



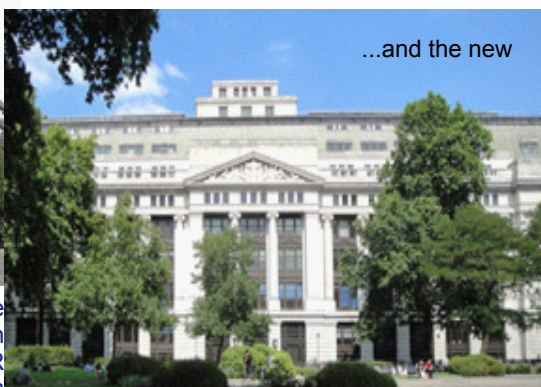
**Welcome from Richard Moxon, Vice-chairman of the OSPAR Commission**

As Head of the UK delegation to OSPAR and Vice-Chair of the Commission I have experienced over a number of years the added value Regional Conventions can provide to the protection of the European Seas. I have been strongly supportive of developing synergy between the obligations of EU legislation, in particular the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and OSPAR's agenda. The UK currently chairs the important Intersessional group through which OSPAR Contracting Parties coordinate their actions for implementing the directive at the North-East Atlantic scale. At the same time, during a period of economic restraint, there is even more need for efficiency and cost-effective working. To that end I have been a key player in the hazardous substances and eutrophication work of OSPAR over many years and welcome the progress which HASEC is making in combining these two well-established OSPAR thematic programmes and the contribution which the associated assessment frameworks are making to the coordinated implementation of the MSFD.

the old...



...and the new



The UK is host Government to the OSPAR Commission and this March has facilitated the move of the OSPAR Secretariat from New Court to Victoria

House in the same part of Central London. Victoria House is an impressive Grade II listed building, constructed for the Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society in 1922 - 32 and extensively remodelled in 2003 to provide contemporary accommodation incorporating two large atria. The OSPAR Secretariat is located at the top of the building on the 9th floor. This bright, open plan office overlooks Bloomsbury Square and has stunning views across the city in all directions and provides the professional environment needed for the Commission's work.

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Richard Moxon



**The BE-AWARE Project by John Mouat (OSPAR Secretariat)**

The BE-AWARE project is a two-year initiative (2012–2014), co-financed by the European Union with a total budget of €540,800, which will undertake a risk assessment of marine pollution in the Greater North Sea and its approaches. The overall aim is to clearly understand the regional risk of marine pollution and to compare the effectiveness of different strategies with the goal of optimising marine pollution prevention.

The need for an area-wide risk assessment of marine pollution was recognised by Bonn Agreement Ministers in 2010 (Dublin Declaration). In particular Ministers noted enlargement of the Bonn Agreement area as a result of the accession of Ireland in 2010, predicted increased storminess as a consequence of climate change, increased export of oil products from the Russian Federation transiting through the Bonn Agreement area, and new maritime uses and activities, such as wind farms, collectively contributing to a complex pattern of sea use and maritime development. It was therefore vital to undertake an overview risk assessment to look at potential improvements to disaster prevention.

**BE  
AWARE**



Bonn Agreement  
Accord de Bonn

The main focus of the project, which is split into ten work packages, is to undertake a quantitative risk assessment for mineral oil pollution, including spills from shipping and offshore installations. Other outputs include a qualitative risk assessment in relation to hazardous and noxious substances (HNS) and common criteria for the assessment of environmental and socio-economic sensitivity, for which OSPAR will provide input through the ongoing socio-economic analysis.

BE-AWARE held a Method Seminar on 27th March, in Copenhagen with Project Partners, Consultants and Bonn Agreement Contracting Parties to agree on a risk assessment methodology and to develop a data request note to collect the information needed by the project. Whilst most of the data will be collected from Contracting Parties (e.g. AIS, accidents at sea, oil spills at sea, pilot usage, VTS systems, STS operations, bunkering at sea etc.) directly there will also be a need for OSPAR data such as the inventories of offshore installations and wind farms to gain a full picture of potential risk. The data gathering phase of the project will continue until October 2012.

In November 2011, around seventy planners, scientists and stakeholders from four countries worked hard to set up a Marine Spatial Plan for the Sea of Colours. Not real but very serious!

The serious game 'MSP Challenge 2011' was played during the joint HELCOM-VASAB, OSPAR, and ICES workshop in Lisbon Portugal with participants from 16 countries. It proved a highly engaging event: a novel learning experience for many of the players.

'MSP Challenge 2011' is a computer-supported Serious Game with plenty of social interaction among the stakeholders, with a visual interactive model containing 70 layers of fictitious but realistic marine spatial data running in the background and a feedback system to measure performance and enhance learning.



integrated MSP plan by the end of the day. Info and data are derived and inspired from the Kattegat / Skagerrak / Baltic sea area and the countries Norway/Germany/Denmark and Sweden, but simplified, abstracted and reduced to create a level playing field and make the game process manageable and educational.

**Impression of the game materials**



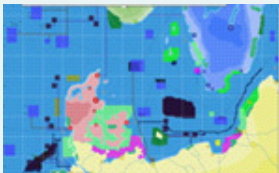
**The four plans for the sea of colours**



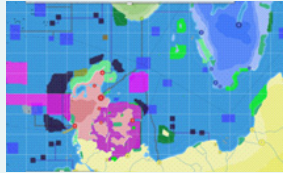
Country Green



Country Blue



Country Yellow



Country Red

**Who won?**

In the game there are four countries – red, blue, green, yellow – around one shared sea area. The five spatial planners in each of the countries have been 'assigned' to set up and manage a participative MSP planning process and to come up with an

The Netherlands' Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment (I&E), commissioned and financed the design and facilitation of the game on behalf of the international organizing committee. The serious gaming research group of Delft University (Delft, the Netherlands) was requested to develop and run it at the Lisbon workshop.

The insights from the questionnaires before, in and after the game are plenty, and are now being analyzed. They will be reported in forthcoming publications. At the same time, there are plans to repeat the game in Europe, the Baltic, Canada and perhaps China.

Want to know more? Contact Lodewijk Abspoel (lodewijk.abspoel@minienm.nl) and Igor Mayer (i.s.mayer@tudelft.nl).

Article by Igor Mayer, Qiqi Zhou, Lodewijk Abspoel, Xander Keijser, Erik Olsen, Eugene Nixon

 **Spotlight on:**

**IGR-3 (23-26 January 2012)**

The Global Plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities was adopted by UNEP in 1995. The Third Intergovernmental Review (IGR-3) of this comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach was undertaken in Manila earlier this year. Prior to the Review a 2-day conference highlighted technical and scientific issues concentrating on nutrients, wastewater and marine litter. As part of the conference the OSPAR Executive Secretary moderated a session on the role of Regional Seas Conventions, recalling successes in tackling these sources (drawing attention to the QSR 2010) and shortcomings to be addressed. During the IGR-3 UNEP launched their synthesis report 'Green Economy in a Blue World' and the meeting agreed a Manila Declaration.

**Madeira II**

To effectively manage the High Seas Marine Protected Areas designated by OSPAR Ministers in 2010, it is critical for OSPAR to work together with other competent authorities. A first informal meeting took place in Madeira (March 2010) resulting in a draft 'Collective Arrangement'. Representatives of North-East Atlantic competent authorities and invited experts met again in Paris (January 2012) to exchange information, update progress on agreeing the draft Collective Arrangement and to develop a draft framework for cooperative management illustrated using Charlie Gibbs South Marine Protected Area. This pioneering work co-ordinating existing regional mechanisms is part of a wider global debate on the governance of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction.

**ICG-Cobam**

Monitoring and assessment are accepted as a key part of OSPAR's work. In some cases, such as for contaminants, OSPAR has considerable experience. There is less experience, however, in how to go about monitoring and assessing the state of biodiversity in the marine environment – and yet the pressure is on to come up with solutions. The MSFD is a main driver for this work in relation to how to deliver the four biodiversity related Descriptors. Ambitions are high, with two rather immediate deadlines: in 2012 to determine what good environmental status means, and how to measure it; and further targets to have monitoring in place by 2014. Addressing this challenge is the current focus for the intersessional correspondence group ICG-Cobam, providing a forum for sharing experience and jointly developing solutions that will be coherent and coordinated across OSPAR.





## Exciting phase for the OSPAR information system by Emily Corcoran

An implicit requirement of OSPAR's remit is the generation of significant amounts of data and information on the state of the North-East Atlantic. Some of our data sets stretch back decades. Over the years, as new measures have been adopted and implemented, different data streams have been collated covering issues pertinent to all the OSPAR thematic strategies. A veritable treasure trove of information – with one important little “but”. Having all of this data is only a good thing if it can be used, and, in particular, can be easily recalled, understood and trusted!

OSPAR has agreed that it is an important time to examine how we look after and present our data and information so that we can get the most out of our data and use it to answer the questions being asked under the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy, and the EU MSFD – ultimately we need to know when we have good environmental status and that our seas are healthy and functioning. Work has started with the help of consultants, to define the type of information system that would be needed to manage data, ensure a minimum standard of data to help it be as useful as possible, visualise the data to make it understandable for decision-makers and external audiences. There are many challenges to ensure that we invest wisely and end up with the best solution that aligns with and enhances the work going on in other regional and global data and information initiatives.



## The latest addition to the OSPAR Secretariat

As the new face in the Secretariat I have been asked to write a brief introduction to my role as Marine Data Analyst at OSPAR. I have over 5 years' experience as a Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems Specialist working in the marine environment. In my previous role, I was responsible for data management including preparation and maintenance of metadata, data processing and preparation, driving day-to-day GIS usage together with problem solving and development of new methodologies to ensure data quality; all skills which I will be utilising in my position at OSPAR. Thanks to the people I have already met for the warm welcome and I very much look forward to the work ahead.



Chris Moulton



## Sharing OSPAR knowledge: International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea-Nippon Foundation

As part of OSPAR's initiative to increase understanding of OSPAR's vital role in the protection of the North-East Atlantic, an informal meeting with members of the Training and Capacity-building programme on Dispute Settlement under UNCLOS from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea took place on 25 November 2011 at the OSPAR Secretariat. The Secretariat provided a comprehensive review of work within OSPAR, in particular as regards recent achievements, such as the establishment of marine protected areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction. This gathering offered the opportunity to share knowledge and enabled the participants (junior to mid-level government officials from all over the world) to gain an understanding of the work and functions of OSPAR. The success of this approach encourages the Secretariat to continue to hold similar meetings on a regular basis with organisations dealing with matters of common interest, in order to benefit from mutual exchange of expertise.



## Forthcoming meetings and conferences

30 April–5 May 2012	Sixteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 16)	Montreal, Canada
7 May–11 May 2012	Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (UN BBNJ)	New York
31 May 2012	Bonn Agreement Joint operational combat exercise (BONNEX DELTA)	Germany
11–13 June 2012	Third MAIA International Workshop about MPA Management Planning	La Coruña, Spain
18–22 June 2012	3rd International Conference on Progress in Marine Conservation in Europe 2012	Stralsund, Germany
20–22 June 2012	36th Annual COLP Conference on “The Regulation of Continental Shelf Development: Present Status and Future Directions (36 ILOS)”	Nova Scotia
11–13 July 2012	2nd Conference on Sustainable oceans: Reconciling Economic Use and Protection - Dräger Foundation and the Earth Institute Columbia University	New York
6–14 September 2012	IUCN World Conservation Congress	Jeju, Korea
1–3 October 2012	Fourth International Dialogue on Underwater Munitions (IDUM)	San Juan/Vieques
1–5 October 2012	64th Session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (IMO MEPC 64)	London
8–19 October 2012	Eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity	Hyderabad, India

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