

German Maritime LNG Platform supports ban on Heavy Fuel Oil Use in Arctic

14 June 2017 – This week the German Maritime LNG Platform signed the Arctic Commitment, joining a diverse group of international companies, organisations, politicians and polar explorers calling for a ban on heavy fuel oil (HFO) use in Arctic shipping,

"The Clean Arctic Alliance welcomes the German Maritime LNG Platform as a signatory of the Arctic Commitment. The LNG Platform joins a growing international movement calling for a ban on the use of HFO by ships in the Arctic's pristine and fragile environment", said Sian Prior, Lead Advisor to the Clean Arctic Alliance, a coalition of international non-governmental organisations that launched the Arctic Commitment in January 2017.

"By switching to less-polluting alternatives to HFO, such as LNG, the shipping industry has a real opportunity to lead the path away from the use of heavy fuel oil and towards a sustainable future, before a ban is considered by the IMO", she added.

"With this July's meeting of the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee fast approaching, it's time for companies and governments to support decisive action to clean up Arctic shipping. The Platform's support comes at a crucial time for us".

Tessa Rodewaldt, Managing Director of the Platform, stressed:

"We're delighted to support the Arctic Commitment and throw our weight behind the international campaign to ban the use of HFO as a shipping fuel in the Arctic region. Shipping needs to become more sustainable and international regulation on shipping emissions is increasing, for the better. Such regulations must also apply to the Arctic region, which is particularly fragile. By using LNG, emissions can be substantially reduced, which lowers the impact of shipping on the natural environment of the Arctic region."

The Clean Arctic Alliance is an international coalition of non-governmental groups campaigning for an International Maritime Organization (IMO) ban on HFO from Arctic shipping. The German partner of the alliance is the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU).

The German Maritime LNG Platform is an interest coalition of nearly 100 members and partners from the maritime sector both in Germany and abroad. Its objective is the establishment of a cleaner and more sustainable shipping sector through the use of LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) to substantially reduce pollutant emissions, such as SOx, NOx, CO2 and particulate matter (PM).

About Heavy Fuel Oil

- Heavy fuel oil (HFO) is a viscous fossil fuel used to power ships and deliver goods all over the world. As the dirtiest and most polluting of fuels, HFO is a problem wherever it's used, but if spilled in colder regions, such as Arctic waters, HFO breaks down even more slowly and can devastate livelihoods and ecosystems.
- HFO produces harmful and significantly higher emissions of air pollutants, including sulphur oxide, nitrogen oxide, particulate matter, and black carbon (BC). When emitted and deposited on Arctic snow or ice, the climate warming effect of black carbon is up to five times more than when emitted over open ocean.
- On March 16th 2017, the European Parliament voted to support a ban on HFO from Arctic waters, as part of the EU's "Arctic Resolution". The Resolution calls "on the Commission and the Member States to actively facilitate the ban on the use of heavy fuel oil (HFO) and carriage as ship fuel in vessels navigating the Arctic seas through MARPOL of IMO" (See Clean Arctic response)
- During March 2017, IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim attended the meeting of Arctic Council Senior Officials in Juneau, Alaska, where he highlighted the importance of safety of seafarers and protection of the Arctic environment.
- In December 2016, Canada and the US announced a joint "phase down" of HFO from their respective Arctic regions (see Clean Arctic Alliance response). In September 2016, both countries had formally notified the International Maritime Organization that a "heavy fuel oil spill in the Arctic could cause long-term damage to the environment".
- During the IMO's MEPC 70 meeting in October 2016, three papers addressing the HFO problem were presented, along with one on Arctic food security. In response, several Arctic countries, and in an unusual move, the IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim, stated that they shared the concerns summarised by the papers on the need for further consideration of the risks of HFO (see Clean Arctic Alliance response).
- The Clean Arctic Alliance believes that use of HFO in the Arctic can be stopped by 2020 if governments and business demand action by the International Maritime Organization to ban the use of HFO. The Alliance encourages the shipping industry to switch to higher quality, alternative fuels, such as LNG, before such a ban is in place.

The Arctic Commitment:

On January 25th 2017, expedition cruise ship operator Hurtigruten and the Clean Arctic Alliance signed the Arctic Commitment, which challenges businesses and organisations to step forward and call on the International Maritime Organization to implement a phase-out of polluting heavy fuel oil (HFO) from Arctic shipping by 2020.

A number of other organisations, including the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators, have also now signed the Arctic Commitment. The full text of the Arctic Commitment, and the list of signatories can be found here:

<http://www.hfofreearctic.org/en/arctic-commitment/>

About the Clean Arctic Alliance

The following not-for-profit organisations form the Clean Arctic Alliance, which is committed to achieving the phase-out of HFO as marine fuel in the Arctic:

Alaska Wilderness League, Bellona, Clean Air Task Force, Danish Ecological Council, Environmental Investigation Agency, European Climate Foundation, Friends of the Earth US, Greenpeace, Icelandic Nature Conservation Association, Nature And Biodiversity Conservation Union, Ocean Conservancy, Pacific Environment, Seas At Risk, Surfrider Foundation Europe, Transport & Environment and WWF.

For more information visit <http://www.hfofreearctic.org/>

The German Maritime LNG Platform

The German Maritime LNG Platform, created in 2014, is aimed at creating a more sustainable shipping sector through the use of LNG as a marine fuel in sea and inland shipping and as an energy source in ports. The Platform has nearly 100 national and international members and partners, among them ports, shipping and technology companies, infrastructure providers, suppliers, classification societies, shipyards and shipping and environmental organisations and associations. It successfully operates as a partner to both political and sector stakeholders, often acting as a broker between them. In particular, it closely co-operates with the German Federal Transport Ministry and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy to develop a strategy for the maritime use of LNG in Germany. It is also a member of the European Commission's European Sustainable Shipping Forum (ESSF).

For more information, please visit: www.lng-info.de

Contacts:

Tessa Rodewaldt, Managing Director, German Maritime LNG Platform
rodewaldt@lng-info.de; +49 17631128113

Dave Walsh, Communications Advisor, HFO-Free Arctic Campaign,
Dave.Walsh@HFOFreeArctic.org, +34 692 826 764

Information on NABU and the project (in German): <https://www.nabu.de/umwelt-und-ressourcen/verkehr/schifffahrt/21415.html>