

# Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM) and Indigenous-led Conservation

in the Nordic region and the wider Arctic



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# Workshop objectives, outcomes products

**Overall Objective:** to advance the OECM Nordic project, including integration with the CAFF/PAME OECM project.

**Specific objectives for the workshop from both projects:**

- Provide an overview of the current range and understanding of international and national criteria used for the identification of "Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures" (OECM) in the Nordic regions and the Arctic marine environment.
- Summarize concepts, methodologies, guidance and relevant tools for OECM development, implementation and assessment.
- Identify and discuss differences and commonalities in OECM approaches among Nordic and other Arctic states and explore the case for a common approach.
- Promote a common understanding and terminology around area-based conservation approaches to marine management and terrestrial management in the Nordic and wider Arctic region, where possible.
- Share and discuss case studies that explore the role of Indigenous sustainable management practices, including Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs), and other Indigenous management approaches, including advice and lessons learned and exploratory case studies.
- Build upon and inform the development of other relevant activities in the Nordic and wider Arctic regions.
- Discuss development of fact sheets on OECM best practice related to the Nordic project.

**Outcome:** By the end of the workshop participants will understand key concepts around OECMs and Indigenous-led management practices, including how OECMs can contribute to reaching global/national conservation targets, and the wider benefits of OECMs for conservation in the Arctic Nordic and wider Arctic regions. Through presentations by experts and practitioners and existing case studies participants will learn about the process of identifying, recognizing and reporting OECMs, and discuss needs and opportunities for making progress on OECMs.

### Workshop products:

- Workshop report
- List of case studies and examples of OECM and IPCA development and application in the marine and terrestrial environments in the Nordics and wider Arctic for further consideration in ongoing and future projects
- Contributions to the Nordic report and broader PAME/CAFF OECM report, and insights into additional project development under the Arctic Council

### Supporting documents

- CBD. 2018. "[Protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, Dec.14/8](#)", Decision adopted by the COP to the CBD 14/8. Convention on Biological Diversity.
- IUCN. 2019. [Recognising and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures](#). World Commission on Protected Areas Task Force on OECMs.
- IUCN. 2023. [Site-level tool for identifying other effective area-based conservation measures \(OECMs\) : first edition | IUCN Library System](#)
- FAO. 2022. [A handbook for identifying, evaluating and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures in marine fisheries](#). Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
- [HELCOM investigates alternative marine protection measures](#) and [Decision Tree](#)
- [Joint ICES/IUCN-CEM FEG Workshop on Testing OECM Practices and Strategies](#)
- Government of Canada. 2022. [Guidance for recognizing marine Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures 2022 \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](#)

### List of acronyms used in the report

- ABFM: Area-based Fisheries Management Measures
- ABNJ: Areas-beyond National Jurisdiction
- AI: Artificial intelligence
- BBNJ: Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction
- BCB: Biodiversity Conservation Benefit
- CAFF: Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna
- CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity
- CPAN: Circumpolar Protected Areas Network
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EBSA: Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs)

- EEZ: Exclusive Economic Zone
- EU: European Union
- FAO: Food and Administrative Organization
- FJMC: Fisheries Joint Management Council
- HELCOM: Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission – also known as the Helsinki Commission
- ICC: Inuit Circumpolar Council
- ICES: International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
- IK: Indigenous Knowledge
- IPCA: Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area
- IMPAC5: Fifth International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5)
- IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature
- LIFE IP: LIFE Integrated Project, LLIFE is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action
- MPA: Marine Protected Area
- MSP: Marine Spatial Planning
- NAFO: Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
- NBSAP: National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
- NCM: Nordic Council of Ministers
- NEAFC: North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
- NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric
- OECCM: Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures
- PAME: Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment
- UN: United Nations
- UNGA: United Nations General Assembly
- WCPA: IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas
- WKECOVME: ICES workshop to evaluate long-term biodiversity/ecosystem benefits of NEAFC closed and restricted areas
- WKTOPS: ICES/IUCN-CEM Fisheries Expert Group Workshop on Testing OECCM Practices and Strategies
- WWF: World Wildlife Fund

# Day 1: Sunday April 14, 2024

## Welcoming remarks

Inge Thaulow, CAFF Chair expressed the importance of advancing the understanding and focus on OECMs in the Arctic, including the Nordic countries. She highlighted the Government of Greenland's priority on following up to the global biodiversity framework and its targets, including those related to OECMs. She noted the importance of bringing Nordic countries together to share experiences and lessons learned on OECM developments. She emphasized the importance of understanding and exploring OECM concepts and Indigenous management practices to facilitate implementation of targets, especially in light of recent global agreements on biodiversity. She finally expressed gratitude to the participating organizations and attendees of this workshop and looked forward to the discussions and presentations during the workshop.

## Setting the Scene

*Tom Christensen, Section for Arctic Environment, Aarhus University*

Tom Christensen from Aarhus University opened the first session of the workshop emphasizing the key objectives of the workshop and noted in particular the synergies between the Arctic OECM project and the NCM supported Nordic OECM project. He gave a summary of the workshop context and the linkages between the projects, stating that the workshop involves collaboration between Canada, the US, and the Kingdom of Denmark, with Aarhus University leading the Nordic project. The workshop aimed to integrate the OECM Nordic project with the Arctic Council project, focusing on advancing OECM development, implementation, and assessment. Key objectives included: providing an overview of OECM criteria, methodologies, and guidance, as well as identifying differences and commonalities among countries, sharing case studies, and informing future activities. The workshop also discussed project timelines, outputs, and the involvement of Indigenous Peoples in conservation efforts. The session included presentations on various related projects, such as ecosystem status reports, marine conservation actions, and the application of Indigenous Knowledge. The workshop discussed key concepts, case studies, and more to inform future conservation efforts in the Arctic and Nordic regions. Additionally, an experimental approach involving AI assistance in drafting the workshop report is introduced for efficiency.

Ever since its establishment, environmental protection has been at the core of the work of the Arctic Council. In the Council's founding document, the Ottawa Declaration, the eight Arctic States affirmed their commitment to protect the Arctic environment and healthy ecosystems, to maintain Arctic biodiversity, to conserve and enable sustainable use of natural resources. It does so through defined actions based on scientific recommendations.

CAFF is the biodiversity working group of the Arctic Council. CAFF's mandate is to address the conservation of Arctic biodiversity, and to communicate its findings to the governments and residents of the Arctic, helping to promote practices which ensure the sustainability of the Arctic's living resources. It does so through various , and expert group .

The Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME) is the focal point of the Arctic Council's activities related to the protection and sustainable use of the Arctic marine environment and provides a unique forum for collaboration on a wide range of activities in this regard.

CAFF and PAME collaborate on topics of biodiversity conservation and protection in the marine environment, including on area-based conservation measures.

PAME has developed a Framework for a Pan-Arctic Network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). As part of this a "Pan-Arctic Network of MPAs Toolbox" develops guidance to assist Arctic States in advancing their MPA networks by providing theory and tools that can be used to assess and protect the diversity of genes, species, populations, habitats, features, and ecosystems; their interactions and processes; and the ability to adapt to change. This guidance is intended to inform decision-makers, practitioners, Indigenous peoples, and stakeholders involved in developing MPA networks and ecosystem-based management in the marine Arctic.

# International guidance on identification, use, and performance assessment of OECMs (terrestrial and marine)

## Convention on Biological Diversity

*Joseph Appiott: Convention on Biological Diversity*

Joseph Appiott's presentation provided a comprehensive overview of the development and integration of Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). He traced the evolution of the concept, starting with its inception in 2010 with CBD's target 11, which aimed for 10% of coastal and marine areas to be conserved through protected areas and OECMs by 2020.

Despite initial slow uptake, OECMs gained recognition due to their potential to complement protected areas in achieving conservation goals. Appiott emphasized that OECMs offered an opportunity to recognize and account for biodiversity outcomes of management measures beyond traditional protected areas. He highlighted the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity into various sectors, acknowledging that conservation efforts should engage not only traditional biodiversity stakeholders but also other sectors contributing to biodiversity outcomes.

The presentation delved into the criteria for identifying OECMs, emphasizing the need for a geographically defined area governed and managed to achieve positive and sustained biodiversity outcomes. Appiott stressed the importance of assessing whether an area effectively contributed to *in situ* conservation, addressed existing or anticipated threats, and upheld relevant cultural, socio-economic, and other local values.

He discussed the challenges and considerations specific to marine OECMs, including the three-dimensional nature of the ocean and the importance of expert interpretation in defining the boundaries of conservation measures. Monitoring outcomes, avoiding the risk of greenwashing, and the need for context-specific and case-by-case processes were highlighted as crucial aspects of effective OECM implementation.

Overall, Appiott's presentation underscored the significance of OECMs as a tool for recognizing and enhancing biodiversity conservation efforts beyond traditional protected areas. It emphasized the need for collaboration across sectors and careful consideration of biodiversity values, threats, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of OECMs in achieving conservation goals.

## Convention of Biological Diversity definition of Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures

At the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the following definition for Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures was adopted:

"other effective area-based conservation measure" means "a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the *in situ* conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values" (CBD/COPDEC/14/8)

### Criteria for identification of OECMs (CBD/COPDEC/14/8)

**Criterion A:** Area is not currently recognized as a protected area

- Not a protected area

**Criterion B:** Area is governed and managed

- Geographically defined space
- Legitimate governance authorities
- Managed

**Criterion C:** Achieves sustained and effective contribution to *in situ* conservation of biodiversity

- Effective
- Sustained over long term
- *In situ* conservation of biological diversity
- Information and monitoring

**Criterion D:** Associated ecosystem functions and services and cultural, spiritual, socio-economic and other locally relevant values

- Ecosystem functions and services
- Cultural, spiritual, socio-economic and other locally relevant values

## ICES/IUCN presentation

*Ellen Kenchington, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, ICES/IUCN presentation*

Ellen Kenchington, a research scientist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, shared insights from a workshop conducted by ICES and IUCN on identifying OECMs and evaluating them against CBD criteria. Initially, OECMs were not recognized in global biodiversity targets, but in 2018, the CBD adopted a formal definition, emphasizing areas delivering significant biodiversity outcomes not covered by MPAs. Kenchington highlighted the flexibility of OECMs compared to MPAs, with quicker adoption and modification. She stressed their importance in maintaining ecosystem connectivity, especially in the face of climate change.

Kenchington presented case studies from the Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) and discussed their evaluation against CBD criteria, advising closer examination of the report from the [ICES Workshop to Evaluate Long-term Biodiversity/Ecosystem Benefits of NEAFC Closed and Restricted Areas \(WKECOVME\)](#) and the [ICES/IUCN FEG Workshop on testing OECM practices and strategies \(WKTOPS\)](#). These case studies demonstrated the benefits of OECMs in reducing fisheries' collateral impacts and improving biodiversity. However, questions emerged during the process, such as determining sufficient evidence, evaluating different biodiversity benefits, and addressing unmanaged risks like climate change.

From an organizational perspective, Kenchington emphasized the importance of detailed preparation, including experts from relevant policy and management frameworks, and ensuring participants understand the CBD criteria. She suggested conducting multiple evaluations in one workshop to improve consistency in decision-making. As judgements are almost always required in evaluations, she emphasized transparency in the full evaluation process.

Overall, Kenchington highlighted the practical application of CBD criteria in evaluating OECMs, emphasizing their role in biodiversity conservation and the need for thorough preparation and expert collaboration in case-by-case and context-specific evaluation processes.

### **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework: Target 3** **Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas**

Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing Indigenous and traditional territories where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.

### **Directorate of Fisheries, Norway, NEAFC/NAFO**

*Gunnstein Bakke, Senior legal advisor, Directorate of Fisheries, Norway, NEAFC/NAFO*

Gunnstein Bakke, from the Directorate of Fisheries in Norway, provided insights into the assessment and understanding of OECMs from a fisheries management perspective. He emphasized that many closures, although some of them are located south of the Arctic, are relevant to discussions about industrial fisheries within the Arctic region. Bakke highlighted the national exercise conducted in Norway, noting that the small scale fisheries in Norway may not be comparable to other small scale fisheries in the Arctic for example in relation to its importance to subsistence. Bakke mentioned that OECMs provide an opportunity for fisheries management to showcase positive effects and gain recognition for their efforts in mainstreaming biodiversity into fisheries management. He emphasized the importance of further developing fisheries regulations to maximize positive impacts on biodiversity. Bakke discussed the reporting of closures as OECMs by both the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) and the North Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) in 2024, focusing on sponges, corals, and seamounts. He raised questions about the deep sea and the challenges of accurately reporting measures that genuinely protect biodiversity not only creating "paper parks" where it is so deep that no fishing takes place anyway as an example. He concluded by highlighting the need for ongoing dialogues between fisheries sectors and conservation communities, including practical, effective measures to conserve biodiversity while ensuring sustainable use. All this in the context that fisheries is the only activity in the oceans that fully depends on clean, healthy and functioning ecosystems which is the main incentive to perform well in mainstreaming biodiversity,

## Equilibrium Research

*Nigel Dudley, Equilibrium Research*

Nigel Dudley, a freelance consultant closely involved with the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (IUCN WCPA), presented an overview of OECMs with a focus on their development, application in terrestrial regions, and the identification process.

He highlighted the significance of OECMs in the global biodiversity framework, particularly under Target 3, which aims to achieve 30% protection for land and sea areas. Dudley emphasized the increasing importance of OECMs due to the limited scope for expanding traditional protected areas in many countries.

The emergence of OECMs was somewhat accidental, originating from a late-night debate during the Nagoya meetings. This ambiguity initially led to confusion, but it gained momentum over time, leading to the formation of a task force by the IUCN WCPA and eventual inclusion in the global biodiversity framework.

Dudley outlined three main categories of OECMs: ancillary conservation, secondary conservation, and primary conservation. He provided examples such as military training grounds, protected watersheds, and areas where communities resist formal protected area status.

He discussed the challenges of defining and identifying OECMs, emphasizing the need for a case-by-case approach. The process involves three steps: 1) screening, 2) obtaining consent from stakeholders, and 3) rigorous identification, which can be time-consuming and complex, especially in cases involving Indigenous rightsholders, multiple landowners, and other stakeholders.

Dudley also addressed concerns about the long-term sustainability of OECMs, acknowledging the need for clarity on what "long term" entails, especially in rapidly changing environments like the Arctic. He stressed the importance of monitoring, commitment to maintenance, and the potential for OECMs to contribute to ecosystem restoration efforts.

In conclusion, Dudley underscored the ongoing learning process surrounding OECMs and the importance of international collaboration to ensure effective conservation outcomes. He highlighted the need for discussions on adapting OECMs to changing environmental conditions and the role they can play in filling gaps in protected area networks.

### **IUCN definition of protected area**

A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values. (Dudley, presentation)

### **Identifying or establishing other effective area-based conservation measures**

Types of approaches that deliver effective conservation in other effective area-based conservation measures

1. "Primary conservation" – refers to areas that may meet all elements of the IUCN definition of a protected area, but which are not officially designated as such because the governance authority does not want the area to be recognised or reported as a protected area. For example, in some instances Indigenous Peoples may not want areas that they manage to be designated as protected areas or recorded in government protected area databases. Assuming an area meets the OECM criteria, the governance authority has the right to withhold or give its consent to the area being recognised as an OECM.
2. "Secondary conservation" – is achieved through the active management of an area where biodiversity outcomes are a secondary management objective. For example, enduring watershed protection policies and management may result in effective protection of biodiversity in watersheds, even though the areas may be managed primarily for objectives other than conservation. Sites managed to provide ecological connectivity between protected areas or other areas of high biodiversity, thereby contributing to their viability, may also qualify as OECMs.
3. "Ancillary conservation" – refers to areas that deliver in-situ conservation as a by-product of management activities, even though biodiversity conservation is not a management objective. For example, Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands protects shipwrecks and war graves. This protection has led to the ancillary conservation of important biodiversity.  
(based on IUCN, 2019)

## HELCOM

*Jannica Haldin, Deputy Director, HELCOM*

Jannica Haldin, Deputy Director of HELCOM, presented insights from a previous workshop and subsequent developments regarding OECMs in the Baltic Sea region. The presentation outlined the unique characteristics of the Baltic Sea, emphasizing its heavy anthropogenic pressure and the resulting need for robust governance structures. HELCOM, as a regional sea convention, plays a central role in coordinating conservation efforts across the Baltic Sea countries.

The presentation highlighted the significance of stakeholder engagement and collaboration, emphasizing the importance of inclusive decision-making processes involving various sectors such as shipping, fisheries, and energy. Despite initial skepticism and challenges, the workshop served as a platform to raise awareness and build a shared understanding of OECMs.

Key findings from sector-specific discussions, including shipping, offshore energy, and cultural and archaeological sites, underscored both the potential and challenges associated with OECMs. While sectors like shipping and offshore energy showed potential for contributing to biodiversity conservation, challenges such as evolving industry standards and long-term impact assessment were recognized.

The presentation emphasized the need for a collaborative approach in developing a shared vision for OECMs in the region. This involves ongoing dialogue among countries at different stages of the OECM process, ensuring alignment with international guidance and standards. The development of a common understanding and decision tree for identifying OECMs provides a framework for future conservation efforts.

The presentation outlined the need for national-level implementation of OECMs, supported by ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing among Baltic Sea countries. Integrating OECMs into existing conservation networks and addressing research and resource challenges remain key priorities for advancing marine conservation in the region.

Overall, the presentation demonstrated the progress made in raising awareness and building consensus on OECMs in the Baltic Sea region, while also highlighting the ongoing challenges and opportunities for further collaboration and action.

The question and answer period following Haldin's presentation covered several key points. Initially, there was a discussion about the availability of workshop documents due to changes in website structure, with plans to rectify the issue. The conversation then shifted to the consideration of monitoring biodiversity and stressors in protected areas, emphasizing the importance of effective monitoring and data sharing across sectors. Additionally, there were questions about offshore

energy sectors and the potential for transboundary OECMs, highlighting the need for coordinated measures across borders and sectors. The discussion also touched on the challenges of artificial structures like wind farms impacting biodiversity and the necessity for case-by-case evaluation. Haldin mentioned ongoing efforts to develop a comprehensive resource on marine OECMs to address common questions and provide standardized answers. Throughout the session, there was a focus on collaboration, data sharing, and adapting measures to maximize biodiversity benefits while minimizing impacts.

[Access the HELCOM Decision Tree](#)

## **Nordic and wider Arctic participating county approaches to identifying marine and/or terrestrial OECMs**

### **Canada**

*Andrea Mast, Fisheries and Oceans Canada*

Andrea Mast's presentation on Canada's approach to identifying and recognizing marine OECMs provided valuable insights into the country's efforts in marine conservation and Indigenous engagement. Her presentation explored the historical context, key criteria for OECM recognition, Indigenous considerations, case studies, and implications for Canadian legislation and future conservation efforts.

### **Historical Context and Key Initiatives**

Mast began by providing historical context, noting pivotal documents and initiatives in Canada related to OECMs. In 2016, Fisheries and Oceans Canada published interim [Operational Guidance for Identifying OECMs in Canada's Marine Environment](#) (informed by science advice provided through the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat). Subsequently, the CBD's OECM definition and voluntary guidance and the final report of the [National Advisory Panel on Marine Protected Area Standards](#) in 2018 further shaped Canada's approach, and in 2022 Canada published [Guidance for recognizing marine OECMs](#), which applies to marine OECMs that are recognized by Canada's federal government.

### **Domestic Guidance and OECM Criteria**

The [Guidance for recognizing marine OECMs](#) (2022) interprets the international OECM definition, developed through the CBD, into a Canadian context. The guidance outlines key OECM concepts, guiding principles, and criteria for the recognition of OECMs. The criteria for OECM recognition outlined in the Guidance include requirements for the candidate OECM to be a long-term area-based measure that is spatially defined, and information on its biodiversity conservation benefits (BCBs) is collected. It must also be governed and managed by relevant

governing authorities in ways that provide BCBs over the long term. Canada's approach emphasizes science-based decision-making and assessment criteria to ensure robust marine conservation efforts. Mast emphasized the importance of consultation and engagement in Canada's marine conservation efforts.

### **Indigenous Considerations**

Mast emphasized the importance of Indigenous partners in marine conservation. Canada's domestic guidance includes provisions to respect constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights and recognize areas of spiritual, cultural, or historical importance to Indigenous Peoples. This reflects a commitment to collaborative and inclusive conservation efforts that include Indigenous Knowledge and cultural values.

### **Case Studies: Lull Bay and Hoeya Sound, and Disko Fan Conservation Area**

The presentation highlighted two case studies exemplifying successful collaboration between relevant governing authorities (including Indigenous governments), communities and stakeholders. Gwaꞗdlala/Nalꞗdlala (Lull Bay and Hoeya Sound), located on the Pacific Coast, demonstrates the OECM recognition of an existing Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area. The Disko Fan Conservation Area in the Eastern Arctic showcases adaptive management practices, such as adjusting fishing gear prohibitions based on identified risks to the area's conservation objectives.

### **Implications for Canadian Legislation and Future Conservation Efforts**

In response to questions, Mast discussed Canadian legislation related to biodiversity protection and plans for future OECM recognition. While Canada currently lacks specific OECM legislation, and area-based measures under a variety of legislation may be recognized as OECMs, *Biodiversity Protection Regulations* under the *Fisheries Act* empower the Minister to create regulations that restrict fishing activities specifically for biodiversity protection. Areas established under these regulations that meet the required criteria may be recognized as OECMs. This underscores Canada's commitment to integrating OECMs into legislative frameworks and advancing marine conservation efforts.

### **Conclusion**

Andrea Mast's presentation underscored Canada's proactive approach to marine conservation through OECM recognition. By incorporating scientific expertise, Indigenous perspectives, and adaptive management practices, Canada aims to achieve long-term biodiversity conservation outcomes. The case studies illustrate successful collaboration and highlight the importance of partner and stakeholder engagement in marine conservation initiatives.

## **Biodiversity Conservation Benefits (BCBs)**

A BCB is the net positive change in biodiversity or prevention of its loss, resulting from the governance decisions and management actions within an area (Government of Canada, 2022 Guidance for Recognizing Marine Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures).

## **Norway**

### *Eva Degré, Norwegian Environment Agency*

Eva Degré from the Norwegian Environment Agency provided insights into Norway's approach to identifying and recognizing OECMs. She began by acknowledging that while discussions about OECMs in Norway had been somewhat dormant, they had gained momentum in recent years. Degré mentioned that [Norway's national biodiversity action plan](#) and [Norway's integrated plan for the conservation of areas of special importance for marine biodiversity](#) had highlighted the need to use legislation beyond the Nature Diversity Act to protect biodiversity effectively. She expressed hope that a further upcoming white paper on biodiversity would provide more clarity and conclusions regarding Norway's work on OECMs.

Degré outlined some of the recent tasks undertaken in Norway related to OECMs, mentioning collaboration between the Environment Agency, the Fisheries Directorate, and the Institute for Marine Research. These tasks involved examining relevant regulations, particularly in the fisheries sector, to assess their potential conservation effects. Degré explained that while Norway has not yet decided upon procedures for defining areas that can be reported as OECMs, discussions were ongoing, and the workshop provided an opportunity for further exploration.

One key aspect of the discussion was defining areas eligible for reporting as OECMs. Degré emphasized the need to consider how potential OECMs would contribute to ecological objectives and representativeness. She highlighted that Norway was exploring various frames of activity that could be relevant to OECMs.

Degré provided examples of regulations, such as those protecting coral areas and vulnerable ecosystems from impacts from fisheries, which could contribute to OECMs. She discussed the complexity of overlapping regulations and activities, including oil and gas exploration and mineral extraction, in these areas. Despite the challenges, she underscored the importance of ensuring that regulations in sum effectively protected biodiversity from human activities.

The following discussion also touched on the need for long-term considerations in regulation and monitoring. Degré emphasized that sectorial regulations should be efficient and that they must not be undermined by lack of regulations of other relevant sectors or potentially harmful activities. There were questions about the duration of regulations and the level of monitoring required, especially in remote areas where human activity was limited.

In response to questions, Degré clarified that discussions with industry typically occurred when regulations were established, with assessments of biodiversity benefits being a scientific and managerial issue. Degré emphasized the importance of monitoring in remote areas as a major challenge for OECM and OECM effectiveness—and hence their (continued) recognition—in the Arctic, because of many data poor areas, suggesting that monitoring needs to be sufficient to detect natural fluctuations in biodiversity.

Overall, Degré's presentation provided insights into Norway's evolving approach to OECMs, highlighting ongoing discussions, challenges, and considerations in implementing effective conservation measures.

#### **Recognition of OECMs in Norway's integrated plan for the conservation of areas of special importance for marine biodiversity**

"...not only protected areas under the Nature Diversity Act, but also conservation measures under other legislation, may be identified as 'other effective area-based conservation measures' as mentioned in Aichi target 11. To be designated as OECMs, measures must provide a sustained and effective contribution to the conservation of geographically delineated areas that support valuable biodiversity." (Meld. St. 29, 2020-2021: Norway's integrated plan for the conservation of areas of special importance for marine biodiversity.)

## **Kingdom of Denmark**

*Palle Smedegaard Nielsen from the Ministry for Agriculture, Self-Sufficiency, Energy, and Environment, Government of Greenland*

Palle Smedegaard Nielsen provided insight into the process of identifying potential OECMs in Greenland.

### **Political Background and Biodiversity Strategy**

Nielsen began with an overview of the political background, highlighting the connections between targets under CBD in the Global Biodiversity Framework and Greenland's Biodiversity Strategy 2030.

### **Legal Frameworks and Governance**

Examples on jurisdictional frameworks that can provide regulation which could provide biodiversity benefits and lead to recognition as OECM. These legal frameworks include fisheries and mineral resource sectors. In the fisheries sector, executive orders define specific limitations on fishing gear and temporal restrictions, while in the mineral resource sector, completely separate legal frameworks covering land administration are established. Governance and jurisdictional competencies for enforcing regulations were emphasized as essential aspects of OECMs.

### **Screening Process and Criteria**

The presentation outlined the screening process for identifying potential OECMs, which involved evaluating areas already under management and not categorized as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Criteria such as defined governance, geographic definition, and sustained contribution to biodiversity conservation are considered during the screening process.

### **Examples of Potential OECMS**

Specific examples from the fisheries and mineral resource sectors were presented, highlighting areas such as areas restricting bottom-touching fishing gear south of Disko Bay and Melville Bay Conservation Area. These examples demonstrate how existing regulations and frameworks can contribute to the identification of potential OECMs. The need for further exploration and potential adjustments to existing areas to align with OECMs criteria was acknowledged.

### **Next Steps and Future Directions**

The presentation concluded with a discussion of the next steps in Greenland, including an upcoming draft report and internal processes. The importance of incorporating learnings from workshops and projects, as well as political direction, was emphasized. The presentation highlighted ongoing efforts to assess and protect biodiversity values in Greenland.

## **Discussion and Questions**

During the presentation, questions were raised regarding regulations on bottom trawling for shrimp, the applicability of guidelines to establish mines, and the disparity in identified OECMs between the east and west coasts of Greenland. Responses clarified the scope of regulations and governance measures and highlighted the influence of factors such as population density and associated activities regulated and the exclusion of certain areas from assessment.

## **United States of America**

*Elizabeth McLanahan, NOAA*

Elizabeth McLanahan opened her presentation by acknowledging that she is representing the work of NOAA's marine protected area center. She addressed the fact that the United States is not a party to the CBD but emphasized the country's commitment to environmental conservation. This commitment was underscored by President Biden's executive order on tackling the climate crisis, which included domestic targets related to conserving 30% of lands and waters, aligning with the global 30 by 30 initiative.

### **Emphasis on Connectivity**

McLanahan emphasized the importance of connectivity in conservation efforts, particularly regarding MPAs and OECMs, illustrating this concept by referencing whale migration patterns, showcasing how marine animals can move between different areas for breeding and feeding. Additionally, she mentions memorandums of understanding with other countries, such as the Dominican Republic, to address shared conservation goals and activities.

### **Status of Marine Protected Areas**

The presentation discussed the status of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the United States. McLanahan provides statistics indicating that 26% of U.S. waters are designated as MPAs, with 3% being fully no-take zones. She presented a distribution map showing the geographic concentration of these areas, particularly around the Pacific Islands due to the presence of a Marine National Monument around Hawaii. This underscored the importance of preserving biodiversity-rich areas and highlights the United States' efforts in this regard.

### **Challenges and Progress on OECMs**

McLanahan acknowledged that the U.S. has not yet identified any OECMs but emphasized ongoing efforts to develop NOAA's Area-based Management Characterization Tool. The tool asks a guided set of questions designed to assess an area's conservation potential and identify opportunities for enhanced outcomes.

The tool seeks to holistically characterize an area's conservation potential by documenting not only how a management authority works to manage the area, but how the area is managed through range of jurisdictional authorities in place.

McLanahan also discussed the importance of evaluating thresholds for conservation criteria, highlighting the need for consistency in data collection and interpretation across different geographic areas.

### **Data Gaps and Challenges**

McLanahan identified significant data gaps, particularly related to monitoring ecosystem services, which poses challenges in assessing long-term biodiversity considerations. Additionally, she noted that characterization data are not spatially consistent. Large sites present challenges in characterization due to variations across their geographic extent, leading to questions about how to assess their conservation value effectively.

### **Future Directions and Collaboration**

In conclusion, McLanahan expressed excitement about learning from countries that have made progress in applying OECMs, especially concerning large geographic spaces with multiple uses. She emphasized the importance of collaboration and knowledge-sharing to address common challenges and improve conservation efforts globally.

In summary, Elizabeth McLanahan's presentation provided valuable insights into U.S. conservation efforts, emphasizing the importance of connectivity, collaboration, and ongoing research to address challenges and advance marine conservation initiatives.

## **Iceland**

### *Snorri Sigurðsson, Icelandic Institute of Natural History*

Snorri Sigurðsson from the Icelandic Institute of Natural History provided an overview of the current status of OECMs in Iceland. While Iceland has not yet established any OECMs, recent policy and legislative developments have indirectly acknowledged the concept. However, there has been limited progress in implementation, with most marine conservation efforts focused on fishery regulations rather than dedicated conservation measures.

### **Current Marine Conservation Efforts**

Iceland's marine conservation efforts are relatively nascent, with only about 2% of its marine area under legal protection for specific conservation goals. Most conservation measures are driven by fishery regulations rather than dedicated MPAs. These regulations often stem from the need to manage harvested species, leaving gaps in general ecosystem mapping and conservation coverage.

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

One of the main challenges facing marine conservation in Iceland is the fragmented knowledge of biodiversity in marine environments. While there are efforts to improve biodiversity mapping, there is still a long way to go. Additionally, there is a need to align different government policies dealing with conservation issues and improve stakeholder consultation.

## **Recent Developments**

Despite these challenges, there have been recent positive steps towards marine conservation in Iceland. The national biodiversity policy is under review to align with global biodiversity frameworks. In 2023 a working group has been established to analyze the legal and policy framework regarding marine conservation areas, with a particular focus on OECMs and to suggest necessary actions. While the group has not yet delivered its final report, there is political support for exploring the use of OECMs in marine conservation.

## **Identifying Potential OECMs**

An important product of the working group is a description of a formal process for identification and establishment of OECMs through area-based fishing regulations. This involves evaluating current commercial fishery regulations and evaluating the potential as OECMs. The process requires a rigorous evaluation of regulations utilizing a system created from FAO, CBD and IUCN guidelines. One example is the regulation on lump fish catch, which includes closures in key biodiversity areas to address bycatch issues. These areas show promise as potential OECMs due to their limited commercial fishing activity and significant biodiversity value. Another point of note is that no formal work on terrestrial OECMs has been initiated by the government to identify terrestrial OECMs or establish a framework to do so. There was a recent MSc study from the University of Iceland that investigated opportunities for terrestrial OECMs, noting the following areas for consideration: water protection zones, cultural heritage sites, municipal spatial planning/recreation areas, forest reserves and soil conservation areas.

## **Future Steps**

Moving forward, Iceland aims to formalize the process of identifying and establishing OECMs. This includes completing evaluations of current regulations and engaging in stakeholder consultation. While challenges remain, such as temporal closures and deep-sea conservation, Iceland is committed to advancing marine conservation efforts and contributing to international conservation goals.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Iceland's journey towards establishing OECMs in its marine environment is still in its early stages. However, recent developments and ongoing efforts indicate a growing commitment to marine conservation. By addressing knowledge gaps, aligning policies, and engaging stakeholders, Iceland aims to play a significant role in global marine conservation efforts.

## Finland

*Lasse Kurvinen, Metsähallitus; Penina Blanket, Finnish Ministry of the Environment*

Lasse Kurvinen from Metsähallitus presented on OECMS in Finland, highlighting the ongoing progress in the country in this regard.

### **Establishment of OECM Working Group**

In 2019, following the CBD decision in 2018, Finland formed an OECM working group (2019–2021) comprising of representatives from various agencies. The primary objectives of this group were to draft national principles for identifying OECMs, propose methodologies for data compilation, reporting, and coverage calculation, and do an initial scoping of potential OECM area types. Stakeholder engagement was included through theme groups and events, facilitating discussions on potential area types and biodiversity values.

### **Theme Group for Marine Areas**

Within the OECM working group, a theme group for marine areas was established, focusing on scoping potential area types against OECM criteria. This involved assessing different area types and their biodiversity values, including stakeholder engagement through two events to gather views and insights.

### **Life IP Biodiversea Project**

To further advance the work, Finland included a work package on OECMs into the Life IP Biodiversea project, which included scoping potential area types, assessing previous criteria assessments, and conducting site-specific inspections.

Finland's participation in EU projects has enabled further progress, with a focus on technical assessments and integration into national processes. The technical assessment within the Life IP project is nearing completion, with results expected to be published soon. These findings will be integrated into ongoing national processes aimed at formalizing procedures for identifying and reporting OECMs.

Kurvinen provided examples of areas assessed in Finland, including UNESCO World Heritage sites, fishing restriction areas, boating restriction areas, military areas, and landscape protection areas. Each type of area requires detailed evaluation against OECM criteria to determine its suitability.

### **Case Study: River Mouth Fisheries Restrictions**

Kurvinen delved into the specifics of river mouth fisheries restrictions, highlighting their geographically defined zones and the need to assess potential overlaps with formal protected areas. These restrictions aim to protect migratory fish, contributing to biodiversity conservation, although assessing other direct biodiversity benefits remains challenging. The case study on river mouth fisheries restrictions highlights the challenges of assessing direct biodiversity benefits and establishing monitoring mechanisms.

## **Monitoring, Reporting, and Governance**

A critical challenge lies in establishing monitoring, reporting, and governance mechanisms for recognized OECMs. Questions around who conducts monitoring, who bears the costs, and how reporting obligations are managed require further consideration and development.

## **Conclusion and Future Directions**

Kurvinen acknowledged the complexity of establishing OECMs and emphasized the need for clarity in terminology and processes. Despite challenges, Finland has made significant strides in identifying and assessing potential OECMs, with ongoing efforts focused on refining methodologies, engaging stakeholders and formalizing identification and reporting procedures. Despite challenges, the country remains committed to advancing marine conservation through effective OECM establishment and management, complementing formal protected areas.

## **Overview of Indigenous sustainable management practices, Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) and other approaches to Indigenous engagement in area-based conservation**

### **Herb Nakimayak, Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada Vice President, International**

Herb Nakimayak, Vice President of ICC Canada, presented on the importance of recognizing Indigenous sustainable management practices, particularly focusing on Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) and other approaches to Indigenous engagement in area-based conservation. Nakimayak highlighted his background representing the Inuvialuit Settlement Region in Western Canada and emphasized the significance of including and fully recognizing Indigenous Knowledge into conservation efforts.

He mentioned his involvement in various organizations, including the the [Fisheries Joint Management Committee](#) (FJMC) and the [Ārramăt](#) project, which aims to collaborate with Indigenous groups globally. Nakimayk stressed the importance of respectful collaboration between Indigenous Peoples and government entities in conservation projects.

Nakimayak discussed several initiatives in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, such as the FJMC Arctic Char program, which collects data on harvest and environmental indicators, including mercury and microplastics. He emphasized the role of Indigenous Knowledge holders and scientists in gathering data and developing management plans, ensuring consistency across organizations.

Additionally, Nakimayak discussed the Beaufort Sea Commercial Integrated Fisheries Management Frameworks, the Inuvialuit Settlement Region beluga harvest monitoring program (in place since 1973), the Eastern Beaufort Sea Beluga Management Plan, and the establishment of the Tarium Niryutait Marine Protected Area to protect important beluga habitat and harvesting areas. He highlighted the need for collaboration between scientists and Indigenous Knowledge holders to address conservation challenges effectively.

Nakimayak also discussed the significance of Indigenous Knowledge in scientific research, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and mutual respect. He mentioned the ongoing work on the ringed seal management plan, utilizing data to address concerns about ringed seal populations.

He also emphasized the strengths of Indigenous Knowledge and observations, which ensured continued data collection during COVID-19. The FJMC has over 30 years of data on Arctic char and ringed seal and 50 years of data on beluga. He recognized the importance of involving Indigenous youth in these activities.

In conclusion, Nakimayak expressed gratitude for sharing his insights and emphasized the importance of ongoing collaboration and dialogue in conservation efforts. He welcomed questions and further discussions on Indigenous-led conservation initiatives.

### **Rowenna Gryba, Inuit Circumpolar Council**

Rowenna Gryba, representing Inuit Circumpolar Council, shared insights from her collaborative research efforts with Indigenous communities in Alaska, specifically in Utqiagvik, Kotzebue, and Tikigaaq. Her presentation focused on the use of Indigenous Knowledge in area-based conservation initiatives. Gryba's work aims to bridge the gap between Indigenous Knowledge and area-based conservation practices.

#### **Acknowledgments and Importance of Indigenous Knowledge**

Gryba began by acknowledging her co-authors, emphasizing the essential role played by Indigenous hunters in the project. She underscored the significance of Indigenous Knowledge holders, recognizing that their wisdom and expertise are foundational to the success of conservation efforts. Gryba highlighted that Indigenous Knowledge encompasses not only ecological aspects but also spiritual, cultural, and relational dimensions, which are often overlooked and not included in scientific research.

#### **Background and Project Initiation**

The motivation for Gryba's project stemmed from concerns around the listings of seals under the US Environmental Protection Agency and how to better include Indigenous Knowledge in current federal management processes. Gryba

emphasized the need for greater inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge and perspectives in conservation management, highlighting the disconnect between Western scientific approaches and Indigenous understandings of ecosystems.

### **Indigenous Knowledge Interviews**

Gryba described conducting semi-directed interviews with Indigenous hunters, focusing on their knowledge of ice-associated seals. These interviews fostered organic conversations, allowing Gryba to explore key ecological factors that were emphasized by the hunters, such as currents and winds that influence seal habitats. Gryba emphasized the importance of actively listening to and learning from Indigenous Knowledge holders, who offer invaluable insights into their relationship with the environment.

### **Mapping Indigenous Knowledge**

Through collaboration with hunters, Gryba translated Indigenous Knowledge into spatial maps depicting important seal habitats and currents, and graphical summaries of the Indigenous Knowledge shared. The maps and graphs serve as visual representations and summaries of Indigenous Knowledge, providing an approach to visualize the intricate relationships between seals and their environment. Gryba highlighted the iterative nature of this process, with hunters actively participating in refining and correcting her interpretations, ensuring the accuracy of the maps and summaries.

### **Quantitative Analysis of Indigenous Knowledge**

Gryba introduced a method to quantify Indigenous Knowledge, allowing for statistical characterization and use into habitat models. This approach enabled her to use Indigenous Knowledge as a sole data source in habitat models, with results showing important areas for species that includes dynamic habitat types, enriching conservation practices with diverse perspectives.

### **Combining Indigenous Knowledge with Satellite Data**

Gryba illustrated methods developed to include Indigenous Knowledge and satellite telemetry data using Bayesian statistics. This approach allowed Gryba to use Indigenous Knowledge as informed priors and as covariates in the models, enhancing the accuracy of habitat predictions. Gryba emphasized the complementary nature of Indigenous Knowledge and scientific data, advocating for their combined use in conservation modeling to produce more robust, accurate, and nuanced outcomes.

### **Results and Implications**

The combined knowledge and subsequent maps generated by Gryba demonstrated the enhanced accuracy of seal habitat predictions when Indigenous Knowledge was included with scientific data in modelling approaches. Gryba underscored the broader implications of her work, highlighting the potential of Indigenous

Knowledge to fill critical data gaps and improve conservation practices. She emphasized the need for ongoing collaboration between Indigenous communities and scientific researchers to harness the full potential of co-production of knowledge in conservation efforts.

## **Conclusion**

Gryba concluded her presentation by expressing gratitude to the Indigenous hunters for their invaluable contributions to the project. She reiterated the importance of recognizing and respecting Indigenous Knowledge as a vital resource for understanding and managing ecosystems. Gryba called for a paradigm shift in conservation practices, advocating for greater inclusion of Indigenous perspectives to ensure more holistic and effective conservation outcomes.

The question and answer period following Gryba's presentation delved into various technical aspects and implications of her research. One attendee questioned an assumption in the research that the scale at which the people observed the animal (by coastlines or boats) accurately reflected the extent of seal habitat. Gryba responded by discussing the influence of hunters on animal behavior and the constant observations made by Indigenous communities throughout different seasons, highlighting the importance of understanding these dynamics. Another attendee expressed concerns about the rapid pace of climate change affecting the integration of Indigenous Knowledge into scientific studies. Gryba emphasized the importance of actively engaging with Indigenous Knowledge holders, including both active hunters and elders, to capture real-time observations and address shifting habitat use due to climate change.

Further discussions revolved around the significance of co-production studies, integrating Indigenous Knowledge into habitat modeling and critical habitat designation processes, and the role of Indigenous Knowledge in monitoring and assessment efforts. Attendees highlighted the value of including Indigenous perspectives in monitoring plans and emphasized the need for ongoing dialogue and collaboration between Indigenous communities, scientists, and policymakers. Overall, the discussion underscored the importance of incorporating Indigenous Knowledge in research and decision-making processes to enhance understanding and management of Arctic ecosystems in the face of climate change.

# Day 2: Monday April 15, 2024

## Breakout session 1

**Topic: The use of the CBD OECM criteria in different context in the Nordic and wider Arctic, differences and commonalities in approach among Arctic States, and exploring the case for a common approach**

### Guiding questions:

- What are the critical relevant steps to identify OECMs in the region (based on criteria, guidelines and national tools)?
- What specific considerations are needed to apply OECMs in the Nordic and/or Arctic region as a management tool?
- What considerations need to be taken into account to list categories of potential/available OECMs in the Nordic and/or Arctic region for different sectors?
- Are there areas that are unlikely/unsuitable to be OECMs? Should those be defined and how?

### Table 1

#### **1. What are the critical relevant steps to identify OECMs in the region (based on criteria, guidelines and national tools)?**

- An overview of existing measures and partners/stakeholders involved in the process is crucial. Identify who is involved and assess needs.
- Early engagement with different sectors is essential, as demonstrated by Finland's approach of setting up thematic working groups and events. There is a need to understand who does the scoping at what stage of the process and engagement should occur throughout
- For some countries, the focus is still on designing the process, with engagement with sectors and stakeholders yet to come.
- For others the starting point for identifying OECMs was the low level of MPA coverage, leading to consideration of fisheries measures.
- Some countries have initially focussed mainly on areas with fisheries measures and assessment of their conservation values and the alignment of such measures with the CBD criteria

- Using a schematic flowchart and leveraging CBD criteria were highlighted as relevant steps. There is need for some level of international consistency in the application of criteria and sub-criteria in order to maintain the integrity of the intention of OECMs and contribute to the global goals.

## **2. What specific considerations are needed to apply OECMs in the Nordic and/or Arctic region as a management tool?**

- Active involvement and participation of Indigenous Peoples, and processes to support inclusion.
- Early engagement with sectors and stakeholders is crucial for effective implementation, especially as new/emerging sectors are becoming more active in the Arctic.
- There are strong seasonal changes in the Arctic marine context, and there is a need to understand natural variability in relation to conservation measures, and if measures can be considered seasonal in nature but providing long-term benefits.
- Alignment with both CBD and EU targets, where applicable, is necessary.
- Further exploration of the threshold for what constitutes an acceptable OECM is needed.
- The Arctic is also a transboundary region, so cooperation across borders and in areas beyond national jurisdiction is of particular importance to consider.

## **3. What considerations need to be taken into account to list categories of potential/available OECMs in the Nordic and/or Arctic region for different sectors?**

- Get an overview of what is there and who is doing what, and work to incentivize sectors to reduce any burden to action from their perspectives. Care should be taken about making changes that could affect existing sectors.
- Consider who does the monitoring and what reporting systems there are, as both carry a burden.
- Assessment of existing measures and their alignment with CBD criteria.
- Evaluation of biodiversity value and potential overlaps with fisheries measures, particularly in marine environments.

#### **4. Are there areas that are unlikely/unsuitable to be OECMs? Should those be defined and how?**

- Some areas have potential for new/growing activities where an OECM could be unsuitable if the knowledge of sector activities and impacts on biodiversity are unclear.
  - Even unlikely areas can go through the process of assessment and that standards and criteria should guide the assessments. If in doubt, leave it out. Unsuitable areas should still be documented and possibly revisited.
  - It may be beneficial to define criteria for identifying unsuitable areas as OECMs, possibly based on biodiversity assessments and sector-specific considerations.
- 

### **Table 2**

#### **1. What are the critical relevant steps to identify OECMs in the region (based on criteria, guidelines and national tools)?**

- Start with the use of existing screening tools such as Ecologically and Biologically Sensitive Areas (EBSAs) in the Arctic. Utilize the CBD criteria as a foundational starting point.
- Discuss whether to begin with an area or a management measure, referencing previous discussions with HELCOM.
- Recognize the need for a structured approach akin to the MPA toolbox but tailored for OECMs.
- Consider the varying agendas of participants from different sectors and the importance of awareness in the initial stages.
- Propose a desktop exercise to apply the criteria to real or fictitious examples to foster consistency in evaluation.

#### **2. What specific considerations are needed to apply OECMs in the Nordic and/or Arctic region as a management tool?**

- Different states are in different stages of OECM development. There is a need to develop a consistent-enough approach that provides sufficient flexibility for wide-ranging application in various contexts.
- Develop a tool box and consider the flexibility of the tool as it relates to climate change and the ability to revise the approach.
-

Acknowledge data-poor areas and the potential for shared approaches among Arctic regions.

- Highlight the diverse governance structures in the Arctic and the necessity of involving local communities and Indigenous Peoples' organizations.
- Explore approaches to marine OECMs beyond the Arctic for potential lessons learned and recognize the scarcity of marine OECMs in existing databases.
- Consideration should be given to:
  - monitoring commitments and considerations in OECMs (existing or new), including sharing across industrial sectors;
  - challenges with how to define long-term benefits to biodiversity and how this might be jointly interpreted for the Arctic;
  - opportunities for OECMs to contribute to conservation effectiveness of MPCA networks in a rapidly changing Arctic;
  - geographic scope of OECMs being aligned with relevant biodiversity feature/ecosystem structures and functions to be conserved (rather than considering jurisdictional boundaries predominantly);
  - whether evaluation of OECM-related biodiversity conservation benefits in the Arctic – where data are often lacking – can benefit from practices and experiences in other parts of the world.

**3. Considerations for listing categories of potential/available OECMs in the Nordic and/or Arctic region for different sectors:**

- Examine differences in sectors active in the Arctic, such as shipping and fishing, and recognize that sectors may already have different management measures in place that could be classified as an OECM; there is a need to have this overview.

**4. Are there areas that are unlikely/unsuitable to be OECMs? Should those be defined and how?**

- The group discussed the concept of temporary protection measures and whether they should be considered as OECMs, particularly in cases where they mitigate pressure for extended periods of time despite being temporary in nature.

## Table 3

### 1. What are the critical relevant steps to identify OECMs in the region (based on criteria, guidelines and national tools)?

- Utilize established guidelines and case studies, such as the Canadian Guidance framework and HELCOM, for identifying OECMs, leveraging international insights and strong stakeholder engagement.
- Compare and evaluate different approaches, considering starting points for identification (area/biodiversity feature vs. regulatory/governance measure) and their respective pros and cons.
- Ensure the presence and quality of biodiversity benefits, although evaluating/measuring these benefits may pose challenges.
- Consider the case-by-case context, acknowledging the difficulty in standardizing minimal benefits and the risk of insufficient biodiversity outcomes in measure-first approaches.
- Recognize the importance of including both new and established measures as OECMs to meet global/national biodiversity goals, despite challenges in identifying new OECMs without known biodiversity benefits.
- Develop tools, such as decision trees, to bridge gaps between measure-first approaches and the need to evaluate biodiversity benefits, potentially considering upgrading OECMs to MPAs for long-term conservation.
- Emphasize open communication and data sharing to understand all activities within potential OECMs, considering environmental assessments and risk assessment processes.

### 2. What specific considerations are needed to apply OECMs in the Nordic and/or Arctic region as a management tool?

- Considerations included co-management with Indigenous Peoples/Organizations, cross-border management, climate change adaptation, and utilization of marine spatial planning tools.
- Monitoring challenges, the importance of data transparency, and stakeholder engagement were emphasized as well as data sovereignty when discussing the role of Indigenous Knowledge into data frameworks utilized for OECMs.
- The role for international fora in the Arctic context was discussed as an important element to improve alignment between national efforts. Arctic Council working groups may be especially important to collect, curate and disseminate important data, strategies and tools. International fora need to have a clear role and mandate and joint processes must be clearly defined and utilized when applicable.

- A good communication strategy is important. A clear inherent understanding of the OECM concept is not a given and perceptions will differ.
- 3. What considerations need to be taken into account to list categories of potential/available OECMs in the Nordic and/or Arctic region for different sectors?**
- Exploration of sectors like shipping and their potential OECM opportunities, including speed reduction areas and noise control, was discussed.
  - Emphasis was placed on the need for National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) to drive the utilization of OECMs.
  - Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) was highlighted as a method to engage various sectors and promote biodiversity inclusive planning.
- 4. Are there areas that are unlikely/unsuitable to be OECMs? Should those be defined and how?**
- Areas with high biodiversity pressures, rapid activity changes, lack of local support, and limited management capacity may be considered unsuitable for OECMs.
  - Areas where biodiversity benefits may be difficult to identify and where activities are too unpredictable.
  - Areas without local support, adequate consultation or where capacity for management is severely limited, as is where greenwashing may be a risk.
- 

## **Table 4**

- 1. What are the critical relevant steps to identify OECMs in the region (based on criteria, guidelines and national tools)?**
- Conduct baseline research to understand the region's basic elements and root biological concerns and ecosystem functions in the concept and criteria of OECM establishment.
  - Establish a clear and agreed-upon definition of OECMs.
  - Define a process for flagging OECMs in a rapidly changing environment.
  - Determine the need for a legal framework or guidelines for identifying OECMs.
  -

Ensure sector involvement and awareness, considering incentives for their participation.

- Communicate effectively with government and sectors, using appropriate tools, timelines and language.
- Facilitate transborder discussions and coordination across jurisdictions.
- Apply a precautionary approach when determining the amount of information needed for establishing OECMs.
- Utilize helpful tools like the HELCOM decision tree in the evaluation process.

**2. What specific considerations are needed to apply OECMs in the Nordic and/or Arctic region as a management tool?**

- Address cross-jurisdictional and transboundary challenges.
- Consider implications of OECMs in Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) in the Arctic.
- Recognize the rapid rate of change in the Arctic environment.
- Adapt monitoring targets to the Arctic's specific characteristics.
- Cooperate with multiple sectors to ensure effective implementation.

**3. What considerations need to be taken into account to list categories of potential/available OECMs in the Nordic and/or Arctic region for different sectors?**

- Ensure the concept of OECMs is not devaluated and addresses all threats.
- Determine criteria for identifying what areas are not OECMs on a case-by-case basis.
- Use case studies and consider various scenarios, such as protections across borders and different purposes for protected areas.

**4. Are there areas that are unlikely/unsuitable to be OECMs? Should those be defined and how?**

- Establish clear criteria for determining when an area loses its OECM status.

## Breakout session 2

### Question 1

**What can be learned from the processes and approaches used from the case studies, and how can these lessons be applied in a broader context?**

#### **Consistency between Arctic States**

Achieving consistency in OECM implementation across Arctic states is acknowledged as challenging due to the diverse range of sectors, stakeholders, and rightsholders involved, and important local/regional/national contexts. However, the group identified existing processes that could serve as a foundation for promoting alignment. These processes include collaborative forums where stakeholders from different sectors can convene to discuss common goals and strategies. Understanding the legal jurisdiction differences between Arctic states is paramount for establishing consistency in OECM identification and management. By aligning frameworks and regulatory approaches, Arctic states can create a cohesive strategy for OECM recognition that transcends national boundaries.

#### **Involvement of Rightsholders, Partners, and Stakeholders**

Early and frequent engagement with a broad range of stakeholders and rights holders emerged as a key theme. It was emphasized in the group the importance of including diverse voices in the decision-making process, particularly Indigenous Knowledge holders who are often rights holders in the regions where OECMs are designated. Recognizing Indigenous Knowledge as a valuable source of long-term monitoring data can enrich the understanding of ecosystem dynamics and contribute to more holistic management strategies. In addition to engaging Indigenous Peoples, engaging stakeholders such as industry representatives, environmental organizations, and local communities is essential for fostering collective ownership and support for OECM initiatives. Incentivizing biodiversity conservation for stakeholders, perhaps through financial incentives or regulatory mechanisms, can further enhance stakeholder buy-in and commitment to OECM objectives.

#### **Communication**

Effective communication emerged as a critical component of successful OECM implementation. The group emphasized the need for clear and consistent messaging tailored to different sectors, stakeholder and rightsholder groups. Developing common terminology and ensuring a shared understanding of OECM concepts are fundamental to facilitating meaningful dialogue and collaboration. Moreover, the group highlighted the importance of visual communication tools, such as maps, diagrams, and infographics, to convey complex information in a compelling and accessible manner. Investing

in science communication strategies can help bridge communication gaps and foster greater public awareness and support for OECM initiatives.

### **Different Knowledge Systems and Data Collection and Monitoring**

The incorporation of diverse knowledge systems, including Indigenous Knowledge, alongside scientific data, was underscored as essential for comprehensive OECM assessment and monitoring. Indigenous Knowledge holders possess valuable insights into local ecosystems, biodiversity trends, and resource management practices that can complement scientific data and enhance the robustness of OECM assessments. Developing common databases and standardizing monitoring protocols are critical steps toward harmonizing data collection efforts and facilitating cross-border collaboration. Addressing challenges related to data storage, management, sovereignty, and accessibility is paramount for ensuring the reliability and usability of OECM monitoring data over the long term.

### **Flexibility**

OECMs offer greater flexibility compared to MPAs, allowing for adaptive management approaches that can accommodate changing environmental conditions and stakeholder needs. However, the group recognized challenges in utilizing short-term management measures to achieve long-term conservation goals. Discussions centered on scenarios where short-term measures could be counted toward OECM targets provided they contribute to long-term biodiversity conservation objectives. The group also discussed what timeframe may constitute as a short term measure. The group emphasized the importance of developing monitoring frameworks that assess both short-term management effectiveness and long-term biodiversity outcomes to ensure the integrity and credibility of OECM designations.

In conclusion, the group's discussion highlighted the multifaceted nature of OECM implementation in the Arctic context and underscored the importance of collaboration, communication, and adaptive management approaches. By embracing diverse perspectives, engaging rightsholders and stakeholders at all levels, and leveraging existing processes and knowledge systems, Arctic states can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of OECM initiatives, thereby contributing to the conservation and sustainable management of marine and terrestrial ecosystems in the region.

## Question 2

### What would be needed in an OECM toolbox to support best practices?

#### **Format of the Toolbox**

The group emphasized the importance of building upon existing resources rather than creating a new framework from scratch. They suggested expanding the current PAME MPA toolbox to include OECM tools, advocating for a collaborative approach through workshops, including Indigenous Peoples, to develop a common vision for Arctic OECMs and MPAs. Additionally, they proposed that the toolbox serve as a forum for stakeholders and rightsholders to share knowledge and best practices, with a focus on establishing a shared vision for Arctic conservation efforts.

#### **Content of the Toolbox**

In terms of content, the group emphasized leveraging existing materials and guidance from organizations such as the CBD, IUCN, HELCOM and the FAO. They identified the need for the toolbox to address both the process of recommending OECMs and the operational management of existing ones. Key suggestions included the development of decision trees, maps of existing and potential OECMs, case studies, and standards for data reporting and evaluation. They highlighted the importance of including examples of successful conservation initiatives and practical guidance on incorporating Indigenous Knowledge into OECM management.

#### **Communication Strategies**

Effective communication was deemed crucial for the toolbox's success. The group recommended real-time sessions and "OECM office hours" to facilitate engagement and collaboration among stakeholders. They stressed the importance of involving Indigenous Knowledge holders in the toolbox's development, recognizing the importance and effectiveness of Indigenous management practice. Additionally, they suggested showcasing successful industry communication examples as valuable tools for encouraging and facilitating OECMs.

#### **Communicating Toolbox Results:**

The group underscored the importance of communicating the results of the toolbox to stakeholders. This involved showcasing the utility of OECM tools for addressing specific Arctic marine conservation issues, clarifying how existing marine governance mechanisms can support OECM identification and management, and evaluating measures' contributions to biodiversity conservation benefits. They emphasized the need for clear and accessible communication of the toolbox's findings to ensure widespread understanding and adoption of OECM best practices.

Overall, the group's reflections highlighted the importance of collaboration, leveraging existing resources, and effective communication in developing and implementing an OECM toolbox tailored to the Arctic context. By incorporating these insights into the toolbox's design and implementation, stakeholders can work towards enhancing conservation efforts and biodiversity protection in the region.

## Breakout session 3

### Table 1

#### Topic: Next steps for marine OECMs

##### Guiding questions:

- What case studies should be in the report, who is writing which sections of the report and what is a timeline for deliverables?
- What key elements could be included in the PAME MPA toolbox to better consider perspectives on OECM approaches and applications?
- What opportunities exist for advancing OECMs in the wider marine Arctic?
- What is essential knowledge needs to advance marine OECMs in the Arctic? What parties and peoples can contribute to advancing this understanding?
- What are some potential next steps to advance marine OECMs in the Arctic?

#### Case Studies

The discussion emphasized the significance of including case studies in sections three and four of the CAFF/PAME OECM report. Participants recognized the need to illustrate diverse approaches to identifying marine OECMs among Arctic Council member states. For section three, where member state approaches are detailed, suggestions ranged from summarizing existing approaches, like those of Canada, to providing updates on the development progress of other countries. This approach aimed to offer insights into the varying stages of OECM implementation across Arctic nations.

In section four, which focuses on relevant case studies and best practices, participants explored various thematic areas to be covered. These included addressing multi-sectoral challenges, integrating Indigenous perspectives, examining the efficacy of short-term and seasonal management measures, and guarding against practices akin to greenwashing. The group emphasized the importance of selecting case studies that illuminate key issues and offer actionable lessons for OECM implementation.

Regarding the timeline for deliverables, the group aimed to complete the report before the conclusion of the Norwegian chairmanship (May 2025), allowing for dissemination and feedback within the Arctic Council. Additionally, there was a recognition of the need for ongoing updates, acknowledging that OECM approaches and case studies will continue to evolve, making the report a dynamic resource.

### **Key Elements for the PAME MPA Toolbox**

Participants brainstormed key elements to enrich the PAME MPA toolbox's consideration of OECMs. They discussed the integration of MPAs and OECMs within the framework document, proposing distinct sections or tabs for each concept to accommodate their unique features. The toolbox was envisioned as a repository for decision-making tools, such as decision trees, to aid stakeholders in identifying and evaluating OECMs. Mapping tools for existing and potential OECMs were suggested to provide spatial context and facilitate planning.

Standardization emerged as a crucial theme, with recommendations for setting standards for data reporting, modification processes, and evaluation criteria. The group underscored the importance of Indigenous Knowledge and practices, advocating for their inclusion in the toolbox to ensure culturally sensitive approaches to OECM management. Effective communication strategies were highlighted as essential to engage stakeholders and convey complex concepts clearly.

### **Opportunities for Advancing OECMs**

While grappling with the question's interpretation, participants explored opportunities to extend OECM initiatives beyond national boundaries. Binational collaboration across exclusive economic zones (EEZs) was identified as a promising avenue for advancing OECMs in the wider marine environment. Evaluating existing management measures and identifying opportunities for collaboration and harmonization were deemed essential steps in this process.

The discussion also touched on the importance of considering connectivity and representativity in OECM recognition, emphasizing the need to account for ecological linkages and species movements across marine ecosystems. Climate change modeling emerged as a critical aspect, with participants highlighting the necessity of anticipating future management needs in response to shifting environmental conditions.

### **Essential Knowledge Needs and Potential Next Steps**

Although time constraints limited in-depth exploration, informal discussions during lunch provided valuable insights into essential knowledge needs and potential next steps for advancing OECMs in the Arctic marine environment. Participants highlighted the importance of aligning MPA and OECM strategies, particularly

within the context of emerging frameworks like the BBNJ Agreement. They also discussed the report's role as a living document, emphasizing the need for periodic updates to reflect evolving practices and knowledge in OECM management. Overall, the conversation underscored the collaborative effort needed to advance OECMs in the Arctic and the significance of ongoing learning and adaptation in this dynamic field.

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## **Table 2**

### **Topic: Next steps for marine OECMs**

#### **Guiding questions:**

- What case studies should be in the report, who is writing which sections of the report and what is a timeline for deliverables?
- What key elements could be included in the PAME MPA toolbox to better consider perspectives on OECM approaches and applications?
- What opportunities exist for advancing OECMs in the wider marine Arctic?
- What is essential knowledge needs to advance marine OECMs in the Arctic? What parties and peoples can contribute to advancing this understanding?
- What are some potential next steps to advance marine OECMs in the Arctic

#### **Case Studies**

The group highlighted various case study options for inclusion in the report. They proposed incorporating existing case studies such as Disko Fan in the Canadian Arctic and theoretical case studies simulating areas with diverse industrial activities. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of documenting processes used by different countries for identifying and recognizing OECMs, especially for those still in the development phase. The group also suggested exploring MSP theoretical examples and simulations conducted by experts. Regarding the timeline, while there was brief discussion, the group aimed to meet the May 2025 deadline for deliverables.

#### **Key Elements for the PAME MPA Toolbox**

Participants proposed several key elements to enrich the PAME MPA toolbox for better consideration of OECM perspectives. These included leveraging the sticker wall concept to gather potential examples, compiling information on important Arctic species and critical habitats, and mapping current EBSAs and critical habitats across the Arctic region. Flowcharts were suggested to simplify governance and management processes, while defining key criteria based on CBD standards was deemed essential. Comparing MPAs and OECMs to delineate their differences was also highlighted as crucial for clarity.

## **Opportunities for Advancing OECMs**

The group identified various opportunities to advance OECMs in the wider Arctic marine context. They emphasized the potential of transboundary OECMs and stressed the importance of recognizing the dynamic nature of species distribution within ocean environments. Incentives were suggested to encourage countries to initiate OECM recognition, with a focus on collaboration with the Arctic Council and learning from non-Arctic countries' experiences to glean valuable insights.

## **Essential Knowledge Needs and Potential Next Steps**

The discussion underscored the importance of accessing international best practices beyond Arctic states, citing examples from countries like Indonesia and utilizing tools like ArcNet for analysis. Participants emphasized the need for comprehensive knowledge exchange and learning from global experiences to inform Arctic-specific OECM initiatives effectively.

The group acknowledged the value of the workshop and proposed additional focused workshops to delve deeper into case studies and communication strategies. They emphasized the need for targeted workshops involving communication experts, stakeholders, and OECM specialists to enhance understanding and facilitate effective communication of OECM concepts to diverse audiences.

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## **Table 3**

### **Topic: Next steps to advance progress on the Nordic OECM project (Marine)**

#### **Guiding questions:**

- What type of information would be relevant to include in the planned summary report/fact sheets?
- What do we want to communicate and to whom? What translations may be necessary? What are the relevant platforms to reach target audiences?

#### **What type of information would be relevant to include in the planned summary report/fact sheets?**

The group deliberated on the essential content for both the summary report and fact sheets. They recognized the need for a dual approach to cater to different audience preferences and information needs. While the summary report would provide a comprehensive overview, the fact sheets would offer succinct and visually appealing key points. By incorporating infographics and clear language, the fact sheets aimed to distill complex information into easily digestible snippets. The group emphasized the importance of maintaining consistency in terminology between the summary and fact sheets to avoid confusion among readers.

Additionally, they stressed the necessity of defining key questions and objectives to ensure coherence and relevance in the communication materials. This approach would facilitate effective dissemination of information about the Nordic Marine OECM project.

**What do we want to communicate and to whom? What translations may be necessary? What are the relevant platforms to reach target audiences?**

In discussing the communication strategy, the group focused on the clarity of messaging and audience engagement. They highlighted the importance of defining the target audience and tailoring communication accordingly. This involved identifying key stakeholders, policymakers, managers, administrators, journalists, and sector representatives who would benefit from understanding the project's objectives and implications. To ensure inclusivity, the group acknowledged the necessity of translations into various Nordic languages, including Saami and Kalaallisut. They discussed leveraging automatic translation services as a preliminary step, followed by manual editing for accuracy and cultural relevance.

Regarding communication platforms, the group identified the CBD conference as a strategic venue for showcasing the project's outcomes alongside presentations to the Nordic Council of Ministers. They also considered webinars, posters, and country-specific approaches as effective means to reach a broader audience. Internal communication within each country's ministries and sectors was deemed crucial for raising awareness and soliciting feedback on potential OECM sites. The group emphasized the need for a multifaceted approach to engage stakeholders at various levels and underscored the importance of involving marine spatial planners due to their pivotal role in coordinating activities across different sectors.

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**Table 4**

**Topic: Next steps to advance an understanding of Nordic terrestrial OECMs**

**Guiding questions:**

- If a terrestrial OECM project were to be suggested as a new Nordic or CAFF project, what should be considered in project objectives, scope, budget and timeline?
- Are there particular types of terrestrial OECMs to consider? Are there specific considerations needed to be given to terrestrial aspects related to OECMs? How can these be addressed?
- Which priority sectors should be engaged in terrestrial OECMs and what types of regulations need to be considered?
- What opportunities exist for advancing terrestrial OECMs in the Arctic and Nordic Arctic?

## **Project Objectives, Scope, Budget, and Timeline**

The group emphasized the importance of aligning any proposed terrestrial OECM project with existing initiatives like the CAFF/ PAME and Nordic projects. By building on these ongoing efforts, the project can leverage existing networks, knowledge, and resources, thereby ensuring synergy and avoiding duplication of efforts. However, the group noted the need to carefully consider the unique aspects of terrestrial OECMs, particularly in relation to governance structures and ownership models, which may differ significantly from those in marine environments.

Regarding project objectives, the group proposed several key aims, including assessing the current status of terrestrial OECMs across the region, identifying gaps and challenges in their implementation, and developing strategies to overcome barriers and enhance conservation outcomes. Additionally, the project could seek to promote collaboration and knowledge exchange among stakeholders, facilitate the sharing of best practices and lessons learned, and ultimately contribute to the effective management and protection of terrestrial ecosystems in the Arctic and Nordic regions. They found a need to contextualize OECMs as a tool to help achieve conservation goals, with the possibility to conduct a coherence analysis of the current protected areas network to ascertain what OECMs are there, assess the contribution of OECMs, and identify gaps in coverage or adequacy. This would allow for an active tool that can target high priority areas. Key questions include: What does biodiversity need? What principles ensure that the network (including OECMs) can deliver for biodiversity? What needs to be considered across the Arctic to ensure national jurisdiction also considering what biodiversity needs?

In terms of next steps, the group suggested organizing a "sharing circle" as an initial step to engage stakeholders and gather input on key issues and priorities. This sharing circle could provide a platform to review existing activities of terrestrial work and projects across Arctic states and further share experiences, discuss case studies, and outline potential strategies for advancing terrestrial OECMs in a specific project proposal to CAFF, as the topic links to CAFF mandate, activities and essential strategic considerations. Once scope was determined and co-leads identified, a project proposal could be delivered to CAFF. The project may benefit from a series of workshops to bring multiple stakeholders together in a terrestrial context. A culminating deliverable may be produced that could be similar to the CAFF/PAME marine project.

Regarding budget and timeline considerations, the group did not provide specific details during the discussion. However, they recognized the importance of securing adequate funding to support project activities, including workshop organization, data collection and analysis, stakeholder engagement, and communication efforts.

A realistic timeline would be essential to ensure that project objectives are achieved in a timely manner while allowing for sufficient consultation and collaboration among participants.

### **Types of Terrestrial OECMs and Considerations**

The group identified CAFF's dormant Circumpolar Protected Areas Network (CPAN) as a valuable resource for assessing terrestrial OECMs and their potential role in bridging gaps between protected areas. The group recognized that terrestrial OECMs may present greater complexity compared to marine environments, particularly due to factors such as private land ownership, diverse governance structures, and competing land uses. They acknowledged that monitoring may be relatively more accessible in a terrestrial environment than in an Arctic marine context and therefore there is the potential for a strong knowledge base. To address challenges, the group emphasized the need for careful consideration of regulatory frameworks, land tenure systems, and stakeholder engagement processes. They suggested exploring innovative approaches to governance and management that integrate Indigenous Knowledge as well as local knowledge, engage Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities, and promote collaborative decision-making. Additionally, the group highlighted the importance of capacity building and knowledge sharing to support the effective implementation of terrestrial OECMs across the region.

### **Priority Sectors**

Key sectors identified for engagement in terrestrial OECMs included the forestry and mining sectors. The forestry sector, in particular, was highlighted for its significant impact on terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as its potential to contribute to OECM design and management. Other "sectors" mentioned included hunting, water management, tourism, energy, cultural heritage, military, areas under restoration, and nature-based solutions.

### **Opportunities for Advancement**

The group explored various opportunities for advancing terrestrial OECMs in the Arctic and Nordic regions, including leveraging existing international conventions and agreements. They noted ongoing discussions within the Ramsar Convention regarding the potential contribution of wetlands to the CBD process, suggesting this as a concrete opportunity to strengthen the argument for terrestrial OECMs. Additionally, the group highlighted the importance of communication and outreach efforts to raise awareness, build support, and mobilize resources for terrestrial conservation initiatives.

Overall, the group's discussion underscored the importance of integrating terrestrial OECMs into existing conservation frameworks, engaging stakeholders across sectors and jurisdictions, and leveraging international cooperation and collaboration to advance terrestrial conservation efforts in the Arctic and Nordic

regions. By building on existing initiatives, sharing knowledge and best practices, and fostering partnerships among governments, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, industry and other stakeholders, the region can work towards achieving its conservation goals and ensuring the long-term sustainability of terrestrial ecosystems.

## **Final words**

Tom Christensen wrapped up the discussions by expressing gratitude for the productive dialogue. He acknowledged the progress made on both the Arctic and Nordic projects, highlighting the valuable insights gained from the workshop. Moving forward, the plan is to utilize the outcomes to produce a workshop report with assistance from the CAFF and PAME Secretariats. This report will be circulated for feedback, serving as a platform for future project developments. Project follow-up meetings will be held with engagement of the wider expert group, with a focus on establishing a timeline for deliverables, aiming for milestones before the May 2025 deadline. Christensen emphasized the importance of collaboration between research scientists and administrators, expressing appreciation for the diverse participation in the workshop. He also acknowledged the significance of Indigenous Knowledge and hoped for continued involvement in the next phase.

On behalf of the Chairs of CAFF and PAME, Katrine Nissen, PAME Chair, concluded by commending the collective effort of the participants and emphasizing the value of collaboration across working groups and projects. She encouraged ongoing reflection and idea-sharing, underscoring the need for sustained engagement beyond the current project period.

# Annex 1: List of case studies/ locations identified during the workshop

## Arctic OECM case studies:

- Disko Fan Conservation Area Marine Refuge (Canada)
- River mouth fisheries restrictions (Finland)
- Bottom trawl closures in West Greenland (Greenland)
- Wider Melville Bay area (Greenland)
- Seabed management plan (Greenland)
- Lumpfish closure\* (Iceland)
- Commercial fisheries regulations to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (Norway)
- Bottom gear closure to protect coral (Norway)
- NEAFC Closed and Regulatory Area 4 (see the report of the [Workshop to evaluate long-term biodiversity/ecosystem benefits of NEAFC closed and restricted areas WKECOVME](#))

\*Indicates potential OECM

## Under ICES WKTOPS current candidates for case studies include:

- the Plaice Box – a partially closed area in the North Sea, established in 1989 to reduce the discarding of undersized plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*);
- the Sandeel Fishery Closure - a large, closed area encompassing much of Scotland's east coast established in 2000 to protect the lesser sandeel (*Ammodytes marinus*) with consequences for black-legged kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) seabird populations;
- the Lophelia Coral Conservation Area (LCCA) off Nova Scotia, Canada – a small 15 km<sup>2</sup> area closed to protect the only known cold-water coral reef in Canada using ABFM tools;
- NAFO closed areas to protect sponge vulnerable marine ecosystems in ABNJ of Flemish Cap following UNGA sustainable fisheries resolutions.

## Other non-Arctic case studies

- Rockall/NEAFC Haddock Box
- NAFO Sponge Ground Closures (ABNJ)
- NAFO Seamount Closures (ABNJ)
- Gwaxdlala/Nalaxdlala (Lull/Hoeya) Marine Refuge (Canada)

# Annex 2: Brief timeline of major events re: OECMs in a Nordic/Arctic context

**2010:** Discussions on the concept at the 10<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan

**2010:** Adoption of Aichi Biodiversity Targets including Target 11

- *“By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.”*

**2015:** The CBD invited IUCN to provide advice, and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas WCPA Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures Specialist Group was established

**2016:** Fisheries and Oceans Canada publishes Operational Guidance for Identifying OECMs in Canada's Marine Environment

**2015–2018:** IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas WCPA Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures Specialist Group provided advice to CBD

**2018:** Decision 14/8 of the 14<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt defined OECMs:

- *“A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values.”*

**2019:** IUCN-WCPA Task Force on OECMs publishes “Recognising and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures”

**2019–2021:** Finland OECM Working Group established

**2020–2021:** Norway publishes “Norway's integrated plan for the conservation of areas of special importance for marine biodiversity”

**2021:** ICES/IUCN-CEM FEG Workshop on Testing OECEM Practices and Strategies (WKTOPS)

**2021:** President Biden's Executive Order 14008 Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad; America the Beautiful initiative

**2022:** Government of Canada publishes "Guidance for recognizing marine OECEMs"

**2022:** HELCOM regional OECEM Workshop

**2022:** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations publishes "A handbook for identifying, evaluating and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures in marine fisheries".

**2023:** IUCN publication of "Site-level tool for identifying other effective area-based conservation measures (OECEMs)"

**2023:** ICES Workshop to evaluate long-term biodiversity/ecosystem benefits of NEAFC closed and restricted areas (WKECOVME)

**2023:** IMPAC5 Congress session focusing on MPAs and OECEMs in Vancouver, Canada.

**2023:** Iceland establishes a task force to analyze current status of legal and policy framework regarding marine conservation areas including MPAs and OECEMs

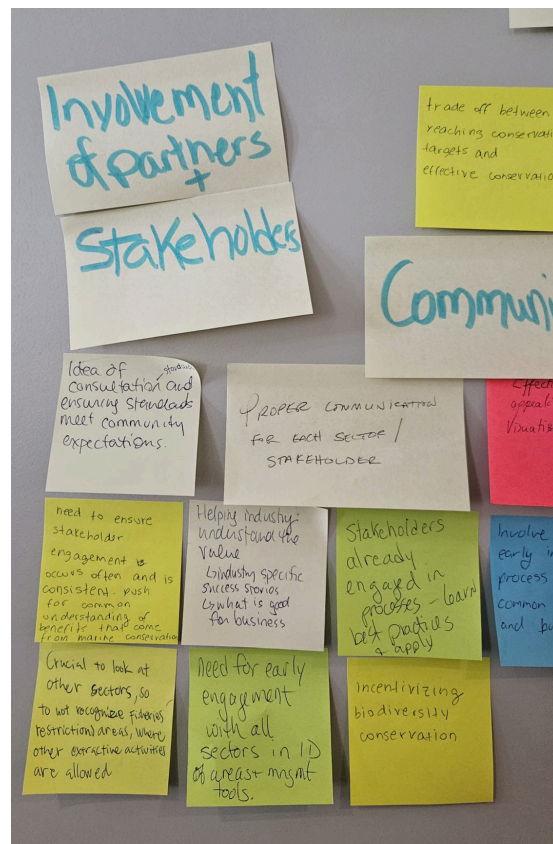
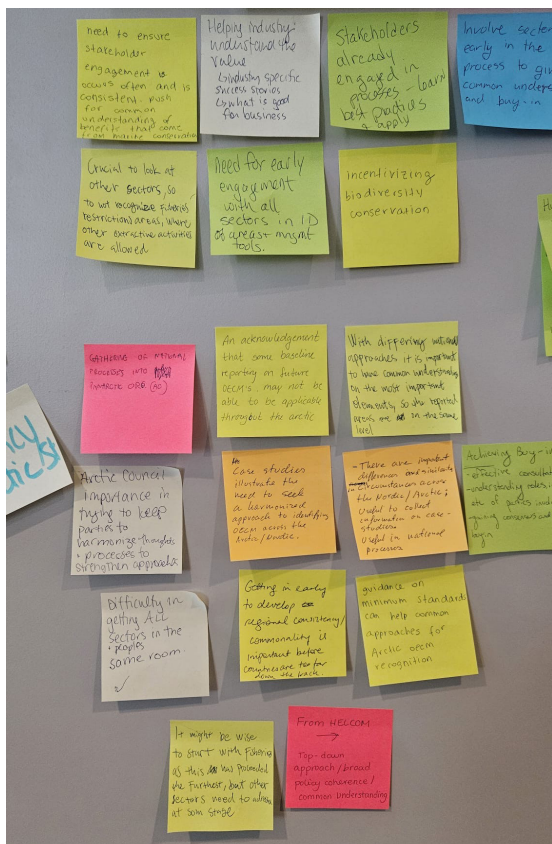
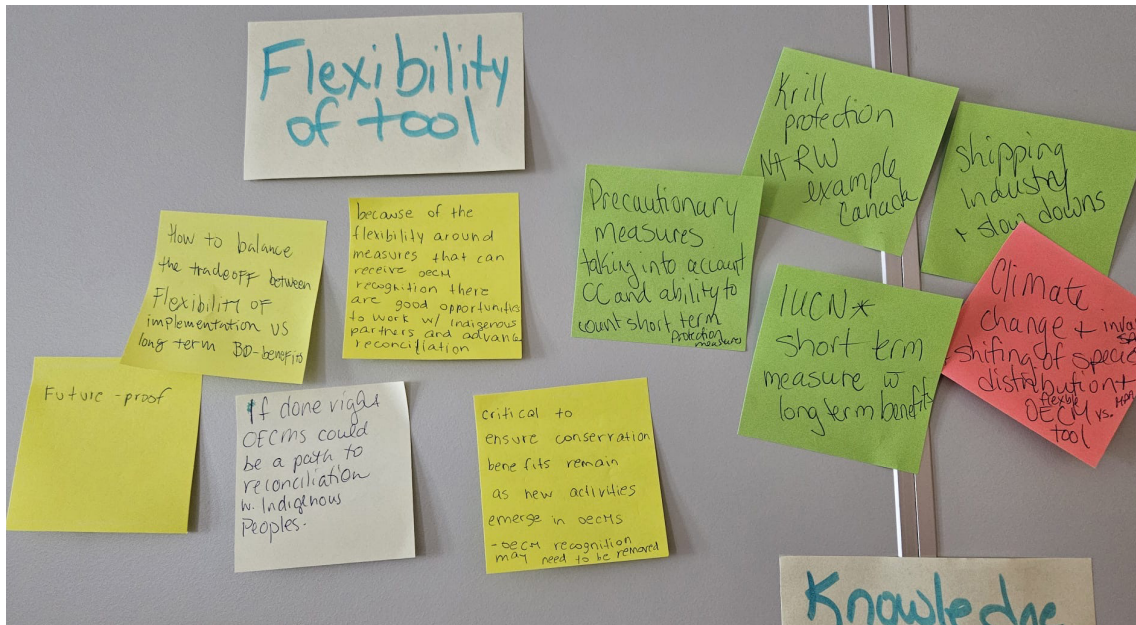
# Annex 3: List of participants

\*indicates participation by recorded presentation

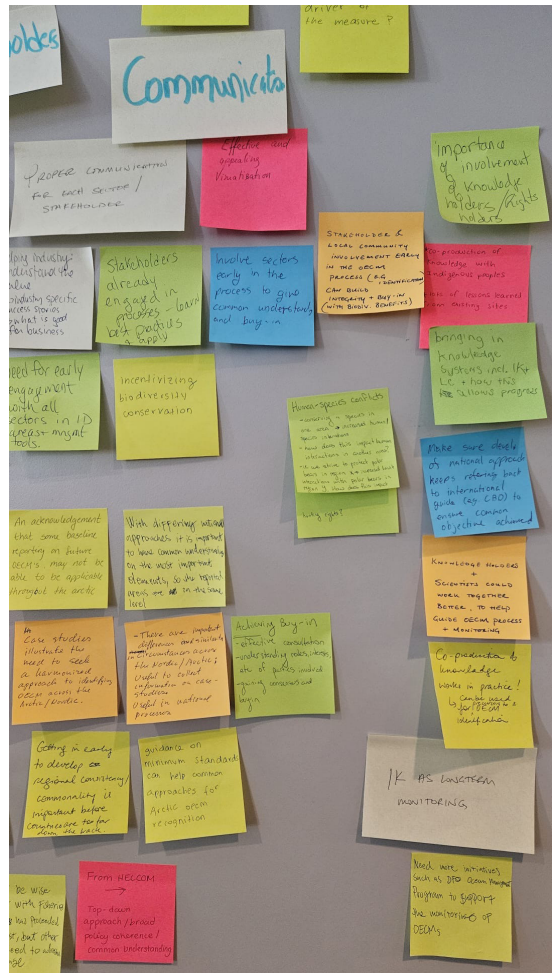
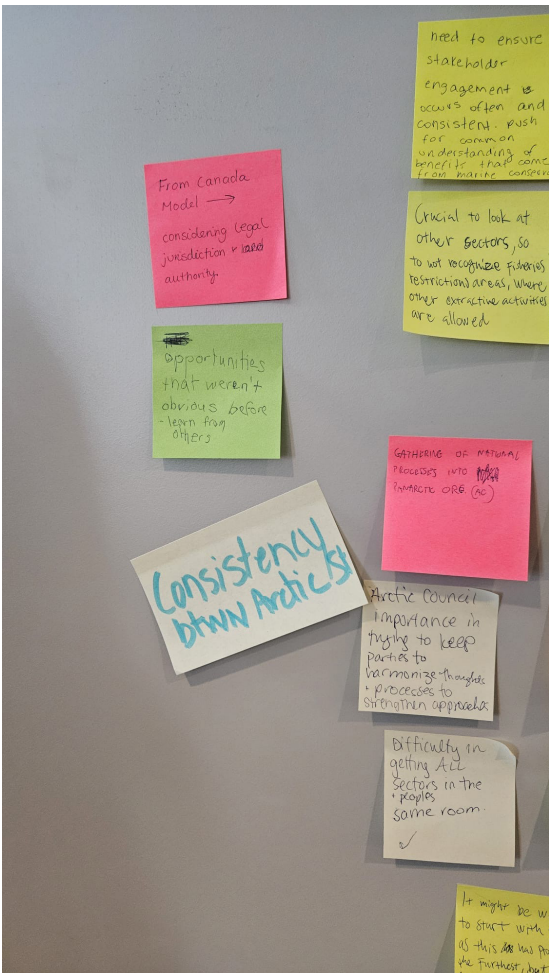
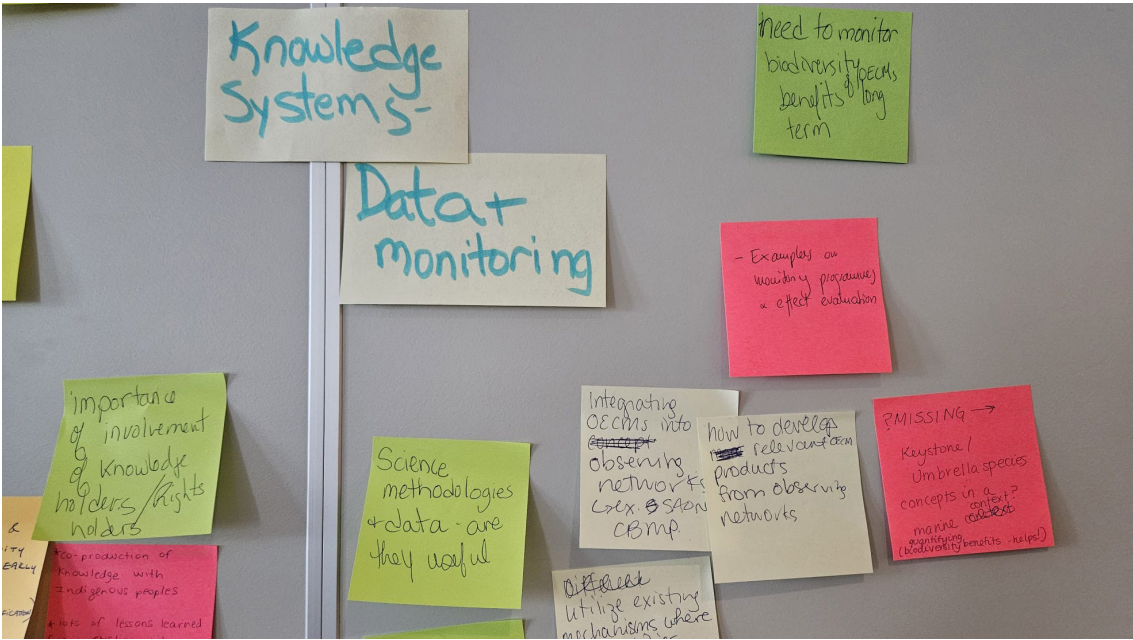
First	Last	Organization	Country
Joseph	Appiott*	CBD Secretariat	
Gunnstein	Bakke	Directorate of Fisheries, Norway	Norway
Penina	Blankett	Ministry of the Environment	Finland
David	Blockley	Greenland Institute of Natural Resources	United Kingdom
Nathia	Brandtberg	Ministry of Environment	Denmark
Matilde Skogen	Chauton	Norwegian Environment Agency	Norway
Tom	Christensen	Aarhus University	Denmark
Fiona	Danks	CAFF Secretariat	
Eva	Degre	Norwegian Environment Agency	Norway
Anni	Djurhuus	University of the Faroe Islands	Faeroe Islands
Jan	Dusik	WWF Global Arctic Programme	
Paige	Eikeland	GRID-Arendal	United States
Jan	Ekebom	Ministry of the Environment	Finland
Rowenna	Gryba	Inuit Circumpolar Council	Canada
Soffía	Guðmundsdóttir	PAME Secretariat	
Jannica	Haldin	HELCOM	Finland
Heidi Mary	Hansen	Miljøstyrelsen	Denmark
Jasmine	Jarjour	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	Canada
Lis	Jørgensen	Institute of Marine Research	Norway

Anuja	Kapoor	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	Canada
Ellen	Kenchington	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	
Lasse	Kurvinen	Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland	Finland
Melanie	Lancaster	WWF Global Arctic Programme	
Olivia	Lassaline	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	Canada
Andrea	Mast	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	Canada
Elizabeth	McLanahan	NOAA	United States
Herbert	Nakimayak	Inuit Circumpolar Council /Fisheries Joint Management Committee	Canada
Palle Smedegaard	Nielsen	Government of Greenland	Denmark
Jessica	Nilsson	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management	Sweden
Katrine	Nissen	Miljøstyrelsen	Denmark
Oliver	O Cadhla	Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Ireland	Ireland
Courtney	Price	CAFF Secretariat	
Snorri	Sigurðsson	Iceland Institute of Natural History	Iceland
Martin	Sommerkorn	WWF Global Arctic Programme	
Sólrún	Svandal	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland	Iceland
Inge	Thaulow	CAFF Chair Kingdom of Denmark	Denmark
Fredrik Juell	Theisen	Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment	Norway

# Annex 4: Post it notes from the workshop







# About this publication

## Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM) and Indigenous-led Conservation in the Nordic region and the wider Arctic

Courtney Price and Tom Christensen

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