



## **SUMMARY REPORT**

### **OSPAR workshops**

**Paris 14 to 16 October 2009**

Author: Jim Portus (NWWRAC Representative)

#### **Workshop on actions and measures in relation to the OSPAR list of threatened and/or declining species and habitats:**

- One of the targets for the 2010 Ministerial meeting of OSPAR (MM 2010) is the adoption of measures in relation to a selection of species and habitats on the OSPAR List. (Annexed)
- The objective of the workshop was, therefore, to define detailed actions and measures for the selected species and habitats in a meaningful way which can form the basis for developing the necessary OSPAR measures for MM 2010.
- Delegates were introduced to the OSPAR process, the programmes and the measures to coordinate and achieve the objectives calling upon nations to, where practicable mitigate for human activities, safeguard against developments and restore species and habitats to good environmental status.
- OSPAR makes recommendations for MPA selection, conducts mapping surveys, gives guidance, monitors and evaluates progress towards objectives.
- The question of how fisheries issues could be addressed at the workshop was raised during the initial plenary session. Participants were reminded of the limitations of the OSPAR Convention when identifying potential priorities for action.
- Before the workshops, there were four presentations on a selection of species and habitats from the OSPAR List; the European sturgeon, seabirds, elasmobranchs and the deep sea.
- The workshops focused work on a pre-selection of species and habitats from the OSPAR List endorsed by the OSPAR Commission. The majority of the workshops were in small working groups focused on a particular bioregion or set of pressures.

- Because of my involvement in UK with emergency statutory closures of inshore scallop fishing grounds, I assigned myself to Group 6 – Coastal and continental shelf habitats – facilitated by David CONNOR (Joint Nature Conservation Committee (UK)) & Cecilia LINDBLAD (Swedish Environmental Protection Agency)
- The main actions and measures suggested by the Group 6 were to reduce fishing pressures (without displacing fishing effort elsewhere), undertake impact assessments, and encourage changes to less damaging fishing practices where the habitat occurs e.g. from trawling to creeling for *Nephrops* on seapen and burrowing megafauna habitats. There was also a role for MPAs in both protection and restoration of habitats. Communicating the need for conservation measures as well as increasing scientific understanding by using data collected for other purposes such as commercial Remotely Operated Vehicle footage as well as studying historic data on the character of communities before significant damage by trawling would be very valuable. A related issue was the need for mapping to determine the extent and quality of these habitats.
- The group identified 8 cross-cutting actions and measures and the OSPAR Commission was identified as taking a lead role in some of these. Three of the proposed measures were worked up in detail, summarised in Table. Priority actions and measures on coastal and continental shelf habitats and species elaborated by Working Group 6

Action/Measure	Objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing fishing pressure including mutual benefits of closed areas and through improved gears and practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close some areas of habitat to improve habitat quality (and age structure of target species) and potentially benefit fisheries.</li> <li>• Change fishing gears/practices (e.g. reduce weight, change from trawls to creels for <i>Nephrops</i>) to reduce impacts on seabed.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Spatial Planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop overall strategy for management of large areas to better manage relationship between activities and biodiversity. This needs to happen at different scales (e.g. from regional sea to local MPA). Develop zoning schemes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure new, and if possible existing, regulated activities take account of the need to protect habitat and species on the OSPAR List.</li> </ul>



- Fishing activities were also identified as a key pressure for many of the species and habitats considered in other groups at the workshop. Fishing might cause a direct impact where a species was the target of a fishery as in the case of e.g. bluefin tuna, or an indirect impact such as by-catch of the ocean quahog and damage to seapen habitats during demersal fishing operations. Uncertainty about the precise effects was also an issue in some cases.
- Involvement of fishermen and other stakeholders to develop proposals and monitoring progress is critical to success (offshore – Regional Advisory Councils, inshore – CP Fishery competent authorities). Essential to adapt management measures as delivery progresses, building upon experience.
- The workshop participants identified more than 90 species/habitat specific, general and cross-cutting measures and actions. Twenty-nine were elaborated on and there was also some consideration of priorities. Most of the proposals can be categorised as potential OSPAR agreements, including calls for action, although there are also examples that might form the basis of OSPAR Recommendations and one call to reiterate an existing OSPAR Decision. These proposals, presented in the working group summaries, provide a useful checklist for MASH when considering the sorts of actions and measures that might be developed for MM2010.

Jim Portus for NWWRAC.

22 November 2009.

## Annex I. Pre-selection of OSPAR species & habitats

### to identify concerted protective measures and organisation of working groups

Species/Habitat	Presence in OSPAR Region	Examples of main pressures	
<b><u>GROUP 1 : Birds</u></b>			
Balearic Shearwater ( <i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i> )	All	<b>Birds -predation at breeding sites</b>	
Black-legged Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> )	II, III, IV, V	<b>Birds -prey overfishing</b>	
<b><u>GROUP 2 : Elasmobranchs and marine turtles</u></b>			
Portuguese Dogfish ( <i>Centroscymnus coelolepsis</i> )	All	<b>Fish-deepwater trawls, longliners, bycatch</b>	
Gulper Shark ( <i>Centrophorus granulosus</i> )	IV,V		
Leafscale Gulper Shark ( <i>Centrophosus squamosus</i> )	All		
Common Skate ( <i>Dipturus batis</i> )	All		
Spotted Ray ( <i>Raja/Dipturus montagui</i> )	II, III, IV, V		
Porbeagle ( <i>Lamna nasus</i> )	All		
Thornback Skate/Ray ( <i>Raja clavata</i> )	I, II, III, IV		
White Skate ( <i>Rostroraja alba</i> )	II, III, IV; V		
(Northeast Atlantic) Spurdog ( <i>Squalus acanthias</i> )	All		
Angel Shark ( <i>Squatina squatina</i> )	II, III, IV		
Basking Shark ( <i>Cetorhinus maximus</i> )	All		<b>Fish-bycatch, ship strikes</b>
Leatherback Turtle ( <i>Dermochelys coriacea</i> )	All		<b>Reptiles- marine litter</b>
<b><u>GROUP 3 : Diadromous Fish Species</u></b>			
Common Sturgeon ( <i>Acipenser sturio</i> );	II, IV	<b>Fish-freshwater quality, waterway development (dams, weirs etc.)</b>	
European Eel ( <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> )	I, II, III, IV		
Allis Shad ( <i>Alosa alosa</i> )	II, III, IV		
Salmon ( <i>Salmo salar</i> )	I, II, III, IV		
Sea Lamprey ( <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> )	I, II, III, IV		
<b><u>GROUP 4 : Other Commercially Important Species</u></b>			
Bluefin Tuna ( <i>Thunnus thynnus</i> )	V	<b>Commercial fisheries</b>	
Cod ( <i>Gadus morhua</i> )	II and III		
Orange Roughy ( <i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i> )	I, V		
<b><u>GROUP 5 : Deep Sea</u></b>			
Coral Gardens	All	<b>Bioregions -deepwater trawls/bottom disturbance</b>	
Deep-Sea Sponge Aggregations	I, III, IV, V		
Lophelia Pertusa Reefs	All		
Oceanic Ridges with Hydrothermal Vents/Fields	I, V		
Seamounts	I, IV, V		
<b><u>GROUP 6 : Coastal &amp; Continental Shelf Habitats</u></b>			
Sea-Pens and Burrowing Megafauna	I, II, III, IV	<b>Continental Shelf Bioregion -bottom disturbance (e.g. benthic fishing, sand and gravel extraction)</b>	
Ocean Quahog ( <i>Arctica islandica</i> )	I, II, III, IV		
Modiolus modiolus beds	All		
Intertidal Mudflats	I,II, III, IV	<b>Coastal Bioregion -bottom disturbance (e.g. dredging,</b>	



Zostera Beds	I, II, III, IV	<b>sand and gravel extraction)</b>
Flat Oyster ( <i>Ostrea edulis</i> ) and flat oyster beds	I, II, III, IV	