

Vacancy Announcement and Job Description for the post of Executive Secretary of the OSPAR Commission/ Secretary of the Bonn Agreement¹

1. Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for the post of Executive Secretary of the OSPAR Commission/ Secretary of the Bonn Agreement (hereinafter referred to as “Executive Secretary”). The post is based in London and becomes vacant on **01/09/2027**.
2. Under the Commission’s Staff Regulations, the appointment will be for an initial period of three years (subject to an initial period of probation). After a review at the end of that period, a second three-year contract may be offered. There is a maximum period of service of six years, except in special circumstances.
3. The successful candidate will be asked to take up the post by 01/09/2027. The post is based at the Secretariat offices in central London. The Secretariat operates a “3 days in the office/2 days working from home” policy. The normal hours of work are variable and are those required to carry out the work. The post also requires frequent international travel, mainly within Europe.
4. The post is open to nationals of the Contracting Parties to the OSPAR Convention/Bonn Agreement (see paragraphs 5 and 8), as well as nationals from any Member State of the European Union.

The OSPAR Commission

5. The OSPAR Commission is an international intergovernmental organisation established to implement the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment in the North-East Atlantic. It consists of representatives of the Contracting Parties: that is, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the European Union.
6. The Commission is administered by a Secretariat, which also supports a sister organisation, the Bonn Agreement. The responsibilities of the Secretariat are to help the OSPAR Commission and the Bonn Agreement to develop and implement policies and regulations. The Secretariat is currently composed of an Executive Secretary, five Deputy Secretaries, and eight administrative assistants. The working languages are English and French.
7. Further information about the OSPAR Commission can be found on the Commission’s website at [OSPAR Commission | Protecting and conserving the North-East Atlantic and its resources](https://www.ospar.org/protecting-and-conserving-the-north-east-atlantic-and-its-resources)

The Bonn Agreement

8. The Bonn Agreement is the mechanism by which ten Governments, together with the European Union, cooperate in dealing with pollution of the Greater North Sea and its Approaches by oil and other harmful substances. The signatories to the Agreement are the Governments of Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union. Further information can be obtained from its website at: www.bonnagreement.org.

¹ Applicants’ data will be handled in line with the OSPAR Privacy Policy, <https://www.ospar.org/privacy>

Description of the post

9. The Executive Secretary is the senior executive official of the OSPAR Commission and the Bonn Agreement and heads the Secretariat. As such, they personally, or through the staff of the Secretariat, discharge the following functions. They:

- ensure the Secretariat effectively supports the Contracting Parties in their work in delivering the objectives of the OSPAR Commission and the Bonn Agreement;
- are responsible to the OSPAR Commission and the Bonn Agreement for the day-to-day management of the business, for drawing up budgets and for the control of the income and expenditure;
- act as Executive Secretary at meetings of the Commission and the Bonn Agreement;
- ensure that the Secretariat services all meetings of the subsidiary bodies and perform any other tasks that are entrusted to them by the Commission/Bonn Agreement or by its Chairs;
- support and manage the Secretariat staff in accordance with recognised good practice, ensuring that workloads are reasonable and shared fairly across the team and that activities are focused on the priorities of the OSPAR Commission /Bonn Agreement.

10. The Executive Secretary is expected to contribute to policy formulation through the preparation of documents setting out options for consideration by the Commission/Bonn Agreement and/or by their subsidiary bodies.

Requirements for appointment

11. Since the work of the Commission and the Bonn Agreement must inevitably take account of the scientific and legal contexts, the person to be appointed should have reached a high educational standard at a university or in a professional qualification, preferably (but not necessarily) in a subject related to environmental sciences, maritime or environmental law, environmental engineering, or environmental management. Work experience in this field at a senior level is essential.

12. Candidates should have at least ten years' **relevant** work experience. Ideally, this should include experience of working with, or in, international organisations or similar administrative experience. It would also be desirable for candidates to have background knowledge of, and/or work experience with, the problems of marine environmental protection and pollution-control measures and related international and/or European Union regulation. Experience in working with policy making, for instance within national administrations will also be a strong advantage.

13. The person to be appointed will have to have good and proven organisational, administrative and presentational skills. They must be able to take responsibility for the management of the Commission's/Bonn Agreement's office, the staff and the finances in accordance with recognised good practice. They must also be able to set up, run and follow up a large number of meetings every year. In particular, the candidate's personality must permit them to get on well with representatives of Contracting Parties, international organisations and observer organisations, while pursuing the purposes of the Commission/Bonn Agreement.

14. The bulk of the Secretariat's work is done in English, but documents, reports and publications are also produced in French and some of the correspondence is written in French. A thorough knowledge of English, and the ability to draft quickly and concisely in English is essential. French language skills for the post-holder are also highly desirable. Given equal qualifications and experience, preference will be given to a candidate who has a good knowledge of French.

15. The person to be appointed must be prepared for frequent travel, and accept the working of long and irregular hours. They should also be able to represent the views and policies of the Commission/Bonn Agreement at meetings of other international organisations, being a clear communicator is therefore essential to the role.

Terms of Service and Remuneration

16. OSPAR Secretariat staff enjoy privileges and immunities in line with the Headquarters Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom and OSPAR. The salaries of OSPAR Secretariat staff are exempt from UK income tax. Remuneration of staff members is guided by the salary scales of remuneration of the Co-ordinated Organisations for staff serving in the United Kingdom. Further details on the salary and on allowances which may be payable are contained in the “Remuneration” document. The full terms and conditions of service are set out in the Commission’s Staff Regulations ([Agreement 2000-14](#)), as amended from time to time.

Application Procedure

17. Further details of this post and the way applications should be made is included in the “Application Instructions” document.

18. The closing date for applications is **4 December 2026**, and applications should be sent for the attention of the Executive Secretary to secretariat@ospar.org. The Secretariat will acknowledge receipt of your application by email. **If you do not receive an acknowledgement within a few days, please contact the Secretariat to check that your application has been received. Please include the following in the subject line of your email: “Confidential: Application Executive Secretary 2027”.**

19. The *indicative* timetable for this appointment procedure is as follows:

Applications to be sent to the Executive Secretary	04/12/2026
Shortlisting of candidates	05/01/2027
Interviews with shortlisted candidates resulting in a recommendation for appointment	02/02/2027
Approval procedure finalised	17/02/2027
Successful applicant to take up appointment	01/09/2027

Please note that the **above timings are tentative only** and, in particular, the date of the interview may change depending upon the availability of the interview panel. Shortlisted candidates will be notified by email.

Interviews will be held in person at the Secretariat offices in London.