Waste Assessment Guidance (WAGs)

- Waste Assessment Guidance Process
- Consists of eight steps with several decision points that are not necessarily taken in sequential order.
  - Not a linear process – many feedback loops
  - Applications may be withdrawn or re-formulated early in the process.
  - Applicants may be asked for additional information before proceeding.
  - Options other than ocean disposal may be identified.
  - Applications may be rejected at several stages.

- Specific Guidelines for Assessment
Specific Waste Assessment Guidance

- Revised specific guidelines for the assessment of vessels (2016)
- Revised specific guidelines for assessment of platforms or other man-made structures at sea (2019)
  - Intended for use by national authorities responsible for regulating dumping of wastes
  - Embody a mechanism to guide national authorities in evaluating applications for dumping of wastes in a manner consistent with the provisions of the LP/LC
Expanding remit of the LC/LP

Treaties Objective:

“Contracting Parties shall individually and collectively protect and preserve the marine environment from all sources of pollution”

- So LC/LP governs dumping activities world-wide, but always from the perspective of protection from all sources of pollution.

Newly emerging issues (LP):

- Since 2006 Parties responded to new threats to the oceans and impacts posed by increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) by regulating new climate change mitigation technologies
LC/LP and climate change – regulating climate change mitigation technologies

Ocean-based mitigation offer significant potential to contribute to global efforts to limit global warming and for achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Regulated under the London Protocol:

- **2006**: *Carbon capture and storage (CCS)* in sub-seabed geological formations. Entered into force in 2006
- **2009**: to allow the export of carbon dioxide streams for CCS. Not yet in force.
- **2013**: amendment to the London Protocol to regulate the placement of matter for ocean fertilization and other **marine geoengineering activities**. Not yet in force.
GESAMP Working Group 41 on ‘Ocean Interventions for Climate Change Mitigation’ (formerly the Working Group on Marine Geoengineering)

WG 41 objectives:

- Better understand the potential environmental and socio-economic impacts of different marine climate intervention approaches: and

- To provide advice to the London Protocol Parties to assist them in identifying those marine climate intervention techniques that it might be sensible to consider for listing in the new annex 4 of the Protocol
Marine geoengineering techniques

- Fe/N&P Fertilization
- Increasing Ocean Reflectivity
- Alkalinity Addition
- Macroalga Cultivation
- Artificial Upwelling/Downwelling
- Direct Injection into Seabed Sediments
- Crop Wastes Deposited on Seabed
- CO₂ Injected into Mid-depth Waters
- Direct Injection onto Seabed
Fifty years of ocean protection

Major milestones since adoption of the London Convention in 1972 regulating dumping at sea


1980s

Dredging - most of the permits for dumping at sea relate to dredged material. The potential impact on the receiving environment has to be evaluated, in line with the Waste Assessment Guidelines, before a permit for dumping is issued.

1990s


Incineration of wastes at sea is banned via amendment to the London Convention, from 1994.

2000s

Regulating climate change mitigation technologies: marine geoengineering, which can involve interventions in the marine environment in order to counteract climate change. A resolution adopted in 2010 is followed by an amendment to the London Protocol in 2013, to include marine geoengineering activities. The amendment allows ocean fertilization activities to be permitted for research purposes only, and enables other marine geoengineering activities to be regulated in future.

2010s

Amendment to remove sewage sludge from list of permitted materials for dumping adopted at October 2022 meeting of Contracting Parties to London Protocol.

2020s
Thank you

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