

Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Task Group on Ballast Water Management Convention Exemptions
Ninth Meeting
Gothenburg, Sweden, 13-14 December 2018

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Background

This document contains extracts from [MARITIME 18-2018](#) (25-27 September, Hamburg, Germany) which are of relevance for TG BALLAST.

Action required

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information and make use of it as appropriate.

Outcomes of relevant HELCOM meetings

Matters arising from MARITIME 18-2018

The Meeting:

- took note of the information on the outcomes of recent HELCOM meetings (document 2-2), including the eighth Meeting of the Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Task Group on Ballast Water Management Convention Exemptions (HELCOM-OSPAR TG BALLAST 8-2017); and agreed to consider matters of particular relevance for the Maritime Working Group under the relevant agenda items.
- took note of the contribution provided by OSPAR to the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting 2018 containing a proposal for further collaboration between OSPAR and HELCOM as well as of the reply letter by HELCOM (document 2-6) and discussed the need and possibilities for new areas of cooperation.
- in this context, Germany highlighted the successful cooperation between HELCOM and OSPAR in the joint HELCOM/OSPAR Task Group on Ballast Water Management Convention Exemptions (HELCOM/OSPAR TG BALLAST), which has also led to the adoption of the "HELCOM-OSPAR Joint Harmonized Procedure for BWMC A-4 exemptions". Germany extended their gratitude to both Secretariats for their contribution to the work of this task group.
- noted that the cooperation has created both solutions and synergies, and agreed that TG BALLAST could work as a model and example for further cooperation on other topics.
- Finland stated its view that the initiative by OSPAR is an important one. The meeting noted that OSPAR does not directly have the mandate to deal with shipping related matters as such, and therefore agreed that it is necessary to carefully consider which areas of cooperation would be most appropriate.

HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan

- recommended that HELCOM expert groups and networks linked to impacts from maritime activities should be engaged in the work and that the BSAP update should be part of the agenda of relevant groups and networks. The meeting also highlighted that results of regional projects such as the Interreg COMPLETE project, the BONUS SHEBA project and the Baltic LINES project should be considered in the BSAP update, as well as work by ICES groups.

Ballast water and biofouling

Ratification and implementation of BWM Convention

The Meeting:

- congratulated Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for ratifying the BWM Convention since the last meeting. Poland informed the Meeting that the ratification process is still ongoing, with an aim to ratify late in 2018 or early 2019.
- recalled that the *ad hoc* Correspondence Group on Ballast Water Management (CG BALLAST) was discontinued at MARITIME 17-2017 since its tasks could be partly covered by the COMPLETE project and HELCOM-OSPAR TG BALLAST and considered the need to re-establish the CG BALLAST.
- the German Co-Chair of TG BALLAST informed the meeting of the intersessional work of TG BALLAST which had considered, *inter alia*, two tasks (the early warning system and the generation of a list of surveyed ports) from the CG BALLAST to be included in the Terms of Reference of TG BALLAST. While members of the TG BALLAST are generally positive to taking over these tasks, a final decision will be taken by TG BALLAST 9-2018 in December.
- agreed that there is therefore no need to re-establish the CG BALLAST at this stage.
- responses to the updated questionnaire on remaining issues to update the HELCOM-OSPAR Joint Harmonized Procedure for BWMC A-4 exemptions, which was also circulated intersessionally, may still be submitted by TG BALLAST members by 14 October 2018.
- considered the proposal in document 3-1 to add hull fouling of recreational vessels to the Terms of Reference for the Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Task Group on Ballast Water Management Convention Exemptions, 2017-2020.

- while some support was expressed to the proposal, concern was also raised due to the limited timeline (2017-2020) and scope of the current Terms of Reference, and the possible need to enhance the Terms of Reference more than just including biofouling of recreational vessels.
- following discussion, the meeting agreed that the matter should be considered further at TG BALLAST 9-2018 before the matter could be submitted to HOD 56-2019 for approval. The meeting further encouraged submission of documents on the matter to TG BALLAST 9-2018 under “Any other business”.

Regionally harmonised A-4 exemptions and related risk assessments

- no other issues related to regionally harmonized A-4 exemptions and related risk assessments were raised by the Meeting.

Other BWM related activities

The Meeting:

- took note of the information on the status of the project “Completing management options in the Baltic Sea Region to reduce risk of invasive species introduction by shipping (COMPLETE), 2017-2020” (document 3-2, **presentation 3**) as presented by Germany.
- welcomed the important work being undertaken by the project and noted with appreciation that a training event for port State control officers on ballast water sampling for compliance is going to be organized in the port of Hamburg in spring 2019.

Biofouling

The Meeting:

- recalled that HOD 53-2017 agreed that HELCOM should become a strategic partner to the GEF/UNDP/IMO GloFouling Partnerships project and support the initiative based on the COMPLETE project and other available resources and material including the core indicator on non-indigenous species.

HELCOM publications, implementation and reporting

HELCOM Maritime Assessment 2018

- The Meeting took note of the HELCOM Assessment on Maritime Activities in the Baltic Sea region, published as [Baltic Sea Environment Proceedings No. 152](#).

Baltic Sea Clean Shipping Guide 2017

- The Meeting took note of the revised [2017 edition of the Baltic Sea Clean Shipping Guide](#).

State of the Baltic Sea report

- The Meeting took note of the finalization of the second holistic assessment of the state of the Baltic Sea, approved by HOD 54-2018 (published on the website: <http://stateofthebalticsea.helcom.fi/>).

Future work and meetings

The Meeting:

- considered the Work Plan for HELCOM Maritime 2016-2018 (document 13-1) and agreed on a new updated work plan for 2018-2020, taking into account the update of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, as contained in **Annex 6**.
- expressed its appreciation for the confirmation by the EU to host MARITIME 19-2019 at EMSA, Lisbon, on 24-26 September 2019. The Meeting noted that a meeting room will be made available also on 23 September 2019, in case there is need for a workshop related to the update of the BSAP, or a meeting of one of the expert groups of HELCOM Maritime.
- thanked Sweden for their offer to investigate possibilities to host HELCOM MARITIME 20-2020.