



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR  
SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD

December 20, 2016

EPA-SAB-17-002

The Honorable Gina McCarthy  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Subject: Review of conclusions in *Efficacy of Ballast Water Treatment Systems: a Report by the Science Advisory Board*

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

The EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) recently concluded a review of the information and analyses used to support the conclusions in the 2011 SAB report, *Efficacy of Ballast Water Treatment Systems: a Report by the EPA Science Advisory Board* to determine if a correction to the report was required. The SAB determined that no correction to the 2011 report is required.

In July 2016, the SAB convened a Work Group to respond to inquiries from some members of the former *Ecological Processes and Effects Committee Augmented for the Ballast Water Advisory* and a current SAB member that conclusions in the report required correction. This Work Group operated under the auspices of the chartered SAB to review the conclusions and the information and analyses used to support the conclusions in the 2011 SAB report. The Work Group presented its recommendations in a memorandum<sup>1</sup> distributed to the Board and posted on the SAB website for its November 30, 2016 meeting. In reaching its conclusions, the Work Group considered: the Ballast Water Report; supporting materials available to the former Panel; Ballast Water Panel meeting minutes; public comments submitted to the former Panel; and materials and oral responses provided during a public fact-finding teleconference<sup>2</sup> conducted by the Work Group. The Work Group found that the issue represents a difference in opinion over interpretation of data, not an indication of error.

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendations regarding ballast water treatment efficacy and conclusions in the 2011 SAB report, *Efficacy of Ballast Water Treatment Systems: a Report by the EPA Science Advisory Board*. Available at: [https://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/1B1228EC34C77C81852580600070F92D/\\$File/EPA+BW+Work+Group+Memorandum+10+28+2016final+.pdf](https://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/1B1228EC34C77C81852580600070F92D/$File/EPA+BW+Work+Group+Memorandum+10+28+2016final+.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> SAB Work Group fact finding regarding data and conclusions on ballast water treatment efficacy in the 2011 SAB report, *Efficacy of Ballast Water Treatment Systems: a Report by the EPA Science Advisory*. Available at: <https://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/a84bfee16cc358ad85256ccd006b0b4b/2bf6e4715508b06785257fe9004f819f!OpenDocument&Date=2016-08-12>

The SAB discussed the Work Group's recommendations and finds that the conclusions about shipboard treatment efficacy in the SAB report, *Efficacy of Ballast Water Treatment Systems: a Report by the Science Advisory Board*, were supported by the data that were provided to the former Panel. Further, the SAB finds that the conclusions in the 2011 report were supported by the analyses conducted by the former Panel, and these analyses were documented in the Ballast Water Report. In reaching this determination, the SAB considered the Work Group's analyses, the recommendations in the memorandum, and the discussion among Board members at the November 30, 2016, meeting. The SAB did not seek new data regarding ballast water treatment system efficacy, nor was any new data reviewed by the Work Group or the SAB.

In summation, the SAB concludes the Ballast Water Report does not contain a substantial scientific error. The SAB finds that the report, *Efficacy of Ballast Water Treatment Systems: a Report by the Science Advisory Board*, presents sound scientific judgements using appropriate analyses and reasonable interpretation of the data available to the authoring panel.

Sincerely,

**/signed/**

Dr. Peter S. Thorne, Chair  
Science Advisory Board

Enclosure  
Roster of SAB Members

## **NOTICE**

This report has been written as part of the activities of the EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB), a public advisory group providing extramural scientific information and advice to the Administrator and other officials of the Environmental Protection Agency. The SAB is structured to provide balanced, expert assessment of scientific matters related to problems facing the Agency. This report has not been reviewed for approval by the Agency and, hence, the contents of this report do not necessarily represent the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor of other agencies in the Executive Branch of the Federal government, nor does mention of trade names of commercial products constitute a recommendation for use. Reports of the SAB are posted on the EPA Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/sab>.

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