

International Workshop on Port Reception Facilities for the Baltic Sea as Special Area according to MARPOL Annex IV

Kiel, Germany

30 June – 1 July 2016

Organized by the Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency (BSH) in cooperation with the Port of Kiel and Baltic Ports Organization (BPO) on behalf of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety

Background

The Baltic Sea is a particularly sensitive while at the same time highly cruised sea. Despite many efforts, the **accumulation of nutrients and organic matter in the Baltic Sea is too high and has significant effects on the sensitive marine ecosystem.**

Excessive nitrogen and phosphorus loads come from different fields of human activity, including sewage from passenger ships. One effective solution to this particular challenge is the fastest possible creation of a **comprehensive network of Baltic ports with adequate port reception facilities (PRFs) for sewage from passenger ships.**

With HELCOM being actively involved in the process for the region since 2007, and the adoption on 15 July 2011 and entry into force of resolution MEPC.200(62) on 1 January 2013, the **Baltic Sea became the first “special area” with respect to discharge of passenger ships’ sewage according to MARPOL Annex IV.** In order to reduce the input of nutrients to the Baltic Sea mandatory limits for the discharge of phosphorus and nitrogen have been newly introduced (phosphorus: max 1.0 mg/l or 80 per cent reduction, nitrogen: max 20 mg/l or 70 per cent reduction). Alternatively, sewage from passenger ships may be discharged to reception facilities in ports. **The dates on which the stricter requirements in respect of the “special area” will take effect depend on sufficient notifications to IMO from the Parties bordering the Baltic Sea on the availability of PRFs for sewage.**

Following a joint notification of the adequacy of PRFs for sewage by eight Baltic Sea riparian states, the IMO at MEPC 68 confirmed that it had agreed on the definition of the applicable area and on the sufficiency of the received notifications of that area. **The dates for the special area requirements to be applicable have been agreed to be 1 June 2019 for new passenger ships and 1 June 2021 for existing passenger ships.** Countries have already entered into national processes to ensure that adequate PRFs for sewage are in place for these dates. In Germany, Rostock/Warnemünde and Ports of Kiel and Lübeck/Travemünde are currently in the process of assessing possible PRF solutions.

However, **there is a need for effective practical solutions for remaining technical implementation options and certain legal questions,** including adequate PRFs in ports, effective waste water management planning and additional environmental protection measures. **Enhanced information exchange and cooperation efforts among all involved stakeholder groups** would effectively

contribute to the planning as would do the availability of information on, for example, new on-board technical possibilities with regard to sewage composition and treatment or storage capacities and discharge possibilities in the various ports around the Baltic Sea.

This workshop aims therefore to

1. **Engage** politically in **bringing together representatives of the different stakeholder groups** involved: politics (regional/EU, national/local), administration, municipal sewage treatment providers, ports and cruise/shipping industry, NGOs;
2. Provide for an **update on regulatory developments** at the international and regional level, as well as **on other relevant implementation efforts** at the national levels related to PRFs (e.g. IMO, HELCOM, short reports of different countries etc.);
3. Provide for a **forum to discuss selected political, technical and legal issues**, including PRF partnerships and exchange of views on commonly interesting questions, such as the composition and quality of waste water, technical necessities on-land, mobile solutions on-board and in ports, liability in case of exceedance of limit values, integration of sewage into the 'no special fee system' as incentive to discharge in ports;
4. **Identify ways how to address challenges ahead, strengthen cooperation and finding common solutions** (e.g. identification of best practices and exchange of technical know-how).

The **Workshop Report** will be presented at the HELCOM WG MARITIME-16 (6-8 September 2016) and be made available to the press and on the BSH website.

The workshop will include a **site visit of the Port of Kiel or the Municipal Waste Water Treatment of Kiel**, as well as a **networking dinner** at the end of Day 1.

The international workshop **will take place in Kiel, Germany on 30 June and 1 July 2016.**

Working language is English. 50 to 60 participants from different stakeholder groups, as described above, are expected.

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