

**REPLY BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE *FOR THE*
ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
TO QUESTIONS ASKED PURSUANT TO RULE 14 OF THE
RULES OF PROCEDURE BY DEPUTY ST PIER**

Question 1

Can the Committee please advise what work has and is being undertaken to identify a less ecologically damaging alternative to the use of sodium hypochlorite for the removal of algae from marine slipways?

Answer

The management of marine slipways is undertaken by States Works on behalf of the Agriculture, Countryside and Land Management Service (ACLMS). The removal of algae (e.g. seaweed) from walking surfaces on piers and jetties is required to maintain a safe environment for the public and sea users.

Historically, sodium hypochlorite has been the principal substance used to remove macroalgae from jetties and slipways. It is used in a 50/50 dilution which breaks down into harmless products from around 1 hour after use, depending on conditions, but does need to be applied with care.

In line with the Committee's aim to reduce chemical inputs into the environment, potential alternatives have been trialled.

A macroalgae cleanser has been trialled since 2018 in different circumstances, with differing levels of success. We have learned and continue to learn about how best to use the product and in what circumstances. It is currently being trialled at the bathing pools. We are not aware of any direct, scientific comparisons between the environmental impacts of the macroalgae cleaner and sodium hypochlorite but they are claimed to be less in the former.

The use of a hot foam has also been trialled but was found to be ineffective for this purpose.

We will continue to explore alternatives to the use of sodium hypochlorite. It is currently the main cost-effective option that meets the challenges of making safe 52 piers and jetties, often in inaccessible areas, within the limited time that our tides allow. We are also open to trying a mix of approaches, should they balance those challenges whilst reducing further any ecological impacts.

Date of Receipt of the Question: 12 May 2022

Date of Reply: 31 May 2022