

# MARPOL

International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships



North American Marine Environment Protection Association



## Oceans, lakes and rivers are the cradle of life on our planet.

Without them, no life on earth would exist. Unfortunately, the world's oceans, lakes and rivers have been seriously endangered by the actions of humans. The most serious threat is pollution, primarily from land-based sources and runoff, and includes oil, noxious liquids and harmful substances, sewage, garbage, and greenhouse gas emissions.



Photo: WikiCommons/Wberger

**MARPOL International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships** is an agreement, or convention, written by the members of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to control and prevent pollution from ships. Its objective is to preserve the marine environment by regulating the handling of oil, garbage, sewage, noxious liquids, harmful substances and air emissions aboard a vessel and to minimize damage from operational or accidental discharge of such substances into the water. To ensure the sustainable development and future operation of the maritime industry, we must all work together to prevent pollution and restore our world's oceans, lakes and rivers to healthy conditions.

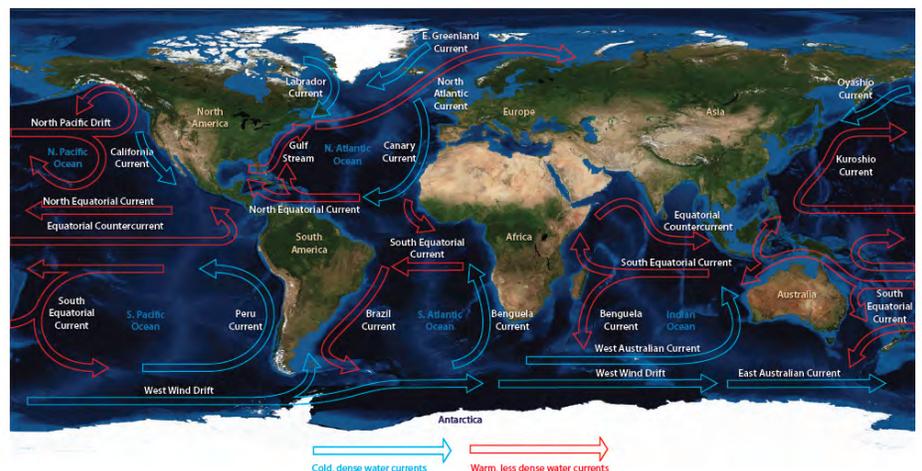
**IT'S ALL CONNECTED** - Oil, garbage and other materials travel around the entire world due to ocean currents, affecting marine life and people everywhere.



## Seafarers are especially entrusted with stewardship of the oceans.

Compliance with MARPOL regulations, when combined with accurate documentation, thorough training, and proper contingency planning will help marine organizations stay proactive in environmental preservation.

Take action today - join NAMEPA to help us "Save Our Seas!"



## ANNEX I : Oil Pollution

Discharging oil in the water can kill plants and animals by coating them with oil, suffocating them. Shipboard sources of oil pollution include engine room bilges, fuel tanks, bunkering operations, cargo operations (loading/discharging), tank washings, and ballasting/de-ballasting accidents. Generally, oil or oily mixtures should not be discharged into the water. When operationally necessary, these substances should only be discharged using special equipment and outside of prohibited areas.



## ANNEX II : Noxious Liquid Substances

Many chemicals are poisonous to sea life, so great care should be taken before dumping any liquid into the water. Chemicals can also contaminate the fresh water drinking supply for humans and make fish unsafe to eat. A complete list of noxious liquid substances is listed in the International Bulk Chemical Code (IBC) book, which classifies various liquids in terms of what level of hazard they pose to marine life and people if discharged into the sea. Check the MARPOL rules before discharging anything into the water.



## ANNEX III : Harmful Substances

Pollution of other harmful substances into the marine environment may come from loss overboard of harmful packaged goods. Standards exist for packing, labeling, documenting, stowing and limiting quantity of harmful substances. A list of substances that are classified as marine pollutants can be found in the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) code. Accidental loss overboard of containers, especially those which are known to contain marine pollutants, must be always be reported to shore authorities.



## ANNEX IV: Sewage

Sewage is any drainage and waste from toilets and urinals, medical areas like dispensaries and sick bays, and any locations that contain living animals. When untreated sewage is discharged into the sea, harmful bacteria and other disease-causing agents can spread, plants and animals can become sick, and the health of people who rely on seafood to eat or fresh water to drink is threatened. Having an approved sewage treatment system on board is critical.



## ANNEX V : Garbage

Garbage, especially plastic (which doesn't biodegrade), can kill animals when they become entangled or eat it. While the biggest source of coastal pollution is from people ashore, ships are also responsible for minimizing the impact. It is illegal to discharge all materials other than certain types of food and animal waste anywhere at sea. Review the MARPOL regulations, the vessel's Garbage Management Plan or the placard in the garbage storage area of your ship for specific instructions.



## ANNEX VI : Air Pollution

Ships are among the lowest sources of harmful exhaust, but need to do their part in minimizing the pollution from their airborne emissions from burning fuel to run engines and generators. Greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide contribute to climate change, and sulfur and nitrogen emissions also pollute the air. Ships operating in designated Emission Control Areas (ECAs) are required to comply with more stringent fuel, sulfur, and engine nitrogen oxides limits to avoid damage to human health and the environment.



For more detailed information on MARPOL and marine environmental conservation, please visit NAMEPA's website at [www.namepa.net](http://www.namepa.net)

NAMEPA is an independent, marine industry-led association which engages maritime businesses, government and the public to "Save our Seas" by promoting sound environmental practices. NAMEPA operates as a nongovernmental organization committed to preserving the marine environment through educating seafarers, port communities and students about the need and strategies for protecting this important global resource.

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To find out how you can become a member as a company, individual, or organization, please visit [www.NAMEPA.net](http://www.NAMEPA.net).