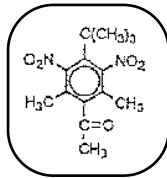


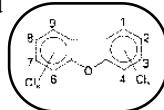
At OSPAR MMC 1998, Environment Ministers of the Contracting Parties to the OSPAR Convention and the Member of the European Commission will adopt a new Objective and Strategy with regard to Hazardous Substances.

WWF calls upon Ministers and the Member of the European Commission to take bold action and unanimously adopt the target of the cessation of discharges, emissions and losses of hazardous substances by the year 2020. And in this context, pay particular attention to those chemicals which have been shown or which are suspected to interfere with the body's hormone system, also known as endocrine disruptors.



WWF welcomes the objective, scope and tenor of the new OSPAR Strategy with regard to Hazardous Substances as a suitable instrument to incorporate the Precautionary Principle into policies and practical measures and to encompass preventive measures on endocrine disrupting chemicals, including hazardous ingredients in agricultural and non-agricultural pesticides.

WWF underlines that in order to help avert the chemical threat to marine wildlife and ecosystems in the longer term, the OSPAR Strategy must take account of



**WWF's Essentials
for OSPAR MMC
1998
- Hazardous
Substances -**

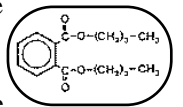
- emissions and losses of hazardous substances from diffuse sources, including consumer products and by-products from manufacturing,
- hazardous substances which could enter the marine environment,
- entire groups of hazardous chemicals,

For information, contact:

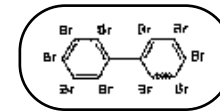
Stephan Lutter
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- man-made substances which give rise for concern even if they are not toxic, persistent and liable to bio-accumulate at the same time,
- chemicals which are likely to accumulate in sediments,
- substances or groups of substances which can exert harmful synergistic effects,
- hazardous degradation and transformation products.

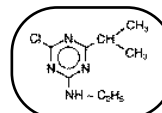
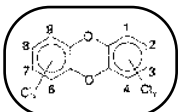
WWF recommends using a more comprehensive definition of an 'endocrine disruptor' than currently referred to in the Glossary to the OSPAR Strategy. The vague and misleading term "adverse health effects in an intact organism" should be avoided.



WWF is concerned that certain concepts incorporated in the new OSPAR Strategy could undermine the Precautionary Principle. Any selection and priority setting mechanisms should just be subordinate tools to set priorities for further action. Once the intrinsic hazardous properties of certain chemicals and their potential release to the Maritime Area are identified, the need for programmes and measures to eliminate marine pollution from these chemicals should be determined.



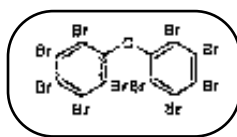
Relative ranking of substances based on their properties, use patterns and probable occurrence in the marine environment is an instrument to determine priorities for action and develop a release reduction strategy. OSPAR must not relapse into using environmental quality objectives as an excuse to 'fill up' marine water, sediments or food chains with 'tolerable' levels of toxics through the loophole of risk assessment.



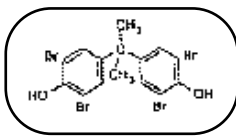
WWF is convinced that in following up the new Strategy in cooperation with the EU, it falls to OSPAR to pave the way for a mechanism of priority setting which takes full account of existing and new potential threats to the sensitive marine environment arising from man-made chemicals. The guiding principle has to be the **Precautionary Principle**.



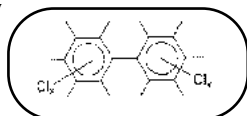
WWF regrets that, in spite of the commitment in the 1992 OSPAR Ministerial Declaration, poor progress has been made on the phasing out of a number of organohalogens shown to accumulate in sediments and marine food chains in the Maritime Area, such as chlorinated paraffins and brominated flame retardants.



W W F
calls for
further
action to

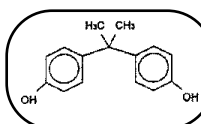
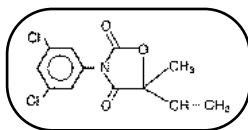


eliminate emissions and/or phase out the use of organohalogen compounds, the most notorious group of persistent chemical pollutants marine wildlife has ever faced. The 1998 OSPAR Ministerial Meeting coincides with the 10th anniversary of the mass mortality of North Sea seals. Scientific evidence now demonstrates that organohalogens, such as PCBs, played a decisive role as a co-factor in this disaster.



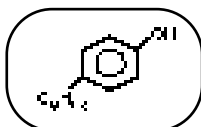
WWF emphasizes the need to learn the lessons of the past and develop measures to reduce and eliminate a new wave of endocrine disrupting chemicals released from land based, offshore and shipping sources.

Examples of which are known from the following groups of chemicals: organotin compounds, chlorinated and brominated hydrocarbons, alkylphenol and bisphenol compounds, phthalates, polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and a number of agricultural pesticides, such as lindane, triazines and vinclozolin. Whether banned, restricted or still



in use - these substances are all ending up as a harmful chemical cocktail in the marine environment. Their final sink is the sea where they pose unpredictable threats to marine wildlife.

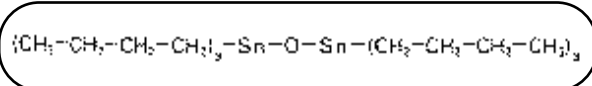
WWF urges OSPAR to take immediate action to phase out and eliminate already identified endocrine disruptors eg. those covered by the OSPAR List of Chemicals for Priority Action (as well as butylbenzylphthalate, so far omitted). Furthermore, endocrine disrupting properties should rank high under the selection and prioritisation process for hazardous substances from the OSPAR List of Candidate Substances to be considered for such measures.



WWF stresses the need to phase out and/or substitute products and materials which cause emissions, discharges and losses of hazardous substances during their life cycle (cradle-to-grave approach). Rather than tackling pollution problems with clean-up measures at the end of the pipe, the most efficient way to safeguard a clean and healthy ocean is the encouragement of political and industrial commitments to clean production. This includes development of product alternatives not based on hazardous substances as well as mechanical or constructive solutions.

WWF believes that a system of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR), supplemented by product registers of the type already established in the Nordic Countries would be the most appropriate tool to obtain "reliable data on production volumes, use patterns, emission scenarios, exposure concentrations and properties of substances" throughout OSPAR States.

WWF requests Ministers to consider a specific regional measure with regard to emissions of hazardous substances from ships in the North-East Atlantic in order to enhance and accomplish a global ban on the antifouling agent tributyltin (TBT), the most toxic and effective biocide



knowingly released into the marine environment. The provisions of Annex II to the OSPAR Convention should be stringently applied in order to prevent dumping and remobilisation of dredged material contaminated with TBT and other hazardous substances. The OSPAR Guidelines on the Management of Dredged Material must be amended accordingly.

A number of distress signals have been reported from European seas associated with the input of man-made chemicals:

- the decline of harbour porpoises and bottlenose dolphins; malformation of the reproductive tract, reduced number of pups and/or impairment of immune-function in seals;
- increased prevalence of fish diseases, feminisation of male fish, occurrence of hermaphrodite fish, changes in the sex ratio in certain fish stocks and/or decreased testes size in fish;
- infertility (imposex) in whelks, dogwhelks and periwinkle, abnormalities of shell growth in oysters, intersex in crustaceans etc.

