From: Alan
To: 'robert@latimers.com'
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2006 9:59 AM
Subject: OSPAR - Port of Tyne Capping Trial.

Dear Mr Latimer,

We have discussed on the telephone on a number of occasions the dumping project that was carried out off the coast of Northumberland and Durham to dispose of contaminated dredging from part of the Port of Tyne, and about which you sent me an e-mail on 19 June.

2. I explained that the OSPAR Commission does not have any role in supervising the activities of national authorities in relation to individual projects. The OSPAR Commission is a mechanism to enable the Governments involved (together with the European Community) to cooperate in developing and implementing policies to improve protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic. Nevertheless, there is a requirement on the Governments to report to the OSPAR Commission on their activities, so that the Commission can collectively assess what is happening and consider whether international agreements on policies are needed to improve the situation.

3. In the light of what you told me, I considered that the operation that had been carried out (and its ongoing consequences) was something that was likely to be of interest to the OSPAR Commission, and which would merit consideration to see what lessons should be drawn from it.

4. I accordingly presented a short document on the case to this summer's meeting of the OSPAR Commission. I attach a copy.

5. The summary record of the meeting records as follows:

"16.2 The Secretariat presented a note (OSPAR 06/16/1) drawing attention to a case in the United Kingdom, where work had been undertaken to solve the problems of disposing of contaminated dredged material by dumping it at sea under a cap of inert material. The Secretariat suggested that it would be useful for there to be an exchange of information on the problems involved, and for BDC to consider whether further OSPAR action was needed to address this type of technology.

16.3 The United Kingdom agreed to make a presentation on this issue to EIHA. OSPAR consequently agreed to add an item on this subject to the BDC Work Programme."

("BDC" is the Biodiversity Committee of the OSPAR Commission; "EIHA" is its working group on the environmental impact of human activities. You can see the full text of the summary record from the OSPAR Website - go to "Meetings and Documents", where you can down load the full text. There is, however, nothing else about this in the summary record).

6. The entry in the BDC work programme is as follows:

2006/07 Product 30A:	**Conclusions on whether there needs to be further work on the dumping of contaminated dredged material under an inert cap**
Based upon:	Report from EIHA
Based in turn upon:	Presentation by the UK
Task Manager:	Mr Chris Vivian (UK)
Target Date:	6 weeks before EIHA 2006
Reference:	OSPAR 2006 Summary Record § 16.2

7. EIHA will meet in Galway, Ireland on 7 - 9 November 2006, and BDC will meet on 26 - 30 March 2007, probably in Brussels. The summary records of the meetings will be posted on the OSPAR website - the EIHA summary record probably about 4 weeks after the meeting, the BDC summary record probably about 2 weeks after the meeting.

8. I realise that this will not meet your concerns about the specific case of the Tyne dumping, but that is, from the OSPAR point of view, a matter for the UK authorities. What concerns OSPAR is whether this case shows the need for some more general agreement on how to handle such cases.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Simcock

Executive Secretary, OSPAR Commission

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