

Home (/) » International Cooperation on Marine Pollution from Sunken Vessels

International Cooperation on Marine Pollution from Sunken Vessels

Admin



Submitted by: Submitted 2 weeks 6 days ago by ELPStudent.ENVI....

Post date: Friday, 23 August 2019 - 10:49 pm

Last modified: Wednesday, 28 August 2019 - 08:15 am

Status: Submitted

Original language of the motion as submitted: English

Author's contact: elpiucn@gmail.com

Background information



1. Does the proposed motion:

Correspond with the purpose of motions as defined in Rule 48bis:

Yes

Propose an amendment to either the draft IUCN Programme 2021-2024:

No

Address issues pertaining to the governance of IUCN?:

No

2. Specify which IUCN constituents (Members or components of IUCN) or third parties (Rule 54 (b) viii.) referred to in the operative paragraph(s) of this motion have:

Been consulted during the development of this motion:

IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL)

Collaborated in the development of the motion:

IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL)

Provide any additional information about consultations carried out/ collaboration with IUCN constituents in the development of this motion, in particular if consultations had the purpose of identifying solutions that might address the underlying issues. (Rule 54 (b) x.) :

The draft motion was circulated to the IUCN Marine and Polar Programme, and North America and Oceania IUCN Members.

3. Before submitting this motion, have you searched the IUCN Resolutions and Recommendations Platform to ensure that this motion does not repeat previously adopted Resolutions or Recommendations?:

Yes

Please specify, what is new, over and above previously adopted Resolutions and Recommendations and state which Resolutions / Recommendations:

There are no prior motions on this topic.

4. Please indicate whether the proposed motion has been discussed in one of the Regional Conservation Fora held in 2019 or - where applicable - in a meeting of the National Committee(s) of the country(ies) concerned? (Regulation 66ter):

Yes

Please specify in which:

North America Regional Conservation Forum

Oceania Regional Conservation Forum

5. Does the motion focus on local, national or regional issues?:

No

6. Does the proposed motion concern issues arising in a State or States outside the proponent's State/Region?:

No

Preamble

The preamble explains in a succinct way the rationale for the motion and substantiates the action(s) called for in the operative part. :

RECOGNIZING that the pollution of our oceans is a global problem, which threatens marine species and their ecosystems;

NOTING that there are more than 8,500 potentially polluting sunken vessels around the world with more than 22 billion gallons of fuel on board; most of which are from WWII. Because of the years of erosion the issue of fuel leakage is no longer “if” but instead “when” it will happen;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that pollution from wrecks is a lesser-known but important issue that threatens the stability and livelihood of our oceans and marine ecosystems;

UNSETTLED about the immediate environmental threat of sunken vessels continues to deteriorate, fuel and other dangerous chemicals will begin and continue to spill into our oceans;

CONCERNED, a majority of the efforts in removing fuel have been reactive once a leak is reported. The oceans and the environment deserve and require a proactive approach to this threat;

ACKNOWLEDGING that several countries have made efforts to document and maintain databases to track these wrecks, including Finland, Sweden and Estonia wreck registers and risk assessment work done in the SWERA project;

Operative paragraphs

The operative section of the motion specifies the position of Members and contains the action(s) that they are agreeing to take.:

1. Calls upon the IUCN Secretariat to develop and maintain a database of potentially polluting shipwrecks;
2. Calls upon IUCN Member States to continue to develop and share innovative tools and best practices for pollutant removal from sunken ships having oil or packaged dangerous goods on board; and
3. Urges IUCN Marine and Polar Programme to cooperate to produce a toolkit to evaluate the threat for oil pollution and to select technical proper means for salvage and oil/chemical proactive removal operations.

Proponents and co-sponsors

You are submitting this motion on behalf of:

Environmental Law Program at the William S. Richardson School of Law [United States of America]

Co-sponsors:

Center for Environmental Legal Studies [United States of America]

Center for Large Landscape Conservation [United States of America]

Hawai'i Conservation Alliance [United States of America]

Instituto O Direito por um Planeta Verde [Brazil]

International Council of Environmental Law [United States of America]

SYLVIA EARLE ALLIANCE (DBA MISSION BLUE) [United States of America]

Explanatory memorandum**Explanatory memorandum (optional):**

The pollution of our oceans is a global problem that has arisen as a consequence of the industrialization of the world and the intensified shipment of crude oil and the products of its refinement. Pollution from sunken ships is a lesser-known but important issue that threatens the stability of our oceans and marine ecosystems.

Most potentially polluting sunken vessels were sunk at or around the time of World War II and continue to deteriorate. Among these wrecks are vessels that still contain fuel or other dangerous substances in their tanks or holds. It is estimated that there could be up to 22 billion gallons of fuel and more than 8,500 at-risk vessels under the world's oceans. Most wrecks that have lain on the seabed for more than 60 years succumb to corrosion, so there is a considerable likelihood of petroleum products seeping out of many of them. The issue of fuel leakage is no longer "if" but instead "when" it will happen.

Recent response efforts in the United States of America and elsewhere have led to interest from both government and industry to systematically identify, investigate, and potentially offload the oil remaining onboard wrecks before they begin to leak. Databases have been developed by several countries to prioritize wrecks based on the amount of oil on-board and the probability of pollution spillage.

In 2004, the U.S Navy successfully removed 2.8million gallons of oil from USS Mississinewa, which sunk during WWII in 1944. However, despite the success of the oil removal it is important to highlight that only after leakage was reported in 2001 action was taken. The leak and potential additional oil leaks from the USS Mississinewa were life threatening to the environment and habitants of Ulithi Atoll (located in the Yap state of the Federated States of Micronesia).

One of the issues raised during the Oil removal project in 2004 was the fact that the majority of these sunken vessels are War Graves. So, special considerations are required. However, because of the imminent threat to the environment and life outweighs any possible delays such special considerations may require. Because of the advanced deterioration of these sunken vessels the special considerations ought to be overlooked in order to focus

on saving the living.

As a recent example of the global cooperation needed to combat this issue, in 2014, Finland, Estonia, and Sweden began to cooperate through their Sunken Wreck Environmental Risk Assessment (SWERA) project. The main objectives of this program were to conduct a wreck survey, create wreck models, risk assessment of different salvage operation alternatives, and develop innovative technological solutions for oil removal operations.

The oil, chemicals and unexploded ordnances still on board these vessels pose a grave and imminent danger to the people, marine and coastal environments, fisheries, and species of our oceans. More should be done, on a cooperative, global level, to improve guidelines and strategies for responding to pollution from wrecks; no one country can solve this problem alone.

Information required for the implementation of the motion

1. Provide:

a) An overview of the activities and estimated resources needed to implement the motion (these can be human or other resources, but expressed in USD). Also include an estimation of the resources pledged (in USD), including by the proponent, co-sponsors, or third parties.:

Activity	Estimated financial resources required (USD)	Estimated financial resources pledged (USD)
Field activities	0.00	0.00
Scientific activities	0.00	0.00
Education/ communication/ raising awareness	0.00	0.00
Fundraising	0.00	0.00
Policy influencing	0.00	0.00
Convening stakeholders/ networking	0.00	0.00
Capacity building	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.00
Total	0.00	0.00

Rate here to which degree the resources required for the implementation of the motion have been estimated and committed. During the online discussion of motions, proponents of motions will be able to update this

information and rating, while IUCN Members will be able to pledge or commit their contribution to the implementation of a motion.:

D: Motion can be implemented within the regular budget and resources available to the Member or component of IUCN (Secretariat, Commission, etc.) which is called upon to implement the motion.

b) Description of the contributions which proponent and co-sponsors intend to make towards the implementation of the motion: (Rule 54 (b) viii.)

Proponent 

IUCN Member:

Environmental Law Program at the William S. Richardson School of Law [United States of America]

Proposed actions:

Education/Communication/Raising awareness

Co-sponsors 

Co-sponsor:

SYLVIA EARLE ALLIANCE (DBA MISSION BLUE) [United States of America]

Proposed actions:

Other

Co-sponsor:

Center for Environmental Legal Studies [United States of America]

Proposed actions:

Education/Communication/Raising awareness

Co-sponsor:

Center for Large Landscape Conservation [United States of America]

Proposed actions:

Other

Co-sponsor:

International Council of Environmental Law [United States of America]

Proposed actions:

Other

2. Provide here the name of a focal point who would be in charge of reporting annually on the follow-up and implementation of the motion if adopted:

Name: Emily

Surname: Gaskin

Institution: Environmental Law Program at the William S. Richardson School of Law

3. If the operative paragraph(s) of this motion is/are directly related to the mandate and work of one or more IUCN Commission(s), has the Steering Committee of the relevant Commission(s) committed to oversee implementation and assist in the gathering of data on the implementation of the Resolutions involved?:

Not applicable

4. As required by WCC-2016-Res-001, please indicate when the motion automatically ceases to be effective and will be moved to the Resolutions and Recommendations Archive. This can be either when a stated period has elapsed or when an objective has been achieved.:

This motion ceases to be effective when all sunken vessels have been safely removed from the oceans.

Scope



Please specify to which area of the draft IUCN Programme 2021-2024 this motion is related:

Healthy Oceans

Indicate the geographic scope of the implementation of this motion:

Global

Keywords



Region:

- Global

Nature and biodiversity:

- Marine & Coastal

- Fishes

Sustainable Development Goals:

- Goal 9 - industry, innovation and infrastructure

- Goal 14 - life below water

Threats and Drivers:

- Human intrusions & disturbance
- Pollution
- Transportation & service corridors

Type of response / intervention:

- GIS, mapping / remote sensing
- Monitoring / Evaluation

Congress themes:

- Managing landscapes for nature and people (/programme/congress-themes/landscapes)
- Restoring ocean health (/programme/congress-themes/oceans)

Hosts



[REGISTER \(/REGISTER\)](#)

#IUCNcongress

[!\[\]\(71ceb62b681518c82e95d615e7265d66_img.jpg\) \(https://twitter.com/IUCN\)](https://twitter.com/IUCN) [!\[\]\(aed08979fdf1e1a21984952cac02efc3_img.jpg\) \(https://www.facebook.com/iucn.org/\)](https://www.facebook.com/iucn.org/)[!\[\]\(e10773081adcaeab632f9dd4c8931cd5_img.jpg\) \(https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8WrhXI7D8q53qZxzS8ihQ \)](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8WrhXI7D8q53qZxzS8ihQ)[Programme \(/programme\)](#)[The Event \(/event\)](#)[France \(/france-marseille\)](#)[Newsroom \(/newsroom\)](#)[I am a ... ▾ \(/i-am\)](#)[Why attend? ▾ \(/why-attend\)](#)[About ▾ \(/about\)](#)[Register \(/register\)](#)[!\[\]\(3b2dcacf48e43c80086616b9c3042b47_img.jpg\) \(https://www.facebook.com/iucn.org/\)](https://www.facebook.com/iucn.org/) [!\[\]\(3075be04baa384fd14dd120776a39742_img.jpg\) \(https://twitter.com/IUCN\)](https://twitter.com/IUCN)[!\[\]\(41959a55675a4cf6a0c75249945ddd26_img.jpg\) \(https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8WrhXI7D8q53qZxzS8ihQ \)](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8WrhXI7D8q53qZxzS8ihQ)

#IUCNcongress

[Privacy policy \(https://www.iucn.org/privacy_policy_en\)](https://www.iucn.org/privacy_policy_en)[Terms & conditions \(https://www.iucncongress2020.org/node/39852\)](https://www.iucncongress2020.org/node/39852)

© IUCN 2019. All rights reserved