



**Regional Strategic Action Plan to Minimize the Transfer  
of Harmful Aquatic Organisms and Pathogens in Ships' Ballast Water and  
Sediments Wider Caribbean Region**

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## GLOSSARY

BWM	Ballast Water Management
CAR/RCU	Caribbean Regional Co-ordinating Unit
CME	Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement
EIMS	Environmental Information Management System
GBP	GEF/UNDP/IMO GloBallast Partnerships
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HAOP	Harmful Aquatic Organisms and Pathogens
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IMO	International Maritime Organization
LPIA	Legal, Policy and Institutional Aspects
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NTF	National Task Force
PBBS	Port Biological Baseline Survey
RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe	Regional Activity Centre / Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre for the Wider Caribbean Region
RTF-WCR	Regional Task Force on Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments in the Wider Caribbean Region
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WCR	Wider Caribbean Region

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Nowadays, shipping carries more than 90% of the world's goods and commodities and is essential to the global economy. The Wider Caribbean Region (WCR), due to its strategic location, is an active region of the world economy and a major hub for commercial shipping. The Panama Canal alone accommodates more than 14,000 ships a year, and this number is expected to double in the next 10 to 15 years with the current expansion of the Canal.

Ships need to carry ballast to maintain their balance, stability and ensure structural integrity (basically, to operate securely and safely), especially while unladen or partially laden. As shipping efficiency improved and technology became available, solid ballast was gradually replaced by ballast water to ensure these functions. It is now estimated that about 3 to 5 billion tonnes of ballast water are transferred internationally every year. Although this change has been facilitating international trade, it has also assisted in 'jumping' natural barriers, helping aquatic species to be introduced, disperse and sometimes establish themselves in environments they were not supposed to reach. Indeed, at every moment, it is estimated that 7,000 different species are being transported in ships along with ballast water.

The issue of aquatic invasive species, including the transfer of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens (HAOP) in ships' ballast water and sediments, has been identified by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) as one of the greatest threats to global marine biodiversity and ecosystems (along with land-based sources of pollution, habitat loss and overfishing), and is also a significant threat to coastal economies and even public health. Global economic impacts from invasive alien species, including disruption to fisheries, fouling of coastal industry and infrastructure and interference with human amenities, are estimated to exceed tens of billions of dollars per year. The impacts are set to increase in coming years: indeed, unlike oil spills, there is certain latency before noticing the presence and effects of an invasive alien species. Additionally, this type of 'pollution' is almost irreversible: once they have become established in a new environment, it is virtually impossible to control or eradicate invasive marine species.

Moreover, as globalization of the world economy and the associated trade is continuing further, the commerce of goods and commodities relies more and more on shipping, which in turn is likely to accelerate the rate of transfer of potential HAOP. Countries in the WCR are at particular risk, as new markets, and therefore new ports and shipping routes, are created. Many ports in the region export bulk commodities and oil and, in return, receive large amounts of ballast water. Furthermore, some of the Countries of the WCR are islands and rely largely on shipping to import necessary goods. A large amount of ballast water is thus transferred in the WCR and hence the marine environment in the region is exposed to the arrival of potential HAOP. The risk of marine bio-invasions, and their possible long-lasting implications on the ecosystems and their biodiversity, but also on human health and economy, is therefore extremely important, and the WCR was thus designated as one of the top priority regions during the second phase of the 5-year (2008-2012) GloBallast Project, a joint programme between the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and IMO. The implementation of the IMO /GEF /UNDP GloBallast Partnerships project (*Building Partnerships to Assist Developing Countries to Reduce the Transfer of Harmful Aquatic Organisms in Ships' Ballast Water*) was initiated in 2008. The GloBallast Partnerships builds on the pilot phase and focuses on the

implementation of the BWM Convention by assisting countries to enact legal, policy and institutional reforms to minimize the impacts of aquatic invasive species transferred by ships.

The consequences of these invasions could include:

*Ecosystem changes:* The original species composition and/or ecological processes may be altered by the introduction of alien (invasive) specie(s).

*Economic impacts:* Fisheries, tourism (including diving) and coastal industry and other commercial activities and resources may be disrupted by the invading specie(s), resulting in loss of revenue and/or removal costs.

*Public health impacts:* People may fall ill or even die from consumption of, or direct exposure to toxic organisms, diseases and pathogens introduced through ballast water.

In response to the aquatic threat, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and the maritime industry have been working on the issue of ships' ballast water introduction for more than twenty years, initially developing voluntary guidelines and then developing a legally binding international regime to meet the new challenges posed by the problem. In February 2004, these global efforts culminated with the adoption of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention). The Convention sets out strict treatment standards for ballast water discharges, which, when in force, will apply to different ships at different times depending on their construction date and their tanks' ballast water capacity. Additionally, the Convention provides guidance for the type approval of ballast water treatment systems and identifies detailed procedures to ensure that the environmental toxicity of ballast water is evaluated and minimized, resulting in safe discharges of treated ballast water. This is especially important when systems use chemical treatment methods. Strengthening national and regional capacity and fostering regional co-operation for the effective implementation of the BWM Convention is critical for successfully managing the issue of HAOP. A set of such measures in the form of a regional Strategic Action Plan (SAP) is considered and endorsed by the member Governments.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF A REGIONAL STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN (SAP)**

The overall objectives of a regional SAP are:

- .1 To provide a regional framework for the activities that need to be developed and implemented within the WCR in order to mitigate, minimize and eventually eliminate the transfer of HAOP in ships' ballast water, in accordance with the BWM Convention and relevant programmes such as the GEF/UNDP/IMO GloBallast Partnerships project (GBP);
- .2 To enhance regional cooperation and capacity in BWM matters towards the protection and conservation of the marine environment in the WCR using the existing regional bodies; and,

- .3 Encourage the accession to the BWM Convention by IMO Member States and facilitate the harmonized implementation of effective ballast water management strategies and policies within the Region.

The specific objectives of the proposed SAP are to:

1. Ensure effective co-ordination and support of the ballast water related activities through the establishment of an adequate institutional framework;
2. Increase awareness on the potential dangers associated with the transfer of HAOP, notably through ballast water;
3. Build capacity and provide training to address ballast water management matters at the regional and national levels;
4. Develop and implement regional and country specific programmes to identify sensitive areas and activities that may be at risk from marine bio-invasions, and ensure their protection;
5. Facilitate the necessary regional coordination and co-operation required for the development of legal, policy and institutional arrangements at the national level to address the issue of ballast water, including the promotion of the accession to the BWM Convention;
6. Develop and implement compliance monitoring and enforcement programmes to ensure the successful implementation of the BWM Convention;
7. Encourage regional co-operation to ensure harmonized implementation of the standardized regime for ballast water management; and,
8. Identify any opportunities for self-financing of ballast water related activities to ensure sustainable implementation of the international requirements and the protection of the coastal and marine resources at the regional level.
9. Identify other regional programs and activities with similar goals to marry up for joint activities and initiatives.

### **3. DESCRIPTION OF THE REGION**

The Strategic Action Plan covers the Wider Caribbean Region, defined by the Cartagena Convention as the marine environment of the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea and the areas of the Atlantic Ocean adjacent thereto, south of 30 deg north latitude and within 200 nautical miles of the Atlantic coasts of Territories and States pertaining to the following Countries: Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, France, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, United Kingdom, United States of America and Venezuela. In addition, the SAP also covers El Salvador.

Fisheries (both major industrial fisheries and artisanal fisheries) and coastal tourism (e.g. diving) are two of the major sources of income for many of the countries of the WCR. The

coastal waters of the WCR contain biologically diverse (with many endemic species) and highly productive ecosystems that support both industries. These sensitive ecosystems provide an important livelihood for many coastal communities. Due, amongst other factors, to the presence of the Panama Canal, the maritime traffic in the WCR is important, and the region has numerous busy ports. There is also a significant offshore oil industry in the region (e.g. Gulf of Mexico), and about one third of the world oil production originates or passes through the WCR.

Globalization has brought great changes to shipping in the WCR. Ships are becoming bigger and faster, which means that more ballast water is carried by ships from and to the countries in a shorter time, giving unwanted stowaways more chances to survive. Furthermore, environmental concerns, especially marine, are trans-boundary. Any environmental problem within any part of the WCR can no longer be considered as an isolated or localized incident, but rather as a matter with potentially far-reaching ecological and socioeconomic implications. In this regard, the spreading of the Indo-Pacific Lionfish in the WCR should be noted.

All countries in the WCR are Member States of the IMO and generally have a strong history of ratifying IMO Conventions, with a common interest in the protection of the marine environment. They all have shown great concern with respect to the threats that human activities bring to the world ocean, particularly the biological invasions induced by shipping activities.

#### **4. WIDER CARIBBEN REGION STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

##### **Strategic Priority 1. Commit to the implementation of international instruments developed to minimize the introduction of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens in the Wider Caribbean Region**

Growing recognition of the impacts of invasive species has led to a widespread response to the issue, in the form of legal instruments as well as programmes aimed at developing practical, technical solutions.

With the adoption of the BWM Convention by consensus at IMO, Countries of the WCR are encouraged to accede to the convention as early as possible, but, in the meantime, to adopt the necessary measures following the provisions of the Convention and IMO guidelines and resolutions, to ensure the incorporation of the BWM Convention into national legislation.

Countries will need to carry out, at the national level, a review of the existing legal and policy framework related to ballast water management, so that any new regulations or legislation on this matter will comply with the BWM Convention and are of course not unconstitutional.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region support the work for the minimization of the introduction of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens being carried out by the relevant organizations and forums, particularly the work of the International Maritime Organization and are committed to take all appropriate actions toward accession to the BWM Convention for its entry into force as soon as possible.***

**Strategic Priority 2. Maintain and enhance capacity-building activities and initiatives in the Wider Caribbean Region.**

IMO Member States have adopted, in 2004, the *International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments* (BWM Convention), which provides a new international legal regime to address the threat of HAOP. In article 13, the BWM Convention requires Parties with common interests to protect the environment, human health, property and resources in a given geographical area. It also calls for the provision of technical assistance to train personnel, initiating joint research and development programmes and undertaking action aimed at the effective implementation of the instrument.

A pre-requisite for any successful programme is to identify all stakeholders and bring them to a common platform in terms of developing the preliminary skill-base to deal with BWM matters and bio-invasions in general, with the view to facilitating discussion among the various stakeholders in each country and in the region. Several activities contained in this strategy address training and capacity building issues with respect to specific areas of BWM.

Under the GloBallast Partnerships project, a number of important activities and initiatives are being undertaken in the Caribbean region, which significantly help develop and strengthen the expertise within the region and the capacity of the Countries of the WCR in the field of ballast water management. However, the lifetime of the GloBallast Partnerships project is limited and the project is expected to end in 2014.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region agree to continue efforts made in the region to enhance capacity building, knowledge transfer and training of personnel after the GloBallast Partnerships Project terminates, and to involve relevant international and regional co-operation mechanisms, non-governmental organizations, and agencies for the continuation of the process initiated.***

**Strategic Priority 3 Develop knowledge on the environmental condition of the Seas of the Wider Caribbean Region and invasive alien species introduced by ships.**

The development and updating of knowledge in the field of invasive alien species introduced by ships in the Wider Caribbean Region is fundamental in order to have a sound scientific, technical and legal basis as a solid basis for management measures.

Effort must be made to compile relevant data and enhance knowledge on the above issues. These efforts need to be strengthened with comprehensive species inventories, data on species present in ports and data related to maritime traffic in the region, as well as relevant oceanographic data. The compilation of comprehensive species inventories for individual ports plays a significant role in ballast water management. For a port to effectively manage the ballast water associated with its shipping movements, data must be available and complete from the local port as well as from the source ports for the ballast water being received.

A port baseline survey is considered vital for assessing existing natural conditions and the presence or absence of introduced marine species. Such surveys should be conducted in accordance with internationally adopted protocols / guidelines such as the CRIMP Protocol, and should be conducted on an ongoing basis as a long-term biological monitoring programme for each port in the WCR. This will allow any introduction to be tracked and managed, and any new introductions to be detected.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region agree to promote, individually or through regional co-operation, research and development programmes in the field of invasive alien species and ships' ballast water management, as means to enhance knowledge and assist in the establishment of scientific grounds on which best measures on controlling the transfer of invasive alien species can be based. The Countries also agree that results of such scientific work should be made available to all interested parties.***

**Strategic Priority 4. Use risk assessment as a reliable tool to assist in ballast water management decision-making and in compliance, monitoring and enforcement procedures**

**Risk assessment and ballast water management.** Risk assessment can be helpful in ensuring that the provisions of the BWM Convention are applied in a consistent manner, based on scientifically robust groundwork. In particular, the IMO has developed Guidelines for the implementation of the BWM Convention under which risk assessment is needed. The Guidelines on Designation of Areas for Ballast Water Exchange (G14) are of particular relevance for the Wider Caribbean Region, as it addresses the sea areas where a vessel cannot exchange its ballast water and where the port State may designate areas, in consultation with adjacent or other States, where a ship may conduct ballast water exchange. The IMO also recommends carrying out risk assessment when a Party, within waters under its jurisdiction, is granting exemptions to ships (G7 Guidelines for Risk Assessment under Regulation A4 of the BWM Convention).

Risk assessment is also essential to have a sound knowledge of the overall risks for introduction of invasive alien species associated with the maritime traffic in the Wider Caribbean Region. When resources are limited, management actions such as compliance, monitoring and enforcement (CME) maybe prioritized according to the higher risk areas or vessels.

**Biological invasion of ports.** Major shipping ports are often the first places where invasive alien species are introduced and become established. Port Biological Baseline Surveys (PBBS) are used to develop a baseline list of species – both native and non-native – that are present in a shipping port. Subsequent long-term monitoring regimes should be put in place to continue building an information database in this field and detect any new invasions. This data can be used to communicate risks to other shipping ports or countries, as appropriate, and provide an essential reference point for management of non-native species. As they target marine pests, PBBS can also help raise awareness of marine pest issues within the region. Most importantly, they allow any existing introductions to be recorded, tracked, and managed.

**Ports at risk of biologic invasion.** Some ports in the Wider Caribbean Region are more at risk of biological invasion as they are ports receiving greater volumes of ballast water originating from ports located outside the Region. It should be noted that once a harmful species is introduced in one port located in the Wider Caribbean Region, there is a risk of secondary introduction of other ports located within the region.

To facilitate effective ballast water management, each country needs to know the level and types of risks of introductions that its ports may face, as well as the most sensitive resources and values that might be threatened. Risk assessments at the national/port level can function as a useful tool for such management, given that adequate background information is available.

Risk Assessment could also be used by countries to effectively manage resources in order to make progress on multiple fronts for implementing the convention. For instance, a country may have ten ports in need of a PBBS, however, only two deal in large quantities of ballast water. PBBS's could be conducted on those two only, in the first instance, the others being reserved for a later date.

A regional-level risk assessment could be used to identify the priority ports for detailed risk assessment.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region consider risk assessments at national, sub-regional or regional level, as an appropriate tool to guide ballast water management measures and are committed to establish surveys and monitoring programmes including reporting and alert mechanisms.***

**Strategic Priority 5. Decide upon voluntary regional arrangements in the Wider Caribbean Region and ensure sub-regional and national strategies are in line with these.**

Given the transboundary nature of invasive alien species issue, it must be recognized that individual countries cannot effectively address this concern on their own. A harmonized regional ballast water management regime has to be agreed upon by the coastal States of the Wider Caribbean Region, which takes into account the maritime traffic lanes in the region and the origin and distribution of ballast water in the ports of the region, as well as the particular geographical constraints of the area and associated scientific and oceanographic data.

As the BWM Convention is not yet in force, voluntary measures are called for in order to address the introduction of invasive alien species in ships' ballast water and sediments in the Wider Caribbean Region. In addition, harmonized procedures incorporated in a compliance monitoring and enforcement (CME) system should be implemented by all countries of the region. Sub-regional approaches within the Wider Caribbean Region area are encouraged also and existing sub-regional agreements in the Wider Caribbean Region should consider integrating BWM issues in their work, in coherence with the regional approach adopted. National strategies established by coastal States in the Wider Caribbean Region should take into account and be consistent with the policy and arrangements agreed upon at sub-regional and regional levels.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region agree to work collaboratively to adopt regional voluntary arrangements concerning ballast water management in the Wider Caribbean Region, consistent with the requirements and standards set out in the BWM Convention.***

**Strategic Priority 6. Regional cooperation and consideration of other regional seas strategies and initiatives.**

A key objective of this SAP is to achieve regional coordination in the WCR and to harmonize the implementation of national and regional BWM Strategies in line with the BWM Convention. Regional cooperation is also necessary for the continuous and joint progress of all the Countries of the WCR. All Countries are thus encouraged to disseminate, during regional activities or through existing regional bodies (e.g. UNEP CAR/RCU, RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe), the lessons learned at the national level during the implementation of a BWM regime.

The Regional Task Force on Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments in the Wider Caribbean Region and El Salvador (RTF-WCR) created within the GBP project will help to facilitate the process as well as to establish linkages with other regions.

Harmonization of approaches to ballast water management across regional seas is essential to help achieve the goals of the BWM Convention. Communication and alignment with neighbouring regions and their BWM structures is needed to ensure consistency between the regimes, and also to promote sharing of information between these interlinked marine regions. A dialogue should also be established with other relevant regional seas Secretariats such as the OSPAR Commission for the North-East Atlantic, which agreed in June 2007 on "General Guidance on the Voluntary Interim Application of the D1 Ballast Water Exchange Standards in the North-East Atlantic", the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM) for the Baltic Sea, which developed a roadmap towards a harmonized implementation of the BWM Convention, and the ROPME Sea Area which recently adopted regional measures on ballast water management exchange.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region are committed to achieve regional coordination in the WCR, to harmonize the implementation of national and regional BWM Strategies in line with the BWM Convention and to enhance and maintain cooperation with the neighbouring regions of the Wider Caribbean Region and with other relevant regional agreements in order to ensure that the measures adopted are consistent with other ballast water management regional arrangements.***

**Strategic Priority 7 Develop an information exchange network**

The exchange of information related to ballast water management issues among the countries of the WCR, which is timely and easily accessible, is essential to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the BWM Convention in the region. This can be best achieved by the use of an information exchange network in the Wider Caribbean Region. This network will facilitate communications with and between countries, as well as function as a clearing house mechanism (CHM)<sup>1</sup> for data and ballast water management related information within the region. The network will also ensure appropriate linkages with other regions and international programmes (e.g. GloBallast) involved with ballast water management issues.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region are committed to the establishment of an information exchange network in the WCR***

**Strategic Priority 8 Encourage and support public awareness initiatives**

The dangers of uncontrolled discharges of ballast water, as well as the BWM Convention, are not well known at the national and regional levels. This lack of information and a generally low level of awareness on BWM issues are major obstacles requiring priority attention.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region are committed to encouraging and supporting public awareness initiatives***

**Strategic Priority 9 Implementation of the Strategic Plan**

The Cartagena Convention provides an appropriate legal framework to channel the efforts at the regional level in the Wider Caribbean Region.

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<sup>1</sup> Clearing House Mechanism is an electronic information network of countries in the WCR working together to facilitate implementation of the WCR Strategy and Action Plan. It is a mechanism to facilitate access to and exchange of information on HAOP and IAS in the WCR. A CHM is compatible with different levels of national capacity; needs-driven; provides access to information; supports decision-making; has no vested interest in controlling the expertise or information; and is created for the mutual benefit of all participants

The Regional Task Force on Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments in the Wider Caribbean Region and El Salvador (RTF-WCR) created within the **GloBallast Partnerships Project** as a supporting regional mechanism established within the framework of the UNEP's Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP), and tasked, *inter alia*, to develop and adopt a Regional Strategy as well as an Action Plan for its implementation, is well placed to continue to be the driving force for the implementation of the Regional Strategy. The GloBallast Partnerships Project is scheduled to end in 2014 and it is unlikely that all the countries in the region will be ready to give full effect to the BWM Convention by that time. Therefore it is important to BWM in the region that RTF-WCR continues to operate with the same mandate. The Terms of Reference of RTF-WCR are attached to the Regional Strategy and Action Plan (**Annex I**).

RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe is the Regional Coordinating Organization in the Wider Caribbean Region for the GloBallast Partnerships project that aims to help developing countries to establish ballast water management policies in order to decrease the risk of marine bio-invasions. It is also the Secretariat of the RTF-WCR. As such it has a key role to play, both regionally and nationally in the development of measures for the control and management of ship's ballast water and sediments in the Wider Caribbean Region. RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe can continue to facilitate a more comprehensive participation and longevity for BWM initiatives in the WCR.

Implementation of the Regional Strategy and Action Plan must also take into consideration the involvement of regional bodies such as:

Caribbean MoU;

CARICOM

Inter-American Committee on Ports;

COCATRAM, ROCRAM and ROCRAM-CA;

United States Coast Guard (USCG); and,

Viña del Mar MoU.

A Regional Scientific Committee should be established and provide advice to the RTF-WCR as appropriate, including on matters such as the correct Protocol to be used for PBBS in the WCR.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region consider that RTF-WCR is an important supporting regional mechanism for the implementation of the Regional Strategy and Action Plan and agree that at the end of the GloBallast Partnerships Project it continues to operate with its original mandate, supported by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe and a Regional Scientific Committee, taking into consideration regional bodies relevant to its work.***

### **Strategic Priority 10. Keep the Strategy and Action plan under review and assess their implementation progress**

The Strategy and Action Plan should be subject to periodic review to take into account emerging issues, outcomes of research and development (R&D) activities and experience gained from its operation and implementation.

Periodic gatherings of representatives of the regional coordinating mechanism and Secretariats should be arranged to assess progress with implementation of the various regional strategies and arrangements and facilitate reaching a harmonized approach at the global level.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region will meet regularly as appropriate, including the use of online forums, with the purpose of reviewing and evaluating the ongoing relevance of the Strategy, and overall effectiveness of activities carried out under the Action Plan, and agree that the work accomplished in the various regional seas regarding the management of ballast water is on the agenda of meetings and forums gathering the various regional Secretariats and agreements.***

### **Strategic Priority 11. Identify, and where applicable source, adequate resources to implement activities under the Strategy and Action Plan**

Recognizing that budgetary resources provided through multilateral and bilateral donors are not infinite, one of the objectives of this SAP is to identify various opportunities for self-financing of the ballast water related activities beyond the external intervention.

Since the development of self-financing mechanisms will largely be handled at the national level, the RTF-WCR shall aid the review of opportunities for self-financing of the activities related to ballast water management to the extent possible (e.g. GloBallast Self Financing Report). The RTF-WCR will evaluate any opportunities for ongoing resource mobilization, contributions, collaborations or co-financing in order to help sustain ballast water management activities in the long-term.

***The long-term objective of Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region is to ensure the sustainability and continuity of activities from self-financing sources.***

## **5. ACTION PLAN**

The present Action Plan for the implementation of the Regional Strategy on Ships' Ballast Water Management identifies the main measures to be taken at regional level, sub-regional or national level in accordance with the Strategic Priorities, and includes a workplan/timetable for their implementation (**Appendix**).

The actions outlined in this SAP are structured to initiate and help support ballast water management measures throughout the region in a manner that is sustainable and consistent with international regimes and domestic legislations.

**Action 1. Accede to the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments 2004 (BWM Convention)**

Accession to the BWM Convention is urged in order that, when it enters into force, the treatment standards for ballast water discharges become applicable to ships. To help the process at national level, national policy initiatives preparing the ground and leading to accession should be undertaken.

An important step in achieving the proposed objectives of the SAP will be the creation of National Task Forces (NTF) including the major stakeholders in BWM, taking into consideration the IMO related guidelines. The NTF in each of the participating countries will develop their National Action Plan for BWM with the support of the RTF-WCR, including the provision of templates through the GloBallast Programme and other related programmes or projects as appropriate.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region, agree:***

- a) to form a national task force to lead the process towards accession to the BWM Convention;***
- b) to develop national legislation to give effect to the BWM Convention by providing, inter alia, penalties for violators as well as regulations which would set out technical arrangements for its enforcement.***
- c) to use material from the GloBallast Programme, including the model legislation where appropriate, and lead partner countries as aids in the process.***

**Action 2. Enhance expertise; facilitate knowledge transfer and capacity building in the Wider Caribbean Region**

Given the absence of national legislation and technical initiatives related to ballast water management in several States of the Wider Caribbean Region, an effective Capacity Building programme should be established to assist in carrying out activities, which will assist in implementing the Strategy and Action Plan. Capacity building activities should cover the following:

1. identification of National Lead Agencies and relevant stakeholders for ballast water issues and formation of cross-sector / inter-ministerial working groups and committees;
2. communication and awareness raising activities;
3. port biota baseline surveys, monitoring and ballast water risk assessment;

4. research and development projects;
5. drafting of national ballast water legislation and regulations;
6. compliance monitoring and enforcement;
7. developing national ballast water management strategies and action plans;  
and
8. developing self-financing mechanisms.

Training activities should be organized both at regional and sub-regional level taking into consideration similarities such as the geographical areas concerned, the language, the status of ratification etc. In addition, these training activities should be carried out using the “Train the Trainer approach” where appropriate and used by countries to replicate these training activities at national level. Such training will target all stakeholders, including but not limited to: Port State Control and Port Health Officers, environmental agencies and ship agents. It is therefore anticipated that each country will replicate the training programmes at the national level. GloBallast Partnerships and RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe will provide the relevant training package in the appropriate languages to requesting Countries and will look into the development of training packages to be delivered online.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region, agree***

- a. to investigate the possibility of including training programmes and other capacity-building activities in the regular programme of work of the relevant regional activity Centres of the WCR;***
- b. to seek and secure support, individually or through RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe, from the IMO Technical Cooperation Division (TCD), or other international organizations for national, sub-regional or regional training courses and other capacity-building actions in support of activities of the Action Plan;***
- c. to disseminate protocols and tools for standardization of technical approaches that could be used to conduct regional and national activities;***
- d. that countries with specific expertise on ballast water management related activities help organize national, sub-regional or regional training sessions;***
- e. to replicate such training on a national level through the establishment of a national training programme on ballast water management activities; and***
- f. to deliver an introductory training course on ballast water management, using the GloBallast training package, to decisions-makers of countries in the WCR.***

**Action 3      Establish a survey, biological monitoring and risk assessment system for ports in the Wider Caribbean Region**

The development of a uniform regional biological monitoring system for ports of the Wider Caribbean Region is crucial to understanding the nature of what is being managed, and supporting the methods through which the management is implemented. The process of developing this system should be composed of the following elements:

1. Collection of data (biological, physical, chemical) on port environments;
2. Reviewing best practices, existing literature and approaches, in order to agree on common approaches/protocols;
3. Identifying biological data requirements for proposed risk assessment and management measure (non-indigenous species, harmful species, and pathogens);
4. Identifying long-term monitoring procedures (parameters, frequency);
5. Reviewing existing monitoring programmes, if any, to see if these meet common approaches/protocols;
6. Preparing common implementation guidelines on Port Biological Baseline Surveys and Monitoring.

In some areas of the Wider Caribbean Region, countries may identify sub-regional mechanisms for collaboration on surveys, monitoring and risk assessment.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region, agree:***

- a) to develop a regionally standardized biological sampling and monitoring protocol for use of countries of the WCR in building the necessary biological and environmental databases to support the IAS management objectives;***
- b) to collaborate, preferably following sub-regional approaches where relevant, on biological survey and monitoring activities, including to promote and ensure sharing of technical capacity, resources and results;***
- c) to seek institutional support at the national level to conduct port biological surveys and plans for monitoring, as part of their national strategy for ballast water and IAS management;***
- d) to use a regional Clearing House Mechanism for sharing of data related to port surveys and ongoing biological monitoring; and***
- e) that RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe engage with appropriate international and regional organisations for potential technical assistance and support.***

***Action 4. Adopt harmonized arrangements for ballast water exchange in the Wider Caribbean Region***

The seas of the WCR are semi enclosed and support fragile ecosystems upon which the economies of most of the countries of the region depend. The region is vulnerable to invasive alien species, including the transfer of harmful aquatic organisms. Countries of the WCR have a vested interest in the effective management and control of ships' ballast water and sediments as quickly as possible using harmonized arrangements.

The harmonized arrangements are based on the relevant components and requirements of the BWM Convention. Until such a time as the Convention has entered into force, the arrangements should remain an interim voluntary instrument. This does not prejudice the right of any Contracting Party to determine special requirements in certain areas under their jurisdiction, in conformity with international law.

The text of Harmonized Voluntary Arrangements for Ballast Water Management in The Wider Caribbean Region is given at **Annex II**.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region, agree:***

- a) to adopt harmonized voluntary arrangements for ballast water exchange in the Wider Caribbean Region; and***
- b) to notify all interested parties of the adoption of harmonized voluntary arrangements for ballast water exchange in the Wider Caribbean Region through notices to shipping and instructions to surveyors.***

**Action 5      Establish a Scientific Committee**

A Regional Scientific Committee should be established as a correspondence group to provide timely advice to the RTF-WCR on scientific matters, as appropriate, including the Protocol to be used for PBBS.

The composition of the Committee and the identification of its members would be determined by the RTF-WCR.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region, agree:***

- a) to the establishment of the Scientific Committee to advise on scientific matters, as appropriate.***
- b) that the RTF-WCR will determine the composition and identify the members of the Scientific Committee***

**Action 6      Establish a Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement (CME) system in the WCR**

In association with the development and implementation of the harmonized regional ballast water management regime, a generic compliance and monitoring system (CME) needs to be developed to ensure compliance with the measures proposed within the regime. The CME system should incorporate the following:

1. requirement for ships to collect and record information about their BWM practices (i.e. uptake, management en route and discharge);
2. means for ships to transmit this information to the Port States' BWM regulatory authority, and to subsequently receive directions from them;
3. provision for examination of the ships' official log books or other official records to ascertain compliance with the BWM requirements of the Port State;

4. ability by the appropriate authority to obtain ballast water and sediment samples and carry out any necessary testing;
5. legal provision for enforcement measures to be applied for non-compliance with the required BWM requirements, and provisions for applying sanctions to violations; and
6. effective communication arrangements on a regional level to ensure proper tracking of violations and exchange of experience during the application of the CME system on a national level.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region, agree:***

- a) ***to adapt their existing Port State Control & CME systems in accordance with the BWM Convention; and***
- b) ***to establish and maintain up to-date a regional communication system possibly within a clearing house mechanism (CHM), to allow exchange of experience and tracking of violations utilizing existing control agreements such as the Caribbean MoU, USCG and the Vina del Mar MoU on Port State Control.***

**Action 7. Enhance public awareness on ships' ballast water and invasive alien species issues**

With a view to alert general and targeted public to the risks associated with introducing non-indigenous marine species in the marine environment, and in this way add to the efforts towards preventing and controlling the introduction of invasive species into the Wider Caribbean Region, coastal States and the maritime industry should involve themselves in endeavors to raise knowledge and awareness on the subject. General or specific awareness materials, according to the type of public targeted, are to be used when they exist, or be developed, preferably in the local language of their respective countries. Awareness materials already prepared by IMO-Globalast are available for download from its website<sup>2</sup> including brochures, posters and other educational documents and tools. Where possible, collaborative partnerships will be forged between countries, and with NGO's and other public interest groups to aid in organizing targeted public awareness campaigns.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region, agree:***

- a) ***to use IMO Globalast Public awareness materials and translate these to local languages for dissemination at national level;***
- b) ***to carry out national seminars and workshops to raise awareness among the various stakeholders involved; and***
- c) ***to develop local case studies that may be used effectively for awareness and leveraging support within the Wider Caribbean Region and it's sub-regions.***

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<sup>2</sup> <http://globalast.imo.org/index.asp?page=AwarenessMaterials.htm&menu=true>

**Action 8. Set-up a web-based WCR mechanism for exchanging information**

To facilitate information exchange related to ballast water management issues among the Contracting Parties, an information exchange network is considered necessary in the Wider Caribbean Region. This network will facilitate communications with and between countries, as well as function as a clearing house mechanism (CHM) for data and ballast water management related information within the region.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region, agree to establish an online forum hosted by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe for the purpose of BWM information sharing.***

**Action 9. Incorporate the Action Plan evaluation within the Cartagena Convention reporting system and procedure**

The Action Plan is subject to periodic review to accommodate any developments on ballast water management at the regional or global level and adjusted / updated accordingly. The implementation of the Action Plan should be carried out under the coordination of RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe as a continuation of the present efforts of the Centre devoted to enhance expertise in the region on ballast water management issues. RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe should be kept updated at least annually on the status of actions taken to implement national action plans for ballast water management and in addition, actions taken on a national level should be evaluated periodically under the Cartagena Convention to determine their effectiveness.

***Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region, agree:***

- a) that RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe will coordinate and assist with the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan in the region;***
- b) that RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe will inform its meetings of Focal Points, which take place every two years, on the status of implementation of the Action Plan, for subsequent transmission to the Ordinary Meetings of the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention; and***
- c) to provide RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe with the relevant information on national-based activities annually, and as they occur, with the purpose of reviewing and evaluating its ongoing relevance***

## 6. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes from implementing the SAP will include:

- .1 the increased public and political awareness and support for BWM approaches in the region;
- .2 strong and continuing presence of ballast water management and control capacity in the region;
- .3 reduction in the transfer of potentially harmful organisms to the region's marine environment
- .4 adoption of harmonized national and regional approaches consistent with IMO recommendations including the accession to the BWM Convention;
- .5 uniform application of regulations related to the BWM Convention;
- .6 regional network of coordinated research and monitoring centres for ballast water transfers connected to a global network;
- .7 increased level of protection and conservation of habitats and species of national, regional and global significance;
- .8 protection of fisheries and aquaculture/mariculture activities in and around coastal areas;
- .9 protection of other economic activities including tourism and other coastal industries;
- .10 protection of infrastructure that may be threatened by HAOP;
- .11 increased engagement of industry in the ballast water issue;
- .12 increased levels of protection of human health;
- .13 reduction of the loss of coastal biodiversity and degradation of coastal environments; and
- .14 informed and effective participation in the ballast water management and control process at global level.

Appendix

WORK PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

Action Points	Activities	Year					
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>1. Accede to the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention)</b>	a) Form a national task force to lead the process towards the ratification of the BWM Convention;	✓	✓	✓			
	b) Develop national legislation to give effect to the BWM Convention by providing, <i>inter alia</i> , penalties for violators as well as regulations which would set out technical arrangements for its enforcement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	c) Use material from the GloBallast Programme as an aid in the process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>2. Enhance expertise; facilitate knowledge transfer and capacity building in the Wider Caribbean Region</b>	a) Investigate the possibility of including training programmes and other capacity-building activities in the regular programme of work of the relevant regional activity Centres of the WCR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	b) Seek and secure support, individually or through RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe, from the IMO Technical Cooperation Division (TCD), or other international organizations for national, sub-regional or regional training courses and other capacity-building actions in support of activities of the Action Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	c) Disseminate protocols and tools for standardization of technical approaches that could be used to conduct regional and national activities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	d) Countries with specific expertise on ballast water management related activities help organize national, sub-regional or regional training sessions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	e) Replicate such training on a national level through the establishment of a national training programme on ballast water management activities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Action Points	Activities	Year					
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	f) Deliver an introductory training course on ballast water management, using the GloBallast training package, to decisions-makers of countries in the WCR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>3. Establish a survey, biological monitoring and risk assessment system for ports in the Wider Caribbean Region</b>	a) Develop a regionally standardized biological sampling and monitoring protocol for use of countries of the WCR in building the necessary biological and environmental databases to support the IAS management objectives		✓	✓	✓		
	b) Collaborate, preferably following sub-regional approaches where relevant, on biological survey and monitoring activities, including to promote and ensure sharing of technical capacity, resources and results		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	c) Seek institutional support at the national level to conduct port biological surveys and plans for monitoring, as part of their national strategy for ballast water and IAS management		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	d) Use a regional Clearing House Mechanism for sharing of data related to port surveys and ongoing biological monitoring			✓	✓	✓	✓
	e) RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe engage with appropriate international and regional organisations for potential technical assistance and support			✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>4. Adopt harmonized arrangements for ballast water exchange in the Wider Caribbean Region</b>	a) Adopt harmonized voluntary arrangements for ballast water exchange in the Wider Caribbean Region (Annex II)			✓	✓		
	b) Notify all interested parties of the adoption of harmonized voluntary arrangements for ballast water exchange in the Wider Caribbean Region through notices to shipping and instructions to surveyors			✓	✓		

Action Points	Activities	Year					
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>5. Establish a Scientific Committee</b>	a) Establish a Scientific Committee to advise on scientific matters, as appropriate, including the Protocol to be used for PBBS and arrangements for ballast water exchange in the WCR	✓	✓	✓			
	b) RTF-WCR determine the composition and identify the members of the Scientific Committee	✓	✓	✓			
<b>6. Establish a Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement (CME) system in the WCR</b>	a) Adapt existing Port State Control & CME systems in accordance with the BWM Convention		✓	✓	✓		
	b) Establish and maintain up to-date a regional communication system possibly within a clearing house mechanism, to allow exchange of experience and tracking of violations utilizing existing control agreements such as the Caribbean MoU, USCG and the Vina del Mar MoU on Port State Control		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>7. Enhance public awareness on ships' ballast water and invasive alien species issues</b>	a) Use IMO GloBallast Public awareness materials and translated these to local languages for dissemination at national level	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	b) Carry out national seminars and workshops to raise awareness among the various stakeholders involved	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	c) Develop local case studies that may be used effectively for awareness and leveraging support within the Wider Caribbean Region and it's sub-regions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>8. Set-up a web-based WCR mechanism for exchanging information</b>	Establish an online forum hosted by RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe for the purpose of BWM information sharing				✓	✓	✓
<b>9. Incorporate the Action Plan</b>	a) RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe to coordinate and assist with the implementation of the Action Plan in the region	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Action Points	Activities	Year					
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
evaluation within the Cartagena Convention reporting system and procedure	b) RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe will inform its meetings of Focal Points, which take place every two years, on the status of implementation of the Action Plan, for subsequent transmission to the Ordinary Meetings of the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	c) Countries of the WCR will provide RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe with the relevant information on national-based activities annually, and as they occur, with the purpose of reviewing and evaluating its ongoing relevance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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## ANNEX I

### **Terms of Reference for the Regional Task Force on Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments in the Wider Caribbean Region**

#### **I. Purpose of the Regional Task Force**

The Regional Task Force on Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments in the Wider Caribbean Region and El Salvador (hereafter RTF-WCR) should be considered as a supporting regional mechanism established within the framework of the UNEP's Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP), in order to facilitate:

- a. Bringing into effect the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ship's Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention), adopted in 2004;
- b. Ensuring coherent compliance with and enforcement of the said BWM Convention and of its associated guidelines, recommendations and practices in the Wider Caribbean Region;
- c. Implementing the activities designed under the GEF/UNDP/IMO GloBallast Partnerships Project (GBP), as well as activities and measures decided upon under the Regional Strategy to Minimize the Transfer of Harmful Aquatic Organisms and Pathogens in Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (hereunder referred to as the Regional Strategy) and its Action Plan;
- d. Promoting legal, technical and scientific cooperation on subjects relating to Ballast Water and Sediments Control and Management;
- e. Exchanging of experiences and information on topics such as BWM measures implemented at the national level and their consequences and Invasive Alien Species (IAS) control, management and eradication; and
- f. Contributing to the work carried out at a global level in the field of ships' ballast water and invasive species.
- g. Supporting the activities of the National Task Forces in the region.

#### **II. Mandate of the Regional Task Force in the context of implementing the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloBallast Partnerships Project:**

In the context of implementing the GBP, the RTF-WCR should:

- a. develop and adopt a Regional Strategy as well as an Action Plan for its implementation;

- b. serve as a mechanism to expand interest and involvement in the GloBallast Partnerships Project of all Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region as well as other interested Parties and stakeholders;
- c. provide overall strategic policy and management direction to the Project implementation in the Wider Caribbean Region;
- d. provide recommendations to RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe as the Regional Coordination Organization (RCO) charged with coordinating and managing the Project activities in the region;
- e. assist in identifying and allocating Project support for regional activities consistent with programme objectives;
- f. identify additional funding to support the outputs and activities of the Project;
- g. raise issues and concerns, and generate regional status reports, for consideration at the GloBallast Partnerships Global Project Task Force (GPTF) Meetings;
- h. periodically review and assess the progresses of the Project and its components;
- i. create mechanisms for interaction with the private sector (shipping, ports), Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders (e.g. public health) during the Project implementation; and
- j. identify mechanisms for national and regional sustainability on ballast water management issues after the conclusion of GloBallast Partnerships.

### **III. Mandate of the Regional Task Force in the context of implementing the Strategy and its related Action Plan:**

In the context of implementing the Regional Strategy and its related Action Plan, the Task Force should oversee, coordinate, and facilitate the work on:

- a. regular revision and updating of the Strategy and Action Plan in accordance with the latest developments on ballast water control and management at the regional and global level;
- b. promotion of the revision/development of national legislations, regulations and procedures on ballast water control and management with the view to ensuring a harmonized approach consistent with the BWM Convention;
- c. provision of a mechanism for information exchange on invasive alien species in ballast water in the region as well as on technical control measures taken nationally, regionally and worldwide;
- d. development and delivery of a training programme for personnel involved in ships' ballast water control and management activities;

- e. promotion of measures designed to enhance the public awareness of ships' ballast water and invasive alien species issues;
- f. coordination of national and regional surveys and monitoring activities of invasive alien species;
- g. coordination of national and regional risk assessment activities including selection of the appropriate follow up measures and management responses;
- h. promotion of research and development in the field of ballast water treatment techniques and technological methods of controlling the transfer of invasive alien species;
- i. achieving regional agreements on harmonized Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement (CME) systems and providing guidance to countries for the adaptation and implementation of such systems at national level;
- j. identification of adequate resources for implementing activities under the Strategy and its Action Plan from relevant Regional Organizations, Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region, regional and international shipping and port industries, bilateral and multilateral donors and technical cooperation programmes;
- k. ensuring the long-term sustainability and continuity of activities from self-financing sources within the region.

#### **IV. Establishment and functioning of the Regional Task Force:**

##### **1. Establishment of the Task Force:**

- the RTF-WCR is established as a Working Group;
- the RTF-WCR is set up by the National Focal Points of the GloBallast Partnerships Project or alternatively the designated representatives of a National Lead Agency identified by the Countries.

##### **2. Composition of the Task Force:**

- the Task Force comprises the National Focal Points of GloBallast Partnerships Project or alternatively the designated representatives of a National Lead Agency identified by the Countries;
- the Task Force is also composed of and assisted by the relevant International and Regional Organizations, namely the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP CAR/RCU), the Central American Commission on Maritime Transport (COCATRAM);

- representatives of major stakeholders (e.g. other interested regional agreements, industries, scientific communities, academia, NGOs, etc.) will be invited to attend the RTF-WCR Meetings and might be integrated into the RTF-WCR as deemed appropriate by its Members.

### **3. Chair and Secretary of the Task Force:**

- The Chairmanship of the RTF-WCR will rotate between the Countries member of the Task Force, starting with the Lead Partnering Countries of GBP. The Chairmanship should change at the beginning of each RTF-WCR Meeting and be approved in plenary.
- RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe will serve as Secretary to the Task Force and to the Task Force Meetings.

### **4. Modus operandi:**

- the Task Force carries out its work by correspondence and by organizing technical subject meetings as appropriate;
- during the preparation and adoption of the Strategy and its Action Plan, the Task Force will meet three times (2009, 2011 and 2012) within the framework of the GloBallast Partnerships project;
- in the longer term, general meetings to review and evaluate the implementation of the Strategy and its Action Plan should be organized at least once a year;
- the RTF-WCR should periodically examine and review the present Terms of Reference and make appropriate recommendations.

### **5. Reporting:**

- The RTF-WCR, through its Secretariat should report to relevant Meetings such as Intergovernmental Meeting on the Action Plan for the Caribbean Environment Programme. The report should take the form of a progress report, including appropriate recommendations and proposals on the implementation of Strategy and its Action Plan.
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## Harmonized Voluntary Arrangements for Ballast Water Management in The Wider Caribbean Region

### Introduction

The harmonized voluntary interim regime is being submitted under paragraph 3 of Article 13 of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (Ballast Water Management Convention) whereby Parties with common interest to protect the environment, human health, property and resources, particularly those bordering enclosed or semi-enclosed seas, shall endeavour to enhance regional cooperation, including through the conclusion of regional agreements consistent with the Convention. The proposed arrangements take into account other adopted regional policies on ship's ballast water exchange.

The regime forms also part of a regional strategy on ship's ballast water management and invasive species, developed within the Wider Caribbean Region Action Plan<sup>3</sup>, with the technical support of the GloBallast Partnerships Project<sup>4</sup>. It is based on the requirements of the Ballast Water Management Convention and is being proposed as an interim regime. The regime is voluntary; therefore, ships entering the Wider Caribbean Region area are encouraged to apply these guidelines on a voluntary basis.

This regime will no longer apply when a ship meets the ballast water performance standard contained in regulation D-2 of the Convention, or when the Convention comes into force and a ship has to apply the D-2 standard in accordance with the application dates set out in regulation B-3 of the Convention.

### Definitions

*Convention* means the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments; and is hereunder referred to as "Ballast Water Management Convention";

*Wider Caribbean area* means the marine environment of the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea and the areas of the Atlantic Ocean adjacent thereto, south of 30 degrees north latitude and within 200 nautical miles of the Atlantic coasts of the States referred to in article 25 of the Cartagena Convention.

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<sup>3</sup> The Strategic Action Plan covers the Wider Caribbean Region, defined by the Cartagena Convention as the marine environment of the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea and the areas of the Atlantic Ocean adjacent thereto, south of 30 deg north latitude and within 200 nautical miles of the Atlantic coasts of the Territories and States pertaining to the following Countries: Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, France, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, United Kingdom, United States of America and Venezuela. In addition, the SAP also covers El Salvador.

<sup>4</sup> GEF / UNDP / IMO project "Building partnerships to assist developing countries to reduce the transfer of harmful aquatic organisms in ship's ballast water (GloBallast Partnerships)".

1. Ships entering the waters of Wider Caribbean area from the Atlantic Ocean or from the Pacific Ocean through the Panama Canal or leaving the waters of the Wider Caribbean area to the Atlantic Ocean or to the Pacific Ocean through the Panama Canal, should:

- (a) undertake ballast water exchange before entering the Wider Caribbean area, or after leaving the Wider Caribbean area, as applicable, according to the standard set out in the D-1 Standard of the Ballast Water Management Convention, and at least 200 nautical miles from the nearest land and in waters at least 200 meters in depth<sup>5</sup>;
- (b) in situations where this is not possible, either due to deviating the ship from its intended voyage or delaying the ship, or for safety reasons, such exchange should be undertaken before entering the Wider Caribbean area, or after leaving the Wider Caribbean area, as applicable, according to the standard set out in the D-1 Standard of the Ballast Water Management Convention, as far from the nearest land as possible, and in all cases in waters at least 50 nautical miles from the nearest land and in waters of at least 200 meters depth<sup>6</sup>.

2. Ships should, when engaged in traffic between ports located within the Wider Caribbean area;

- (a) undertake ballast water exchange, according to the standard set out in the D-1 Standard of the Ballast Water Management Convention, as far from the nearest land as possible, and in all cases in waters at least 50 nautical miles from the nearest land and in waters of at least 200 meters depth. The area, where such requirements are met in the Wider Caribbean area, appear in the map provided;
- (b) in situations where this is not possible either due to deviating the ship from its intended voyage or delaying the ship, or for safety reasons, exchange of ballast water should be undertaken in areas designated by the port State for that purpose<sup>7</sup>;

and, if a port State decides to designate a ballast water exchange areas,

- (c) such areas shall be assessed in accordance with the *Guidelines on designation of ballast water areas for ballast water exchange* developed by the International Maritime Organization<sup>8</sup>, and in consultation with adjacent States and all interested States.

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<sup>5</sup> These geographical parameters are those set by Regulation B-4.1.1 of the Ballast Water Management Convention.

<sup>6</sup> These geographical parameters are those set by Regulation B-4.1.2 of the Ballast Water Management Convention.

<sup>7</sup> Regulation B-4.2 of the Ballast Water Management Convention.

<sup>8</sup> Guidelines on Designation of Ballast Water Areas for Ballast Water Exchange (G14), adopted on 13 October 2006. Resolution MEPC.151(55).

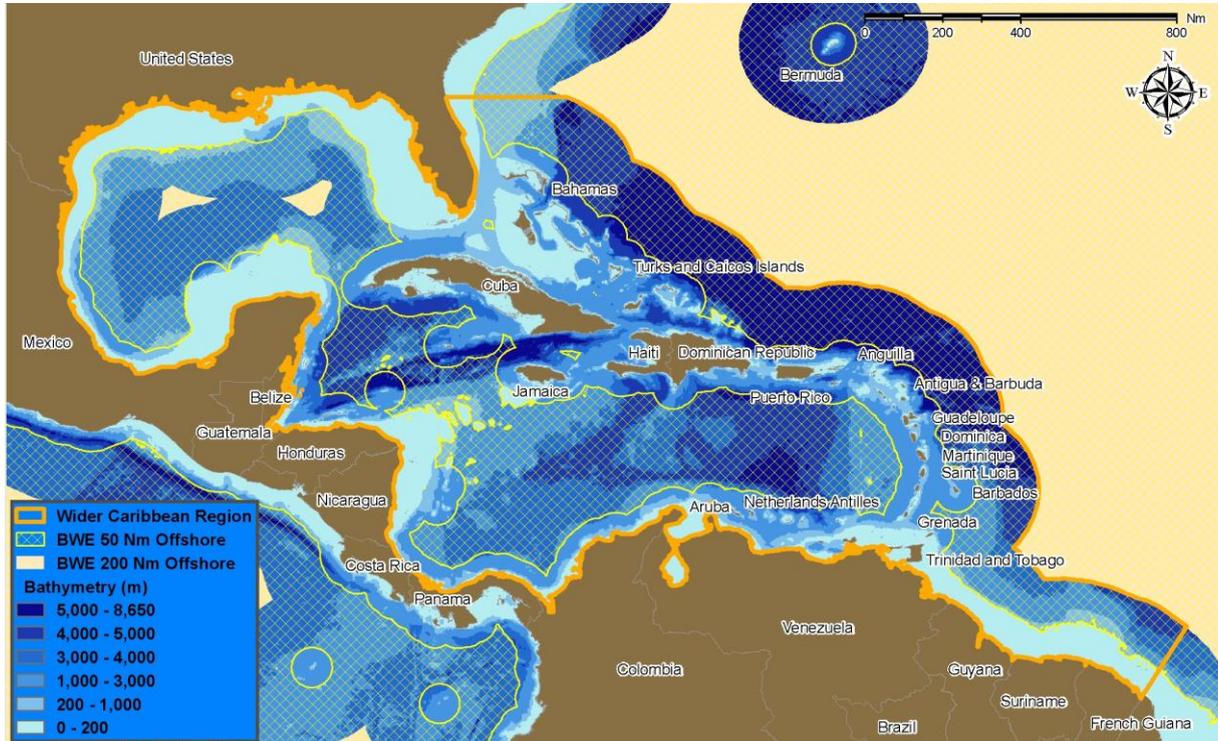
3. Sediments collected during the cleaning or repairing operations of ballast tanks should be delivered in sediment reception facilities in ports and terminals, according to Article 5 of the Ballast Water Management Convention, or be discharged beyond 200 nautical miles from the nearest land of the coastline when the ship is sailing in the Wider Caribbean area.
4. Exemptions can be granted to a ship on a voyage between specified ports or locations within the Wider Caribbean area, or to a ship operating exclusively between specified ports or locations within the Wider Caribbean area. These exemptions are to be granted according to Regulation A-4 1 of the Ballast Water Management Convention and based on the *Guidelines for risk assessment under regulation A-4 of the BWM Convention* developed by the International Maritime Organization<sup>9</sup>.
5. As per Regulation B-4 of the Ballast Water Management Convention, if the safety or stability of the ship is threatened by a ballast water exchange operation, this operation should not be undertaken. The reasons should be entered in the ballast water record book and a Report should be submitted to the maritime authorities of the Port of destination.
6. Each vessel calling at a port within the Wider Caribbean area is required to have on board a Ballast Water Management Plan complying with requirements of the *Guidelines for Ballast Water Management and Development of Ballast water Management Plans* developed by the International Maritime Organization<sup>10</sup> and to keep a record of all ballast water operations carried out.

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<sup>9</sup> Guidelines for Risk Assessment under Regulation A-4 of the BWM Convention (G7), adopted on 13 July 2007. Resolution MEPC.162(56).

<sup>10</sup> Guidelines for Ballast Water Management and Development of Ballast Water Management Plans (G4), adopted on 22 July 2005. Resolution MEPC.127(53).

Areas in the Wider Caribbean Region meeting the requirements set out in Regulation B-4.1.2 of the Ballast Water Management Convention (at least 50 nautical miles from the nearest land in waters of at least 200 meters depth)



MAP OF THE WCR SHOWING AREAS MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF BWM CONVENTION Reg. B-4. 1.2]

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