

**MCI Circular 308/2024**

**To: Vessel Owners, Managers, Masters, Officers, Deputy Registrars and Other Interested Parties**

**Subject: Mediterranean Sea inclusion in ECA**

**Attachments**

- Resolution MEPC.361(79) - Amendments To The Annex Of The Protocol Of 1997 To Amend The International Convention For The Prevention Of Pollution From Ships, 1973, As Modified By The Protocol Of 1978 Relating Thereto (Mediterranean Sea Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides and Particulate Matter)

**Date: 27th December 2024**

**Summary**

Kia Orana,

We are writing to inform you of the upcoming implementation of the Mediterranean Sea Emission Control Area (Med ECA) as adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) through Resolution MEPC.361(79). This measure is part of global efforts to reduce air pollution from ships and protect the marine and coastal environment.

**Key Details:**

1. **Implementation Date:** The Med ECA will come into force on **1 May 2025**.
2. **Regulatory Framework:** Ships operating within the designated Med ECA will be required to comply with stricter emission standards for sulfur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>). Specifically:
  - o Fuel oil used onboard ships must have a sulfur content not exceeding **0.10% m/m**.
  - o Alternatively, ships may use approved equivalent methods, such as exhaust gas cleaning systems (EGCS), to achieve equivalent emission reductions.
3. **Geographical Scope:** The Med ECA covers the entire Mediterranean Sea, as defined in Annex VI of MARPOL. All ships operating in this area must adhere to the new regulations.
4. **Compliance:**
  - o Ship operators are encouraged to start preparations to ensure compliance by reviewing fuel procurement practices, updating operational procedures, and ensuring proper crew training.
  - o Port State Control (PSC) inspections will include verification of compliance with the Med ECA requirements.

**Benefits:**



- Reduction of sulfur emissions will contribute to improved air quality and public health in coastal and port communities.
- It will also help mitigate environmental damage, particularly acidification, to sensitive marine ecosystems.

**Actions Required:**

1. Review and ensure that ships operating in the Med ECA comply with the 0.10% sulfur limit or have alternative compliance mechanisms in place.
2. Update documentation, such as the Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP), to include compliance measures for the Med ECA.
3. Engage with suppliers to secure compliant low-sulfur fuel or alternative technologies.
4. Provide training to crew members on the requirements and operational adjustments related to the Med ECA.

Owners and managers can address their queries to the following email address:  
[technical@maritimecookislands.com](mailto:technical@maritimecookislands.com)

**RESOLUTION MEPC.361(79)**

**(adopted on 16 December 2022)**

**AMENDMENTS TO THE ANNEX OF THE PROTOCOL OF 1997 TO AMEND THE  
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE PREVENTION OF POLLUTION FROM SHIPS,  
1973, AS MODIFIED BY THE PROTOCOL OF 1978 RELATING THERETO**

**(Mediterranean Sea Emission Control Area for  
Sulphur Oxides and Particulate Matter)**

THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE,

RECALLING Article 38(a) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Marine Environment Protection Committee conferred upon it by international conventions for the prevention and control of marine pollution from ships,

RECALLING ALSO article 16 of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocols of 1978 and 1997 relating thereto (MARPOL), which specifies the amendment procedure and confers upon the appropriate body of the Organization the function of considering amendments thereto for adoption by the Parties,

HAVING CONSIDERED, at its seventy-ninth session, proposed amendments to MARPOL Annex VI, concerning the Mediterranean Sea Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides and Particulate Matter, which were circulated in accordance with article 16(2)(a) of MARPOL,

1 ADOPTS, in accordance with article 16(2)(d) of MARPOL, amendments to MARPOL Annex VI, the text of which is set out in the annex to the present resolution;

2 DETERMINES, in accordance with article 16(2)(f)(iii) of MARPOL, that the amendments shall be deemed to have been accepted on 1 November 2023 unless prior to that date, not less than one third of the Parties or Parties the combined merchant fleets of which constitute not less than 50% of the gross tonnage of the world's merchant fleet, have communicated to the Organization their objection to the amendments;

3 INVITES the Parties to note that, in accordance with article 16(2)(g)(ii) of MARPOL, the said amendments shall enter into force on 1 May 2024 upon their acceptance in accordance with paragraph 2 above;

4 ALSO INVITES the Parties to note that, in accordance with regulation 14.7 of MARPOL Annex VI, ships operating in the Mediterranean Sea Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides and Particulate Matter are exempt from the requirements in paragraphs 4 and 6 of regulation 14 of MARPOL Annex VI and from the requirements of paragraph 5 of that regulation insofar as they relate to paragraph 4 of that regulation until 1 May 2025;

5 INVITES coastal States of the Mediterranean Sea Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides and Particulate Matter to ratify and effectively implement MARPOL Annex VI, as soon as possible, if they have not yet done so, at least by the date of entry into force of the said amendments;

6 REQUESTS the Secretary-General, for the purposes of article 16(2)(e) of MARPOL, to transmit certified copies of the present resolution and the text of the amendments contained in the annex to all Parties to MARPOL;

7 ALSO REQUESTS the Secretary-General to transmit copies of the present resolution and its annex to Members of the Organization which are not Parties to MARPOL.

- 2 -

## ANNEX

**AMENDMENTS TO MARPOL ANNEX VI****(Mediterranean Sea Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides and Particulate Matter)****Regulation 14***Sulphur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>) and particulate matter*

1 At the end of paragraph 3.3, the word "and" is deleted. At the end of paragraph 3.4, "." is replaced by "; and". A new paragraph 3.5 is added as follows:

"5 the Mediterranean Sea Emission Control Area, which means the area described by the coordinates provided in appendix VII to this annex."

**Appendix VII***Emission control areas (regulations 13.6 and 14.3)*

2 A new paragraph 4 is inserted, as follows:

"4 In respect of the application of regulation 14.4, the Mediterranean Sea Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides and Particulate Matter includes all waters bounded by the coasts of Europe, Africa and Asia, and is described by the following coordinates:

- .1 the western entrance to the Straits of Gibraltar, defined as a line joining the extremities of Cape Trafalgar, Spain (36°11'.00 N, 6°02'.00 W) and Cape Spartel, Morocco (35°48'.00 N, 5°55'.00 W);
- .2 the Strait of Canakkale, defined as a line joining Mehmetcik Burnu (40°03'N, 26°11'E) and Kumkale Burnu (40°01'.00 N, 26°12'.00 E); and
- .3 the northern entrance to the Suez Canal excluding the area enclosed by geodesic lines connecting points 1-4 with the following coordinates:

Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	31°29'.00 N	32°16'.00 E
2	31°29'.00 N	32°28'.48 E
3	31°14'.00 N	32°32'.62 E
4	31°14'.00 N	32°16'.00 E