CLAIMS

1. A method of treating bio-fouling on a water-borne vessel, using a treatment container, the method comprising:

heating fluid for treatment of the bio-fouling on the vessel;

storing heated fluid in a storage container;

introducing the vessel into the treatment container; and

following introduction of the vessel into the treatment container, transferring heated fluid from the storage container into the treatment container.

2. A method according to Claim 1, comprising, before introduction of the vessel into the treatment container, charging the treatment container with fluid.

3. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the step of charging the treatment container with fluid comprises submerging a portion of the treatment container in a body of fluid.

4. A method according to Claim 1, Claim 2 or Claim 3, comprising, following introduction of the vessel into the treatment container, enclosing the vessel within the treatment container.

5. A method according to Claim 1, Claim 2 or Claim 3, wherein a volume of the heated fluid transferred from the storage container into the treatment container is comparable to a fluid capacity of the treatment container.

6. A method according to Claim 1, Claim 2 or Claim 3, wherein the method further comprises, following introduction of the vessel into the treatment container, removing bio-fouling from the vessel by applying fluid to the vessel in the treatment container, to transfer the bio-fouling from at least one surface of the vessel to the treatment container.

7. A method according to Claim 6, wherein the step of removing bio-fouling from the vessel comprises generating cavitation in the fluid applied to the vessel in the treatment container.

8. A method according to Claim 1, Claim 2 or Claim 3, wherein the temperature of the heated fluid in the storage container is higher than a required treatment temperature.

9. A method according to Claim 1, Claim 2 or Claim 3, wherein the step of transferring heated fluid comprises:

measuring a current temperature in the treatment container; and

determining on the basis of said current temperature an amount of fluid to be transferred from the storage container to the treatment container.

10. A method of treating bio-fouling on a water-borne vessel, the method comprising:

removing bio-fouling from the vessel by applying a fluid to the vessel in a treatment container, to transfer the bio-fouling from at least one surface of the vessel to the treatment container; and

following application of the fluid to the vessel, removing bio-fouling elements from the treatment container by transferring fluid from the treatment container to a removal container.

11. A method according to Claim 10, wherein the step of removing bio-fouling from the vessel comprises generating cavitation in the fluid applied to the vessel in the treatment container.

12. A method according to Claim 10 or Claim 11, further comprising, before introduction of the vessel into the treatment container:

heating fluid for treatment of the bio-fouling on the vessel;

storing heated fluid in a storage container; and

introducing the vessel into the treatment container,

and, following said application of the fluid to the vessel and before transferring fluid to the removal container:

transferring heated fluid from the storage container into the treatment

container.

13. A method according to Claim 12, wherein the removal container is the storage container, and wherein the step of transferring fluid from the treatment container to the removal container comprises transferring the fluid from the treatment container to the storage container, via a filter.

14. An assembly for treating bio-fouling on a water-borne vessel, the assembly comprising:

a heater for heating fluid for treatment of the bio-fouling on the vessel;

a storage container for storing heated fluid;

means for introducing the vessel into the treatment container; and

at least one conduit for, following introduction of the vessel into the treatment container, transferring heated fluid from the storage container into the treatment container.

15. An assembly according to Claim 14, further comprising means for effecting transferral of the heated fluid via the at least one conduit from the storage container into the treatment container.

16. An assembly according to Claim 14 or Claim 15, wherein the treatment container is configured to enclose the introduced vessel.

17. An assembly according to Claim 14 or Claim 15, further comprising at least one pipeline for supplying treatment fluid for removing bio-fouling from the vessel by applying the treatment fluid to the vessel in the treatment container, to transfer the bio-fouling from at least one surface of the vessel to the treatment container.

18. An assembly according to Claim 14 or Claim 15, wherein the treatment container is defined between a dock, which dock containing the storage container, and a pontoon, wherein the treatment container comprises at least one container wall between the dock and the pontoon.

19. An assembly according to Claim 18, wherein the dock is extended longitudinally in both longitudinal directions away from the treatment container.

20. An assembly according to Claim 14 or Claim 15, wherein the treatment container is defined between a plurality of walls of a dock, and wherein at least one wall of the dock comprises a gate for allowing the vessel into and/or out of the treatment container.