

Data, trends and perspectives for the management of ship-generated waste reception port facilities in Greece

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SUMMARY

Ports generate, receive, manage, and handle a large volume of different kinds of different wastes and these wastes are viewed by the port authorities as one of the most important environmental issues, with they must to deal with. The ship-port interface is recognized as being of critical importance for the reduction of illegal discharges of ship-generated wastes and of cargo residues to the sea by managing the availability and use of appropriate waste reception port facilities.

This specific waste management problem is not new, as ever since there has been shipping, there has been also ships' waste. The 1954 OILPOL Convention, attempted to tackle the problem of sea pollution mainly by oil, while later, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78) by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), made the creation of respective facilities a requirement for the ports of the states that would ratified it. However, as the relevant provisions have been long considered as rather inadequate, European Union moved on and conducted a specific legislation (Directive 2000/59/EC) in order to (a) improve the enforcement regime, (b) make stricter the obligation of ports to provide availability of adequate ships' wastes port reception facilities, (c) strongly encourage ships to deliver their wastes to these facilities, and (d) enhance the protection of the marine and coastal environment, by preventing the illegal discharging of wastes from ships. Furthermore, the European Commission (EC) recently carried out in 2015 an evaluation of the implementation of the Directive, as well as an impact assessment on potential legislative changes, aimed to further strengthening the implementation of this Directive.

Through the respective Ministerial Decree 3418/07/2002, which has been later replaced by the M.D. 8111.1/41/09/2009, Greece has fully adopted the provisions and requirements of the Directive 2000/59/EC. This national legislation covers all ships, whatever their flag, as well as all the ports, including marinas and fishing shelters. Each port's administrative body must ensure that appropriate port reception facilities (PRF) are provided and that they can meet the needs of the ships, without causing too many delays. These facilities must be relevant to the port size and able to handle efficiently the specific categories of ship discharging wastes. A specific waste reception and handling plan must be drawn up for each port and these plans must to be approved by the competent Ministry. The plans must be re-approved (after evaluation) at least every three years. The ship-generated wastes imply all waste, including slops, sludge, sewage, garbage, and residues other than cargo residues, which can be generated during the service of a ship. The legislation also defines the notification and the cost recovery systems to encourage the delivery of wastes on land and discourage their dumping at sea. All ships calling at a port will bear a significant part of the cost, whether they use the facilities or not. It also defines a 25% minimum inspection requirement, mainly on ships which have not complied with the notification requirement, as well as on those ships suspected of not having delivered their waste as a priority.

In general, the Greek ports have corresponded adequately for these requirements, by developing relevant management plans, applying of fee systems and eventually, by transferring to external companies the reception, management, and final disposal/recovery of ship-generated wastes, as a specific contract work. Given the fact that each port is unique in terms of size, administrative capacity, physical infrastructure and operations, some problems towards the optimal application and interpretation of the legislation still remain in certain ports, mainly in those of smaller size.

In this study we are focusing on the state of ships' wastes reception facilities in the case of Hellenic ports, based on data available either publicly, or after communication of the authors with ports. The paper provides information on the extent that the current practices have achieved a satisfactory level of compliance with the regulatory framework, comments the quantities and types of the delivered wastes in larger and smaller ports (e.g. Piraeus, Thessaloniki, Volos, Nea Moudania etc.), records the type of the available facilities, technologies and services available, states the main private companies/operators, acting as contractors for ships' waste collection and management, highlights the structure of the various fee systems applied and comments the need for further improvement in the ships' waste chain management at Hellenic level.

