

Ballast Water

Policy paper
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OUR VIEW

Natural ecosystems should be preserved. Therefore, Danish Shipping supports the Ballast Water Management Convention.

It is vitally important to ensure a flexible implementation of the convention since the convention implies significant technical and economic challenges to ship owners.

Danish Shipping encourages the US Authorities to ratify the convention as soon as possible, and thereby eliminating their unilateral requirements.

Short sea shipping and ferry traffic should not be subject to unnecessary requirements for treatment systems. Therefore, the Same Risk Area interpretation should be applied to areas of the Baltic Sea and North Sea where possible.

Danish Shipping welcomes the implementation of the Ballast Water Management Convention.

Ballast water is used to trim or stabilize vessels. The water taken on board can contain living organisms from the area where the ballast water is loaded. The ballast water - and the living organisms in it - is often transported to other areas of the world where it is discharged. Here, the organisms can become invasive species that disturb local ecosystems in the marine environment.

Therefore in 2004, the UN's International Maritime Organization, IMO, addressed the threat of invasive species by adopting the Ballast Water Management Convention that requires ships to treat the ballast water before discharging so that organisms foreign to the local environment do not become a threat. The convention came into force 8 September 2017.

Danish Shipping has continuously supported the convention, which will require approximately 68,000 ships worldwide to

install treatment systems within a period of seven years from the entry into force date.

Invasive species

Invasive species can pose a threat to the natural marine environment since the release of invasive species may significantly disturb the ecological balance. Foreign organisms can impact local flora and fauna, and thus can also have significant commercial impacts by affecting for instance the fishing industry.

Ballast water treatment systems

More than 70 different systems have been approved according to IMO's technical requirements, but very few have been installed on vessels before the convention entered into force. This is partly due to the lack of clarity on future technical requirements to the systems, but also due to the fact that only a few systems have been approved by United States up to recently. United States has its own standards for ballast water treatment and is therefore not a party to the convention.

Ship owners are facing great challenges as the systems need to be installed on new as well as on existing ships within a seven



Invasive species, such as the Chinese mitten crab, can pose a threat to the natural marine environment since the release of invasive species may significantly disturb the ecological balance.

FACTS

- Five to ten billion tons of ballast water is transferred between oceans by ships every year.
- A VLCC - commonly known as a super tanker - transports around 100,000 m³ of ocean water in its ballast tanks on a single voyage.
- The cost of a ballast water treatment system ranges from 0.2 to 2.5 million USD.
- The installation is complicated and time consuming and will typically require the ship to visit a shipyard for several days.



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year period. It will require large investments in the ships and in particular on existing smaller ships it can be difficult to fit in the systems on board.

The Little Blue Book on Ballast Water was initiated by Danish Shipping and developed by LITEHAUZ with financial support from the Danish Maritime Fund. The brochure is a guideline on the various aspects of implementing the Ballast Water Convention and is intended to be used by the vessels' masters, officers and the shore based personnel involved in the implementation.

In relation to short sea shipping it is essential that a pragmatic approach is taken by the authorities. A specific smaller geographical area will often have the same species in the marine environment, and therefore the area will have same risk in relation to invasive species. For ships solely operating within such an area there should not be a need for ballast water treatment.

The Same Risk Area (SRA) concept has been promoted by the Danish Authorities and Danish Shipping in IMO and the development the mathematical

model, which is used for the assessment, has been supported by the Danish Maritime Fund. In 2018, IMO accepted the concept and the relevant guidelines have been amended to address how an SRA based exemption for the requirements for ballast water treatment can be granted.

For more information:

[The Little Blue Book on Ballast Water](#)