



COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS

International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004 (BWM)

SUBJECT CATEGORY:

Marine / Oceans

TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:

Multilateral

FORM:

Legally-binding treaty

STATUS:

- Opened for adoption on February 13, 2004
- Canada acceded to the convention in 2010 and it will come into force September 8, 2017.
- 54 countries representing 53% of world shipping have ratified the Convention.

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:

Lead: Transport Canada

Partners: Environment and Climate Change
Canada
Department of Fisheries and Oceans

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Web Links:

[International Maritime Organization](#)

Contacts:

[Transport Canada Inquiry Centre](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:

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REFERENCE #:

M-M&O-5/EN

OBJECTIVE, KEY ELEMENTS AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The objective of this Convention is to prevent, reduce and control the intentional or accidental introduction of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens (e.g., invasive species) which may cause significant and harmful changes to the marine environment, human health, property and resources.

Key elements of the Convention require all ships to implement a Ballast Water Management Plan. All ships will have to maintain a Ballast Water Record Book and will be required to carry out ballast water management procedures to given standards. Parties to the Convention are given the option to take additional measures which are subject to criteria set out in the Convention and to International Maritime Organization (IMO) guidelines.

The ballast water management standards will be phased in over a period of time. Eventually most ships will need to install an on-board ballast water treatment system. In the meantime, ships must exchange their ballast water mid-ocean.

The Convention is expected to reduce the introduction and spread of new aquatic species, including bacteria and other microbes, micro algae and various aquatic plant and animal species in Canada and globally.

CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

Canada played a key role in the development of the Convention and continues to play an active role in international discussion on the Convention and its implementation at the IMO.

Once the Convention is brought into force, Canada will enforce the Convention's standards, timelines and other requirements for vessels flying Canada's flag. Canada will also inspect and enforce the Convention's requirements on other ships operating in waters under Canadian jurisdiction.



RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

Canada will amend the Ballast Water Control and Management Regulations under the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001* to bring the Convention into force in Canada. Until these amendments are made, Canada will continue to apply the existing Ballast Water Control and Management Regulations.

Canada faces certain technical and regional compatibility factors that pose challenges to ships operating primarily on the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Seaway system. As the Convention has not yet entered into force, Canada will continue to monitor these challenges and is working to resolve them through its engagement with the United States and other stakeholders towards compatible, fair, practicable and environmentally protective requirements meeting Canada's international obligations. Canada remains committed to the Convention.

Canada will remain active in the international discourse on the implementation of the Convention at the IMO.

Canada also continues to co-operate on the joint oversight of ballast water management and alien invasive species with the United States through the *Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement*.

Reports

Canadian activities are documented in the proceedings of IMO Committee Meetings and published on the IMO web site. Transport Canada reports on ballast water management through its Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy.