



---

<b>Document title</b>	Development of a “Best Practice Guidance for the handling of wastewater in Ports in the Baltic Sea – the first Special Area for sewage according to MARPOL Annex IV”
<b>Code</b>	5-3
<b>Category</b>	INF
<b>Agenda Item</b>	5 - Sewage discharges from ships and port reception facilities
<b>Submission date</b>	17.09.2018
<b>Submitted by</b>	Germany
<b>Reference</b>	

---

## Background

The Baltic Sea is a particularly sensitive sea area due to natural conditions, in particular being a semi-enclosed sea.

Therefore, the Baltic Sea became the first “special area” according to MARPOL Annex IV aiming at the prevention of sewage discharge into the sea from passenger ships. In order to reduce the input of nutrients into the Baltic Sea, mandatory limits for the discharge of phosphorus and nitrogen have been newly introduced (phosphorus: max 1.0 Qi/Qe mg/l or 80 per cent reduction, nitrogen: max 20 Qi/Qe mg/l or 70 per cent reduction). Alternatively, sewage from passenger ships has to be discharged to reception facilities in ports. The Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) of the IMO agreed in April 2016 on the application dates 2019 and 2021 (and 2023 as exemption for ships travelling directly between North Sea and St Petersburg) for the MARPOL Annex IV special area in the Baltic Sea.

Against this background, a need for effective practical solutions to deal with the manifold technical challenges became obvious. Apart from the construction of adequate PRFs in ports, effective waste water management planning and environmental protection measures are prerequisites for effective implementation.

To enhance the cooperation efforts among all involved stakeholder groups and share information on, for example, new onboard technical solutions with regard to sewage composition and treatment or storage capacities, as well as discharge possibilities in the various ports around the Baltic Sea, the Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH) in cooperation with the Port of Kiel and the Baltic Ports Organization (BPO) on behalf of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety organized an international workshop in summer 2016.

Nearly 60 representatives of politics (regional/EU, national/local), administrations, municipal sewage treatment providers, ports and cruise/shipping industry and NGOs from all Baltic Sea states discussed and identified ways how to address the challenges ahead, strengthen cooperation and find common solutions.

The discussions showed that it was important to promote a regular mutual exchange of information on available technologies, lessons learned and best practices, as often the greatest challenges exist at the technical level.

As a follow up, BSH commissioned a project on the development of a “Best Practice Guidance for the Handling of Wastewater in Ports in the Baltic Sea”. The Guidance provides information and concrete guidance for the different involved stakeholders of HELCOM member states, in particular administrations,

municipal sewage treatment providers, ports and cruise/shipping industry. It has been developed by the Development and Assessment Institute in Waste Water Technology at RWTH Aachen University (PIA) and will be presented at MARITIME 18-2018 (see presentation).

Before, the project has been presented at different HELCOM meetings in 2017, such as the HELCOM PRF Platform meeting and MARITIME 17-2017 and received general support.

It is foreseen to publish the “Best Practice Guidance” as a publication of the HELCOM Secretariat in 2019 after a final draft has been circulated and approved by the HELCOM member states by correspondence as a follow-up to the presentation at MARITIME 18-2018.

### Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information on the project “Best Practice Guidance for the handling of wastewater in Ports in the Baltic Sea – the first Special Area for sewage according to MARPOL Annex IV” and further steps.