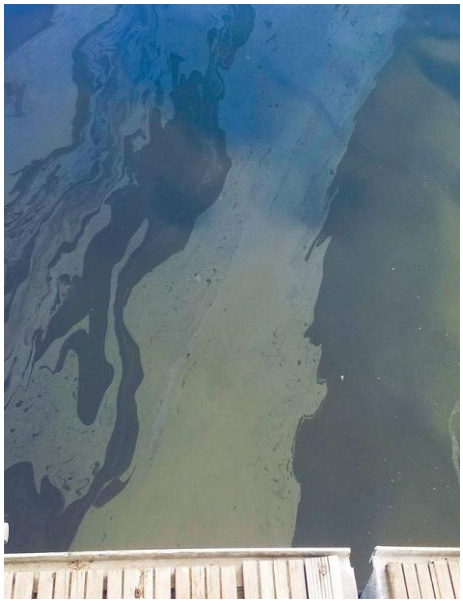
**PRESS RELEASE**

# BOATERS URGED TO UNDERSTAND GLOBAL ANTI-POLLUTION LEGISLATION AS INDUSTRY EXPERTS DEBATED THE HIDDEN IMPACT OF EVERYDAY BOATING

**Paul Gullett of Wave International joined expert panel at Southampton Boat Show examining the pollution generated by leisure craft – and the practical solutions available to boat owners**

No boat owner sets out to pollute the water. Yet routine boating activities can inadvertently release a cocktail of contaminants into the marine environment, from contaminated bilge water and wash-down water to oil, diesel, microplastics, microfibres and paint particles.



The scale of this largely unseen pollution, and the legislation and liabilities that could apply to leisure boat owners, was examined by a panel of marine, insurance and environmental experts at this year's Southampton Boat Show.

Paul Gullett, Managing Director of Wave International, joined panel host and chair Peter Wallbank, Technical Director at August Race, alongside insurance experts Mike Wimbridge, Managing Director of Pantaenius UK Ltd, and Alan Wilkins, Managing Director of Mercari

Risk Management, for a discussion entitled “Understanding the Global Anti-Pollution Legislation that applies to all Boaters” to explore what global anti-pollution legislation, including MARPOL, means for leisure boaters, marina operators and charter companies, as well as the potential implications for insurance, liability and environmental responsibility.

While much of the marine industry's current attention is focused on reducing pollution from propulsion systems, Gullett believes greater attention needs to be paid to what comes out of the hull.

“Nobody is deliberately putting pollution into the oceans,” says Paul Gullett. “In many cases, boat owners don’t even realise they are. But multiply those small, routine discharges across all boats and marinas throughout the world and you start to see the scale of the issue.”

Every boat accumulates contaminants during normal use. Bilges can collect traces of oil and diesel, while everyday cleaning and maintenance can introduce microplastics, microfibres, paint particles, detergents and other contaminants into the water. The panel discussed whether these routine, often inadvertent discharges could create legal, environmental and insurance implications for boat owners, what responsible boaters and those working in the marine industry can do to reduce their impact and the practical, easy-to-adopt solutions that already exist to help boat owners prevent contaminated water from entering the marine environment.

A clear message from Mike Wimbridge, Managing Director of Pantaenius UK Ltd, was that “No one, no one whether the boater, charter company or marine operator is insured against an illegal act, or for the potential cost of the consequences.”

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