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## **New regulations to reduce marine pollution in Antarctic enter into force – UN**



1 August 2011 –

A ban on pollution from heavy grade fuel oils in the Antarctic region goes into effect today, the United Nations maritime agency reported.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) said that amendments to International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution From Ships (MARPOL) detailing specific densities of crude oil which should not be used in the Antarctic mean that ships plying that area with lower grade fuel will have to switch to a higher fuel while in the area.

MARPOL has 136 parties, representing 98 per cent of the world's shipping tonnage.

“This means, in effect, that ships trading to the area, whether passenger or cargo ships, would need to switch to a different fuel type when transiting the Antarctic area, defined as ‘the sea area south of latitude 60 degrees south’,” IMO stated in a press release.

IMO also said MARPOL will formally establish a North American Emission Control Area (ECA), in which emissions of sulphur oxides, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter from ships will be subject to more stringent controls than the limits that apply globally. The ECA will take effect 12 months after the amendments enter into force on 1 August 2012.

There area currently two designated ECAs, both on sulphur oxides in the Baltic Sea area and the North Sea area.

Last month IMO adopted MARPOL amendments to designate certain waters adjacent to the coasts of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands as another ECA. The MARPOL amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2013, with the new ECA taking effect 12 months later.

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