

## **5<sup>th</sup> IAMU Student Assembly**

### **New Legislation on the Environmental Impact of Global Ballast**

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#### **SUMMARY**

The Global Ballast Water Management Program is progressing to eliminate the dangers of harmful foreign aquatic organisms and pathogens, from being subjected to vulnerable ecosystems throughout the world. New suggested legislation could possibly require that individual ships maintain a ballast water and sediments management plan as well as conforming to specific ballast water management procedures and standards. Basic requirements of this legislature are that all ships will be required to implement ballast water exchange by a specific date, and incentives are provided for shippers to test future ballast water treatment technologies.

The primary areas of influence of this directive are the Great Lakes of the United States, as well as an initial testing site of the Port of Odessa located in the northwest part of the Black Sea. The reason for selection of these areas is the uniqueness of aquatic environment, and specifically for the Black Sea, the diversity of ships exchanging ballast water from all over the world.

The magnitude of the directive can be explained in the fact that it took more than forty national legislative acts to carry out the initial analysis. In order to effectively implement this plan several steps must take place. The primary influencing body of this directive is the IMO, (International Maritime Organization) and the co-ordination unit will be based at the IMO Headquarters. Additionally, there will be a Global Task Force comprised of stakeholder in the organization, and affected parties. This group will review the work plan, as well as amend the work plan when necessary. Separate Regional Task Forces will implement the plan in specific areas. The IMO will work closely with each separate body to overcome difficulties specific to each region as well as a list of potential partners including:

- 1) The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- 2) International Union for Conservation of Nature/Natural Resources (IUCN)
- 3) International Council for the Exploration of Sea (ICES)
- 4) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

There have been proposals to limit the invasive nature of foreign ballast water released by traveling ships that involve both filtration of the ballast water, as well as neutralization of

the affecting organisms by destruction of cell-membrane. The production model of this system is currently in the modular stage for efficient installation in current vessels. This method was decided upon in order to limit costs, as well as provide limited impact on the operations of the ship, and surrounding environment.

The application of study on this topic will depend on several variables. Support of legislation by specific nations is undoubtedly important. Proper management of the navigation of ships, in combination with the commitment to public health and environmental sanctity is also of up-most importance. Despite the extensive analysis of this plan, and steps to implement it, there are gray areas that will certainly arise in the future. Problems facing the shipping industry, that have not been evaluated or even encountered, and can only be overcome with constant improvement of systems created and ingenuity by the parties involved. The national management involved must be aware of deviations from the initial plan, and provide maximum effort as co-operation to ensure success.

## REFERENCES

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