



**Ballast Water Memorandum of Agreement between  
EPA's Environmental Technology Verification Program  
and the U.S. Coast Guard**



**Signed by Henry L. Longest II (EPA/ORD)  
and Rear Admiral Paul J. Pluta (USCG) on June 12, 2001**

Ballast water discharged from ships has been implicated as a major pathway for the introduction of nonnative organisms into the aquatic ecosystems of the U.S. Trillions of gallons of ballast water from foreign regions, containing many thousands of associated organisms per gallon, are discharged in the U.S. every year. Introduction of nonnative species through ballast water discharges, such as zebra mussels in the Great Lakes and Asian clams in San Francisco Bay, have had significant and adverse economical and ecological impacts. The National Invasive Species Act of 1996 requires the United States Coast Guard (USCG) to develop a National Ballast Water Management Program to prevent such introductions. The evaluation and development of innovative technologies for treating ballast water to remove unwanted organisms is a key element in this program. A number of treatment technologies are being investigated worldwide by government, industry, academic and nongovernmental interests. Comparisons among these efforts are hampered by a lack of standardized testing protocols.

The USCG has decided to partner with the EPA's Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) Program to provide independent evaluations of the performance of private sector ballast water technologies in controlling the introduction of invasive species. Begun in 1995, ETV addresses the need for credible environmental technology performance data to help businesses and communities better utilize the environmental technology choices available to them. Its sole product is objective information on technology performance contained in Verification Reports and Statements. The program is voluntary and open to all commercial-ready environmental technologies within ETV testing categories. Stakeholder groups, representing the needs of the marketplace, set priorities for the program, assist in the development of testing protocols, and review verification reports. All testing is done through independent third party testing organizations, which have incorporated high levels of quality assurance into all test and reporting procedures. The ETV test plans, protocols, verification reports and statements are made available worldwide through posting on the ETV Web Site ([www.epa.gov/etv](http://www.epa.gov/etv)).

### **Recent and Upcoming Activities**

- On June 12, 2001, Rear Admiral Paul J. Pluta, Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety and Environmental Protection, USCG, and Henry L. Longest II, Acting Assistant Administrator for Research and Development, U.S. EPA, signed a Memorandum of Agreement committing the two agencies to work together to verify the performance of innovative environmental technologies to control ballast water discharges.
- An ETV stakeholder group was formed and held its first meeting on the same day. Stakeholders represent all interested parties—local, state, federal, and international governing bodies, the academic and testing community, shipping and port interests of all types, and technology vendors. The group established technology categories believed to be ready for testing and is charged with defining the factors to be addressed and assessed through ETV testing, evaluation, and public reporting over the next six months.
- A preliminary technology vendor list and draft testing protocols will be completed by NSF International and Battelle Memorial Institute, ETV private sector testing organizations, and reported to the group in October. A technical panel comprised of subject matter experts will be formed to determine the exact testing procedures to be used to address the verification factors.
- Companies will be solicited for participation, and testing is planned to be underway by the summer of 2002.

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