

**Spring General Assembly of the  
European Boating Association**

**held at the**

**Hotel Mirador**

**Paseo Maritimo 10, Palma, Mallorca**

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

**Minutes for the meeting of the Environment Committee held on Saturday  
19<sup>th</sup> April between 09-00 and 13-00hrs.**

- 1. Welcome by the Chairman.** The Chairman, opened the meeting. He suggested that the information from member states given at the last meeting in Austria be used as the basis of the environmental database, which will be published separately to these minutes. Reports to this meeting should only include updates to this information. He also asked members not represented at this committee to provide information after this meeting.
- 2. Minutes of the meeting held in Graz on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2007.** The Committee agreed that the minutes as circulated are a true record of the meeting.
- 3. Matters and actions arising from the minutes.**

**Action 4:** to monitor the implementation of the Water Framework Directive in member states. The current situation, where known, is included in the environment database which is separate to these minutes.

**Action 9:** as above environmental reports will be separate to these Minutes.

**Action 10:** as above the database of Antifouling legislation in member States.

**Action 11:** as above the numbers and locations of windfarms and any restrictions to navigation.

- 4. Updates on reports from member states.**

**Sewage Holding Tanks in the Baltic Sea:**

Germany has taken on board a HELCOM recommendation that Sewage Holding Tanks should be fitted to vessels in the Baltic Sea and this applies to all German vessels. Consultation with water users took place during the winter 07/08 and the outcome is an exemption from the requirement for Small Boats of less than 11 metres in length, and an economic exemption covering

boats built prior to 1980. The requirements apply to sewage but not to grey water.

Denmark is applying the recommendation with an exemption for boats built before 1980.

All countries represented at the meeting reported a shortage of pump out facilities.

HELCOM has recommended that costs associated with pumping out holding tanks should be included in the cost of berthing in a harbour or marina and not levied as an additional charge.

## **5. The Water Framework Directive.**

**Poland.** There has been a change of Government that has become very active and carrying out public consultation. A Water Forum has been set up and is showing particular interested in all water issues. There is however no involvement by water users. Ecological issues are taking precedence, which are often in conflict with the needs of other water users. Natura 2000 sites are causing problems for water users resulting in a lot of discussion of the conflicting issues.

**Netherlands.** Since reporting to the Autumn meeting, the development is that watersports representative groups are acting together in discussions with Government which, at present, is listening to the concerns of water users. It would appear that there is a lack of appreciation of water use issues in government, so users and business are working together to make the case for watersport. This also includes tourist associations.

**Denmark.** The Government has published a consultation document that has been circulated around member clubs in a process of obtaining local user input. There are areas of water that have been identified where, without intervention, boating could have had restrictions on the use of that water. There is an ongoing apathy to the process still persisting in many clubs that this is something happening in Brussels and does not affect us. Windsurf and kite surf are particular water users where it looks likely they will be heavily affected.

**Germany.** Further to the report to the last meeting, different water users are acting together in consultation with government. A particular concern is that environmentalist organisations will unduly influence water use and their actions are being monitored carefully.

**UK.** The consultation process of identifying Significant Water Issues and the classification of water bodies as Artificial (AWB) or Heavily Modified (HMWB) has been completed and the results are expected for final consultation soon. This will lead into the next stage of the process that is the preparation of River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs). The RYA continues to monitor the process through its local organisations.

## **6. Marine Policy Directive.**

It was reported that the proposed directive has been adopted and Member States will have to assess current quality of Marine waters and develop measures designed to achieve good environmental status. This directive will do for marine waters what the Water Framework Directive is doing for inland waters. Aspects of the directive likely to affect navigation include Marine Protected Areas, dredging, and disposal of sediments from dredging. Links to the appropriate web pages will be provided.

**Member Organisations are asked to be aware of this directive as their countries begin to develop marine strategy.**

## **7. Disposal of old boats.**

An update was given on the current situation with disposal of old boats as seen by the members of EURMIG, ie the industry point of view. It has become evident to EURMIG and ICOMIA (the European and International trade bodies) that a system was needed for the disposal of boats at the end of useful life, particularly with the trend towards a shorter design life. A pilot study in Finland, still in its early stages, is showing there are too few boats available to make the process a viable economic activity. Industry is ready to implement the process when there is enough raw material and resulting waste product to make it viable. Early build grp boats are beginning to enter the disposal process and figures will be emailed of the number of boats involved.

It was noted that industry was saying it is not an economic process and as a result not responding, however it is becoming a big problem in some Danish harbours and we must find a solution. There was a reported problem encountered in Germany where, with some boats, where there is no record of the owner meaning that many unused boats cannot be identified and hence cannot be disposed of.

EURMIG view is that it is not a problem for the manufacturers and that disposal must be a market led process. There is also the problem as to what to do with the waste once a boat has been scrapped with the only current option being to landfill and the problems resulting from this option. End of life recycling of many products varies from state to state across the EU however Finland does have recycling centres able to deal with boats. Eurmig and Icomia consider they are ready to respond when it becomes economically viable.

## **8. Report from IMO (the International Maritime Organisation).**

The meeting was updated on work within IMO. It was said that from early days the main concerns of IMO were safety of ships. Increasingly environmental matters are becoming of greater importance and this is reflected in the fact that MEPC (Marine Environment Protection Committee) is becoming the more important committee of IMO. A paper dealing with the spread of Marine Alien Species from Friends of the Earth International (FOEI) has raised the profile of this spread of marine alien species and the part played by small ships. The organisms attach themselves to the hull and then

become detached, by whatever process, in a new location. Following the paper from FOEI, ISAF was given the task of preparing a best practice guide, a draft of which was presented to the General Assembly of the EBA at the Autumn meeting in Austria last year. At IMO an Intersessional Correspondence Group has been convened under the BLG sub committee (Bulk liquids and Gasses sub-committee) headed by Dr Naomie Parker and the translocation of alien species is one of the topics being covered.

Links to the website were to be provided and feedback was asked for on the topic from EBA members. This should be initially passed to the chairman of the committee and he will co-ordinate responses to be submitted by AG. Finally, it has been agreed with MEPC that the paper from ISAF be re-submitted covering transfer of Marine Alien Species as well as wider environmental issues.

The latest CD-ROM from the Green Blue initiative 'Into the Green Blue' was presented to MEPC as an example of best practice in communication with boaters showing that with support the leisure boating sector can police its own activities and comply with best environmental performance.

As explanation to the committee, the chairman explained that the Green Blue is a joint environmental programme from the British Marine Federation and the RYA in the UK supported by the UK Government. A short demonstration of the CD-ROM was given.

A further concern being addressed by MEPC, is that of beach litter. This is as a result of the work being done in OSPAR in surveying beach litter in the countries in the OSPAR Region, the North East Atlantic and the North Sea. Also raised recently in the press the huge problem of litter in the Pacific Ocean has been highlighted. It is widely accepted that marine litter, as well as having a huge detrimental effect on wildlife, has a huge impact on world economy.

In reply to a question it was confirmed that MEPC is a committee of IMO not a sub-committee.

In response to a question it was said that IMO has only concerned itself with the recycling of ships and not addressed any issues associated with small boats.

## **9. Marine litter.**

Activity in OSPAR was reported on, in connection with Marine Litter. This is a serious and growing problem having not only a serious impact on the marine life, but also a huge economic impact across the EU. OSPAR has an ongoing programme of surveying and tracing the source of beach litter as a means of understanding the sources and impacts of the problem and to look for political commitment to tackling the problem. It is evident that much of the litter is

commercial fishing based or is entering the waters from land however leisure boating has to ensure that its activities do not make the problem worse.

KIMO International, based in the Shetland Islands, is an international association of local government authorities with an aim of clearing pollution in the North Sea. The EBA has been approached with a request to assist in their collection of data relating to the occurrence and type of marine litter encountered in the North Sea. The committee agreed this is a project to be supported and suggested that member organisations of EBA encourage their members to return the questionnaire if they encounter marine litter when at sea. An explanation of the project and questionnaire will be circulated to meeting attendees.

Germany tabled an example of a leaflet and sticker that contain advice on disposal of waste onboard small craft. It has been produced by Deutscher Motoryachtverband in German and English and it is mandatory that it be displayed on all small boats in German waters.

### **10. Offshore wind farms.**

Update on the previously reported situation with wind farms from member states.

Germany reports it is possible to sail through windfarms although there are some constraints, however there are no operational windfarms as yet.

Netherlands reports that windfarms are being planned in locations between shipping lanes with exclusion zones around individual turbines of 500 metres and the turbines spaced 1000 metres apart. This effectively is a blanket ban over the whole of the windfarm and the result will be to force small craft into the main shipping lanes.

It was noted that an interesting development could be a planned farm that will straddle the border between German and Netherlands waters.

Denmark has no restrictions in navigating in windfarms, however all are in very shallow water.

The UK position is there are no restrictions to navigation although there is talk of a 50 metre exclusion zone around individual turbines.

### **11. Antifoulings.**

It was asked whether there was anything happening in individual countries and whether the biocide directive was having any effect on antifouling.

In Sweden they are waiting to see what happens with their new government and it is thought likely it will rescind the total ban on copper in antifouling.

It was reported that Finland is carrying out a programme that is looking at the times of year when marine growth occurs and whether timing of cleaning of hulls can be developed as an effective way of reducing reliance on biocides in antifoulings.

### **12. Any further business.**

The Chairman reported his attendance at a Natura 2000 conference in Brussels in November. The conference was the final one of the programme and was looking particularly at success stories and further potential. The message coming from the conference is that where there are success stories, it has been with the co-operation of local people and users of the sites. If the sites are to be viable they must address the economic needs of the region. More than one example included facilities for boating. Some EBA members have reported problems with Natura 2000 sites so the message is to become involved in the development of these sites if they are in waters of interest to boating.