

Commercial Antifouling Agents: Is there our safe guard is infallible?

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Antifouling (AF) chemicals are one of the major sources of marine pollution. Although stringent ban imposed on toxic chemicals used in the AF formulations, in many of the commercial AF paints toxic organic/inorganic chemicals are indiscriminately used singly or in combination to increase the effectiveness as well as durability of coatings. In some commercial AF coatings available in the market, toxic chemicals (as booster biocides) are used in higher proportions (active ingredients > 50%). Especially, these AF coatings applied on small fishing boats and vessels are largely responsible for the persistent pollutants occurring in the coastal region. As a maritime nation increasing usage of toxic AF paints to fishing and shipping activities along the Korean coast leads to a high risk of environmental degradation. In view of the toxic and persistent AF chemicals usage in Korea, future needs of AF research are discussed.