MEMO OF THE FIRST INFORMAL CONSULTATION SESSION OF THE JOINT HELCOM/OSPAR TASK GROUP ON BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT CONVENTION (BWMC) AND BIOFOULING
(IC JTG BALLAST &BIOFOULING 1-2023)

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Introduction

0.1 The First Informal Consultation Session of the Joint Task Group on Ballast Water Management Convention (BWMC) and Biofouling (IC JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 1-2023), hosted by the Netherlands, was held in Sassenheim, the Netherlands, on 9-10 November 2023.

0.2 The Session was attended by delegations from Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom as well as HELCOM Observers from INTERTANKO and the Nordic Boat Council, and an invited guest from GiMaRIS. The list of participants is contained in **Annex 1**. The list of documents is set out in **Annex 2**.

0.3 The Session was co-chaired by Mr. Ville-Veikko Intovuori, Finland, and Mr. Julio de la Cueva, Spain.

0.4 Welcoming remarks were provided by Mr. Rob Gerits, Dutch Head of Delegation for OSPAR's Environmental Impacts of Human Activities Committee (EIHA).

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

Agenda Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

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

1.2 The Session noted that due to the strategic pause and suspension of official HELCOM meetings until further notice, any formal decisions made by the Session have to be approved by all HELCOM Contracting Parties through a separate correspondence procedure. The Session invited the HELCOM Secretariat to inform the OSPAR Contracting Parties of the outcome of such a correspondence procedure, when concluded.

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

2.1 The Session took note of an update on the work of ICES/IOC/IMO Working Group on Ballast and Other Ship Vectors (WGBOSV) (**document 2-4**).

2.2 The Session took note of the progress made in achieving the aims of the OSPAR's NEAES task on biofouling (**document 2-6** and **document 2-6 Rev. 1).**

2.3 In this context, the Session discussed the way forward in creating an inventory of human activities related to non-indigenous species (NIS) introductions including biofouling and other shipping related vectors, considering the two options detailed in document 2-6 Rev.1. The Session noted that JTG Ballast & Biofouling does not have the mandate to make any decisions on the matter and that it would be advisable for Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and other interested parties to discuss the matter intersessionally with a view to making a decision at OSPAR EIHA in 2024.

2.4 The Session, however, recognized that the EIHA task template set out in Annex 1 of document 2-6 Rev.1 foresees an inventory of human activities related to NIS introductions in general, which includes biofouling and other shipping related vectors, noting that this should be a relatively simple task done by literature review. The Session also noted that while a biofouling assessment based on Wet Surface Area (WSA), as proposed in option 1 of document 2-6 Rev.1, would be useful, it is a separate matter not to be undertaken within the scope of the EIHA task template.

2.5 The Session further noted that such activities associated with the EIHA task template, which are outside of the scope of JTG Ballast & Biofouling, could potentially be tasked to JEG NIS, provided that the terms of reference of the group are revised accordingly.

2.6 The Session took note of the information on OSPAR's issues of relevance to JTG Ballast & Biofouling (**document 2-9**).

2.7 The Session took note of the new HELCOM working structure resulting from the conclusion of the renewal process, and in particular that JTG Ballast & Biofouling is under the umbrella of the HELCOM Maritime Working Group (**document 2-1**).

2.8 The Session took note of the information on the launching of the new HELCOM Meeting Portal (**document 2-2)**. The Session invited OSPAR representatives of JTG Ballast & Biofouling to sign up to the new HELCOM Meeting Portal by contacting the HELCOM Secretariat (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi).

2.9 The Session took note of the memos of relevant HELCOM informal consultation sessions during the intersessional period, in particular IC HOD 2-2023, and IC HELCOM 1-2023 and IC HOD 3-2023 (**document 2-3**). The Session further took note that the next Ministerial Meeting on the Baltic Sea Marine Environment, hosted by Latvia, is planned for 25 April 2024. The focus will be on the results of HOLAS 3, strengthening implementation of the 2021 HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) and culminating in the 50th anniversary celebration of the signing of the original Helsinki Convention.

2.10 The Session took note of an update on actions in the BSAP with particular relevance to JTG BALLAST and BIOFOULING (**document 2-5**). When considering the implementation of each of the actions, the Session provided additional input as contained in **document 2-5 Rev. 1**. In discussing BSAP action S12, the Session recognized the importance of inviting representatives of both HELCOM and OSPAR e.g. when organizing workshops or considering measures within the scope of JTG Ballast & Biofouling.

2.11 The Session took note of the Memo of IC MARITIME 2-2023 (**document 2-7**). In particular, the Session took note of the discussion related to challenging water conditions, as discussed in paragraphs 4.7-4.9 of the Memo. The Session noted that several countries within the Baltic Sea and North Sea regions have encountered cases where ships are unable to use their ballast water management systems (BWMS) due to conditions such as high turbidity. The Session also noted that the related IMO guidelines, expected to be finalized by MEPC 81 in March 2024 are likely not going to solve all issues related to how to deal with challenging water conditions.

2.12 The Session recognized the need for harmonization of practices related to challenging water conditions, to avoid having varying interpretations of the BWM Convention and the IMO guidelines on the matter.

2.13 The Session also noted that several options need to be considered for how ships and port States should handle challenging water conditions in practice, and that all options will not be possible to implement in all countries, recognizing e.g. that in the Baltic Sea ballast water exchange is not a feasible option.

2.14 The Session noted that Germany has developed national procedures on contingency measures, as included in **document 2-10**.

2.15 The Session invited other Contracting Parties and Observers to submit relevant information and proposals to the next session for consideration with a view to possibly commencing the development of harmonized procedures for the Baltic Sea and North Sea regions related to challenging water conditions.

2.16 The Session noted that guidance for contingency measures have been developed for the Mediterranean Sea by the Barcelona Convention, and that these could also be useful to consider when discussing harmonization of procedures within the Baltic and North Seas.

2.17 The Session took note of the Memo of IC JEG NIS 1-2023 (**document 2-8**). In particular, the Session took note that IC JEG NIS 1-2023 discussed the need for cooperation between JEG NIS and

HELCOM-OSPAR JTG Ballast Water & Biofouling, the EU D2 Core Group and the D2 Expert Group, as well as relevant ICES groups dealing with NIS.

2.18 The Session took note that IC JEG NIS 1-2023 recommended that JEG NIS should also be informed of developments within the Correspondence Group on Target Species under JTG Ballast & Biofouling. The Session invited the Secretariats to share the Memo of this Session to JEG NIS.

2.19 The Session took note of the request to contacts of JTG Ballast & Biofouling who are also contacts of JEG NIS to keep JEG NIS updated on relevant discussions and outputs in relation to the OSPAR North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy (NEAES), focusing particularly on the operational objective related to NIS and a new task recently agreed under that objective.

2.20 The Session took note of recent developments at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), including MEPC 80 and PPR 10, relevant for the Session, as provided by the Finnish Co-Chair to the Session (**Presentation 1**).

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

3.1 The Session took note of the latest developments regarding the regionally harmonized early warning system (EWS) designed to ensure prompt dissemination of findings of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens (HAOP) as set out in **document 3-1** submitted by Lithuania.

3.2 The Session took note of the invitation for Contracting Parties to join the EWS and nominate representatives (data providers, members of JEG NIS and JTG Ballast Biofouling, warning signal receivers), in particular from institutions tasked with the detection of HAOP and NIS. The Session noted that Germany has recently decided to join the pilot implementation of the EWS and will inform Lithuania about the details of the participating contact points. Recognizing the value of the EWS, the Session encouraged all HELCOM and OSPAR Contracting Parties to consider joining the EWS.

3.3 The Session noted that the continued maintenance of the AquaNIS database hosted by Klaipeda University will require a funding of approximately 100.000€ per year. The Session considered potential funding resources and urged Contracting Parties to consider providing funding, or proposing potential funding sources for the AquaNIS database, and to inform Lithuania as well as the HELCOM Secretariat as soon as possible.

3.4 The Session took note of the German MSFD status report as contained in **Presentation 2.** The Session took note that the status reports for the Baltic Sea and North Sea are only available in German.

3.5 The Session took note that work is ongoing in relation to the setting of threshold values at EU level in the frame of the EU D2 core group, coordinated by the Joint Research Center (JRC). In addition, the Session took note that the JRC is in the process of organising a workshop on "Establishing transnational collaboration to manage Invasive Alien Species in the European Union" to be held on 13-14 November 2023 in hybrid format.

3.6 The Session took note that Contracting Parties and Observers were invited to provide proposals for amendment of the Port Survey Protocol as part of the JHP, including the use of eDNA as part of port sampling, if deemed relevant (Outcome of OSPAR JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 2-2022, para. 3.12).

3.7 The Session took note of experiences with genetic methods (eDNA) as part of surveys in the Port of Rostock (**Presentation 3**), noting both strenghts and weaknesses of using such methods.

3.8 The Session noted that eDNA has also been tested extensively in ports in the Netherlands, and it has been noted that BWMS do not destroy the DNA of organisms and that it is therefore expected that the increased use of BWMS will also lead to the increased detection of NIS when using eDNA methods.

3.9 The Session recommended revisiting the use of eDNA as part of the port sampling at the next session of the JTG, and also to discuss it in the context of documents 4-1 and 6-1 below.

Agenda Item 4 Port Sampling

4.1 The Session took note of the program of port surveys currently taking place in Spain (**document 4-1** and **Presentation 4**). The Session acknowledged that port surveys realized by following the JHP protocol can properly complement the necessary work to monitor descriptor 2 on NIS of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD).

4.2 The Session took note of a comment that, when presenting results from port surveys using other protocols than those in the JHP, it would be useful to distinguish which species were found by morphological identification and which were found by eDNA methodologies. The Session recalled that currently eDNA is not included in the port sampling protocol and that therefore results from eDNA monitoring are not included in the decision support tool.

4.3 In considering document 4-1, the Session recalled the discussion on eDNA methodologies under Agenda Item 3 above (c.f. paragraphs 3.7-3.9) and discussed the possibility to simplify the sampling protocol considering for example eDNA methodologies. The Session recommended that this matter needs further discussion in the context of document 6-1 under Agenda Item 6.

4.4 The Session took note that HELCOM Contracting Parties were invited to provide updates on port surveys conducted to the HELCOM Secretariat by 26 September 2023, in order for an information document to be produced for consideration by IC MARITIME 2-2023. The Session noted that the updated list of surveyed ports, as submitted t IC MARITIME 2-2023, is also set out in **document 4-2**.

4.5 The Session noted that some ports in Belgium and the Netherlands have been surveyed but are not included in the list in document 4-2. The Session invited Belgium and the Netherlands to provide the data to the HELCOM Secretariat (marta.ruiz@helcom.fi) so that information on these surveys can be included.

4.6 The Session noted that Finland has in 2023 conducted surveys in two ports, and that re-surveys are undertaken in six main Finnish ports with three-year intervals, so that two ports are surveyed each year.

4.7 The Session noted that the port of Gdynia has recently been surveyed and that Poland will inform the Secretariat when the results are available in spring 2024.

4.8 The Session took note of information provided by Norway regarding work related to port sampling, methodologies and NIS risk assessments in Norwegian ports. The Session invited Norway to provide more information on this work to the next Session.

4.9 The Session recognized that the port survey protocol in the JHP is needed for risk assessments when considering exemptions under the BWM Convention, but noted that surveys using other methodologies provide useful information that can be utilized also in the final decision making when considering whether to grant exemptions or not.

4.10 The Session took note that the HELCOM Secretariat will continue requesting updates on survey ports once a year. The Session recommended that in case any challenges with the sampling protocol are identified by Contracting Parties, this should also be reported and shared with future sessions of JTG Ballast & Biofouling.

4.11 Recalling the discussions at OSPAR JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 2-2022, the Session took note that Denmark confirmed the findings of the Danish report *A baseline study of the occurrence of non-indigenous species in Danish harbours* (Outcome of OSPAR JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 2-2022, para. 4.5).

4.12 Recalling the discussions at OSPAR JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 2-2022 (Outcome of OSPAR JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 2-2022, para. 4.6), the Session took note of the information provided by Denmark that a project concerning the monitoring of NIS in six Danish ports, using a combination of species-specific eDNA detection system and conventional tools in 2021-2022 has been concluded, and that the final report is available with English summaries included here and here.

4.13 The Session took note that the final report of the German pilot study initiated in 2020 using molecular tools to test the barcoding potential for monitoring of NIS in biofouling, as further detailed in Presentation 3, has not been published yet.

Agenda Item 5 On-line decision support tool

5.1 The Session recalled that when agreeing to remove the watchlist from the on-line decision support tool, JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 1-2021 had agreed that consideration should be given to establishing a separate candidate list in the future, pending developments on targets species. (Outcome of JTG BALLAST&BIOFOULING 1-2021, para. 5.5). No proposals to establish a separate candidate list were made to the Session.

5.2 The Session, took note of a comment, that a watch list could be useful to have in order to facilitate adding new species on the Target Species list associated with the JHP. The Session consequently invited interested parties to submit proposals to the next session regarding criteria to be used for possibly establishing a watch list in the future.

5.3 The Session considered a proposal by the HELCOM Secretariat to update the template for submitting data to the online decision support tool based on experiences gained lately during data uploading (**document 5-1**) and invited the HELCOM Secretariat to implement the additional updates and Contracting Parties to start using the updated reporting template.

Agenda Item 6 Target Species

6.1 The Session took note of the intersessional work conducted by the Informal Correspondence Group on Target Species (CG TS) coordinated by Finland and Spain (**document 6-1** and **Presentation 5**). The Session thanked Mr. Okko Outinen (Finland) and Ms. Aina Carbonell (Spain) for coordinating the work of the CG.

6.2 The Session discussed the proposed changes to the Target Species (TS) selection criteria as well as to the Joint Harmonized Procedure as contained in the document.

6.3 The Session recalled that Annex 2 of the JHP specifies that the HELCOM and OSPAR TS lists should be "*living documents and are always under review by HELCOM and OSPAR and will be regularly updated if new information becomes available*".

6.4 The Session noted that the proposed changes to the TS selection criteria, as detailed in Annex II of document 6-1, are mainly providing guidance on how criteria 3 and 4 should be interpreted. The Session noted that the other proposed changes to the JHP are related to clarifying a procedure for how the HELCOM and OSPAR TS lists should be updated, if new information becomes available, warranting such updates.

6.5 The Session noted that revising the JHP would also require formal approval by WG Maritime and HOD within the HELCOM framework, as well as EIHA and the OSPAR Commission within OSPAR.

6.6 The Session recommended approval of the changes proposed in Annex II of document 6-1 as a separate guidance document to be published on the website of the Ballast Water Exemptions Decision Support Tool. The Session further recommended that this guidance should be used by Contracting Parties when updating the HELCOM and OSPAR TS lists.

6.7 The Session invited the HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats and the co-sponsors of document 6-1 to make use of the text in Annex II of the document, in preparing such a guidance document for approval by HELCOM WG Maritime (by correspondence) and OSPAR EIHA 2024 (15-19 April 2024).

6.8 The Session noted that the JHP could nevertheless be amended in the future, if deemed necessary, based e.g. on experience gained in using the TS selection criteria and associated guidance document, and based on possible needs to include eDNA methodologies in the port survey protocol.

6.9 The Session reviewed the tasks of the informal correspondence group, considering also future possibilities for JEG NIS to be involved in this work (Outcome of OSPAR JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 2-2022, para. 6.6). The Session recommended to establish the informal correspondence group on the Joint Harmonized Procedure with the following tasks:

- to test the TS selection criteria by reviewing example species from the HELCOM and OSPAR TS lists, making use of the guidance discussed in paragraph 6.7 above;
- to consider the need to include eDNA methodologies in the port survey protocol of the JHP; and
- to consider possible needs of revising the port survey protocol of the JHP.

6.10 The Session recommended that the tasks of the informal correspondence group should be reviewed at the next session.

6.11 The Session welcomed the offer by Mr. Okko Outinen (Finland) and Ms. Aina Carbonell (Spain) to continue as coordinators of the informal correspondence group.

6.12 The Session invited the HELCOM Secretariat to circulate a request for HELCOM and OSPAR Contracting Parties and Observers to join the work of the informal correspondence group. The Session advised that a deadline for expressing interest to join the work should be included in the request, but that the informal correspondence group should be open for new participants also later.

6.13 The Session recalled that OSPAR JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 2-2022 in general supported a proposed update to the HELCOM TS list, some Contracting Parties commented that they need some time to review it. The Meeting consequently invited the HELCOM Secretariat to circulate that list to Contracting Parties and Observers for review, and invited the HELCOM Secretariat to update the HELCOM TS list in the online decision support tool, if no objections are received from HELCOM Contracting Parties within two weeks after circulation of the list.

6.14 The Session took note that HELCOM Contracting Parties agreed on the updated TS list to be used in risk assessments concerning exemptions from ballast water management within the Baltic Sea through a correspondence procedure which concluded on 15 November 2022. The Session noted that the updated TS list has consequently been uploaded to the decision support tool.

Agenda Item 7 Biofouling

7.1 The Session took note of a draft Biofouling Management Guidance for recreational crafts as contained in **document 7-1** and **Presentation 6**.

7.2 The Session took note of comments on the draft Biofouling Management Guidance for recreational craft, as provided by the Nordic Boat Council (NBC) and the European Boating Association (EBA) in **document 7-4**.

7.3 The Session took note of the following input in relation to the draft Guidance:

- Germany would be happy to work with the NBC and EBA on revising the draft Guidance;
- bureaucracy should be avoided for the smallest boats, but larger recreational craft can be expected to have some documentation (record book, management plan or similar);
- general guidance on how to manage biofouling is needed on the regional level, but considerations should also be given to the different needs and conditions for different kinds of boats, types of marinas and also the situation and level of awareness in different countries;
- the draft Guidance should clarify that some parts does not apply to recreational craft which do not use AFS;

- the draft Guidance should clarify that very small recreational craft are not the target audience of the draft Guidance;
- awareness of boatowners regarding the risks associated with biofouling and NIS differ significantly between countries; and
- the help of the NBC and EBA would be appreciated in reaching out to marinas and boat owners to make use of the Guidance when finalized.

7.4 The Session discussed the next steps to finalize the draft guidance document and recommended that Germany, Finland, Spain and other interested parties continue developing the draft guidance by correspondence, with a view to submitting a final draft guidance to IC MARITIME 3-2024 in September 2024. The Session invited those who are interested in taking part in the work to contact Germany (Nicole.heibeck@bsh.de) at their earliest convenience.

7.5 The Session took note of the draft Guidelines for recommendations on IWC as contained in **document 7-2** and **Presentation 7.**

7.6 The Session took note of the following input in relation to the draft Guidelines and the draft IWC risk assessment:

- the draft Guidelines should take into account the IWC guidelines under development within the IMO, which is expected to continue at PPR 11 in February 2024;
- Spain is considering submitting a document on this matter to PPR 12 in 2025;
- an ISO standard is under development regarding IWC, which also needs to be taken into account;
- at present, ports cannot be required to have port reception facilities in place for wastes from IWC; and
- Germany, Finland and Spain are planning to test the draft IWC risk assessment and, depending on the results, consider submitting a document on the matter to PPR 12 in 2025. In addition, Finland is planning to test the 2023 IMO Biofouling Guidelines.

7.7 The Session discussed the next steps to finalize the draft IWC guidelines and welcomed the offer by Spain to continue leading the work intersessionally together with other interested parties with a view to submitting a revised draft to the next session. The Session invited those who are interested in taking part in the work to contact Spain (jcueva@puertos.es) at their earliest convenience.

7.8 The Session took note of the information on the online workshop on "Methods for assessing NIS risk-related biofouling classes of commercial vessels" held in October 2023 as well as work on developing methods for assessing biofouling classes and the risks of introducing NIS via commercial ships (**document 7-3** and **Presentations 8** and **9**).

7.9 The Session took note of the following comments in relation to document 7-3 and Presentations 8 and 9:

- underwater drone/ROV inspections should also be considered as an option in the development of biofouling assessment methods; and
- the work undertaken by the Neterlands and GiMaRIS would be useful to submit to the IMO PPR for consideration in the context of further development of biofouling related guidance.

7.10 The Session discussed the next steps in developing a possible interregional protocol for assessing biofouling classes and the risk of introducing NIS via commercial ships. In this context, the Session welcomed the offer by the Netherlands to continue leading the work intersessionally with a view to submitting a document on the matter to the next session. The Session invited those who are interested in taking part in the work to contact the Netherlands (saahenry.kabuta@rws.nl) at their earliest convenience.

7.11 The Session recalled that in addition to the draft Biofouling Guidance for recreational craft, three other draft guidance documents for harmonized biofouling management in the Baltic Sea were developed under the COMPLETE project (draft Guidance on biofouling management strategies, draft Guidance on cleaning practices for commercial shipping and draft Guidance on information to be included in the Biofouling Management Plan and Biofouling Record Book of commercial and non-commercial vessels).

7.12 The Session recalled that JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 1-2021 agreed that these three draft guidance documents, available in document 7-1 to that meeting, should be put on hold until adoption of the revised IMO Biofouling Guidelines.

7.13 Taking into account the discussion on IWC guidance above, the Session recommended that the draft Guidance on cleaning practices for commercial shipping should be kept in abeyance until the adoption of IMO guidelines on the matter.

7.14 With regard to the two draft guidance documents on biofouling management strategies and management plans/record books, the Session noted that the revised IMO Biofouling Guidelines address much of the contents of these draft guidance documents. The Session recommended that the draft guidance documents, as set out in annexes 3 and 5 of JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 1-2021 document 7-1, should be compared with the IMO Biofouling Guidelines in order to assess the need for additional regional guidance for harmonized implementation.

7.15 The Session welcomed the offer by Germany, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain to contribute to this work intersessionally, with a view to submitting a document on the matter to the next Session. The Session invited the Secretariat to liaise with these countries in initiating the work.

7.16 The Session also noted that the work on assessing the need for additional regional guidance should take into account any experience Contracting Parties may already have in implementing or interpreting the revised IMO Biofouling Guidelines.

Agenda Item 8 Open issues

8.1 The Session took note of the information on the possible effects of implementing the Same Risk Area (SRA) concept in the Southwest delta of the Netherlands and Belgium (**document 8-1** and **Presentation 10**).

8.2 The Session discussed the information and noted that a timeline for the possible establishment of a SRA in the Southwest delta of the Netherlands and Belgium has not been determined yet.

8.3 The Session advised the Netherlands and Belgium to also take into consideration possible effects of the SRA on the Wadden Sea area, and to inform neighboring countries that may be affected by the SRA, the IMO as well as future sessions of JTG Ballast & Biofouling of any future developments related to the possible establishment of the SRA.

8.4 The Session did not discuss any other information related to the designation of SRAs.

8.5 The Session did not discuss any other information related to audits of port reception facilities for ballast tank sediments.

Agenda Item 9 Any other business

9.1 The Session took note of the draft biofouling parameter for inclusion in the Baltic Sea Climate Change Fact Sheet, as contained in **document 9-1**.

9.2 The Session invited Contracting Parties and Observers to provide written comments on the draft to Nicole Heibeck (nicole.heibeck@bsh.de) by **1 December 2023.**

9.3 The Session invited Germany and Finland to address the input received and recommended that the further developed draft biofouling parameter is submitted to HELCOM EN CLIME 5-2024 for consideration.

9.4 The Session 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 had agreed that the matter should be considered in more detail at the next Meeting and invited interested parties to submit proposals, as appropriate. (Outcome of TG BALLAST 11-2020, para. 9.2). OSPAR JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 2-2022 took note that no formal proposals on this matter were submitted to the Meeting, but recognized that the German proposal on biofouling risk assessment (document 07-01) concludes that extending the decision support tool to cover also biofouling would be useful.

9.5 The Session took note that no formal proposals on this matter have been submitted to the Session.

9.6 The Session invited Contracting Parties to submit concrete proposals on the matter to the next Session. The Session also invited Germany, Finland, the Netherlands and Spain to consider this matter in the context of assessing the need for additional biofouling guidance, as discussed under paragraph 7.16 above.

9.7 The Session took note that Mr. Julio de la Cueva, Spain, Co-Chair of JTG Ballast & Biofouling is stepping down as Co-Chair of the JTG.

9.8 The Session expressed appreciation for the work conducted by Mr. de la Cueva while Co-Chairing the JTG.

9.9 The Session elected Mr. Saa Kabuta as the new Co-Chair of JTG Ballast & Biofouling for the remaining period of the mandate (end of 2024).

Agenda Item 10 Future meetings

10.1 The Session took note that HELCOM Contracting Parties agreed upon the updated workplan for the Joint Task Group for 2023-2024 through a correspondence procedure which concluded on 15 November 2022.

10.2 The Session took note that OSPAR EIHA approved the workplan in March 2023.

10.3 The Session took note that the workplan is available on the HELCOM website and OSPAR website.

10.4 The Session took note that no offers by HELCOM nor OSPAR countries to take the lead on items in the Work Plan have been received.

10.5 The Session took note that the list of contact addresses and observers of JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING is available from the new HELCOM Meeting Portal through this link.

10.6 The Session took note of the National Administration Contacts - Official Contact Points for BWMC A-4 Exemptions (**document 10-1**) and updated the list as contained in **Annex 3.**

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

10.8 The Session encouraged Contracting Parties to ensure that information on national contact points is also up to date in the IMO Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS), in accordance with Guidelines (G7).

10.9 The Session welcomed the offer by Poland to host the next session, tentatively on **15-16 October 2024** in Gdynia. The Session invited Poland to inform the Secretariats about the venue and practical information in due course.

Agenda Item 11 Memo of the Session

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

Annex 1 List of participants to IC JTG BALLAST & BIOFOULING 1-2023

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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	Renewal of HELCOM working structure	HELCOM Secretariat
2-2	Launch of the new HELCOM Meeting Portal	HELCOM Secretariat
2-3	Information on the memos of recent HELCOM sessions	HELCOM Secretariat
2-4	Update on the work of WGBOSV	OSPAR Secretariat
2-5	Update on actions in the BSAP with particular relevance to JTG BALLAST and BIOFOULING	HELCOM Secretariat
2-6 and 2-6 Rev. 1	OSPAR's NEAES task on biofouling	OSPAR Secretariat
2-7	Memo of IC MARITIME 2-2023	HELCOM Secretariat
2-8	Memo of IC JEG NIS 1-2023	HELCOM Secretariat
2-9	OSPAR's issues of relevance to JTG Ballast & Biofouling	OSPAR Secretariat
3-1	Update information of the regionally harmonized early warning system (EWS) for timely communication of findings of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens	Lithuania
4-1	Port sampling in Spain	Spain
4-2	Updated list of surveyed ports	HELCOM Secretariat
5-1	Proposal to update the HELCOM OSPAR RA Tool port sampling reporting template	HELCOM Secretariat
6-1	One-year summary of the Informal Correspondence Group on Target Species (CG TS)	Finland; Spain; Estonia; Lithuania; Germany
7-1	Draft Biofouling Management Guidance for recreational crafts	Germany; Spain; Finland
7-2	Draft Guidelines for recommendations on IWC	Spain
7-3	Workshop results review and optimisation of methods for assessing NIS risk-related biofouling classes of commercial vessels	The Netherlands
7-4	Comments to document 7-1	Nordic Boat Council; European Boating Association

Code	Title	Presented By
8-1	Effects of implementing a SRA concept in the Southwest delta of the Netherlands and Belgium	The Netherlands
9-1	Climate change fact sheet – Biofouling parameter	Germany; Finland
10-1	Official contact points for BWMC A-4 Exemptions	HELCOM and OSPAR Secretariats

Annex 3 National Administration Contacts - Official Contact Points for BWMC A-4 Exemptions

(Missing information to be added)

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