

【欧州】【海事】

Internal regulation of gas emissions: Considerations regarding the extension of the North Sea and English Channel ECA region and the introduction of a Mediterranean Sea ECA

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【概要 : Summary】

Sulphur Emission Control Areas (SECAs) and Emission Control Areas (ECAs) for SO_x, NO_x and PM were established to minimize airborne emissions from ships in specified areas. In Europe, there currently exist two SECAs including the Baltic Sea, and the North Sea and English Channel. However, so far there is no SECA in the Mediterranean Sea. Although the Mediterranean region will benefit from the new global sulphur emission requirements, which will reduce the allowed sulphur content in marine fuels outside emission control areas (ECAs) from 3.5% currently to 0.50% m/m as of 2020, the introduction of a Mediterranean Sea ECA would further reduce the sulphur limit to 0.1% m/m. The EU Member State France is taking the lead for proposing a Med-ECA and the Spanish government might follow the call to support the idea of a Med-ECA. Besides, there exists an initiative to extend the North Sea and English Channel SECA beyond the currently existing regional limits.

However, in both cases, it can be expected that the application preparation procedure and the approval process will take several years. The application for the extension of the North Sea SECA could be delayed by the UK's exit of the EU.

【記事 : Article】

Based on the International Maritime Organisation (IMO)'s MARPOL Annex VI, SECAs and ECAs were

established to minimize airborne emissions like for SO_x, NO_x and PM from ships in specified areas. The MARPOL Annex VI amendments were transposed into EU law by Directive 2012/33/EU, which was later repealed by Directive (EU) 2016/802. The EU's SECAs/ECAs' sulphur contents limit for marine fuels of 0.1% sulphur contents were introduced in 2015. The existing SECAs and ECAs have had a positive impact on the air quality in the dedicated areas. With the start of the introduction of the global 0.50% maximum sulphur content requirement in 2020, it can be expected that the positive impact on air quality will be wider spread. However, there are doubts that the 0.50% sulphur limit will have the same benefits as the 0.10% sulphur limit in the European SECAs. Therefore, recently, there emerged considerations to extend the already existing SECA in the North Sea and English Channel and to introduce an ECA in the Mediterranean Sea.

Currently, the North Sea and English Channel SECA includes the North Sea up to 62 degrees North and as far west as 4 degrees West, which is in line with Scotland. The English Channel ECA extends to 5 degrees West. However, this means that the West coast of the United Kingdom is currently excluded from the North European ECA regions. There are preliminary talks on whether the North European emission control area could be extended into the Atlantic, covering all the waters of the UK, Ireland and France. However, the finalisation of the proposal to extending the North

Sea and English Channel ECA is likely to take some time, due to the UK leaving the EU. In the UK, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) had approached the Department for Transport in order to look into the possibility to liaising with Ireland and France to extend the range of the current ECA. However, as most UK government bodies are currently focusing on the challenges of Brexit, the SECA extension has lost importance. Furthermore, it is also unclear if the investigation into creating a new ECA will be for sulphur only, or if it will also include NO_x emissions.

Also regarding the Med-ECA, there are increasingly voices from different groups in the EU Member States along the Mediterranean coast to stricter regulate the air pollution from ships. France has been taking the lead on Mediterranean countries and on 25 October 2018, at the side-lines of the IMO's 73rd Marine Environmental Protection Committee meeting (MEPC 73), France presented the results of its impact assessment of the possible implementation of an Mediterranean ECA (Med-ECA). The report indicates that a combined ECA with both, SO_x and NO_x emission limits, would have the greatest positive effect regarding socio-economic and ecological benefits for the Mediterranean countries. The European Commission and the IMO Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) are currently also commissioning respective studies to assess the impact of ECAs in the Mediterranean Sea. The Spanish government might follow the call and support the idea of a Med-ECA. The City Council of Barcelona already called on Spanish government to support an ECA application for the Mediterranean Sea. The Barcelona City Council urged the Spanish Government to actively support the creation of a Med-ECA, as soon as possible, and to thereby support the efforts by France and other coastal states of the Mediterranean Sea. The continued success of the ECAs in Northern Europe and other areas, demonstrate that the creation of an ECA in the Mediterranean Sea could also generate significant benefits in terms of improved air quality, not only in the maritime routes and coastal areas but also in the

cities situated on the Spanish peninsula.

However, similar to the situation prior to the agreement to introduce a SECA in the Baltic Sea, when especially Russia was rejecting the idea of setting up ECAs, there are some EU Member States that are not in favour of the designation of a Med-ECA.

In particular, the EU Member States Greece, Malta, Cyprus are among those countries rejecting the set-up of a Med-ECA, due to the stringent environmental regulations. This rejection could complicate the approval of the Med-ECA. Furthermore, the fact that not all northern African countries are actually parties to the MARPOL Annex VI could also complicate the designation process of a Med-ECA.

Nevertheless, the introduction of the 2020 general sulphur limit of 0.5% could help to convince at least those EU Member States currently reluctant to support a Med-ECA, as the new global sulphur limit will include all those reluctant EU Member States in the Mediterranean. They will have to comply with the much stricter global sulphur limit of 0.5% as of 2020 even before the Med-ECA will become a reality. After this first step, the introduction of the Med-ECA might become a less difficult, as shipping operators and owners will already have taken necessary measures to comply with the 2020 global sulphur limit.

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