

**OUTCOME OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE JOINT HELCOM/OSPAR TASK GROUP ON
BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT CONVENTION EXEMPTIONS
(HELCOM/OSPAR TG BALLAST)**

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OUTCOME OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE JOINT HELCOM/OSPAR TASK GROUP ON BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT CONVENTION EXEMPTIONS (HELCOM/OSPAR TG BALLAST)

Introduction

- 0.1 The Sixth Meeting of the Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Task Group on Ballast Water Management Convention Exemptions was held on 16-17 September 2015 in Gdansk, Poland.
- 0.2 The Meeting was attended by Delegations from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain and Sweden and by Observers from the European Community Shipowners' Association (ECSA) and the Great Lakes Commission. The List of participants is contained in **Annex 1** and the list of documents in **Annex 2**.
- 0.3 Ms Joanna Ignasiak from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development welcomed the participants to Gdansk and outlined the practical details.
- 0.4 The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Henrik Ramstedt, Sweden.
- 0.5 A round table presentation of the participants to the Meeting was conducted.
- 0.6 Mr. Hermanni Backer, HELCOM Professional Secretary and Mr. John Mouat, OSPAR Deputy Secretary acted as Secretaries of the Meeting, assisted by Ms. Marta Ruiz, HELCOM Secretariat.

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documents: 1-1, 1-2, 1-3

- 1.1 The Meeting adopted the Agenda as contained in document 1-1.
- 1.2 The Meeting noted the outcome of the Fifth Meeting of the Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Task Group on Ballast Water Management Convention Exemptions (document 1-3).

Agenda Item 2 Updates to the Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Harmonised Procedure on the Granting of BMW Convention Exemptions

Documents: 2-1, 2-2

- 2.1 The Meeting took note that the revisions of the HELCOM-OSPAR Joint Harmonized Procedure (JHP) for BWMC A-4 exemptions proposed by HELCOM/OSPAR TG BALLAST 5/2014 were endorsed both by HELCOM HOD 48-2015 and the OSPAR Commission 2015.
- 2.2 The Meeting took note of the currently valid Joint Harmonized Procedure (document 2-1).
- 2.3 The Meeting noted that any proposed changes to the Joint Harmonized procedure should be submitted to the Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Task Group in track changes so they can be considered in detail before being submitted for approval by the appropriate bodies.
- 2.4 The Meeting agreed to conduct another round of revisions at the next meeting of the TG BALLAST.
- 2.5 The Meeting took note of the report of the HELCOM ad hoc Correspondence Group on Ballast Water Management (CG BALLAST) submitted to HELCOM HOD 48-2015 (document 2-2).
- 2.6 The Meeting took note that the HELCOM Correspondence Group on Ballast Water Management still had some outstanding tasks, including the development of a regional roadmap for ballast water management in the Baltic and that this should be submitted to HELCOM MARITIME in November.

2.7 The Meeting proposed and discussed further overall needs of amending the harmonized A-4 procedure as follows:

- References in the document might be reduced to a minimum to enable a stand alone document;
- The chapters of the JHP document could be reshuffled for easier reading (e.g. move sampling protocol towards the end).

Agenda Item 3 Port Sampling

Document: 3-1

3.1 The Meeting took note of the final report of the WP 4 within the HELCOM led BALSAM project, including the results of the 2014 port sampling in the Baltic Sea (document 3-1).

3.2 The Contracting Parties informed of alien species sampling in North East Atlantic and Baltic ports during 2015 as well as such activities planned for 2016 as follows:

- Spain informed that Port of Las Palmas is repeating the port sampling conducted last year and that port sampling will be included in the WFD environmental monitoring;
- Germany informed that in a number of ports the JHP and rapid assessment methodology have been compared. The results of the project are not yet ready, but will be provided to the Joint Task Group as soon as possible. A German network of experts has received funding to conduct port sampling in two additional projects;
- The Netherlands planned to sample Amsterdam, Ijmuden, Den Helder and were also looking into collaborating with Belgium on an additional ports;
- Denmark was applying for funding to sample several ports and planning to use the data for the indicator D-2 under the MSFD;
- Sweden planned to start monitoring through pilots in a few ports next year and their MSFD monitoring programme will be fully implemented in 2018;
- Poland has sampled Gdynia and tested a new type of trap for mobile fauna which has proved good results for detecting alien species. Further information on the traps will be provided in due time.

3.3 The Meeting discussed the concern raised by ECSA that different sampling equipment could lead to different results, but concluded that the number of sites sampled, the use of different methodologies and quality assurance through species accumulation curves resulted in a statistically representative and cost efficient sampling of the species present.

3.4 The Meeting appreciated the presentation by the Great Lakes Commission (represented by Buffalo State University A. Karatayev and L. Burlakova) on the port sampling conducted in Buffalo, Oswego, Toledo and Ashtabula ports using the OSPAR-HELCOM Protocol (**Presentation 1**), noting that they had found the method easy to apply. The Meeting welcomed further cooperation between the regions.

Agenda Item 4 On-line decision support tool

Document: 4-1

4.1 The Meeting took note of an update by the Secretariats to the web tool and agreed that there is some need to develop the tool, e.g. as there are now two target species lists instead of one - which was not foreseen when developing the original risk assessment tool.

4.2 The Meeting requested the Secretariats to prepare a document with improvement options, and estimated costs, before the next meeting to enable Contracting Parties to consider if national funding was available and encouraged participants to submit experiences in using the tool.

4.3 The Meeting considered and agreed on the data submission procedures outlined in document 4-1 and requested the Secretariat to simplify the data submission form 1 on port information.

4.4 The Meeting encouraged all parties with port sampling data created through the JHP to submit data available.

4.5 Spain thanked Marta Ruiz from the HELCOM Secretariat for uploading the Las Palmas data to the RA tool.

Agenda Item 5 Target Species

Documents: 5-1, 5-2, 5-3, 5-4

5.1 The Meeting took note of the OSPAR Target Species List (document 5-1).

5.2 The Meeting took note of the Target Species List currently in use in the HELCOM area (document 5-2).

5.3 The Meeting appreciated these lists as the best available scientific information and agreed that for routes between HELCOM and OSPAR areas both lists should be applied.

5.4 The Meeting took note of the Estonian and Lithuanian proposal for revised Target Species selection criteria (document 5-3) considered at the HELCOM Workshop on IMO BWMC target species, criteria and revision process (WS TS 1-2015) held in Tallinn, Estonia, 26 August 2015, which was outlined in a presentation by Sergej Olenin, Lithuania (**Presentation 2**).

5.5 The Meeting considered draft proposals to revise target species identification for BWMC A-4 exemptions and for formalizing a procedure and responsibilities to update the A-4 Target Species list within HELCOM and OSPAR and took note in general of the outcome of the HELCOM Workshop on target species, criteria and revision process (WS TS 1-2015) (document 5-4).

5.6 The Meeting agreed that the Chair in cooperation with the Secretariats revise the draft proposal included in Annex 3 of document 5-4, circulate the draft to the Group for further input/revision with a view of endorsing the revisions at the next meeting.

5.7 The Meeting agreed that the Chair and the Secretariats should incorporate the following comments when revising the draft for first circulation:

- The reference to IMO G7 in 3.3 b) should be replaced with a direct quote from the G7 – which also covers point a), which can be subsequently removed;
- When ballast water is a major vector of introduction of an alien species it should be considered as a potential target species;
- Draft §3. 6 in document 5-4, Annex 3, should be replaced with “The decision on whether a species should be selected or removed for the target species list has to be based on the selection criteria supported by scientific data and/or expert judgement.”;

- More detailed guidance on the application of the criteria (based on document 5-3 and the currently valid Target Species criteria) should be included as an annex to the JHP;
- Justification for including a particular species to the list of A-4 target species according to the JHP should be documented and included in the target species lists;
- Social and cultural aspects in the new table of criteria in Annex 3 should be integrated to the other criteria (including their guidance) and removed as a separate Target Species criteria. The issue on social and cultural aspects could be highlighted in chapter 5 (§5.7), i.e. in the final risk assessment.

5.8 The Meeting recalled that there is a new procedure in place at OSPAR to revise the list annually and that for HELCOM the procedure for such revisions will be considered by HELCOM MARITIME 15-2015 (November 2015).

Agenda Item 6 Open Issues

Documents: none

6.1 The Meeting noted that no new input/proposals on the issue of exemptions for voyages between ports and other locations had been submitted and referred to the presentation by Sweden at the last meeting of the TG (TG BALLAST 5-2014, Madrid, Spain).

6.2 The Meeting discussed the applicability of exemptions to ships operating between ports and other locations (A-4) and A-3 exemptions (e.g. question of same location). It was highlighted that they were separate issues and should not be considered together.

6.3 The meeting took note that the Danish Nature Agency was looking for funding for a project to define the same risk areas concept and to demonstrate that the concept ensures the same level of protection compared to the G7 risk assessment methods. Pending this funding Denmark will develop a proposal to revise G7 for IMO MEPC 69. The same risk area concept to be considered implies that an area within a biogeographic region, including several harbours or routes, could be assessed together.

6.4 The Meeting noted that the same risk area approach concept was worth investigating further as long as it included a robust risk assessment approach.

Agenda Item 7 Any other business

Documents: 7-1, 7-2, 7-3

7.1 The Meeting took note of an update from the Chair regarding the outcome of discussions on A-4 exemptions and related issues at IMO MEPC 68 and PPR 2 and recalled that MEPC 68 agreed to re-establish the Ballast Water Review Group at MEPC 69 and agreed that its terms of reference would include the definition of the term "same location" in the context of regulation A-3 of the BWM Convention and developing guidance for exemptions under regulation A-4 of the BWM Convention regarding assessment of ports or locations of the "same risk area" focusing on short sea shipping (i.e. not intercontinental/transoceanic voyages), taking into account scientific methodologies and meeting documents.

7.2 The Contracting Parties and Observers were invited to update the list of contact addresses of HELCOM/OSPAR TG BALLAST (document 7-1) as well as the list of official contact points for BWMC A-4 exemptions (document 7-2). Updated lists are contained in **Annex 3** and **Annex 4**, respectively.

7.3 The Meeting welcomed the information that Belgium is prepared to notify IMO on ratification of the BWMC in November 2015.

7.4 The Meeting noted that Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands are planning a joint workshop on monitoring of alien species in the Wadden Sea early next year (2016).

7.5 The Meeting took note that the project application on ballast water submitted to the EU Life call in 2014 (document 7-3) was not funded.

7.6 The Meeting considered the option of using the application for drafting an application to other EU financial programs such as regional funds (i.e. INTERREG), and recommended that the Secretariats and concerned parties identify a suitable source of funding and, if needed, re-submit parts of the application as appropriate.

7.7 The Meeting took note of the information that Denmark is carrying out a study on biofouling, noted that the Netherlands and Finland have activities on biofouling and for the HELCOM area such information can be collected via a questionnaire and discussed at HELCOM MARITIME.

7.8 The Meeting took note of the invitation by Sweden to a presentation on biofouling on 25 September at 10:00 at the Chalmers Technical University, Gothenburg.

Agenda Item 8 Work plan and future meetings

Documents: 8-1, Annex 6 of document 1-3

8.1 The Meeting took note of the draft Terms of Reference for HELCOM/OSPAR TG BALLAST for 2015-2016, approved by OSPAR EIHA on 13-17 April 2015, and to be submitted for approval to HELCOM MARITIME 15-2015 to be held 23-25 November 2015 (document 8-1) and agreed to draft and endorse the ToRs for 2016/17 (April 2016 - April 2017) by correspondence and requested the Secretariats to delete footnote on A-3 exemptions as well as include synergies with MSFD monitoring to the draft ToRs for 2016/17.

8.2 The Meeting discussed the issue of electing a new Co-Chair considering the retirement of German Co-Chair, welcomed the offer of Germany to consider providing a Vice- or Co-Chair to the TG and agreed to come back to the issue at the next meeting.

8.3 The Meeting agreed to a revised work plan attached as **Annex 5**.

8.4 The Meeting agreed that the next meeting will be held early summer 2016 or 14-15 September 2016, and welcomed the offer by the OSPAR Secretariat to inquire potential hosts of the next meeting.

Agenda Item 9 Outcome of the Meeting

Documents: 9-1

9.1 The Meeting adopted the draft outcome (document 9-1). The full outcome of the Meeting including Annexes will be finalised by the Secretariats in consultation with the Chair, and will then be made available in the HELCOM Meeting Portal and OSPAR website.

Annex 1

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Annex 2

List of Documents

HELCOM-OSPAR TG BALLAST 6-2015	Date dd.mm.yy	Title	Submitted by
1-1	3.8.2015	Provisional Agenda	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats
1-2	10.9.2015	Annotations to the Provisional Agenda	The Chairs and the Secretariats
1-3	10.9.2015	Outcome of the Fifth Meeting of the Joint HELCOM/OSPAR Task Group on Ballast Water Management Convention Exemptions (HELCOM/OSPAR TG Ballast)	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats
2-1	10.9.2015	HELCOM-OSPAR Joint Harmonized procedure	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats
2-2	10.9.2015	Report of the HELCOM ad hoc Correspondence Group on Ballast Water Management (CG BALLAST)	HELCOM Secretariat
3-1	10.9.2015	Final report of the WP 4 within the BALSAM project	HELCOM Secretariat
4-1	10.9.2015	Data submission procedure for Decision Support Tool	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats
5-1	9.9.2015	OSPAR Target Species List	OSPAR Secretariat
5-2	10.9.2015	List of Target Species currently in use in the HELCOM area	HELCOM Secretariat
5-3	10.9.2015	Estonian and Lithuanian proposal for IMO Ballast Water Management Convention A-4 Target Species selection criteria	HELCOM Secretariat
5-4	10.9.2015	Outcome of the HELCOM Workshop on IMO BWMC target species, criteria and revision process (WS TS 1-2015)	HELCOM Secretariat
7-1	10.9.2015	Contact addresses of Joint HELCOM/OSPAR TG BALLAST	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats
7-2	10.9.2015	Official Contact Points for BWMC A-4 Exemptions	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats
7-3	10.9.2015	Result of the project application on ballast water submitted to the EU Life call 2014	Spain
8-1	10.9.2015	Draft Terms of Reference for HELCOM/OSPAR TG BALLAST for 2015-2016	The Chairs and the Secretariats

Annex 3

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Annex 4

Official Contact Points for BWMC A-4 Exemptions
(Missing information to be added)**DENMARK** (HELCOM and OSPAR)

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Annex 5

Joint HELCOM/OSPAR TG Ballast Water Work Plan (17 September 2015)

WP	Actions from TOR	Activity	Timing	Task leader	Comments
1	Meeting organisation	Arrange meetings and documentation	Early June/ 14-15 September 2016	OSPAR Secretariat HELCOM Secretariat	Meetings hosted alternatingly hosted
2	Overall revision	Carry out overall revision of the JHP	Continuous		
3	Port surveys	Port Survey Testing in the Baltic	Continuous	National Initiatives	
4	Port surveys	Port Survey Testing in the North East Atlantic	Continuous	National Initiatives	
5	Port surveys	Consider potential synergies with MSFD monitoring	Intersessionally by TG BALLAST 7-2016		
6	Port surveys	Improve port survey data submission sheets	Intersessionally by TG BALLAST 7-2016		
7	Target Species	Review of HELCOM target species List	Continuous	tbc	
8	Target Species	Review of OSPAR target species List	Continuous	OSPAR NIS Expert Group (Paul Stebbing)	
9	Target Species	Revise Target Species Selection criteria	Intersessionally by TG BALLAST 7-2016	Chair and Secretariats	
10	Data storage and decision support tools	Update online decision support tool	2015/2016 pending funding from CPs	HELCOM/OSPAR Secretariats	Improve usability and data upload functionality
11	Data storage and decision support tools	Review procedures of Quality assurance and validation of Data		HELCOM/OSPAR Secretariats	Ongoing
12	Outstanding issues	Exemptions to ships operating between ports and other locations (Offshore loading/STS)	Next meeting	Sweden	
13	Outstanding issues	Consideration of same risk area	Next Meeting	Denmark	
14	Terms of reference	Update for 2016/2017	January 2016	Secretariats	To be agreed by correspondence