

“General Guidance on the Voluntary Interim Application of the D1 Ballast Water Exchange Standard by vessels operating between the Mediterranean Sea and the North-East Atlantic and/or the Baltic Sea”

1. In anticipation of the coming into force of the International Maritime Organization's International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (the BWM Convention), vessels operating between the marine areas as defined further in point 3, would be expected to apply on a voluntary basis, as from 1 October 2012 the following guidelines to reduce the risk of non-indigenous species invasion through ballast water. The guidelines are addressed to the vessels covered by Article 3 of the BWM, taking into account the exceptions in Regulation A-3 of that Convention. This Guidance does not replace the requirements of the BWM Convention, but provide the part of interim Ballast Water Regional Management Strategies for the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the North-East Atlantic being developed under Article 13 (3) of the BWM Convention by the contracting parties to either the OSPAR Convention, the Helsinki Convention or the Barcelona Convention*. This Guidance will no longer apply when a ship is in a position to apply the D-2 Standard of this Convention, or the Ballast Water Management Convention comes into force and a ship has to apply the D-2 Standard.
2. If the safety of the vessel is in any way jeopardised by a ballast water exchange, it should not take place. Additionally these guidelines do not apply to the uptake or discharge of ballast water and sediments for ensuring the safety of the vessel in emergency situations or saving life at sea in the waters of the Baltic Sea and the North East Atlantic.
3. Definitions:
 - **North-East Atlantic:**
 - those parts of the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans and their dependent seas which lie north of 36° north latitude and between 42° west longitude and 51° east longitude (but excluding the Baltic Sea and the Belts lying to the south and east of lines drawn from Hasenore Head to Griben Point, from Korshage to Spodsbjerg and from Gilbjerg Head to Kullen, and the Mediterranean Sea and its dependent seas as far as the point of intersection of the parallel of 36° north latitude and the meridian of 5° 36' west longitude);
 - that part of the Atlantic Ocean north of 59° north latitude and between 44° west longitude and 42° west longitude.
 - **The Baltic Sea:**
 - the Baltic Sea and the entrance to the Baltic Sea bounded by the parallel of the Skaw in the Skagerrak at 57 44.43'N; and,
 - **The Mediterranean Sea:**
 - the maritime waters of the Mediterranean Sea proper, including its gulfs and seas, bounded to the west by the meridian passing through Cape Spartel lighthouse, at the entrance of the Straits of Gibraltar, and to the east by the southern limits of the Straits of the Dardanelles between the Mehmetcik and Kumkale lighthouses.

4. Each vessel operating in these waters should:
 - have a Ballast Water Management Plan which complies with the Guidelines for ballast water management and development of ballast water management plans (G4) (IMO resolution MEPC.127(53)); and,
 - record all ballast water operations in a ballast water record book.
5. Vessels leaving the Mediterranean Sea and proceeding to destinations in the North-East Atlantic or the Baltic Sea should exchange all their ballast tanks to the standards set out by the D-1 Standard of the Ballast Water Management Convention, at least 200 nautical miles from the nearest land in water at least 200 metres deep, as soon as they enter the North-East Atlantic. It should be noted that the best place to do this is in waters that meet these criteria to the west of Portugal, Spain and France, as most of the waters of the English Channel and its approaches, the North Sea and the Baltic Sea are less than 200m deep. A map identifying these areas can be found in Figure 1¹.
6. Vessels entering the Mediterranean Sea from the North-East Atlantic or the Baltic Sea and proceeding to destinations in the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea or elsewhere should exchange all their ballast tanks to the standards set out by the D-1 Standard of the Ballast Water Management Convention, at least 200 nautical miles from the nearest land in water at least 200 metres deep, before they leave the North-East Atlantic. A map identifying these areas can be found in Figure 1.
7. If, for operational reasons, exchange is not possible at least 200 nautical miles from the nearest land in water at least 200 metres depth, then such exchange should be undertaken as far from the nearest land as possible outside the Mediterranean Sea, and in all cases in waters at least 50 nautical miles from the nearest land in waters of at least 200 metres depth. It should be noted that nowhere in the Baltic Sea fulfils these criteria (Figure 2).
8. The release of sediments during the cleaning of ballast tanks should not take place within the Baltic Sea, or within 200 nautical miles of the coastline of the North-East Atlantic or the Mediterranean Sea.

* Albania, Algeria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, The European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, The Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

¹ For vessels leaving the Mediterranean or the North East Atlantic proceeding to destinations near Tarrifa Cape a different regime for ballast water exchange could be considered.

Figure 1: Map of North West Europe showing the 200 nautical miles and 50 nautical miles contours and the 200m depth contour.

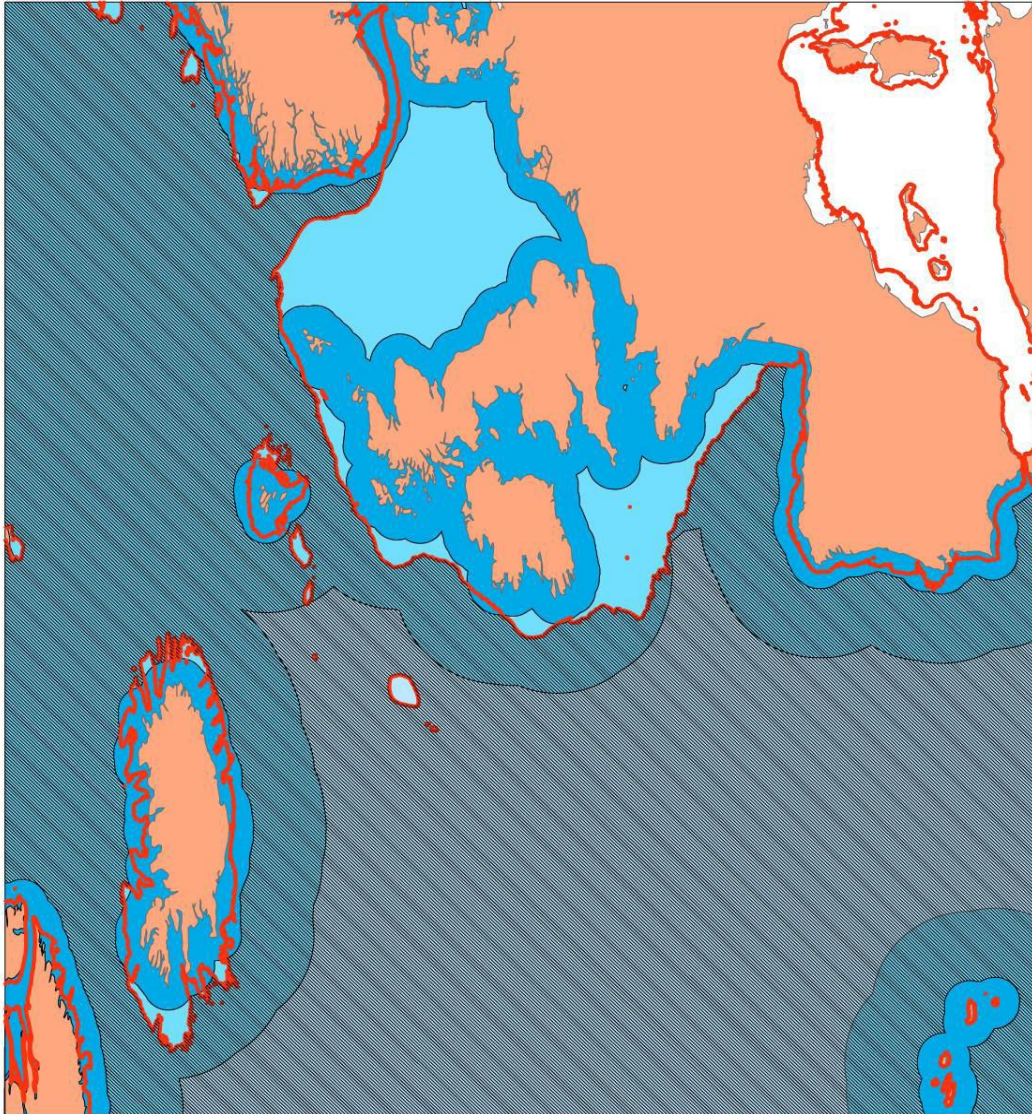
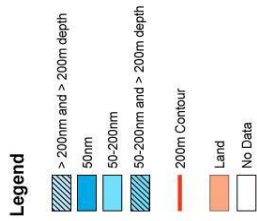


Figure 2: Map of the Baltic Sea showing areas of more than 50 nautical miles from the nearest land and areas of 200 meters depth.

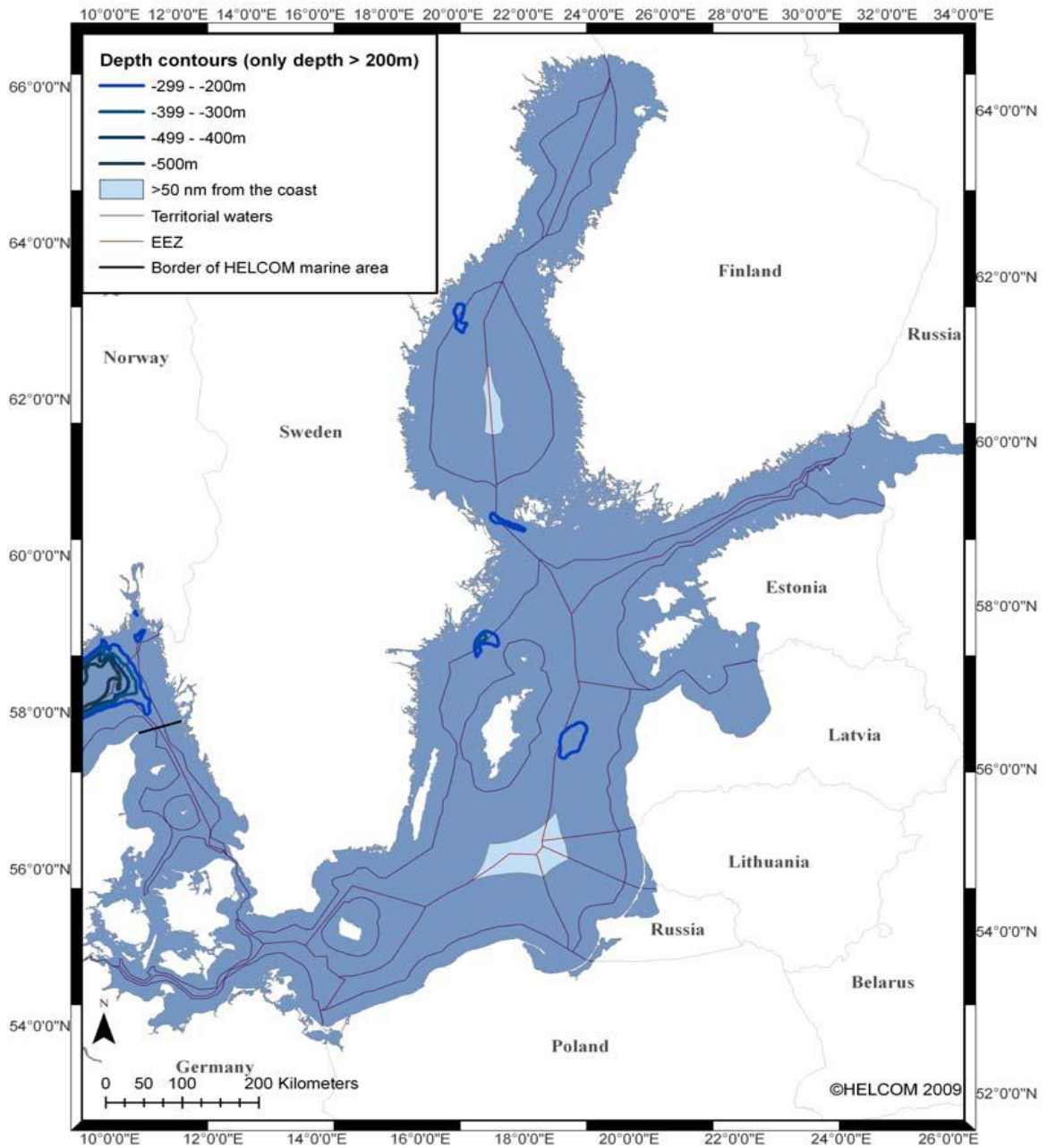


Figure 3: Map showing the areas in the Mediterranean Sea of at least 50 nautical miles from the nearest land in waters of at least 200 meters depth.

