

**OUTCOME OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE JOINT HELCOM/OSPAR TASK GROUP ON
BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT CONVENTION (BWMC) AND BIOFOULING
(JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 1-2021)**

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Introduction

0.1 The First Meeting of the Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Task Group on Ballast Water Management Convention (BWMC) and Biofouling was held online on 2-3 December 2021.

0.2 The Meeting was attended by Delegations from Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom as well as HELCOM Observers from the European Community Shipowners' Associations (ECSA) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Kotka Maritime Research Association attended as invited guest representing the COMPLETE Project. The list of participants is contained as **Annex 1**. The list of documents is set out in **Annex 2**.

0.3 The Meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Katja Broeg, Germany, and Mr. Ville-Veikko Intovuori, Finland.

0.4 Mr. Markus Helavuori, HELCOM Professional Secretary, Ms. Lucy Ritchie, OSPAR Secretariat and Ms. Marta Ruiz, HELCOM Secretariat, acted as Secretaries of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

1.1 The Meeting adopted the Agenda as contained in **document 1-1**, taking note of the annotated Agenda contained in **document 1-2**.

Agenda Item 2 Feedback from Relevant Bodies, including HELCOM, OSPAR and IMO MEPC

2.1 The Meeting took note of the outcomes of relevant OSPAR meetings during the intersessional period (**document 2-5**). In particular, the Meeting took note of the Strategic Objective in connection with non-indigenous species (NIS) as follows "By 2025 OSPAR will develop a coordinated management approach to ensure the number of non-indigenous species introduced via human activity is minimised and where possible reduced to zero".

2.2 The Meeting took note of the draft OSPAR thematic assessment on non-indigenous species to be conducted in the frame of the Quality Status Assessment (QSR) 2023 (**document 2-6**).

2.3 When considering the elements of the draft assessment, the Meeting noted that in relation to non-indigenous species, similar work has been done within the HELCOM work on sufficiency of measures (SOM) and that OSPAR is planning to make use of experiences of this work.

2.4 The Meeting noted that the QSR is going to apply indicator D2C1 on introductions of non-indigenous species, but although also D2C2 on spread or D2C3 on effects of non-indigenous species were considered relevant they are not achievable within the timeframe.

2.5 The Meeting noted that the QSR work is part of the Terms of Reference and 3-year Work Programme of the Joint OSPAR/HELCOM Expert Group on Non-Indigenous Species (JEG NIS) and that further discussions on the matter should continue within that group, once established (c.f. also document 2-2).

2.6 The Meeting took note of the invitation to provide comments to questions raised in document 2-6 to the OSPAR Secretariat (julien.favier@ospar.org) by **17 December 2021**.

2.7 The Meeting took note of the outcomes of meetings of relevance for JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING within the framework of HELCOM held since TG BALLAST 11-2020 as contained in **document 2-4**.

2.8 The Meeting took note of actions in the 2021 Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP), as adopted by the 2021 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting, with particular relevance to the Joint Task Group as contained in **document 2-3** and further developed in **Annex 3** to this Outcome. When considering how to contribute to their implementation in alignment with the Terms of Reference of the Group, the Meeting reflected inter alia as follows:

- MARITIME 21-2021 has set up a process by correspondence, to identify which actions would benefit from having a lead country, and has also invited Contracting Parties to inform on their willingness to take the lead on individual actions by 28 February 2022;
- Lithuania has confirmed that they are willing to take the lead on action S7 on establishing an Early Warning System;
- MARITIME has agreed that JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING should take the joint lead on most other actions related to ballast water and biofouling, as further specified in Annex 3 to the present Outcome;
- regarding action S9, the Meeting agreed that all HELCOM Contracting Parties should annually inform JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING meetings on activities taken with regard to the implementation of the action;
- in order to support the follow up of action S8, the Meeting agreed that Contracting Parties should inform JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING meetings on their biofouling related activities, including implementation of the IMO Biofouling Guidelines.

2.9 Following discussions at HELCOM/OSPAR TG BALLAST 11-2020 ([Outcome of TG BALLAST 11-2020](#), paragraphs 2.2-2.3), the Meeting took note of the status of development of a HELCOM indicator assessing copper (**document 2-1**).

2.10 The Meeting noted that work on developing a copper indicator is also ongoing within OSPAR, although it will not be included in the QSR 2023. Copper will, however, be included in a new OSPAR hazardous substances assessment tool (OHAT) to be hosted by ICES.

2.11 The Meeting took note of the status of the process of the establishment of a Join OSPAR HELCOM Expert Group on Non-Indigenous Species (JEG NIS) (**document 2-2**). The Meeting further took note that the Terms of Reference of the JEG NIS are expected to be approved by HELCOM HOD 61-2021 (8-9 December 2021). The work will mainly contribute towards OSPAR's Quality Status Report 2023 and the HELCOM HOLAS III thematic assessments on non-indigenous species.

2.12 The Meeting recognized the importance of JEG NIS, in particular with regard to harmonizing the assessments of non-indigenous species indicators within HELCOM and OSPAR.

2.13 The Meeting took note of comments regarding the need to consider also ongoing work within relevant ICES working groups, in the context of JEG NIS. The Meeting welcomed the offer by Finland to provide annual summaries to JEG NIS on the activities of the Joint ICES/IOC/IMO Working Group on Ballast and Other Ship Vectors

2.14 The Meeting noted that Peter Staehr (Denmark) will be a Co-Chair for JEG NIS from OSPAR. The Meeting noted that a HELCOM Co-Chair has not yet been identified and that this is a matter to be considered further by HELCOM HOD 61-2021.

2.15 The Meeting took note of information provided by the IMO on the latest developments related to the BWM Convention at the IMO (MEPC and PPR). In particular, the Meeting took note of the following main points:

- moving IMO meetings to an online format due to COVID-19 has significantly slowed down progress on ballast water and biofouling related matters;
- the report of the Correspondence Group on Development of a Protocol for Verification of Ballast Water Compliance Monitoring Devices is expected to be submitted to PPR 9 and it is likely that the Correspondence Group will be re-established to continue its work until PPR 10;
- revised guidance on methodologies that may be used for enumerating viable organisms are being developed within PPR and planned for finalization in 2022;
- The Ballast Water Review Group (BWRG) met online during MEPC 77 (22-26 November 2021);
- MEPC 77 approved a draft unified interpretation of the date to be used for determining the implementation of mandatory commissioning testing of individual ballast water management systems in accordance with resolution MEPC.325(75);
- guidance on measures that may be taken when ballast water management systems encounter challenging uptake water quality are being negotiated, a list of key points were identified in the BWRG at MEPC 77, but work will continue at MEPC 78;
- discussions are ongoing regarding solutions for specialized ship types with challenges to comply with the BWM Convention; and
- the WMU is facilitating the IMO in collecting data to support the experience building phase (EBP) associated with the BWM Convention. Data from 20-30 000 ships is currently being analyzed and will be submitted to MEPC 78 for consideration. This should conclude the data gathering and analysis phases of the EBP and the next step will be to undertake a review of the text of the BWM Convention to identify any areas where the evidence demonstrates a need for possible revision.

2.16 The Meeting took note of a comment from Finland related to the issue of ballast water exchange which is being considered as a possible option in the guidance on challenging water quality mentioned above. The Meeting recalled the common understanding by HELCOM MARITIME 19-2019, that ballast water exchange is not a suitable option in the Baltic Sea area, taking also into account IMO BWM.2/Circ.63, which provides guidance on the application of the BWM Convention to ships operating in sea areas where ballast water exchange in accordance with regulation B-4.1 and D-1 is not possible. The Meeting agreed that Contracting Parties should closely follow the developments within IMO regarding guidance for challenging water conditions, in order to ensure that the guidance is not drafted in a way that could create risks to the Baltic Sea environment.

2.17 The Meeting further noted that depending on the developments in IMO, future meetings of JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING may also need to discuss the scope of a ballast water exchange area which has been established in the North Sea.

2.18 The Meeting recognized that irrespective of the formulation of such guidance from the IMO, the national legislation of the port States and flag States will apply.

Agenda Item 3 Updates to the Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Harmonised Procedure on the Granting of BWM Convention Exemptions

3.1 The Meeting took note that the revised HELCOM OSPAR Joint Harmonised Procedure on the Granting of BWM Convention Exemptions (JHP) was adopted at HOD 59-2020 and that the revised JHP is available on the [HELCOM](#) and [OSPAR websites](#) as well as on the [Risk Assessment tool website](#).

3.2 The Meeting took note that following discussions at TG BALLAST 11-2020 on an update of the development of the regionally harmonized early warning system (EWS) for timely communication of findings of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens (HAOP) ([Outcome of TG BALLAST 11-2020](#), paragraphs. 3.2-3-9), a further developed EWS was submitted to MARITIME 21-2021 for consideration ([document 3-5](#)).

3.3 The Meeting noted that MARITIME 21-2021 had discussed the proposed EWS, welcomed the proposal, noting that not all Contracting Parties were in a position to approve the EWS before further consideration at the expert level by JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING and had agreed that, as a first step, interested Contracting Parties can commence a pilot implementation of the EWS ([Outcome of MARITIME 21-2021](#), paragraphs. 3.5-3.12).

3.4 The Meeting considered the draft EWS (**document 3-1**) and discussed inter alia the following points:

- Denmark, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania have already confirmed their participation in the pilot implementation of the EWS;
- Lithuania is planning to start the pilot implementation of the EWS in early 2022;
- means of communication differ from country to country, which is why the EWS will have to use several means depending on the participating countries;
- scientists should be encouraged to share information of introduced species as soon as possible, not awaiting publication of scientific articles;
- national contingency plans are not in place in most Contracting Parties, but this should not delay implementation of the EWS;
- from a regulatory point of view, banning ballast water discharges based on the EWS may be challenging and the responsibilities of various authorities need to be clearly defined on a national level;
- data quality should be robust and clear and minimum data quality requirements should be established. In this context, the Meeting noted that the proposed EWS Expert Group (c.f. paragraph 3.6 below and document 3-1) should verify the quality of data when making its decisions;
- data should not only rely on annual port monitoring, but also make use of other sources of information on detected non-indigenous or harmful species;
- the BWM Convention does not distinguish between yellow and red risk as in the EWS. These categories need to be discussed and may need reconsideration;
- the EWS is a very promising tool and pilot implementation will provide valuable information for future improvement of the EWS;
- consideration should be given to possible future expansion of the EWS to address also biofouling as well as recreational craft and marinas; and

- the Meeting noted that in the framework of the work on non-indigenous species of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation an early warning system is being developed and that national surveillance systems are also in place in some Contracting Parties, in relation to the MSFD, which may be useful in the context of the EWS.

3.5 The Meeting invited Lithuania to organize an online kick-off workshop, inviting also the contacts and observers of JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING, before the pilot implementation begins in January 2022.

3.6 The Meeting encouraged HELCOM Contracting Parties to take part in the pilot invitation and to nominate national focal points responsible for: 1) sending timely information on findings of HAOP in ports and their vicinities, 2) taking decision as a member of the EWS Expert Group, and 3) receiving a warning signal and further actions, and inform the HELCOM Secretariat (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi) and Lithuania (greta.srebaliene@ku.lt) by **17 December 2021**.

3.7 The Meeting agreed that experiences of the pilot implementation should be submitted to future meetings of JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING for consideration with the view to revising the EWS, as may be needed.

3.8 The Meeting agreed that the first experiences of pilot implementation should be shared also with OSPAR, for submission to the EIHA meeting in March 2022, as there is also an interest within OSPAR for possible extension of the system to the OSPAR region.

3.9 The Meeting agreed, that following pilot implementation, consideration should be given to developing the EWS into a HELCOM Recommendation, in order to strengthen its status as an adopted HELCOM instrument. Such a recommendation should first be drafted within JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING before approval by the HELCOM Maritime Working Group and Heads of Delegation, followed by adoption by the Helsinki Commission.

Agenda Item 4 Port Sampling

4.1 The Meeting recalled that MARITIME 20-2020 instructed the Secretariat to request updates and data for new ports e.g. once per year, including ports surveyed in accordance with other protocols than the survey protocol of the JHP, in order to ensure that sufficient and up to date data is available ([Outcome of MARITIME 20-2020](#), paragraphs 4.11-4.12).

4.2 The Meeting took note that Contracting Parties were invited to provide updates on port surveys conducted to the HELCOM Secretariat by 13 October 2021, so that an information document could be submitted to MARITIME 21-2021 for consideration. Thus, MARITIME 21-2021 took note of an updated list of surveyed ports ([document 3-8](#)). In addition, MARITIME 21-2021 noted that surveys will be conducted on two additional Estonian ports (Tallinna Vanasadam and Paldiski Lõunasadam) in 2022 ([Outcome of MARITIME 21-2021](#), paragraph 3.1).

4.3 The Meeting discussed additional sampling activities in North East Atlantic and Baltic Sea ports undertaken during 2021 or planned for 2022 as follows:

- Denmark: six harbours have been monitored for NIS using a combination of eDNA and conventional tools. The results of these studies can be presented in the next meeting of JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING. In addition, Denmark is involved in the "[Genetic tools for Ecosystem health Assessment in the North Sea region](#)" project (GEANS), where, among other tasks, pilot studies concerning monitoring in relation to European directives on NIS will be conducted;
- Germany: in 2020 a pilot study was initiated with focus on molecular tools to test the barcoding potential for monitoring of NIS in marinas as well as in ballast water. This was done in Rostock and in some marinas located in the North Sea and Baltic Sea. The taxonomic identification followed conventional methods by eDNA and barcoding. Results showed that they are good tools for quick detection and early detection of NIS. The methods are particularly suitable for planktonic species. Germany agreed to make a presentation on this matter to the next meeting;

- The Netherlands: work is ongoing with a programme to revisit ports according to the updated JHP. The process will start next year, and it will also include sampling in buoys. DNA and eDNA is envisaged to be included in the monitoring activities; and
- The Meeting noted information by Finland that in 2021 the port of Raahе was sampled, as the second privately financed port survey and first privately conducted port survey. The Meeting noted that the results are currently not publicly available and not included in the data used by the online JHP decision support tool.

4.4 The Meeting took note of the Swedish monitoring program on marine NIS as contained in **Presentation 1**.

4.5 The Meeting did not discuss any proposals for amendment of the Port Survey Protocol as part of the JHP and invited Contracting Parties and observers to submit proposals, as appropriate, to future meetings. The Meeting noted that Poland intends to present a revised proposal to include sampling of nekton in the Port Survey Protocol for further consideration by the next meeting.

Agenda Item 5 On-line decision support tool

5.1 Following the input received at TG BALLAST 11-2020 on the improved JHP Decision Support Tool ([Outcome of TG BALLAST 11-2020](#), paragraphs 5.3-5.6), the Meeting took note of an update on the improvement of the online JHP decision support tool (**document 5-1** and **Presentation 2**).

5.2 The Meeting welcomed the improvements done in the [JHP decision support tool](#), in relation to the updated user interface including the modifications on the Routes tab, automatic report as an outcome of the risk assessment analyses and link to ICES database and the information displayed on the online decision support tool web app.

5.3 The Meeting noted that the data used for risk assessment for exemptions only includes data from port surveys in accordance with the sampling protocol, as per the provisions of the JHP. Other data available in the AquaNIS database and ICES is also available in the JHP decision support tool, but not used for the risk assessment by the tool. The Meeting noted that as per the provisions of the JHP, this data can, however be utilized for the second step of the decision making.

5.4 The Meeting considered the proposal to remove the watchlist information from the online decision support tool. The Meeting agreed that including the watchlist in the tool could be confusing, as the species on that list are not TS and do not impact the risk assessment.

5.5 The Meeting agreed to remove the watchlist from the tool but agreed that consideration should be given to establishing a separate candidate list in the future, pending developments under Agenda Item 6 below.

Agenda Item 6 Target Species

6.1 The Meeting recalled that TG BALLAST 11-2020 had taken note of information provided by Finland on the funding granted to COMPLETE-PLUS and that within its framework the Target Species (TS) list in the Baltic Sea will be updated with the criteria previously agreed by TG Ballast.

6.2 The Meeting considered the proposal for amendments on the target species selection criteria and update of the Baltic Sea TS list (**document 6-1** and **Presentation 3**).

6.3 The Meeting noted that as the target species selection criteria are part of the JHP, amending the criteria would require approval and adoption also by HELCOM MARITIME and HOD, as well as OSPAR EIHA, BDC and the OSPAR Commission.

6.4 The Meeting thanked Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania for the significant efforts in updating the TS list and proposing an amendment to the selection criteria. The criteria and revised TS list were supported in principle by the Meeting, but several questions were also raised with regard to the addition to the selection criteria, how the criteria were applied and on the composition of the proposed TS list.

6.5 The Meeting could consequently not reach an agreement with regard to the amended selection criteria or the TS list. The Meeting invited HELCOM and OSPAR Contracting Parties to provide comments on the amended TS selection criteria and the procedure to continuously update the TS list. The Meeting also invited HELCOM Contracting Parties to provide comments to the two TS lists. Comments are to be provided to the HELCOM Secretariat (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi) **by 14 January 2022**.

6.6 The Meeting agreed that, if necessary, informal online meetings can be organized to provide further clarifications and with a view to finding solutions to contentious questions with regard to the proposals. The Meeting further invited Estonia and Finland to lead the process of revising the proposals in document 6-1 based on the comments received, for circulation to contacts and observers of JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING and agreement by correspondence **by the end of April 2022**.

6.7 The Meeting took note that OSPAR EIHA has considered the possibility for JEG NIS to work on the TS list for the OSPAR region. The Meeting noted, however, that such a task is not included in the 2021-2023 Terms of Reference of JEG NIS, to be considered for adoption by HOD 61-2022. The Meeting noted that in the future, consideration could be given to revising the Terms of Reference of JEG NIS to include such a task.

Agenda Item 7 Biofouling

7.1 The Meeting took note of an update on the progress and process in Reviewing the IMO Biofouling Guidelines as provided by IMO. In particular, the Meeting noted that the Correspondence Group on the revision of the Biofouling Guidelines will submit a report containing draft revised Biofouling Guidelines to PPR 9, but that many issues are still outstanding, such as defining levels of biofouling rating, AFS maintenance, reporting and in-water cleaning standards.

7.2 The Meeting noted that the Correspondence Group is therefore is expected to be re-established to continue its work until PPR 10 in 2023. The Meeting nevertheless noted that finalization of the revised Biofouling Guidelines is expected at PPR 10, to be followed by adoption by MEPC.

7.3 The Meeting noted that adopting harmonized biofouling management procedures within the HELCOM and OSPAR regions may be premature before finalization of the revision of the IMO Biofouling Guidelines.

7.4 The Meeting encouraged all HELCOM and OSPAR Contracting Parties to follow and contribute to the discussions within IMO.

7.5 The Meeting recalled that MARITIME 20-2020 had agreed to the draft Regional Baltic Biofouling Management Roadmap in principle and mandated TG BALLAST 11-2020 to finalize and agree to it, followed by direct submission by TG BALLAST 11-2020 to HOD 59-2020 for approval and subsequent adoption by HELCOM 42-2021. TG BALLAST 11-2020, however agreed that the proposed Roadmap should not be approved as an official HELCOM instrument but should instead serve as a basis for future work on harmonizing biofouling management in the Baltic Sea and contributing to the review of the IMO Biofouling Guidelines ([Outcome of TG BALLAST 11-2020](#), paragraphs 7.8-7.13).

7.6 The Meeting took note that HOD 59-2020 invited the DG BSAP Segment Team for sea-based activities to take this into account when considering proposed new BSAP actions, making reference to the proposed Biofouling Roadmap ([Outcome of HOD 59-2020](#), paragraphs 6.22-6.23).

7.7 The Meeting took note that MARITIME 21-2021 considered four draft guidance documents on biofouling management developed within the COMPLETE PLUS project, discussed and supported them in general and provided some views ([document 3-1](#), [document 3-2](#), [document 3-3](#) and [document 3-4](#) and [Outcome of MARITIME 21-2021](#), paragraphs 3.17-3.19).

7.8 The Meeting took note that MARITIME 21-2021 also invited Contracting Parties and observers to provide further comments and input to the draft biofouling guidance documents to the Secretariat by 10 November 2021 and the Secretariat to compile them for submission to this Meeting. Input was provided by Finland, Germany and Sweden.

7.9 The Meeting considered the four draft guidance documents in more detail (**document 7-1**), taking into account the comments provided by MARITIME 21-2021 as well as the input provided by Finland, Germany and Sweden in support of the work of the Task Group on related work on biofouling.

7.10 The Meeting took note of the following views in connection with the four draft guidance documents:

- the draft guidance documents contain a lot of valuable information, but their current format is not suitable for HELCOM guidance documents;
- the style of the text differs between the four guidance documents, and should be harmonized;
- all guidance documents should be fully in line with the IMO Biofouling Guidelines, which is currently not entirely the case;
- the draft guidance documents should be used as a basis for further development of harmonized biofouling guidance;
- three of the guidance documents relating to commercial ships should not be finalized until after the revised IMO Biofouling Guidelines have been adopted;
- the guidance for recreational craft should be further developed at this stage, as IMO is currently not reviewing its *Guidance for minimizing the transfer of invasive aquatic species as biofouling (hull fouling) for recreational craft*;
- there is a clear need to raise awareness on biofouling among recreational boaters. Ways of raising such awareness should be considered as part of the guidance for recreational craft;
- the draft guidance for recreational craft could be developed to transpose the IMO *Guidance for minimizing the transfer of invasive aquatic species as biofouling (hull fouling) for recreational craft* for harmonized implementation within HELCOM and OSPAR; and
- the guidance documents should ideally be joint between HELCOM and OSPAR. While awaiting adoption of the revised IMO Biofouling Guidelines, work could begin on developing all four guidance documents to be suitable also for the OSPAR region.

7.11 The Meeting discussed further improvement of the draft documents and agreed that the three guidance documents related to commercial ships should be put on hold, awaiting adoption of the revised IMO Biofouling Guidelines. The Meeting, however, encouraged OSPAR Contracting Parties to intersessionally consider possibly reviewing the draft guidance documents set out in document 7-1 for the region, for further consideration at the next meeting. The Meeting further agreed that the next meeting may wish to consider the structure, target groups and other conceptual and fundamental principles of the three draft guidance documents on commercial ships.

7.12 The Meeting agreed that the development of the draft guidance for recreational craft (Annex 2 to document 7-1) should continue intersessionally, taking into consideration comments in document 7-1, as well as comments made at the present Meeting and at MARITIME 21-2021. The Meeting invited Finland, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain to lead this work, in consultation with the HELCOM Secretariat. The Meeting further invited all interested HELCOM and OSPAR Contracting Parties as well as observer organizations to contribute to the work and to inform the Secretariat (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi) on their willingness to participate.

7.13 The Meeting agreed to further develop the draft Guidance for biofouling management in the leisure boating sector already at this stage, while the other three guidance documents may need to await adoption of the revised Biofouling Guidelines in IMO.

7.14 The Meeting invited the HELCOM Secretariat to inform JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 2-2022 of the status of work on this drafting process.

7.15 Following discussions at TG BALLAST 11-2020 on a proposal by the Netherlands for a pilot study serving as input for the development of a baseline research protocol for the general assessment of biofouling on commercial vessels in the European regional seas ([document 7-1](#), [Presentation 6](#), and

[Outcome of TG BALLAST 11-2020](#), paragraphs 7.2-7.7), the Meeting took note of an update on the pilot study (**document 7-2** and **Presentation 4**).

7.16 The Meeting welcomed the information and encouraged interested participant to liaise with the Netherlands in order to cooperate in the ongoing activities.

7.17 The Meeting noted that in-water cleaning of ship's hulls is prohibited in Spanish ports and anchorage areas. The Meeting further noted that there is no harmonization of in-water cleaning regulations in HELCOM and OSPAR Contracting Parties, and that many Contracting Parties have no such regulations in place.

7.18 The Meeting noted that Germany intends to give a presentation regarding the work within the COMPLETE PLUS project on work on risk assessments for in-water cleaning to the next meeting and will already share more information intersessionally.

Agenda Item 8 Open issues

8.1 The Meeting took note of information regarding the Öresund Same Risk Area (SRA) between Sweden and Denmark, and that exemptions have been granted to five ships operating between Helsingborg and Helsingör. The exemptions are valid for five years, starting in September 2021, and are subject to intermediate review.

8.2 The Meeting further noted that currently it is not possible to inform of exemptions based on SRA in the IMO GISIS database, and that Sweden and Denmark intend to submit a document to MEPC 78 informing of these exemptions.

8.3 The Meeting noted that Germany has included some information regarding available sediment reception facilities in the IMO GISIS database.

8.4 The Meeting noted that a survey has been conducted in Spain, revealing that almost no requests to collect sediments have been received by Spanish ports.

Agenda Item 9 Any other business

9.1 The Meeting took note of the Report on the BW compliance pilot exercise done in Algeciras, Spain on 14-16 September 2021 (**document 9-1** and **Presentation 5**), as well as the recommendations and plans for future possible actions, as outlined in the document. The Meeting invited Spain to share the invitation to a related webinar being planned in 2022, through the HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats.

9.2 The Meeting took note of a report of a [COMPLETE project workshop on ballast water sampling and analysis](#).

9.3 The Meeting recalled that TG BALLAST 11-2020 had considered the links between ballast water tools and biofouling risk assessment tools and the possibilities to utilize e.g. the JHP decision support tool for biofouling purposes, and to consider the matter in more detail, as agreed by TG BALLAST 11-2020 ([Outcome of TG BALLAST 11-2020](#), paragraph 9.2).

9.4 The Meeting took note that no proposals on this matter have been submitted to the Meeting.

Agenda Item 10 Work plan and future meetings

10.1 The Meeting took note that MARITIME 21-2021 considered the draft Work Plan 2021-2022 for the Joint HELCOM/OSPAR TG Ballast Water Management Convention (BWMC) and Biofouling (JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING) ([document 2-1 Corr.1](#)) noting that the Work Plan was already endorsed by the OSPAR Environmental Impact of Human Activities (EIHA) Committee meeting on 15-18 March 2021 subject to improving the level of precision on timing and lead countries, which will need to be taken up at the next meeting of JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING.

10.2 The Meeting took note that MARITIME 21-2021 approved the Work Plan 2021-2022 for JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING as contained in [document 2-1 Corr.1](#) ([Outcome of MARITIME 21-2021](#), paragraphs 2.7-2.11).

10.3 The Meeting took note that MARITIME 21-2021 agreed that JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 1-2021 should endeavour to identify lead countries for certain items in the Work Plan, but that there is no need to revise the Work Plan itself for this reason and that the work item on evaluating the IMO Biofouling Guidelines has already been completed and should therefore be removed from the next Work Plan, which is to be revised by JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 2-2022.

10.4 The Meeting invited HELCOM and OSPAR Contracting Parties to inform the Secretariats (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi and lucy.ritchie@ospar.org) of their willingness to take the lead on items in the Work Plan.

10.5 The Meeting took note that Ms. Katja Broeg is stepping down as Co-Chair of JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING due to changes in her national responsibilities. The Meeting thanked Ms. Broeg for her commitment and all the constructive and efficient work done during her time as Co-Chair of the Group and as a participant to the Group before that.

10.6 The Meeting elected Mr. Julio de la Cueva (Spain) as a Co-Chair of the Group for the remaining period of the mandate (end of 2024).

10.7 The Meeting thanked Mr. Manuel Sala Pérez for his excellent work and contribution to the work of the Group, including the vast improvements on the online risk assessment tool, and for his HELCOM work on non-indigenous species in general.

10.8 The Meeting took note of the contact list for both HELCOM and OSPAR (**document 10-1**), and updated the list as contained in **Annex 3**.

10.9 The Meeting took note of the National Administration Contacts - Official Contact Points for BWMC A-4 Exemptions (**document 10-2**) and updated the list as contained in **Annex 4**.

10.10 The Meeting took note that once updated the list will be uploaded to the HELCOM OSPAR Risk Assessment Decision Support Tool.

10.11 The Meeting recalled that TG BALLAST 10-2019 welcomed the offer by Spain to host the next meeting, which had to be conducted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

10.12 The Meeting welcomed the renewed offer by Spain to host the next Meeting in San Sebastian, to be held tentatively during the week starting 10 October 2022, if the COVID-19 situation allows.

Agenda Item 11 Outcome of the Meeting

11.1 The Meeting adopted the draft Outcome of the Meeting (**document 11-1**). The final Outcome incorporating corrections by the Meeting will be finalised by the Secretariats in consultation with the Co-Chairs and made available in the HELCOM and OSPAR websites.

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Annex 2 List of documents

Code	Title	Presented By
1-1	Provisional Agenda	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats
1-2	Provisional Annotated Agenda	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats
2-1	Status of development of a HELCOM indicator assessing copper	HELCOM Secretariat
2-2	Process of the establishment of a Join OSPAR HELCOM Expert Group on Non-Indigenous Species (JEG NIS)	HELCOM Secretariat
2-3	Actions in the 2021 BSAP with particular relevance to JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING	HELCOM Secretariat
2-4	Outcomes of relevant HELCOM meetings during the intersessional period	HELCOM Secretariat
2-5	Outcomes of relevant OSPAR meetings during the intersessional period	OSPAR Secretariat
2-6	Non-Indigenous Species Thematic Assessment as part of the OSPAR Quality Status Report 2023	OSPAR Secretariat
3-1	Proposal of a Regionally Harmonized Early Warning System (EWS) on the detection of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens (HAOP)	Lithuania
5-1	Update on the improvement of the online JHP decision support tool	HELCOM Secretariat
6-1	Proposal for amendments on the target species selection criteria and update of the Baltic Sea target species list	Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania
7-1	Draft Biofouling Management Guidance	HELCOM Secretariat
7-2	Update on pilot research for biofouling protocol	Netherlands
9-1	Exercise on BWMS compliance organized on 14-16 November 2021 in Algeciras	Spain
10-1	Contact addresses of JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats
10-2	National Administration Contacts - Official Contact Points for BWMC A-4 Exemptions	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats

Annex 3 Actions in the BSAP UP of particular relevance for JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING as identified by the Secretariat

Code	Action	Target year	Type of action	Rationale	Potential effect	Implemented by	Overseeing WG/EG	Criteria for achievement	Cross-reference to actions in other segments	Comments
S7	Establish by 2024 and subsequently implement the early warning system in case of the introduction of invasive species in ports.	2024	Measure	An early warning system (EWS) facilitates timely communication of findings of non-indigenous species (NIS) to all relevant authorities in the Baltic Sea region and international shipping in the Baltic Sea.	The measure will facilitate informed and quick decision-making in order to minimize further introductions of NIS and undertake possible eradication measures.	National/Joint	MARITIME; JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING	An early warning system (EWS) is established and being implemented (Joint and national).		Lithuania to lead
S8	Work for the harmonized implementation of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Biofouling Guidelines and Guidance, taking into account e.g. the proposed Biofouling Management Roadmap, and further contribute to the work carried out in the IMO.	Ongoing	Measure	Biofouling is one of the main vectors for introductions and spread of non-indigenous species to and within the Baltic Sea. However, no legally binding international regulations exist to reduce such introductions. The proposed Biofouling Management Roadmap can be seen as a tool for harmonized implementation of the IMO Biofouling Guidelines and Guidance, taking into account the conditions in the Baltic Sea. It was also noted that the Biofouling Roadmap can support the work in IMO to review the Biofouling Guidelines.	Harmonized implementation of the IMO Biofouling Guidelines and its possible future developments would reduce the risk of spreading non-indigenous fouling organisms in the Baltic Sea and beyond, as well as reducing the input of biocides and microplastics from antifouling systems and as an indirect effect also reducing the energy consumption of ships.	National/Joint	MARITIME; JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING	Ongoing harmonized implementation of the IMO Biofouling Guidelines and Guidance in the Baltic Sea and ongoing active contribution of HELCOM or HELCOM Contracting Parties to the work carried out in the IMO. Implementation by HELCOM and OSPAR Contracting Parties of the IMO Biofouling Guidelines and Guidance is harmonized. Contribution to work carried out in IMO (e.g. submission of	HL30	JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING to lead

Code	Action	Target year	Type of action	Rationale	Potential effect	Implemented by	Overseeing WG/EG	Criteria for achievement	Cross-reference to actions in other segments	Comments
								proposals developed within or based on HELCOM work, incorporation of HELCOM approaches to IMO Guidelines or Conventions etc.) has taken place.		
S9	Promote the development and use of effective, environmentally sustainable biofouling management techniques and antifouling systems on ships and recreational craft, including biocide-free alternatives to prevent biofouling by supporting related research and development activities in the Baltic Sea region.	Ongoing	Supporting action	Biofouling is one of the main vectors for introductions of non-indigenous species to the Baltic Sea. However, no legally binding international regulations exist to reduce such introduction. Also, apart from international regulations prohibiting the use of organotin compounds and cybutryne in antifouling systems (AFS), there is no standard or consensus on which biofouling management techniques or AFS are considered the most appropriate and effective. Promotion of the use of environmentally sustainable biofouling management options which are already on the market, and the development of new tools and products would help minimizing both biosecurity and pollution risks.	N/A	National/Joint	MARITIME; JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING	Research and development activities related to the development and use of effective, environmentally sustainable biofouling management techniques and antifouling systems, including biocide-free alternatives, are ongoing and the results are communicated with users/shippers through appropriate channels (joint and national).	HL30	JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING to lead
S10	Strengthen cooperation with stakeholders in the development and implementation of sustainable biofouling	2026	Measure	Biofouling is one of the main vectors for introductions of non-indigenous species to the Baltic Sea. In addition to being effective, biofouling management options need to be sustainable with minimal release of hazardous	Reduced introductions of non-indigenous species to the Baltic Sea via biofouling. Reduced harmful effects on the environment through release of hazardous	National	MARITIME; JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING	Cooperation with stakeholders in the development and implementation of sustainable biofouling management	HL30	No lead country needed.

Code	Action	Target year	Type of action	Rationale	Potential effect	Implemented by	Overseeing WG/EG	Criteria for achievement	Cross-reference to actions in other segments	Comments
	management options by 2026 to minimize the introduction of invasive aquatic species, the release of hazardous substances and microplastics from anti-fouling systems, as well as enhancing energy efficiency.			substances and microplastics and increased energy efficiency. Due to the prohibition of antifouling systems (AFS) containing organotin compounds and cybutryne, there is still a need for new, effective and sustainable solutions that work for various ship types in a range of conditions. The cooperation of all concerned stakeholders (such as shipowners/operators, paint and equipment manufacturers, shipyards etc.) is the central prerequisite to achieve development and use of sustainable biofouling management options. Thereby, practical applicability is considered from the start of their development.	substances, microplastics and increased energy efficiency of ships.			options in place, by e.g. networks and communication channels (outreach) established.		
S11	Implement the Joint Harmonised Procedure for the Contracting Parties of OSPAR and HELCOM on the granting of exemptions under the Ballast Water Management (BWM) Convention, Regulation A-4, and keep the Ballast Water Risk Assessment Tool up to date with data from conducted port surveys.	Ongoing	Supporting action	The Joint Harmonized Procedure (JHP) and Risk Assessment (RA) Tool provide the means for a harmonized and informed decision making in granting exemptions in accordance with the BWM Convention. Harmonization is important in order to maintain a level playing field among HELCOM and OSPAR Contracting Parties, while ensuring that exemptions do not increase the risk of species invasions and at the same time taking a pragmatic approach from the point of view of the shipping industry. Furthermore, up to date data in the RA Tool is essential for	N/A	National/Joint	MARITIME; JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING	The JHP is implemented among Contracting Parties. Evaluation of the sufficiency of the data from port surveys in the Ballast Water Exemptions Decision Support Tool has been carried out.		JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING to lead

Code	Action	Target year	Type of action	Rationale	Potential effect	Implemented by	Overseeing WG/EG	Criteria for achievement	Cross-reference to actions in other segments	Comments
				making informed decisions on exemptions. Contracting Parties may still issue an exemption based on the "Same Risk Area" concept as described in "Guidelines for risk assessment under regulation A-4 of the BWM Convention "(G7).						
S12	Continue close cooperation with OSPAR on the implementation of the Ballast Water Management (BWM) Convention and the issue of biofouling management at the regional and inter-regional level.	Ongoing	Supporting action	In order to effectively prevent introductions of non-indigenous species (NIS) to the Baltic Sea, coordinated implementation of the Ballast Water Management (BWM) Convention and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Biofouling Guidelines and Guidance is needed between HELCOM and OSPAR. NIS that have been introduced in the North Sea pose a significant risk of invading also the Baltic Sea.	N/A	Joint	MARITIME; JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING	Progress in implementing this ongoing action can be reviewed through assessing what new recommendations, guidelines, tools, principles or publications related to the implementation of the BWM Convention or the Biofouling Guidelines have been developed between HELCOM and OSPAR through JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING.		JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING to lead

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