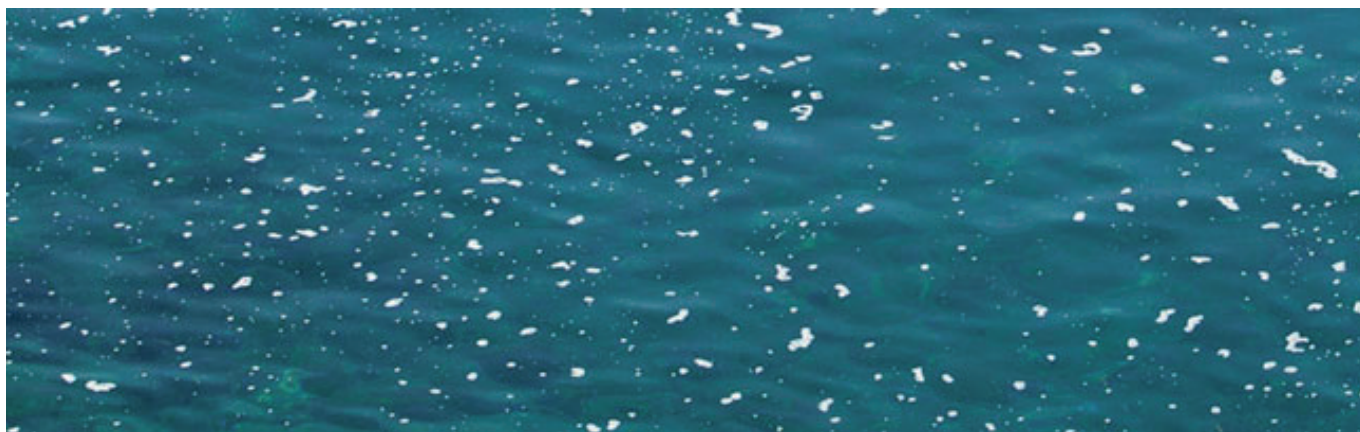


Draft paper proposing alternative measures with regard to the planned Blue Card Scheme



Introduction

As a result of increasing pollution in the gulfs and bays between Bodrum and Göcek-Fethiye, over the last few years, the relevant authorities in Mugla and Ankara have become increasingly concerned about the situation. Pollution is mainly caused by grey water being discharged directly into the sea by charter gulets, day-trip boats, fishing boats, motorboats and sailing yachts. Most of the residue from soap, shower gels, shampoos and detergents is not capable of being broken down by seawater.

At the moment there are strict regulations in existence for the collection and discharge of sewage from black water tanks – only into an area of open sea and at a distance of more than three miles from the coast. So far, the focus has not been on grey water, which has been discharged either into existing tanks or directly into the sea.

The Blue-Card solution

As of March 1st 2010, a new regulation comes into force. It stipulates that all vessels cruising in the Pilot Area between Bodrum and Göcek-Fethiye must:

Discharge both grey water and black water tanks at designated pump-out stations based in harbours or marinas. So far, these are extremely limited in number.

Every boat in the area will be required to carry its own digital Blue Card where each discharge will be recorded.

Coastguard and harbour patrols are tasked with the control of timely waste-water extraction via the Blue Card and can impose severe fines for violation.

Opposition and protests

Watersports associations, yachting magazines, boat owners and charter agencies from all over the world have expressed their opposition to the immediate enforcement of these measures to the Turkish Ministry of Tourism, Mugla's Governor, the Turkish environmental organisation Turmepa and the Chambers of Shipping, because:

- The lead time in the run-up to the introduction of the regulations on March 1st is insufficient

(it will be impossible to build in tanks at such short notice).

- On yachts and boats below 15 metres in length, there will be inadequate space for such tanks.
- Only some of the pump-out stations at harbours and marinas are complete and in any case the planned 30 stations will not be sufficient.
- Similar regulations enforced by German authorities along the coastal regions of the Baltic have demonstrated that extraction is not practical, since vessels will need to visit harbours at least once every two days and this contradicts the whole 'bay-hopping' premise and the unique nature of the 'Blue Cruise'.
- In addition, congestion around pump-out stations will increase to a dangerous level. It is envisaged that queues of 30, 40 or more boats will potentially be waiting their turn. At peak times in the morning and evening, day trip boats will add to this congestion. It's not difficult to anticipate the chaos, frustration, resentment and rage that could ensue from this situation. There will be masses of complaint letters from yacht and gulet charter clients claiming refunds. The damage to the reputation of one of the Mediterranean's most beautiful areas for tourism will be enormous. The press is likely to publish negative comment and hype the subject even further.

There is absolutely no doubt that the time has come to enforce efficient measures against the gradual pollution of the bays – the Turkish authorities, watersports associations and organisations worldwide are all agreed on this point. The international yachting fraternity in particular welcomes the initiatives of Mugla officials and is happy to do its part to keep bays and gulfs clean. However, we only need to look at the constituents of a typical shower gel (in daily use on every gulet, motorboat or sailing yacht) to get an idea of the size of the problem. A typical shower gel contains Sodium Laureth Sulfate, Sodium Myreth sulfate, Cocamidopropyl Betaine, PEG-6 Caprylic/Capric Glycerides, PEG-200 Hydrogenated Glyceryl Palmate, Sodium Chloride, Methylparaben, Glycol Distearate, PEG-7 Glyceryl Cocate, Sodium Citrate, Polyquaternium-22, Hydroxypropyl Guar Hydroxypropyltrimonium Chloride, Laureth-4. The majority of these substances are ecologically harmful, do not degrade in salt water and effectively destroy the marine environment.

Result

Branch Experts in this field believe that the present approach – trying to resolve the problem by having tanks on ALL vessels, shore-based pump-out stations and strict controls – is impossible to achieve, even with a longer timeframe for preparation. Instead, they propose to further develop the Blue Card Scheme (considered to be an excellent concept) and to implement realistic procedures to prevent pollution of the gulfs and bays.

The approach presented in this paper is based on the conviction that the existing Blue Card Scheme needs to be further developed. The focus should be not on the waste water coming FROM tanks but on the waste water ENTERING tanks.

The alternativ approach: Ocean Clean*)

At the January 2010 BOOT Düsseldorf Fair, major firms specialising in water treatment and waste disposal were involved in discussions about marine pollution. All parties involved in this dialogue (chemists and marketing experts alike) agreed immediately that a range of products produced with the working title 'Ocean Clean' could present excellent commercial opportunities. "There is huge market for us to explore," commented one of the marketing specialists. All the

companies contacted were willing to start immediate product development. Products would be available not just in retail sizes, but in bulk for gulets and large vessels. Contracts with Turkey-based resellers will be established. According to these companies, it is possible to develop new products to replace conventional soaps, shower gels, shampoos and detergents, containing 99.9% environmentally-friendly, biodegradable ingredients that will not pollute the sea. The market potential is huge. Producers can either develop their own product line under their own brand name, or a central marketing company could develop the product range and assign licences with a franchising system to interested producers. The main objective in the development of these new products should be that cleaning and washing with the environmentally-friendly detergents be as efficient as using conventional ones.

100% biodegradable products instead of waste water extraction – Critical Success Factors

- 1: Further development of the Blue Card Scheme
- 2: Availability of new biodegradable products
- 3: Involved people's awareness
- 4: Control

Critical Success Factor 1: The Blue Card Scheme as an umbrella organisation

The new biodegradable products are a result of the conceptual approach of the Blue Card Scheme. 'Clean substances into the tank' is a logical development of the Blue Card Scheme. Instead of the complex extraction process in the harbour, only those products which don't pollute the sea will be used on board. The existing pump-out stations will still be needed to evacuate waste water from the black water tanks of charter and excursion boats. The focus of the approach presented here is the development of biodegradable detergents. The market potential is huge.

Critical Success Factor 2: Availability

In order to convince potential producers of alternative detergents of the urgency of action and the market potential, relevant authorities and organisations will invite them to a conference to be held in Marmaris or Göcek. A boat excursion around the bays will provide the opportunity to educate and motivate them, in particular raising awareness of the nature and scope of the current problem. The sooner such a meeting is organised, the quicker concrete results can be expected. Potential Turkish distribution partners should also be involved in the conference and excursion, since this will also help to forge relationships between producers and distributors.



Critical Success Factor 3: Awareness

All coastal marinas and suppliers around the harbour towns must be convinced of the benefits of the 'Ocean Clean' approach, to ensure 'buy-in' for the supply and integration of environmentally-friendly detergents into their product range.

At the same time, gulet charter and bareboat agencies and bases have to be motivated to instruct their customers about the Blue Card Scheme and 'Ocean Clean' and ban the bringing on board and use of conventional soaps, shower gels, shampoos or detergents (see Critical Success Factor 4). Presenting the results of scientific research, demonstrating that such products not only destroy bays and gulfs but can also cause allergies and skin irritation, may be helpful.

National and international yachting and watersports magazines will need to be briefed and lobbied. Thanks to their function as opinion-makers, the subject will reach a broad audience. Photos and background information will need to be supplied. Journalists and writers should be invited to Blue Cruises (free of charge) and encouraged to write about the 'Ocean Clean' initiative and its progress.



Many more initiatives can be planned and implemented. A PR office should co-ordinate the information policy on the Blue Card Scheme to the general public. Turkey could expect to gain international prestige from the campaign. Marine protection activities could have a positive impact on the country's reputation – Turkey as a model tourist destination. The problem of watersports areas being polluted by waste water is an international one, not limited to the Aegean.

Critical Success Factor 4: Control

The proposed measures will only be successful if their introduction is accompanied by strict controls. Boat crews, captains, skippers and their guests will only abide by the regulations if continuous spot checks are carried out and severe fines applied where offences are committed. On the one hand, authorities must appeal to people's sense of reason and 'doing the right thing', but on the other, they must take rigorous steps to reprimand those who remain unconvinced and/or will not comply.



To enforce these measures, a Blue Card 'police force' should be established. Officers will have the authority to turn up on board without prior notice and search the galley, stores, cabins or bathrooms for banned products. If a banned product is found, the captain will have to pay a hefty fine. The captain will be held responsible for ensuring that no traditional detergents are used on board. Through persistent and unrelenting spot checks, the Blue Card regulations will be established; gulfs and bays will recover and remain clean for the future. The enforcement of

the smoking ban in public buildings and offices through the implementation of strict controls serves as an excellent example of what can be achieved.

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Udo Hinnerkopf

