties should begin the process of identifying and selecting sites beyond existing Natura 2000 areas;

(iv) OSPAR should intensify its efforts to identify sites in need of protection in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

3.39 With regard to the prospects for the further development of the network during 2007, BDC noted that:

a. Denmark had recently reported 18 MPAs to the lead country including 7 within the Danish EEZ. These would be reported on in detail in the next MPA status report;

b. Iceland reported they were planning work during 2007 to report five areas with cold-water coral reefs, which had been closed to fishing since 2005, as OSPAR MPAs, a further area covering a hydrothermal vent field and the marine area around the volcanic island of Surtsey.

c. Ireland reported that they hoped to be in a position to submit a first report on selected MPAs by MASH 2007

3.40 BDC welcomed the intentions expressed by these Contracting Parties and agreed:

a. that **Contracting Parties should submit any amendments to the section on future MPA nominations in the MPA report to Germany by 30 April**;

b. to recommend the report to OSPAR 2007 for publication on the OSPAR website, subject to revision to reflect any amendments received;

c. to urge **Contracting Parties to endeavour to submit reports on any further MPAs selected during 2007 to Germany six weeks before MASH 2007**.

MPA nomination database

3.41 Germany provided a brief progress report on the OSPAR MPA nomination database including the latest progress on linking the OSPAR database and the HELCOM BSPA database. The possibilities for integration of the two data bases were currently limited, and as a temporary measure a co-housing arrangement was suggested that would bring the two databases together in one overall package but preserved the table structure of both databases (BDC 07/3/13).

3.42 In response to a question from Sweden on whether the co-housing would be a permanent solution, Germany explained that the main obstacles were the resources needed to develop a better solution, however, for Contracting Parties reporting to both HELCOM and OSPAR it might be possible to explore the development of a single import routine.

3.43 BDC thanked Germany for their continued work on managing the MPA data and agreed:

a. to invite **Germany to explore the possibilities for developing a single OSPAR-HELCOM import mechanism**;

b. to endorse the revisions at Annex 1 of BDC 07/3/1 Rev.1 to the nomination proforma in the OSPAR Guidelines on Identification and Selection of MPAs to ensure consistency with the OSPAR nomination database;

c. for use in reporting the area of a site selected as a component of the OSPAR network of MPAs, to endorse the description, at Annex 2 of BDC 07/3/1 Rev.1, of the landward limit of the maritime area.

Ecological Coherence of the MPA network

3.44 Germany presented a background document on the assessment of whether the OSPAR network of MPAs is ecologically coherent, which was intended to be used as support for the development of procedures to assess the ecological coherence of the OSPAR MPA Network (BDC 07/3/14). BDC noted that the principles in the guidance adopted by BDC 2006 on developing an ecologically coherent network of OSPAR marine protected areas and proposals from the UK to MASH 2005 had been incorporated into this document grouped under four overarching assessment criteria: adequacy/viability, representativity, replication, and connectivity. BDC noted that HELCOM in collaboration with the EU Interreg IIIB project BALANCE held a workshop on ecological coherence 25th -27th of October, 2006, in Helsinki, Finland, and organised discussion under the same four assessment criteria (BALANCE 2006).

3.45 The UK said they could agree to the paper subject to the clarification that the OSPAR-wide review of ecological coherence will be carried out at the OSPAR area or regional level. This was accepted.

3.46 BDC welcomed the background document prepared by Germany and agreed

a. to recommend to OSPAR 2007 that it should be published on the OSPAR website;

b. to urge **Contracting Parties make use of the background document in their work to contribute to an ecologically coherent OSPAR network of MPAs**;

c. to endorse the conclusions and recommendations in § 9-17 of BDC 07/3/14, subject to amendments proposed by UK and Ireland, and invite **the Secretariat to incorporate these into an introductory text in the published document**.

3.47 BDC considered a document presented by Germany explaining three approaches that could be considered in the development of the work on assessing ecological coherence: a self assessment based on expert knowledge (developed by Germany), a species and habitat matrix based on reporting (developed by the UK) and a spatial assessment based on GIS data (developed by Germany) (BDC 07/3/15). Germany also presented a rapid self assessment check list which was intended to support the development of best practices in MPA network design (BDC 07/3/15 Add.1).

3.48 The Netherlands expressed their preference for pursuing an approach for assessment of ecological coherence somewhere between the rapid self assessment approach and the more expansive species and habitat matrix but urged simplification and illustration of the latter approach. The UK highlighted the need for clarification of the data needs associated with the GIS approach. Germany highlighted the need to explore what data was available.

3.49 In the light of this, BDC agreed:

a. to ask MASH to consider the three approaches further and invite the proponents to submit their documents in good time to allow for their detailed consideration;

b. to invite **the UK to elaborate the species and habitat matrix approach with worked examples**;

c. to invite **Germany to circulate a short questionnaire to Contracting Parties with a view to identifying what spatial data Contracting Parties might be in a position to make available**;

d. that the MPA Network Rapid Self Assessment Checklist (BDC 07/3/15 Add.1) should be adopted as a tool to assist Contracting Parties with network design and published on the OSPAR website, subject to editorial amendments to address comments made by Ireland;

e. to **urge Contracting Parties to make use of the self-assessment checklist in future assessments of ecological coherence and other factors influencing the effectiveness of the MPA network**;

f. that the self-assessment checklist should be submitted to HELCOM for the attention of their HABITAT committee.

Management of OSPAR MPAs

3.50 BDC agreed that a score card developed by the UK on the management effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas should be adopted as tool for use by Contracting Parties in the self-assessment of management effectiveness of OSPAR Marine Protected Areas(BDC 07/3/16 Rev.1) and urged Contracting Parties to apply it in their management of MPAs. BDC agreed that the scorecard should be submitted to HELCOM for the attention of their HABITAT committee. BDC noted that further tools for assessment of the extent to which the OSPAR network is well managed may need to be developed should Contracting Parties wish to carry out more in-depth assessments.

3.51 BDC noted that the UK had not been able to prepare guidance on practical activities to be undertaken with other authorities to achieve a common standard of good management across the network but were planning to bring a document forward to MASH 2007

3.52 BDC agreed that a background document on management of cross-border MPAs, prepared by WWF should be recommended to OSPAR 2007 for publication on the OSPAR website (BDC 07/3/17) and that BDC 2009 should review the need to revise the document in the light of further experience. The document provides an overview of existing European and international legal and policy frameworks for the management of Transboundary Marine Protected Areas. BDC thanked WWF for their work on this document.

Communication with stakeholders on MPAs

3.53 BDC noted that at MASH 2006 Spain had taken the lead for the development of guidance on good practice in communicating with stakeholders on MPAs. Spain had experienced difficulties in obtaining input to the work from Contracting Parties in spite of issuing two requests. To take the work forward Spain proposed to develop a theoretical document based on a literature review of existing reports, studies and experiences and to organise a workshop in September 2007, with the aim of exchanging basic information on experience gained and developing the required guidance. (BDC 03/6/18)

3.54 BDC thanked Spain for taking on the role of task manager for the work and in discussion the following points were noted:

a. the development of a literature review as the basis for the work was welcomed;

b. with a view to minimising travel costs, it was queried whether it would be possible to hold the proposed workshop on a date adjacent to the European Symposium on MPAs as tool for fisheries management which was to be held in Murcia, Spain (25-29 September 2007) or whether Spain could explore with the organisers of the Murcia symposium the possibilities for organising a session on stakeholder communication. Spain explained that they had no direct connection to the organisers of the Murcia symposium but would contact them to consider the latter possibility;

c the Netherlands Sweden and the UK indicated that they would attend the proposed workshop, especially if it was held at a similar time to the symposium in Murcia. Germany indicated that if this was they case they would also attend.

3.55 BDC agreed:

a. to invite **Spain to take forward the work on developing a literature review as the basis for the guidance and to circulate this for comment by MASH HODs before 1 July 2007**;

b. to invite **Spain to give further consideration to the organisation of the workshop and to explore the possibilities for coordination with the Murcia MPA symposium** and, if necessary and in consultation with the Secretariat, to circulate revised terms of reference.

Agenda Item 4 – Report of the Working Group on the Environmental Impact of Human Activities (EIHA 2006)

General

4.1 The Chairman of EIHA 2006, Ms Brigitte Lauwaert (Belgium) reported on the outcome of the meeting of the working group on the assessment of the impact of human activities (EIHA) held in Galway (Ireland) (7-9 November 2006) (BDC 07/4/1). BDC noted the issues specified in the report and agreed on the EIHA activities and documents upon which BDC had been invited to take action as indicated below.

4.2 In the light of the number of assessments on human activities for the purposes of the JAMP product BA-5 prepared by task managers, a drafting group met in the margins of the meeting of BDC to make proposals on the best way of preparing or finalising the suite of assessment reports taking account of the comments received from MAQ(1) 2007.

Dumping of wastes and other material

OSPAR Report on Dumping of Wastes at Sea in 2005

4.3 BDC noted the 2005 Report on Dumping of Wastes at Sea which incorporated the new data and corrections submitted by Contracting Parties after EIHA 2006 (BDC 07/4/2). Spain announced that they would send corrections to table 1 and a new map on dumping sites for 2005.

4.4 In presenting the draft assessment report for 2003 - 2004 - 2005 (BDC 07/4/2 Add.1), Rona Vink, as the leader of the Expert Assessment Panel (EAP), stressed that the data on contaminant loads submitted by Contracting Parties was not complete.

4.5 BDC noted that it was likely that the meeting of EIHA 2007 would take place earlier than in other years due to commitments undertaken by the host country to hold meetings of the Barcelona Convention. Those Contracting Parties who had been late in submitting their data this year apologised for the inconvenience created to the EAP and announced that they would do their best to comply with an even earlier date.

4.6 BDC agreed:

a. that **the Secretariat and the EAP should revise the 2005 draft Report on Dumping of Wastes at Sea in BDC 07/4/2 and the assessment of the 2003-2004-2005 dumping reports in the light of the corrections and additions to be submitted by Contracting Parties by 30 April 2007**;

b. to adopt and recommend to OSPAR 2007 for publication on the OSPAR website the revised draft Report on Dumping of Wastes at Sea in 2005, together with the revised assessment of the 2003-2004-2005 reports;

c. that **Contracting Parties should submit their 2006 data on Dumping of Wastes at Sea by 1 September 2007**, so that EIHA 2007 could consider and adopt a complete 2006 Report at its meeting in early October 2007.

Assessment of the reports on dumping of waste for the JAMP

4.7 The Netherlands presented an outline for preparing the JAMP assessment of the environmental impact of dumping activities (BDC 07/4/3). BDC noted that MAQ had recommended this assessment should go beyond the absolute amount of wastes dumped to consider the intensity of dumping of waste in different coastal waters (e.g. a map indicating these pressures would be illustrative).

4.8 Following proposals from the drafting group on this document in response to the comments received from MAQ, BDC agreed on the following arrangements for finalising the JAMP assessment report of dumping activities in the OSPAR maritime area in order to fit the QSR needs:

a. **Contracting Parties should send by 1 July 2007 coordinates of all dump sites used during the past 10 years in decimal degrees (WGS 84). Where it is not possible to provide coordinates, Contracting Parties should indicate the OSPAR region in which the dumpsite is located**;

b. **Contracting Parties should send to the task manager by 1 July 2007 ideas on how to present information on a Convention wide basis to reflect in the assessment the intensity of pressures by dumping of waste by regions**;

c. **Contracting Parties were invited to bring forward case study examples on monitoring reports and research on current and abandoned dumping sites to the Task Managers by 1 July 2007**;

d. the **Task Manager (the Netherlands) should review the structure of the document to reply to the 5 QSR questions raised by MAQ**, and taking into account the results of the actions agreed in the indents above, should develop further the draft JAMP assessment of the environmental impact of dumping activities for discussion at EIHA 2007 with a view to submitting it to the next meeting of MAQ.

Dumped chemical weapons and munitions

Revision of the implementation Report

4.9 Ireland informed BDC about the work needed to complete the implementation report of OSPAR Recommendation 2003/2 on encounters with dumped conventional and chemical munitions, and asked Contracting Parties to revise their data (BDC 07/4/4) in order to make it possible to revise the implementation report in good time for recommending it to OSPAR 2007.

4.10 There was consensus that Ireland should be given discretion to leave out inconsistent or contradictory data when additional data or corrections were not submitted.

4.11 BDC agreed:

a. **that Contracting Parties should check and correct the data submitted on encounters with dumped conventional and chemical munitionsin the greyed areas identified in the spreadsheet attached as Annex 1 to BDC 07/4/4**;

b. to invite **Ireland to revise the first implementation report on OSPAR Recommendation 2003/2[1] in the light of the corrections received from Contracting Parties** and following the arrangements described in BDC 07/4/4 so that the revised report can be recommended to OSPAR 2007 for publication and to replace the previous implementation report.

JAMP Assessment

4.12 Ireland presented a first draft assessment of impacts of dumped conventional and chemical munitions for the purposes of JAMP product BA-5 (07/4/5). Ireland said that this assessment would need to be reviewed in the light of the corrected coordinates to be sent by Contracting Parties.

4.13 KIMO thanked Ireland for the work undertaken to date on this issue. KIMO reminded Germany that they had offered to provide data on encounters for the Federal State of Lower Saxony in accordance with the agreed format for the next compilation in 2008. Germany asked to delete the bracketed text "(for Federal State Schleswig Holstein)" in paragraph 3.3 of BDC 07/4/5.

4.14 KIMO expressed their concern that 17% of the occasions when munitions were encountered they had been released into the sea (§3.10) and requested Contracting Parties to ensure that munitions were brought ashore as much as possible. KIMO also encouraged the region wide use of the sonar reflectors used by the Netherlands in order to facilitate this and to make use of seismograph networks as a potentially very useful tool to monitor underwater explosions of munitions (see §§ 5.3 and 5.5).

[1] on Contracting Parties Encounters with Marine Dumped Conventional and Chemical Munitions

4.15 BDC noted that MAQ was of the view that this draft assessment on dumped conventional and chemical munitions is a good example of the type of assessment material needed for QSR purposes, as it addresses the five QSR questions raised by MAQ and is supported by the presentation of information in maps and figures.

4.16 Following the proposals from the drafting group on EIHA assessments in the light of the comments received from MAQ(1) 2007, BDC agreed on the following arrangements for finalising this JAMP assessment report:

a. **Contracting Parties should check, correct and send to Ireland the data submitted on encounters with their coordinates on dumped conventional and chemical munitions dumping sites in the greyed areas identified in the spreadsheet attached as annex 1 to BDC 07/4/4**;

b. **the Task Manager (Ireland) should review the draft assessment in BDC 07/4/5** in order to:

   (i) **incorporate the corrections received**;

   (ii) **expand the chapter on lessons to be learnt including good practices** such as the Dutch example of marking released munitions for subsequent neutralisation and advise systems that as far as possible break the cycle; and

   (iii) **consider comments raised by Contracting Parties and observers** (KIMO) at BDC 2007;

   and **present the revised draft assessment of impacts of dumped conventional and chemical munitions for the purposes of JAMP product BA-5 for discussion at EIHA 2007** with a view to it being submitted to the next meeting of MAQ.

Sand and gravel extraction

4.17 Belgium reported on progress on this year's ICES report on sand and gravel activities. The Secretariat explained that ICES had acknowledged receipt of the Secretariat's letter reminding ICES of the agreed procedure to contact OSPAR focal points on sand and gravel extraction before publishing and finalising their report. However,Belgium and Germany said that they were not aware that their contact points on sand and gravel had been consulted in this regard. Spain informed the meeting that theirs had been contacted. BDC instructed **the Secretariat to remind ICES again**.

4.18 Belgium explained that the ICES Cooperative Research Report was not yet finalised and that therefore they had not been able to prepare a draft assessment of sand and gravel extraction activities in the OSPAR maritime area. Belgium explained that the ICES Cooperative Research Report should normally be finalised by the end of 2007 and on the basis of it, **Belgium intended to prepare the draft assessment of sand and gravel extraction activities in the OSPAR maritime area for the purposes of JAMP product BA-5, following the structure and trying to reply to the 5 QSR questions raised by MAQ, for discussion at EIHA 2007** with a view to submitting it to the next meeting of MAQ.

4.19 Spain informed the meeting about the results of the 2 year Field Monitoring Programme on the Evolution of the Physical Environment and Biological Communities in the Sand Extraction Area carried out in Cape Vidio sand deposit (Asturias – North Coast of Spain) after its exploitation to extract 540 000 m³ of sand for the Salinas Beach nourishment (BDC 07/4/6). BDC invited **Belgium to take these results into account in preparing the draft JAMP assessment of sand and gravel extraction activities**.

Pollution caused by dredged material

EU directives

4.20 The UK informed the meeting that further developments in the revision of the EC Waste Framework Directive could affect the management of dredged material. They would be taking this into account in preparing the summary of views about implementation of EU directives and the sustainable management of dredged material for EIHA 2007.

4.21 The EC explained that the current text being proposed by the German Presidency of the EU for the review of the Waste Framework Directive, proposed excluding sediments relocated in surface waters for the purpose of managing waters and waterways (including preventing floods), provided that they are not

hazardous and without prejudice to the EC water legislation. A final position on this text was expected at the Environment EC Council of 29 June 2007. The EC also added that transitional areas of excedence had been discussed in the context of the work on hazardous substances under the Water Framework Directive (article 16). In addition, under Natura 2000 issues of sediment management could be a relevant consideration in estuaries.

4.22 The UK confirmed that they would also take into account in their work the views of the European Sea Port Organisation on the Waste Framework Directive and on the Article 16 Daughter Directive of the Water Framework Directive. The issue of hydromorphology referred to in the Water Framework Directive would also be considered.

Capping of dredged material

4.23 BDC noted that the UK had reported on progress to EIHA 2006 and would report to EIHA 2007. BDC invited other **Contracting Parties to report their experiences of similar measures to assist in developing OSPAR understanding of approaches to managing contaminated sediments**. The Secretariat welcomed these contributions which would help their work in replying to any concerns from the public (BDC 07/4/Info.1).

Impact of dredging for navigational purposes

4.24 The Netherlands presented an outline for developing the JAMP product BA-5 assessment of the environmental impacts on marine species and habitats of dredging for navigational purposes, supplemented by the draft assessment of the environmental impact of dredging for navigational purposes presented to EIHA 2006 (BDC 07/4/7).

4.25 BDC noted that MAQ had recommended developing the outline in Annex 1 of BDC 07/4/7 to incorporate the more qualitative information in the assessment in Annex 2 and to reply to the "did it work question". BDC also noted that some Contracting Parties had not yet replied to the questionnaire previously sent by the Netherlands for preparing this assessment.

4.26 Following the proposals from the drafting group on EIHA assessments in response to the comments received from MAQ (1) 2007, BDC agreed that:

a. **Contracting Parties who had not yet replied to the questionnaire on environmental impacts on marine species and habitats of dredging for navigational purposes should do so as soon as possible and by 1 July 2007 at the latest**;

b. the **Task Manager (the Netherlands) should restructure the draft assessment following the 5 QSR questions raised by MAQ, to complete it with the additional questionnaires to be received from Contracting Parties, and present the revised draft assessment of impacts of dredging for navigational purposes for discussion at EIHA 2007, with a view to it being submitted to the next meeting of MAQ**.

4.27 BDC noted that **Belgium will present to EIHA 2007 an updated overview of Contracting Parties' systems for deriving national action levels on the basis of updates from Contracting Parties to be presented by 1 July 2007**.

Underwater noise

4.28 Germany explained that due to the extent and sometimes contradictory nature of the comments received by Contracting Parties (see BDC 07/4/20), they had not been able to finalise the preliminary comprehensive overview of the impact of underwater noise on the marine environment and requested the assistance of other Contracting Parties to co-lead and support this work.

4.29 Contracting Parties and observers thanked Germany for the effort put into this work and stressed the relevance of the impact of increasing underwater noise in the marine environment as a cutting edge issue and encouraged Germany to take this work forward.

4.30 The EC said that the European Parliament had called for regulation of noise generation with an impact on the marine environment and that this would be beneficial for all the stakeholders. The EC offered to co-lead this work within the limit of their scarce human resources for this work.

4.31 The UK supported taking forward the work on underwater noise by avoiding duplication with the work developed by other international organisations and suggested OSPAR's work should focus on the activities contributing to the inputs of underwater noise into the marine environment. In their view it was important to gather the necessary information for producing the JAMP assessment of the environmental impact of underwater sound in the marine environment and for the preparation of the QSR. The UK also offered to assist in this work.

4.32 France highlighted the ambitious scope of the preliminary overview which covered all sources of noise and their impacts on the marine environment, and suggested priority was given to the effects of noise on some species (such as mammals). France would be able to provide the results of some studies. They also suggested making recommendations depending on the types of the source of noise.

4.33 Norway supported the completion of the existing draft overview undertaken by Germany and offered to join the intersessional work.

4.34 NRDC encouraged BDC to finalise this overview in time to be recommended to OSPAR 2007 for publication and offered their assistance to co-lead this work.

4.35 OGP had submitted comments on the draft preliminary overview and offered to join the intersessional work for completing it.

4.36 After these discussions, the UK offered to join Germany, the EC and NRDC as a co-leaders for this work.

4.37 BDC agreed:

a. to create an intersessional correspondence group (ICGN), consisting of Norway, Spain and OGP, under the co-lead of Germany, the EC , the UK and NRDC;

b. that the ICGN should finalise the preliminary overview and present it for discussion to EIHA 2007 in order to be published as a living background document to be revised periodically in the light of further developments and research available;

c. that the ICGN should also develop proposals for preparing by 2008/2009 the draft assessment of the impact of underwater noise on the marine environment for the purpose of JAMP product BA-5 and the preparation of the next QSR;

d. that OIC should be given the opportunity to comment on BDC work on the impact underwater noise from offshore oil and gas activities.

Offshore wind-farms

Review of the current state of knowledge and gaps in knowledge

4.38 The UK reported on progress with the update of the April 2006 Review of the Current State of Knowledge on the Environmental Impacts of the Location, Operation and Removal/Disposal of Offshore Wind-Farms published by OSPAR (BDC 07/4/8) and invited Contracting Parties to submit details of any up-to-date or relevant new information directly by using the mechanism available on the website or through the UK. BDC encouraged **Contracting Parties to make sure that the information they had previously sent was still available and up-to-date and to send any additional or corrected information to the UK by 1 July 200**7, so that a revised version could be prepared for examination at EIHA 2007.

Mechanism for the exchange of information between all stakeholders

4.39 BDC noted the launch and popular usage of the website for exchanging information on Environmental Impacts of Offshore Renewable Energy (March 2007), produced and hosted by the UK (BDC 07/4/9) and stressed that it was the responsibility of Contracting Parties to make sure that the links provided in it are currently available and the research and information referred to is up-to-date.

4.40 The UK confirmed that the website would be reviewed to include additional information or corrections to be submitted by Contracting Parties and to take account of most of the comments made at EIHA 2006 (e.g. a link to the database on wind-farms and its maps).

4.41 The Secretariat informed the meeting that a press release on this website had been placed on the OSPAR website as a successful initiative taken by OSPAR.

Gaps in knowledge

4.42 The UK presented a revised draft review of current gaps in knowledge on the environmental impact of offshore wind-farms from the UK (BDC 07/4/10). Germany thanked the UK for their work on this report and requested the lead country to insert an additional point under paragraph 11 (section on behavioural responses of marine organisms) to reflect the problem of potential increase in sediment temperatures from power cables.

4.43 BDC agreed to recommend to OSPAR for publication the review of current gaps in knowledge in BDC 07/4/10, subject to the amendment proposed by Germany.

Guidance on assessment of operation of wind-farms

4.44 The Secretariat presented on behalf of Denmark draft guidance on assessment of the environmental impact of, and Best Environmental Practice (BEP) for offshore wind-farms in relation to operation as at BDC 07/4/11, which had been revised following a written procedure after EIHA 2006. Germany and the UK said that they had only been able to submit initial comments to Denmark by the agreed deadline and regretted that Denmark was not present at this meeting in order to discuss and incorporate more definitive comments.

4.45 BDC agreed on the following procedure for finalising the draft guidance on operation of wind-farms:

a. **Contracting Parties should submit to Denmark by 30 April 2007 their comments to the draft at BDC 07/4/11**;

b. **Denmark assisted by the Secretariat would incorporate these comments and send the revised guidance to BDC HODs for their adoption in a written procedure**.

4.46 BDC noted that the UK would present to EIHA 2007 a draft consolidated text of OSPAR Guidance on Offshore Wind-Farms (including guidance for all the phases adopted by BDC).

Guidance on assessment of removal of wind-farms

4.47 Germany presented the draft guidance on assessment of the environmental impact of, and Best Environmental Practice (BEP) of offshore wind-farms in relation to removal, at BDC 07/4/12.

4.48 The European Commission queried whether it was appropriate to adopt documents setting out 'best environmental practice' as so-called 'guidance' documents adopted at the level of an OSPAR Committee, especially if the language used in the document was very similar to that of an OSPAR Recommendation. In the view of the European Commission, the status of a document which included the Contracting Parties' explicit views on BEP which had relevance for outside stakeholders should be unambiguous. This was normally achieved by giving such documents the status of a recommendation adopted by the OSPAR Commission. In addition to clarity, this would also achieve that the application of such a measure could be monitored through the usual implementation reporting process. The Executive Secretary said that he would present a document to HOD on this matter.

4.49 After discussion, BDC agreed to take account of comments made by the UK and to adopt the guidance on assessment of the environmental impact of, and Best Environmental Practice (BEP) for offshore wind-farms in relation to removal as at Annex 9.

Draft overall assessment of the environmental impact of wind-farms

4.50 The UK presented in BDC 07/4/13 a draft preliminary assessment of the environmental impact of wind-farms for the purposes of JAMP product BA-5. BDC noted that MAQ was of the view that this draft was very focussed on potential impacts, and advised developing a case study summarising results from environmental monitoring of actual impacts at particular developments and to incorporate mapped output based on the OSPAR Wind-farm database. MAQ welcomed the UK's intention to incorporate the results of a new review of impacts.

4.51 Following the proposals from the drafting group on EIHA assessments in response to the comments received from MAQ(1)2007, BDC agreed on the following arrangements for finalising this JAMP assessment report:

a. **Contracting Parties should identify the main impacts relating to the construction and operation of wind farms including cables, so that examples of these impacts were provided in the assessment**;

b. **the Task Manager (the UK) should review the structure of the document in replying to the 5 QSR questions raised by MAQ and should include illustrative maps and figures in the assessment, and present the revised JAMP draft assessment of impacts of wind-farms for discussion at EIHA 2007, with a view to it being submitted to the next meeting of MAQ**.

OSPAR Database on Offshore Wind-Farms

4.52 The Secretariat presented the updated OSPAR Database on Offshore Wind-Farms at BDC 07/4/14 and raised issues that needed clarification.

4.53 The Netherlands agreed with the proposal of the Secretariat to explain the particular status of some of their wind-farms under the column other remarks. They and the rest of Contracting Parties undertook to check the current status of their offshore wind-farms installations and to report back to the Secretariat as soon as possible in order to enable Germany to produce correct maps in time for publication by OSPAR 2007.

4.54 Germany explained that they had not been able to finalise the maps in time for this meeting but that they would produce revised maps in the light of the corrections to be sent by Contracting Parties. Sweden indicated that their data is not included in the database.

4.55 BDC agreed that

a. **Germany, through the Secretariat, should circulate by 30 April 2007 the map of offshore wind-farms in the OSPAR area associated to the database, taking into account corrections to be sent by Contracting Parties following the explanatory notes**. No response will be taken as consent;

b. the revised database will be recommended to OSPAR for publication on the OSPAR website together with the cover page and associated maps;

c. **Contracting Parties should send to the Secretariat by 1 September 2007 their updated entries on the OSPAR database on wind-farms** for preparing the next (2007) annual update.

Other installations and structures

Coastal defence

4.56 Belgium explained that due to unforeseeable circumstances they had not been able to review and complete the study on the current situation regarding Contracting Parties legislation, experiences and regulation needs with regard to the environmental impacts of coastal defence structures with the replies from Iceland, Spain, Portugal and the UK to the questionnaire circulated by Belgium. **Belgium announced that they would review this study with the additional data already presented by Contracting Parties and present to EIHA 2007 a draft assessment on the environmental impacts of coastal defence structures for the purpose of the JAMP**, following the 5 QSR questions raised in the guidance given by MAQ, with a view to it being submitted to the next meeting of MAQ.

Placement of structures other than oil and gas and wind-farms

4.57 The UK presented the draft assessment of the impact of placement of structures, excluding those for oil and gas and for wind-farms at BDC 07/4/16. BDC noted that MAQ was of the view that this report focused on management issues and had advised the task manager to provide an overview of the extent and intensity of these developments in the OSPAR area e.g. through a map, with concrete information on the actual environmental effects. A case study of a particular development explaining why specific impacts occur at that site and how these may be mitigated could help in this regard.

4.58 Spain expressed their concern that the current situation on placement of structures could have changed since Contracting Parties had replied in 2002 to the questionnaire used as a basis for this assessment, due to the implementation of the Water Framework Directive. Spain reminded the meeting that the area covered by this Directive extends to 1 nautical mile beyond the baseline. This new division of the coastal area could have some implications not considered in the current draft of the assessment.

4.59 Following the proposals from the drafting group on EIHA assessments in response to the comments received from MAQ(1)2007 and discussions at the meeting, BDC agreed on the following arrangements for finalising this JAMP assessment report:

a. **that the Task Manager (UK) would draw up and circulate to Contracting Parties by 30 April 2007 an annotated list of activities and structures with a request to identify gaps and to provide information on the numbers and locations of such structures and activities**;

b. **that Contracting Parties should send their replies to the UK by 1 July 2007**;

c. that **the Task Manager should review the structure of the document by replying to the 5 QSR questions raised by MAQ and present a revised JAMP draft assessment of impacts of placement of structures (excluding those for oil and gas and for wind-farms) for discussion at EIHA 2007, with a view to it being submitted to the next meeting of MAQ**.

Land reclamation

4.60 The Netherlands presented a draft assessment of the environmental impact of land reclamation for the purposes of JAMP product BA-5 in BDC 07/4/17. BDC noted that MAQ had welcomed that this report covered the structure of the 5 QSR questions raised in MAQ guidance, but had required more quantitative information in order to be suitable for QSR purposes. MAQ had queried whether the EIA framework could provide additional information to this assessment. The Executive Secretary said that in his experience this information was more likely to be in the hands of umbrella organisations on effectiveness of EIAs.

4.61 The Netherlands highlighted that only 5 Contracting Parties had replied to the questionnaire used as a basis to prepare this draft assessment. Belgium and Ireland apologised for the delay and announced that they would send their replies.

4.62 The drafting group had also considered how to develop information on the impact of land reclamation on overall quality status and the suggestion from MAQ to include a map showing the extent of land reclamation in different areas. The use of a case study had also been recommended.

4.63 Following the proposals from the drafting group on EIHA assessments in the light of the comments received from MAQ(1)2007 and discussions at the meeting, BDC agreed on the following arrangements for finalising this JAMP assessment report:

a. **Contracting Parties who have not replied to the questionnaire should do so by 1 June 2007**;

b. **Contracting Parties should send case studies on results from monitoring and research reports on land reclamation and inform the task manager of the contact details of umbrella groups who may be dealing with the evaluation of effectiveness of EIAs in their country**;

c. **the Task Manager (the Netherlands) should contact the umbrella groups on evaluation of effectiveness of EIAs identified by Contracting Parties**;

d. MAQ should be informed that the existing questionnaire did not ask for coordinates which would enable maps to be produced, and that a case study would be included in the final assessment.

Placement of cables

4.64 **Germany announced that they would present to EIHA 2007 a revised background document on the potential problems related to the placement of power cables other than those for oil and gas activities, and undertook to present for discussion at EIHA 2007 and further submission to MAQ, a draft assessment of the environmental impact of placement of power cables for the purpose of JAMP product BA-5**, following the structure of the 5 QSR questions raised by MAQ.

Tourism

4.65 Spain presented the draft assessment of the impact of Tourism and Recreational Activities for the purposes of the JAMP in BDC 07/4/19. MAQ had advised BDC to give this issue more attention as it is an increasing pressure and had invited the lead country to develop a more quantitative overview supported by facts and figures (e.g. data on overnight stays; extent of recreational boating). MAQ had also recommended to using some of the 27 EC/EEA Integrated Coastal Zone Management indicators and to addressing the 5 QSR questions raised in the guidance given by MAQ.

4.66 Spain undertook to develop this assessment in the light of the replies to the questionnaire sent by Contracting Parties and of additional statistical data and quantitative information on pressures from tourism to be submitted by them.

4.67 France explained that would need to consult another Ministry for completing the data and that therefore they would need a more specific request.

4.68 Following the proposals from the drafting group on EIHA assessments in the light of the comments received from MAQ(1)2007 and discussions at the meeting, BDC agreed on the following arrangements for finalising this JAMP assessment report:

a. **Contracting Parties should send additional statistics on pressures from tourism**;

b. the **Task Manager (Spain) should review the assessment following the structure of the 5 QSR questions and taking into account (i) Contracting Parties individual replies to the questionnaire; (ii) additional data to be submitted, and (iii) the 27 EC/EEA Integrated Coastal Zone Management indicators to express the sustainable development of the coastal zone**.

Artificial Reefs

4.69 Spain made a presentation on an ongoing project of the Spanish Ministry of Environment for developing Technical Guidelines for Artificial Reefs placement. These guidelines covered all the different typologies of Artificial Reefs, including those with fisheries purposes (which currently are the only ones covered by the Fisheries legislation). The guidelines classify reefs according to their typology and purpose and describe the environmental effects associated with each one of these typologies on the different environmental variables that could be affected. Design criteria are introduced along with a description of the most important studies that should be conducted in order to create an installation that would fulfil the defined objectives, from both functionality and environmental effects.

4.70 The guidelines also incorporate an analysis on the advantages and disadvantages of the different types of commonly used materials and establish the methodology for the placement of the structures with special mention to the use of recycled materials (i.e. ships) as artificial reefs.

4.71 Germany reminded the meeting that they were well aware of the definition of waste in the OSPAR Convention and the distinction between dumping and placement. However, they wanted to remind the meeting that the adopted OSPAR Guidelines on Artificial Reefs for Living Marine Resources (agreement 99/13) encouraged Contracting Parties not to use material which is prohibited from dumping under the Convention. Therefore, Germany expressed concern about the use of vessels as artificial reefs as dumping of vessels has already been phased out in the OSPAR maritime area.

4.72 Spain recognised that the placement of ships could constitute a new significant hydromorphological pressure on the water body, and therefore this type of project should ensure its compatibility with the Water Framework Directive and, moreover, should follow a process for preparation and clean-up according to the Protocol included in the guide. In the view of Spain there was and there should be no incompatibility with the OSPAR Convention.

4.73 The EC said that they were negotiating under the framework of IMO a Convention relating to the end of life of vessels and reminded the EU Member States to take the provisions of this draft Convention into account. The EC also expressed their concern that artificial reefs could be used as a cheap option for getting rid of vessels. The UK explained that the placement of ships on artificial reefs was a much more expensive option than their disposal.

4.74 Spain also said that they intended to implement the guidelines they had presented through national legislation as a Technical Instruction and that, they were currently being used as a basis for the development of "Guidelines for placement of artificial reefs at sea" within the London Convention (discussion was expected at the next Scientific Group meeting and adoption at the 2007 meeting of the Contracting Parties to the LC).

4.75 Finally, BDC discussed the need to identify a lead country and make arrangements for preparing the draft assessment of the environmental impact of artificial risks for the purposes of the JAMP product BA-5 and the preparation of the QSR. **Spain said that they would be happy to provide their experience on artificial reefs and that they would confirm at the meeting of the Commission their possibility to co-lead this work**. **The UK would also be able to provide assistance but would need to explore their resources before committing to co-lead this work**.

4.76 Following the proposals from the drafting group on EIHA assessments in the light of discussions at the meeting, BDC agreed that, when lead countries were identified for preparing the draft JAMP assessment of artificial reefs, they should take account of:

a. the European Artificial Reef Network Report;

b. OSPAR Guidelines on Artificial Reefs for Living Marine Resources (Ref: other agreement 99/13);

c. the Technical Guidelines for Artificial Reefs placement presented by Spain to this meeting (BDC 07/4/18)

d. case studies to be provided by Spain and the UK.

Agenda Item 5 – Other Human Activities dealt with by BDC

(BDC 07/5/1, BDC 07/5/2, BDC 07/5/3, BDC 07/5/4, BDC 07/5/4, BDC 07/5/6, BDC 07/5/7, BDC 07/5/8, BDC 07/5/9, BDC 07/5/10, BDC 07/5/11, BDC 07/5/11-Add.1, BDC 07/5/12, BDC 07/5/13, BDC 07/5/14, BDC 07/5/Info.1, BDC 07/5/Info.2

Fisheries

5.1 The Secretariat introduced BDC 07/5/1 explaining that feedback had been received from Iceland and Norway giving details of official national websites for fisheries information, but regretting that additional work envisaged by BDC 2006 had not been undertaken. Birdlife International recalled the commitment to periodically follow-up and take note of the work of the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs). This had not been addressed during 2006/7.

5.2 BDC agreed on biennial reporting on the fisheries issues identified in the QSR 2000 and addressed in BDC 06/5/1-E, with a first report to be available to BDC 2008. To progress this work, Terms of Reference for an intersessional correspondence group (ICG-FISH) on the fisheries management issues raised by the QSR 2000 were agreed as follows:

Introduction

a. the ICG will be led by **the Secretariat who will facilitate an exchange of information with the European Commission, Iceland, Norway and Denmark** (in respect of the Faroes and Greenland), and drawing on advice as appropriate from ICES and NEAFC;

b. material should also be drawn from Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) with the intention of updating BDC on the fisheries management issues raised by the QSR 2000 and set out initially in BDC 06/5/1.

Task

a. the aim of the ICG will be to prepare for BDC 2008 an updated report that includes information on fisheries and fish stocks drawn from *inter alia* relevant websites and, if available, the proposed NEAFC annual fisheries status report;

b. the ICG should consider evidence of:

   i) excessive fishing effort and over-capacity in the fishing fleet in some regions;

   ii) lack of precautionary reference points for the biomass and mortality of some commercially exploited stocks;

   iii) the particular vulnerability of deep sea fish species;

   iv) the risks posed to certain ecosystems and habitats, for example, seamounts, hydrothermal vents, sponge associations and deep-water coral communities;

   v) adverse environmental impacts of certain fishing gear, especially those leading to excessive catches of non-target organisms and habitat disturbance; and

   vi) the benefits for fisheries and/or the marine environment of the temporary or permanent closure or other protection of certain areas.

c. it will be important to recognise where gaps in scientific knowledge and data gaps exist, and the extent to which these gaps represent limitations and compromise management measures.

Mode of work

a. the ICG should produce:

   i) a preliminary draft report to be circulated to members of the ICG for comment by 1 January 2008;

   ii) a finalised draft report for MAQ(1) 2008 to provide background information that will inform Section 8.1 of the Programme of Work for the QSR 2010 (BDC 07/7/1 Annex 4);

   iii) a finalised draft report, incorporating any comments from MAQ, for BDC 2008; and

   iv) a biennial update of the report.

5.3 Iceland and Germany welcomed this way forward and confirmed their willingness to participate. Belgium requested the ICG to also take note of information relevant to other fish species on the Initial OSPAR list.

5.4 WWF presented BDC 07/5/13 and 07/5/Info.2, respectively setting out the implications for the OSPAR Region of the 2006 UN General Assembly Resolution on Sustainable Fisheries and the UN/IOC Census of Marine Life on Seamounts, Deep Sea Corals and Fisheries. WWF endorsed EC comments that these initiatives had relevance both to OSPAR and NEAFC, setting in context the wider impacts of high seas bottom trawling beyond specific sites. WWF urged dissemination of information to NEAFC and other competent fisheries authorities to raise awareness of potentially vulnerable sites and highlighted the value of predictive modelling to establish the value of seamount ecosystems. Germany welcomed the WWF intervention and reminded the meeting that these issues had been addressed, at least initially, by the meeting of deep-sea scientists as part of the ICG-MPA as reported in BDC 07/3/Info.1. The Secretariat also drew the meeting's attention to the outcome of the joint meeting of OSPAR and NEAFC Heads of Delegation (BDC 07/5/Info.1).

5.5 Following the invitation from the Fifth North Sea Ministerial Conference for OSPAR, in cooperation with the EC, to facilitate a periodic follow-up of the commitments agreed at the North Sea Conference declarations, the Secretariat presented limited available information on the extent of stock enhancement and sea ranching in the North Sea (BDC 07/5/2). Norway referred the meeting to the NASCO website (www.nasco.int) and it was noted that the ICES Working Group on Marine Shellfish Culture (WGMASC) and the ICES Working Group on Environmental Interactions of Mariculture (WGEIM) under the ICES Mariculture Committee had considered some information on stock enhancement. Relatively small-scale lobster stock enhancement was also noted in the UK but not in the North Sea. BDC agreed to advise OSPAR that this topic did not require further work in the short-term.

Shipping/Ballast water management

5.6 The UK introduced BDC 07/5/3 outlining the continued development of a Regional Management Strategy for Ballast Water Management in North-West Europe, together with recommended guidelines for the first stage of implementation. Key aspects of the document included:

a. a staged approach to management, based on voluntary guidelines, presented in two tranches;

b. specifications for projects needed to enable a route-based risk assessment (tranche 2) with cost implications;

c. a requirement for further information on non-indigenous species in the OSPAR Region;

d. recognition that the Strategy presented an interim solution, aimed at reducing the risks posed by non-indigenous species, pending ratification of the IMO Ballast Water Convention;

e. a relatively short timeframe within which to finalise this work and present it to OSPAR 2007, in order to achieve the risk reduction desired.

5.7 Germany welcomed this work and recognised it as serious and important. However, they raised concerns regarding the respective competences of OSPAR and IMO and the use of terminology 'OSPAR bioprovinces' and OSPAR 'bioregions'. Following discussion BDC agreed to refer only to 'OSPAR Regions'.

5.8 For the UK, Mr Brian Elliot assured BDC that as Chair of the IMO Ballast Water Working Group he was mindful that the IMO Convention specifically encouraged regional work where this provided an interim solution with the entry into force of the Convention on Ballast Water Management, as being proposed in this instance. Furthermore, the work had received significant support from the shipping industry on the basis that it was using only those agreements within the Ballast Water Convention. Thus the intention was not to supersede IMO competence, but rather to help the industry work within the framework of the guidelines. Notwithstanding this explanation Germany maintained a study reservation on §36 (c), (e) and (h). UK confirmed their willingness to pursue the matter with Germany through bilateral discussions.

5.9 EBA sought clarification concerning the lower volume limit for ballast water exchange, drawing on Guidelines for the Ballast Water Management Equivalent Compliance (MEPC 53/24/Add.1 Annex 1, Regulation A-5). The UK confirmed that IMO specifically excludes small craft and that the Strategy will only apply to IMO vessels. The meeting also noted that EBA was involved in the process of producing an ISAF (International Sailing Federation) guidance note, including reference to ballast water, for presentation to the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) of IMO.

5.10 BDC worked through the action requested in §36 a-j of the Strategy and endorsed:

a. the principle of where to exchange – subject to substituting the first word 'agree' with 'endorse';

b. proposed dates;

c. the guidance for Tranche 1 as set out in Appendix 5 – noting study reservations by Germany and the Netherlands;

d. the agreement to continue the Ballast Water ICG to report to OSPAR 2007;

e. the terms of reference for further work by the ICG, recognising the importance of finalising the Strategy at OSPAR 2007 and noting the study reservation by Germany;

f. the specifications for Tranche 2 projects;

g. the development of an initial list of non-indigenous species, further to a clarification of the definition of *Polychaeta* as 'macro-organisms' and subject to detailed comments to be provided to the UK by Ireland;

h. the submission of contact points and nominated ports, noting the study reservation by Germany;

i. that **by the end of April 2007 Contracting Parties would**:

(i) **identify areas**;

(ii) **consider co-funding possibilities**. It was noted that within a total budget requirement of £150-200K the UK could provide 50K, Sweden 7-10K, and Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands had indicated that they might be able to contribute. It was established that the timeframe for funding was between now and September 2008 and the priority was the development of the risk assessment and associated management;

(iii) **nominate contractors**;

j. a review of the lists in Appendix 11 subject to harmonising the listing numbering/lettering within the Strategy main body text and the Appendix.

Marine Litter

Final Pilot Project Report

5.11 On behalf of the International Project Steering Group, Sweden presented the Final Project Report for the OSPAR Pilot Project on Monitoring Marine Beach Litter. This has been a 6-year pilot project involving 9 countries, for which there was previously no standardised survey method. France joined the Pilot Project in 2005.

5.12 The Pilot Project categorised 5 major beach litter sources using 40 indicator items, identifying a large variation between beaches and surveys. Within the total composition of litter surveyed, some 75% comprised non-biodegradable plastic and/or polythene. Within the fifty-one 100m reference beaches no trend was discernable, but within the thirty-one 1km beaches there was a significant decrease. KIMO highlighted that no significant increase/decrease was still a trend as levels of marine litter were already high at the beginning of the project. Of the indicators only fishing and aquaculture items showed an increase. For more background material and additional information see http://www.marine-litter.net/who-what/who-Europa/OSPAR-monitoring/OSPAR-Monitoring.htm.

5.13 The conclusion of the Pilot Project is that this is a method that works and it is cost-effective. It enables litter quantification, composition evaluation and trend analysis. As such it represents a major step forward in terms of marine beach litter analysis and better understanding.

5.14 BDC welcomed the Final Project Report, confirmed that it met the purposes of the Draft JAMP BA-5 assessment, and noted that this was also the view of MAQ. BDC agreed to adopt the Final Report, to forward it to ASMO and recommend it to OSPAR for publication.

OSPAR Marine Beach Litter Programme

5.15 The Netherlands kindly offered to lead a new phase of the project, which would now become an OSPAR Marine Beach Litter Programme. This offer was for an initial two years. Belgium kindly offered to co-lead the Programme, subject to available resources, and advised BDC that they would confirm if this was possible at OSPAR 2007. Ireland, who had not been involved with the Pilot Project, confirmed that they wished to participate in the Programme. EBA also expressed an interest in this subject given the impact of marine litter on navigation, safety and visual impact as well as the environment. In the margins of the meeting a drafting group set out an OSPAR Draft Agreement for the Marine Beach Litter Monitoring Programme as at Annex 10. BDC agreed the Draft Agreement, subject to study reservations by Germany, Iceland, Norway, Spain and the UK, and recommended it for scrutiny by ASMO, HOD and OSPAR 2007.

5.16 BDC noted that this agreement fulfils the commitment of the marine litter element of JAMP product BM-4 (a monitoring and reporting system for marine litter) and met a request by Seas at Risk and KIMO International (BDC 07/5/12). It also establishes an opportunity for OSPAR to participate with UNEP/Regional Seas and the Government of Australia (and most likely UNESCO/IOC and 3-4 additional countries) in the development of 'global and harmonised guidelines' for the monitoring and assessment of coastal and marine litter. The UK advised BDC of their current involvement in discussions within the framework of MEPC aimed at revising MARPOL Annex V. **The UK considered that there would be interest in the OSPAR work and agreed to provide the Secretariat with a suitable contact point**.

Fishing-for-Litter

5.17 KIMO International presented draft Guidelines on how to develop a Fishing-for-Litter Project (BDC 07/5/7). BDC noted that no further comments had been received since EIHA and BDC agreed that the Guidelines should be adopted and recommended to OSPAR .

5.18 KIMO International also presented a Revised Background Report on Fishing-for-Litter (07/5/08). This report had been subject to revision and BDC agreed that it should now be adopted and recommended to OSPAR for publication. Belgium informed BDC that they had recently started a fishing for litter project which involved 11 fishing vessels and a research vessel, and would initially last for 10 months.

5.19 Spain reported that they were currently working to launch a national plan to act against the jellyfish blooms invasions. This plan includes the detection and collection of these organisms by fishing. Taking into account the synergies between this activity and the collection of marine litter, Spain had included in this Plan a specific action to detect at the same time the marine litter in coastal waters. In both cases (jellyfish blooms or marine litter) it was planned to organize the selective removal of the materials in those cases where it could represent a risk to coastal stakeholders. Spain stated that they are planning the implementation of this Plan in the current season in the Mediterranean and South Atlantic Spanish coast as a pilot project with the aim to extend it to the whole Spanish coast next year.

5.20 Germany stated that they had no intention to undertake any fishing for litter activity. Vessels were encouraged to use port waste reception facilities and dispose of waste in the proper way.

Co-operation with UNEP

5.21 A presentation by UNEP emphasised that the problem of marine litter is becoming an issue of local, regional, national and global concern. In particular UNEP recalled that the UN General Assembly had addressed the issue of marine litter/debris in its Resolution A/60/L.22 – Oceans and Law of the Sea – of 29 November 2005. UNEP's role and initiatives in this field were explained, together with an invitation for joint working.

5.22 In addition to collaboration associated with the marine beach litter monitoring programme (see §5.22), for which the Netherlands as lead country kindly offered to act as contact point, UNEP had invited OSPAR to develop a review of marine litter for the OSPAR Region. The suggestion was that this would be achieved according to a template used by 11 (possibly 12) other countries/regions around the world, including HELCOM. The intended outcome would be a review document. UNEP had kindly made an offer of seed corn funding for this project subject to matching funding from OSPAR.

5.23 Germany expressed their thanks to UNEP and clarified that any matching funding for the review could be in kind, taking the form of expertise or involvement in correspondence groups. **The Executive Secretary advised BDC that HOD had invited him to present a more detailed outline of this proposal to their meeting in May 2007. BDC agreed that this proposal was of interest and supported further consideration by HOD**.

5.24 An additional strand of UNEP's work and interest in marine litter involved developing an assessment /study/review on Abandoned/Lost Fishing Gear (ALFG), mainly in the Atlantic, and developing recommendations to address the problem. UNEP and FAO are currently developing a more global study on this issue. Recalling EBA's interest in marine litter the Executive Secretary suggested that recreational yachtsmen might be in a position to photograph and geo-reference large assemblages of floating litter and/or large objects, thus providing important data that could support the ALFG work. EBA confirmed their interest in exploring further any possibilities to take this idea forward.

Placement of CO_2

5.25 On behalf of the co-leads (the Netherlands, Norway and UK) of the ICG-CO_2, the Netherlands presented documents BDC 07/5/9 and BDC 07/5/10. BDC noted that ICG-CO_2 would report directly to OSPAR 2007 and should incorporate comments from both OIC and BDC. The goal was to present a complete package comprising a proposal of what is legally possible within a sound technical framework. BDC noted that all the aspects of this work would be discussed at JL, HOD and OSPAR.

5.26 Significant progress had been made at the meeting of the ICG-CO2, held 14-16 February 2007, with agreement being achieved on most aspects. Editorial comments from participants at the meeting had been incorporated in document BDC 07/5/10, which comprised three draft documents as follows:

a. a draft OSPAR measure on the storage of carbon dioxide streams in sub-seabed geological formations. No consensus had yet been reached on the legal status of this document (i.e. whether it should be an OSPAR Recommendation or Decision);

b. a draft OSPAR guideline for risk assessment and management of CO_2 in sub-seabed geological formations; and

c. a draft Framework for Risk Assessment and Management of storage of CO_2 in sub-seabed geological formations (FRAM), as part of the guidelines.

5.27 Contracting Parties who, together with Norway, had co-sponsored the Proposal to amend Annex II and Annex III to the OSPAR Convention (France, the Netherlands, the UK) stated that they were pleased with the progress that had been made within OSPAR. The UK raised a concern within the FRAM, relating to incidental associated substances within CO_2 streams, and suggested that there was a danger of applying European Standards without a clear specification, which was needed to avoid the future prevention of developing technologies. Norway stated that CO_2 derived from a separation plant would, in their view, be relatively pure but could also contain other natural substances, such as methane, and this merited further discussion. Further editorial points were raised by KIMO. A representative of the European Commission explained that the EC had a clear view on carbon capture and storage and that they felt it was inappropriate to remove a legally binding prohibition and replace this with a non-binding measure. Thus the EC would prefer to see the introduction of a legally binding measure with more flexibility with regard to the detailed risk assessment and management guidance currently set out in the FRAM.5.28 Spain presented a proposal to amend some aspects in the package of documents on storage of CO_2 in sub-seabed geological formations as prepared by the ICG-CO_2 (BDC 07/5/14). Spain clarified that their position had not changed and that they supported an Amendment to the OSPAR Convention to make possible CO_2 storage in sub-seabed geological formations, but only on the basis that the technical guidance ensured an adequate protection of the marine environment. Spain explained that in their view marine environmental protection must be the central point of the OSPAR work. At present they felt that the guidance was mainly focused on the process taking place within the geological formation with environmental aspects addressed as a secondary issue.

5.29 More specifically Spain wished to resolve six issues, set out at §9 of their document, which they suggested had not currently been addressed in sufficient detail and needed further clarification. These were summarised as follows:

a. prohibition of CO_2 disposal in the water column;

b. further clarification of the final composition of CO_2 streams allowed for sub-seabed storage;

c. transport arrangements from the source of CO_2 streams to the injection and storage sites currently not included in the guidance and considered as an integral aspect of the risk assessment process;

d. liability issues (taking into account the entry into force on 30 April 2007 of Directive 2004/35/EC on Environmental Liability);

e. provisions for monitoring of any leakage;

f. other important issues, such as the necessity to address the feasibility for remediation and mitigation measures, to be considered during site screening and selection

5.30 To address these issues a drafting group worked to further refine the documentation and a summary of the outcome of these deliberations is at Annex 11. Further to the discussions Ireland stated that they wished to be included as members of the ICG-CO_2 in future.

5.31 The Secretariat advised the meeting of the Notification of entry into force of the CO_2 Sequestration amendments to Annex 1 to the London Protocol on 29 January 2007 for Canada and 10 February 2007 for all other Contracting Parties to the Protocol (LC-LP.1/Circ.11). BDC also noted the timing of the 30th meeting of the London Convention Scientific Group (Spain 18-22 June 2007) and the inclusion of CO_2 storage at agenda item 2 of this meeting's provisional agenda.

Spatial planning

5.32 The Secretariat introduced document BDC 07/5/11 that set out a resume of the 2006 Workshop on Spatial Management (MASMA) and proposals for MASMA 2007. It was noted that the proposed date for

MASMA 2007 was subject to change. Spain, who had kindly offered to host this meeting explained that their commitments to hosting meetings of the Barcelona Convention had resulted in proposals for alternative dates.

5.33 The UK recalled that the EC had evaluated the ICZM Recommendation and there was no need therefore for OSPAR to examine individual ICZM National Plans or to evaluate them collectively. The EC stated, however, that the ongoing consultation associated with the Maritime Green Paper takes into account ICZM but the issue for OSPAR was more about what might be achieved at the regional level. The results of the consultation exercise and a possible package of proposals should be available by mid autumn. The Secretariat drew the meeting's attention to a Nordic Workshop on Marine Spatial Planning 6-7 June 2007 in Copenhagen. BDC agreed that the outcome of all these events would provide useful information for MASMA 2007 and that further consideration should be given to the timing of the meeting.

5.34 BDC also noted Draft Terms of Reference for an intersessional correspondence group (ICG-MSP) to complete an overview of national spatial planning systems (BDC 07/5/11 Add.1). The UK suggested that given the different legal structures in place in different Contracting Parties, the ICG should focus more on practical examples, including both difficulties experienced and benefits to Contracting Parties. Examples of this sort could be fed through as feedback to inform the EC Maritime Green Paper consultation process. EC asked that any information gathered should be up to date. Both Germany[2] and **UK agreed to supply contact details of an expert for the ICG to the Secretariat**. EC suggested that the desk officer for ICZM would be a useful contact point within the European Commission. BDC agreed to adopt the Terms of Reference for ICG-MSP at Annex 12.

Agenda Item 6 – The European Marine Strategy

BDC 07/6/1-Rev.1

6.1 The Secretariat presented a brief update on progress of the draft European Marine Strategy Directive (MSD). At the Environment Council on 18 December 2006, political agreement was achieved that, amongst other matters, defined Good Environmental Status (GES) and provided a list of descriptors, so that further comitology will be limited to criteria and technical standards. The Council also proposed to avoid an overlap in geographical scope with the coastal waters covered by the Water Framework Directive. The MSD is currently undergoing the co-decision procedure in Council and in Parliament. Once the formal common position is reached the second reading will take place, probably in the second half of 2007. Germany has held Council Working Groups during their Presidency, on 23.2.07 and 13.3.07, at which the MSD text has been further refined. A representative of the European Commission stated the need for a pan-European set of methodologies and the potential of application of a wider set of EcoQOs.

6.2 BDC noted the emphasis on regional implementation of the MSD and the requirement to achieve 'good environmental status'. Appropriate emphasis was being given to linkages between the QSR 2010 and MSD requirements to produce national marine strategies for regions or sub-regions based on an initial assessment of marine waters (Article 7 of the Council's political agreement on the MSD of 20.12.06). Mutual interest, between OSPAR and the MSD, in the ecosystem approach was reiterated during discussions on the use of EcoQOs (BDC 07/2/2 §9-18) and their potential application to the diverse marine environments covered by the OSPAR Convention should be further explored by ICG-EcoQOs during 2007/8 (see Annex 4). Indeed the fact that the MSD is relevant to most aspects of BDC work, such as the OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species, is generally recognised and there is a need to clearly demonstrate where OSPAR has been and will in the future be adding value.

6.3 Birdlife International sought clarification from the EC on Article 8.1 of the Council's political agreement on the MSD of 20.12.06 relating to determination of good environmental status. EC stated that the balance between the two issues of achieving good environmental status in a regional context and the responsibility for good environmental status that lies with individual Member States was recognised. If Member States share part of a region the assumption was that the definition of good environmental status was likely to be the same for two or more Parties.

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6.4 In response to a concern raised by WWF relating to the spatial component of Programmes of measures (as set out in Article 12 of the Council's political agreement on the MSD of 20.12.06), suggesting a need to strengthen Article 12.3, EC stated that both the Council and Parliament have both now included relevant provisions. Spatial measures will be instrumental for achieving Good Environmental Status. Types of measures are made explicit in Annex 5 of the MSD, although MPAs are not highlighted in particular.

6.5 WWF also noted a potential timeline issue, in that 2010 is the target date for a coherent network of Natura 2000 designations, yet the MSD sets a timeline starting in 2017. EC confirmed that the MSD provided additional legislation and as such would not amend or aggregate existing legislative instruments.

6.6 The meeting recognised immediate priority issues for BDC as set out in §6 of BDC 07/6/1, including the wider remit of biodiversity requirements as set out in the MSD, when compared to the existing BDC work programme, and the need to harmonise and co-ordinate the role of EcoQOs. UK recalled the strategic approach explained in their document BDC 07/3/10, which linked different strands of BDC monitoring and assessment work to MSD requirements. At the same time UK reminded the meeting that the MSD has yet to be finalised and suggested that caution should be exercised and the importance of local biodiversity work should not be forgotten.

6.7 The Netherlands highlighted that the MSD also requires an analysis of predominant pressures and impacts, including human activity, together with an economic and social analysis of the use of marine waters and the cost of degradation of the marine environment. In support of this the Secretariat drew the meeting's attention to the results of a Framework 6 Project 'European Lifestyles and Marine Ecosystems' (ELME), that has contributed to the sustainability debate by attempting to use issue-based simulations to develop European Regional Seas models. Emergent and cross-cutting issues discussed by this project reflect issues being addressed by the BDC Work Programme, but the scenarios modelled suggest continued degradation and loss of opportunity without additional action. A representative of the European Commission presented a LIFE (Financial Instrument for the Environment) brochure that detailed the accomplishment of various marine environment projects, promoting the MSD and setting EU marine policy in an international context.

6.8 In response to a question from Germany, the Executive Secretary confirmed that the idea of a Common Implementation Strategy (CIS), that might be initiated by Regional Seas Conventions, was currently embryonic. However, as noted by the European Commission in their introduction to the meeting, it is envisaged that the Regional Conventions will be strongly involved in the implementation of the MSD. The Netherlands endorsed this role and supported its further articulation through the development of a CIS proposal and its subsequent consideration by HOD and OSPAR. EC recalled the publication of the first report on the state of implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), at the European Water Conference 2007 held during the week before BDC, and the fact that, although the WFD and MSD goals to be reached are similar, the MSD acknowledges that determination of good environmental status of the marine environment as opposed to surface waters is significantly different and cannot be equally prescriptive. Thus the same level of inter-calibration is not appropriate. EC stated that for the WFD the CIS is a joint endeavour between Member States and several sections of the European Commission encompassing representation from stakeholders.

6.9 In taking this forward, EC encouraged OSPAR to involve other Regional Seas at the earliest opportunity in order to better understand what could be achieved and stated that representatives of the EC would wish to be associated with further developments. UNEP stated that Regional Seas Conventions have an important role to play in any CIS and expressed support for collective effort by the European Regional Conventions and encouraged the involvement of other stakeholders.

6.10 BDC agreed that the regional and sub-regional spatial scale is most appropriate to understand and manage pressures on marine ecosystems and encouraged further cooperation towards an integrated marine biodiversity protection policy and the development of a more detailed proposal for a MSD CIS to be delivered by the European Regional Conventions.

Agenda item 7 – Preparation of contributions to the QSR 2010

BDC 07/7/1, BDC 07/7/1-Add.1, Add.2, BDC 07/7/2, BDC 07/7/Info.1

7.1 OSPAR 2006 adopted an agreement on the preparation of the Quality Status report 2010 establishing a Management Group for the QSR 2010 (MAQ), stressing the need for involvement of strategy committees

and setting out that the QSR should aim to cover, as far as possible, the assessment requirements of the proposed EC MSD (BDC 07/7/Info.1).

7.2 The Secretariat highlighted that the first products from MAQ for consideration by BDC included:

a. a framework and an expanded structure for the QSR 2010 (BDC 07/7/1 Add.1);

b. guidance on the preparation of JAMP thematic assessments, which together with the QSR 2010 will form a pyramid of information intended to contribute to the assessment requirements of the proposed EC MSD (BDC 07/7/1 Annex 2);

c. editorial guidance for contributions to the QSR 2010.

d. comments on those draft JAMP assessments so far available including the set of assessments of human activities prepared under EIHA and the draft assessment of the status of horse mussel beds prepared by the UK (BDC 07/7/2).

Expanded structure of the QSR – Biodiversity and Ecosystems

7.3 BDC examined the ecosystems and biodiversity aspects of the draft expanded structure of the QSR and made the following comments:

a. there is an imbalance in the information available from different parts of the OSPAR area, with a relatively large amount of information being available in the North Sea. This could lead to problems in drawing effective conclusions for all the regions of the OSPAR area;

b. in either case it needs to be recognised that developing a full picture of the status of biodiversity will not be possible due to the absence of good evidence on the past and present status of some components;

c. it will be important for the QSR to express the regional dimension of the biodiversity including to the extent possible the individual ecosystems, for example the description of the North East Atlantic Ecosystem (Chapter 2) could be regionally elaborated describing the physical and biological elements of the different ecosystems in combination. The Large Marine Ecosystem Approach might be considered as the basis for identifying appropriate ecosystem divisions

d. the four QSR questions, which are designed to consider the impacts of human activities on the marine environment and the effectiveness of measures to mitigate these impacts, seem less applicable to the assessment of the status of the biodiversity of the OSPAR maritime area, which is an overarching aspect of the work under the OSPAR Convention;

e. the reporting on status of biodiversity should focus on the key ecosystem components (benthic communities, plankton, fish, benthic communities, mammals). For each component the following questions should be addressed at an appropriate regional scale:

   i. what is the distribution, extent/population and condition of species and habitats comprising the component and how are these changing over time;

   iii. what are the threats to the species and habitat, where do they occur and at what level and how are these changing over time;

   iii. what are the priorities for action;

   iv what management measures are in place, are they effective and what needs to be done in future.

   The assessments should be focused as far as possible on the key species and habitats which give an indication of overall ecosystem health. An illustration of this approach is attached at Annex 13;

f. it is suggested that the positioning of the biodiversity chapter in the QSR framework should be reviewed further as the material for the QSR develops as there may be benefits in presenting it in advance of the separate chapters dealing with the human activities addressed by OSPAR;

g. in developing ideas for the integrated assessment of the quality status of the OSPAR maritime area (chapter 10) the possibilities for making use of the results from the ICES REGNS project in

the North Sea should be considered. The integrated assessment would need to be developed at the regional/ecosystem scale with the overall status of the ecosystems described and the relative impact of different pressures elaborated.

7.4 BDC invited **the Secretariat to forward the comments and suggested approach to the biodiversity chapter to ASMO** and, with a view to making further input into the planning of the QSR agreed:

a. to welcome offers from the **Netherlands and the UK to comment on a further elaborated version of the chapter 9 structure prepared by the Secretariat**;

b. to ask MASH 2007 to take an active role in scrutinising and commenting on the further development of the biodiversity aspects of the QSR;

c. to welcome an offer **from the UK for a member of their MASH delegation to attend meetings of MAQ, subject to availability**.

7.5 BDC noted concerns articulated by the UK over the capacities for delivering the work required to produce the QSR material on biodiversity and ecosystems from within the BDC community. The JAMP Biodiversity Theme currently focused on priorities for protection as opposed to general assessments of quality status or ecosystem health. BDC delegations endorsed the UK's concerns and BDC agreed to urge ASMO to give consideration to sourcing information on the wider status of biodiversity and ecosystems from ICES or another suitable organisation.

Expanded structure of the QSR – Human Activities

7.6 BDC agreed to send the following comments on Chapter 8 of the proposed expanded structure for the QSR, to the next meeting of ASMO:

General comments on the structure

a. ask MAQ to explain the reasons for placing Fisheries and Shipping at the top of the list of Human activities, given the lack of direct OSPAR competence on these matters;

b. advise MAQ to consider keeping the activities listed and their order in Chapter 8 of the Expanded Structure in accordance with the order of the BDC strategy and the Theme Biodiversity of the JAMP; which would be more representative of OSPAR's work;

c. advise MAQ and the Task Managers of the JAMP Assessments of the Human Activities to take into account the checklist of the initial assessment under Article 7 of the proposed MSD;

Comments on specific human activities

8.3 Tourism

d. illustrative material (maps and photos) and further material to be provided by Contracting Parties for consideration by the task manager. Task Manager to consider the Evaluation of Integrated Coastal Zone (ICZM) in Europe final report from 2006;

e. cross reference to 8.9.3 on microbiological contamination;

8.4 Wind-farms and wave power

f. title to be replaced to "Offshore renewable energy";

g. maps and figures available on the OSPAR Offshore wind-farms database;

h. other sources of material should include the following website (www.environmentalexchange.info) which covers status report of current knowledge;

8.5 Cables and pipelines

i. footnote to relate only to cables – Germany will be lead country for cables only.

j. work on pipelines other than oil and gas not identified yet;

8.6 Land reclamation, coastal defence, artificial islands and artificial reefs

k. assessment on coastal defence to be presented by Belgium to EIHA 2007;

l. no work identified on artificial islands

m. cases studies on artificial reefs to be provided by Spain and UK and lead country for the JAMP assessment to be confirmed. Material from the EARRN Report to be included in the assessment;

8.9.2 Marine litter

n. the results of the assessment derived from the Pilot project (data until 2006) should be completed by the Netherlands and Belgium with the outcome of data until 2008. Other sources to take account of can be found on the website (www.marine-litter.net/who-what/who-Europe/OSPAR-monitoring/OSPAR-Monitoring.htm).

JAMP products BA-5 and BA-6

JAMP BA-5 Assessments

7.7 BDC noted that the meeting of MAQ held on 8-9 March 2007 had reviewed the suite of draft assessments of impacts of human activities prepared under the remit of EIHA (part of JAMP product BA-5). In the course of the review of draft assessment of impacts of human activities (JAMP product BA-5), MAQ had made the general and specific comments on each individual assessment as indicated in the second column of Table 1 at annex 1 to BDC 07/7/2.

7.8 The general comments requested the task managers to go beyond identifying at a general level the potential impacts that might be expected from the activities. For the QSR 2010 quantitatively based accounts of the actual extent and intensity of the impacts from human activities and the overall effect on the quality status of the OSPAR maritime area would be needed, where possible illustrated by maps, figures and photographic material. All the thematic assessments would need to address the four QSR questions set out in the guidance on preparation of JAMP Thematic Assessments.

7.9 BDC set up a drafting group to consider MAQ comments on the suit of JAMP assessments for product BA-5 produced by EIHA and make arrangements for developing, completing or finalising these reports. Following the proposals from the drafting group on EIHA assessments developed in the light of the comments received from MAQ(1)2007, BDC agreed on the arrangements for finalising this JAMP assessment as at Annex 14 (see 3rd column).

Arrangements for preparing BA-6

7.10 MAQ had noted that so far no arrangements have been prepared to start work on JAMP product BA-6 (a trend analysis by 2008 of all the different human activities listed in Appendix 3 of the JAMP and their collective impact on the OSPAR maritime area) and that, considering the difficulty in undertaking such an assessment, the product might be delayed and had urged BDC 2007 to give further consideration to its preparation.

7.11 BDC agreed that the arrangements for preparing JAMP product BA-6 should be included in the agenda of the meeting of EIHA 2007. In order to prepare for this, BDC invited all Contracting Parties to send

their ideas to the Secretariat on the best way to carry out a trend analysis and cumulative impacts of all the different human activities by 2008.

7.12 Finally, BDC also noted that EIHA 2007 had invited those **Contracting Parties, who had wind-farms operating in waters under their jurisdiction, to present to EIHA 2007 a description of the way in which they deal with cumulative impacts involving wind-farms. In the light of these descriptions**, **Germany will evaluate the possibility of developing guidance on the assessment of the impact of cumulative effects for discussion which should help in preparing the JAMP products and the contributions of EIHA to the QSR**. This work, although focused on win-farms could inspire discussions on how to consider cumulative effects.

Specifications for assessments of fisheries and shipping

7.13 The Secretariat drew attention to specifications for assessments to prepared on the environmental impacts of fishing and shipping that had been developed by MAQ (BDC 07/7/1 Add.1) and invited **Contracting Parties to submit comments on these either through their delegations to ASMO or directly to the Secretariat by 30 April 2007**.

Agenda Item 8 – Climate change

BDC 07/8/1

8.1 Further to an invitation by HOD to give greater emphasis to climate change, its mitigation and strategies for adaption, including links to OSPAR work and the assessments under the JAMP, BDC noted the potential of climate change to affect a number of aspects of the North-East Atlantic ecosystem. Publication of recent political 'drivers', such as the Stern Report and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 4th Assessment Working Group 1: The Physical Science Basis (summary available at http://www.ipcc.ch/SPM2feb07.pdf), underlined the pressing need to respond to climate change. UK drew the meeting's attention to their national 'Annual Report Card' (Meteorology-Chemistry Interface Processor - MCIP), explaining under different headings what could happen and levels of scientific certainty, as an example of how to communicate climate change issues to decision makers.

8.2 The Secretariat set out additional contextual points as follows:

a. climate change can be linked to a relatively small rate of change superimposed on significant variability;

b. climate change therefore represents an additional pressure within an ecosystem approach;

c. there is a need to 'decouple' this pressure from other stresses in order to be able to detect consequent changes in functioning, marine life and chemistry;

d. scenarios lie at the heart of effective response and understanding;

e. environmental managers are having to deal with probabilities and understand risk; and

f. OSPAR Regions will vary – the Arctic Region will face a significant increase in warming and disproportionate effects of acidification.

8.3 The composition, distribution and interactions upon which biodiversity depends within the OSPAR maritime area could be fundamentally affected by potential changes to oceanic processes including:

a. the potential for changing temperature, current patterns and acidity to affect amongst other things plankton distribution, fish populations, seabird breeding success and the spread and distribution of invasive species;

b. the possibility that increased storminess and rising temperatures, might jeopardise habitats such as intertidal wetlands and the extent of sea ice together with their associated ecology; and

c. ecosystem-scale changes, which then influence human activities such as fishing effort, shipping routes and safety, tourism opportunities and industrial investments, including developments in renewable energies and carbon dioxide storage, potentially changing the nature of the problems currently being addressed by BDC.

8.4 BDC noted potential implications for EcoQOs, MPA demarcation, spatial planning initiatives and risk assessments associated with extreme events. Norway noted the imminent publication of the IPCC Working Group 2 report on climate change impacts and adaption measures, which should also be of particular interest to BDC and OSPAR. UK highlighted the OSPAR work undertaken to alter the impacts of climate change, focusing on potential technical solutions such as offshore renewables and carbon capture and storage. They suggested that OSPAR has a responsibility to embrace all options and enabling techniques to tackle climate change.

8.5 An EC statement identified climate change as having now become the number 1 priority in European environmental policy. For the QSR process, MAQ had been informed of the availability of a recently published group of European reports on the effects of climate change. The Commission is also currently preparing a Green Paper on adaption to the inevitable changes, which will be submitted to wide consultation and will be taken forward under the European Climate Change Programme.

8.6 WWF recalled their 'Vulnerability Assessment of the North-East Atlantic Shelf Marine Ecoregion (NEAME area) to Climate Change' that had placed an emphasis on adaption measures and potential and the need for year on year reductions in carbon dioxide emissions. The report sent a clear message about the need to increase future resilience of ecosystems. The meeting's attention was drawn to WWF-UK's Marine Update 57 and WWF advised that they were in the process of preparing a series of fact sheets, relating climate change issues to each of the OSPAR Strategies, and were considering staging a climate change-related side event at OSPAR 2007.

8.7 Iceland stated that BDC must be certain where to put effort given existing commitments and priorities. The UK endorsed this view, reiterating that overall OSPAR must add value and not duplicate work being undertaken by other bodies. Rather than take climate change on as a new issue it may be more prudent to build it in to work currently being undertaken. Norway suggested that it was not easy to decide how to integrate climate change work at the current time and that, for example, the links between climate change and different sources of pollution may result in increased risks to biodiversity. To this end Norway considered that a summary of the IPCC reports would be helpful.

8.8 Germany endorsed this view, accepting climate change as an important issue, recognising the limited capacity of Contracting Parties to undertake OSPAR work and the need to act intelligently. They recalled the significant body of high quality literature that had now been produced including the publication including the German Advisory Council report 'The Future Oceans – Warming Up, Rising High, Turning Sour'). Practical action was needed rather than more reports. In this respect the large size of the OSPAR region put OSPAR in a unique position and should allow for climate change to be an integral part of overarching assessments. The UK supported this view and recalled their commitment to lead on this aspect within the QSR 2010.

8.9 In summary the meeting therefore considered that all aspects of climate change were relevant to BDC work. UNEP noted that 22 May 2007 is the International Day for Biological Diversity with the theme 'Biodiversity and Climate Change' (www.biodiv.org).

8.10 The Secretariat introduced a complementary document, inviting BDC to consider and prepare suggestions to ASMO 2007 on whether there was a use for products available using operational oceanography to support work under the Biodiversity Strategy. BDC noted the relevance of questions relating to operational oceanography at BDC 07/8/2 Annex 1. ICES made reference to the ICES Annual Climate Status Report and confirmed that many operational oceanography products, that can be used by BDC, are already available. ICES suggested that of these products, those monitoring the effects of climate change were the most notable.

Agenda Item 9 – Organisational issues

BDC 07/9/1

Quality assurance

9.1 BDC noted the decisions from OSPAR 2006 on quality assurance (QA) and the preparation of a QA handbook which should be a living document, to be revised when necessary. BDC commented on a draft contribution to the QA Handbook compiled by the Secretariat and agreed on the text at Annex 15.

Draft work programme for 2007/2008

9.2 Taking into account the 2006/2007 Programme of Work for BDC (BDC 07/1/Info.1) and the progress made at the present meeting, BDC agreed to forward the draft 2007/2008 Programme of Work at Annex 16 to OSPAR 2007 with a view to its adoption.

ICES work programme for 2008

9.3 BDC noted the 2007 ICES Work Programme agreed by OSPAR 2006 (BDC 07/9/1 Annex 1). Taking into account the developments at the present meeting, BDC agreed to invite ASMO 2007 to include in the draft 2008 ICES Work Programme requests on:

a. further development of an ecological quality objective on seabird population trends, requiring work to:

   (i) complete the work begun on compiling meta-data on monitoring across the OSPAR Maritime Area;

   (ii) complete work on developing standardised monitoring methods and protocols;

   (iii) complete work on standardising interpretation of monitoring results;

   (iv) begin the development of seabird population related indicators of ecological quality, comprised of "objectives," "targets" and "limits." At least one EcoQO indicator with its associated objective, target and limit, should be prepared as an example of what others might look like.

   In relation to this request BDC noted that the ICES Working Group on Seabird Ecology (WGSE) consider that the above work could be expedited by the convening of a special study group or a dedicated workshop. BDC would welcome from ICES an indication of the possible costs for organising such a study group or workshop comprising WGSE members and other invited experts e.g. from the European Seabird indicator workshop (15-20 in total) in the first part of 2008;

b. peer review of revised nominations for four bird species to be added to the Initial OSPAR List of threatened and/or declining species, including a review of whether the data used to support the nominations are sufficiently reliable and adequate to serve as a basis for conclusions that the species and habitats concerned can be identified as threatened and/or declining species and habitats according to the Texel/Faial criteria;

c. an assessment of the status of grey seals, harbour seals and harbour porpoise in relation to the Ecological Quality Objectives being applied by OSPAR in the North Sea. The Secretariat has been invited to liaise with the European Commission, ASCOBANS and ICES on whether this request could be made as part of a joint request to ICES on the status of marine mammal populations in the North Sea;

9.4 In relation to the preparation of specific assessments for the QSR, BDC agreed that a request to ICES might need to be considered for the preparation of QSR material on the wider status of the biodiversity and ecosystems of the OSPAR area i.e. beyond protected features and sites. BDC noted that a request to ICES to prepare an assessment on the environmental impact of fisheries was being considered by ASMO but would be decided upon in the light of the advice requested from ICES on a scoping study for such an assessment;

Future meeting arrangements

Allocation of meeting days

9.5 Taking into account the work contained in the draft BDC 2007/2008 Work Programme at Annex 16, BDC agreed to recommend to OSPAR 2007 that the following number of meeting days should be allocated to the work of the Biodiversity Committee: (i) 4 days for MASH 2007; (ii) 3 days for EIHA 2007, to be preceded by the one-day workshop of MASMA 2007; and (iii) 5 days for the next meeting of BDC, starting midday on Monday and ending midday on Friday.

Hosts for meetings

9.6 The Secretariat recalled that the timing of EIHA 2007, to be hosted by Spain in early October, would enable MASH to be re-scheduled for later in the year. The Chair of MASH suggested this could be in November. France kindly confirmed that they will host MASH 2007 in Brittany at one of the IFREMER laboratories and they were flexible concerning the timing of this meeting.

9.7 Further to discussions during agenda item 3 suggesting a joint technical meeting with NEAFC involving ICES, the OSPAR Secretariat had contacted the NEAFC Secretariat who had welcomed this idea and advised BDC, via the Secretariat, that they would be willing to host the meeting in their meeting room in London if dates can be agreed.

9.8 BDC invited Contracting Parties to consider whether they could host the 2008 meeting of BDC and inform the Secretariat before HOD May 2007.

Agenda Item 10 – Election of Chairman

10.1 Further to a proposal from Ireland, seconded by Belgium, BDC re-elected Dr Chris Vivian (UK) as its Chairman for the meeting cycles 2007/2008 and 2008/2009.

Agenda Item 11 - Any other business

11.1 At the request of UNEP the Secretariat made a statement emphasising UNEP's view that the significant efforts of OSPAR on biodiversity conservation matters, linked to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and 2010 Biodiversity targets, as well as the Convention on Migratory Species, should be given a higher profile internationally. The UK endorsed this and additionally recognised the need for OSPAR to work closely with other organisations charged with marine biodiversity programmes, such as ASCOBANS, rather than always developing new independent activities.

Agenda Item 12 – Adoption of the summary record

12.1 The draft summary record (BDC 07/12/1) was adopted as amended.