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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Emission Control Areas – a feasible, replicable pathway to achieving considerable emissions reductions and protecting human health and the environment

Submitted by FOEI, WWF, Pacific Environment and CSC

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document welcomes the declarations of intent from Canada for the designation of an Emission Control Area (ECA) in Canadian Arctic waters, and from the North-East Atlantic Ocean littoral states for the designation of an ECA in their waters as vital steps towards tackling harmful shipping emissions. The document also argues for the most integrated approach possible between these and other ongoing initiatives with a view to maximizing the economic, health, and environmental benefits of ECAs.

Strategic direction, if applicable: 4

Output: 4.1

Action to be taken: Paragraph 7

Related documents: MEPC 80/16/2 and MEPC 80/INF.35

Introduction

1 This document comments on document MEPC 80/16/2 (Canada) and document MEPC 80/INF.35 (Austria et al.) and is submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6.12.5 of the *Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies* (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.4).

2 The co-sponsors welcome the declaration of intent from Canada to propose the designation of an Emission Control Area (ECA) in Canadian Arctic waters (MEPC 80/16/2) and the information from the North-East Atlantic Ocean littoral states and others on the ongoing work regarding the possible designation of a North-East Atlantic Ocean ECA.

3 The designation of these ECAs is a fundamental step towards cleaner air and healthy coastal communities, by tackling the harmful effects of nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulphur oxides (SO_x) and particulate matter (PM) in particularly affected regions and sensitive ecosystems like the Arctic. There are also positive global climate implications from establishing ECAs, especially in the Arctic. A co-benefit of reducing SO_x and PM emissions, is a likely reduction in Black Carbon (BC) emissions. BC constitutes 20% of the shipping sector's global climate impact, and it is five times more potent a climate disruptor when emitted in the Arctic region from sources such as shipping. Some of the most climate vulnerable communities live in the Arctic; they do not contribute to the climate crisis but are feeling the brunt of its impacts.

The need for an integrated approach

4 Minimizing the impacts of air pollution coming from ships is of the utmost importance and should be treated as such when considering the adoption of any kind of measure. In this regard, the designation of ECAs and the uptake of cleaner fuels, particularly a switch to distillate, offer a feasible pathway to achieving considerable emissions reductions and, consequently, protecting human health and the environment. A 2018 study commissioned by the European Commission and undertaken by the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) clearly indicates that the designation of further ECAs for all European Seas would result in a more than 90% reduction in SO₂ emissions, and a reduction in NO_x emissions by 2050¹.

5 Proposals for new ECAs including the recent adoption of the Mediterranean area SO_x ECA, the possible designation of an ECA in Canadian Arctic waters, and the possible designation of additional ECAs referred to in document MEPC 80/INF.35 in the North-East Atlantic highlight the need for improved protection of the broader North-East Atlantic Ocean region through an ECA, thus maximizing the benefits for every littoral state in the region.

6 The benefits that will derive from the proposed designation of an ECA in Canadian Arctic waters and in the North-East Atlantic Ocean have the potential to drive broad positive change in the respective regions. But to maximize these benefits, the co-sponsors urge other countries to follow suit by adopting ECAs in their respective waters whilst stepping away from counterproductive solutions, including switching to liquefied natural gas (LNG) and to alternative compliance methods, particularly exhaust gas cleaning systems (EGCS), also referred to as scrubbers. A recent study by the International Council on Clean Transport (ICCT) shows that use of LNG does not result in climate benefits due to methane slip. If ships run on 100% fossil LNG, methane emissions will triple by 2030, and even if 100% renewable LNG is used, methane emissions will still double by 2030². And the environmental impacts of scrubbers are also alarming, as they result in large volumes of contaminant laden wastewater which is often dumped into the ocean, turning an air pollution problem into an ocean pollution problem, which is unacceptable and likely contrary to UNCLOS (MEPC 79/5/3).

Action requested of the Committee

7 The Committee is invited to note the information contained in paragraphs 2 to 6 and to support the designation of new ECAs in Canadian Arctic waters (MEPC 80/16/2) and in the North-East Atlantic Ocean (MEPC 80/INF.35).

¹ Cofala, J., Amann, M., Borken-Kleefeld, J., Gomez-Sanabria, A., Heyes, C., Kiesewetter, G., Sander, R., Schoepp, W., Holland, M., Fagerli, H., Nyiri, A. (2018), The Potential for Cost-Effective Air Emission Reductions from International Shipping Through Designation of Further Emission Control Areas in EU Waters with Focus on the Mediterranean Sea. IIASA (International Institute for Applied Analysis), December 2018. https://previous.iiasa.ac.at/web/home/research/researchPrograms/air/Shipping_emissions_reductions_main.pdf

² Comparing the future demand for, supply of, and life-cycle emissions from bio, synthetic, and fossil LNG marine fuels in the European Union. <https://theicct.org/publication/lng-marine-fuel-sep22/>