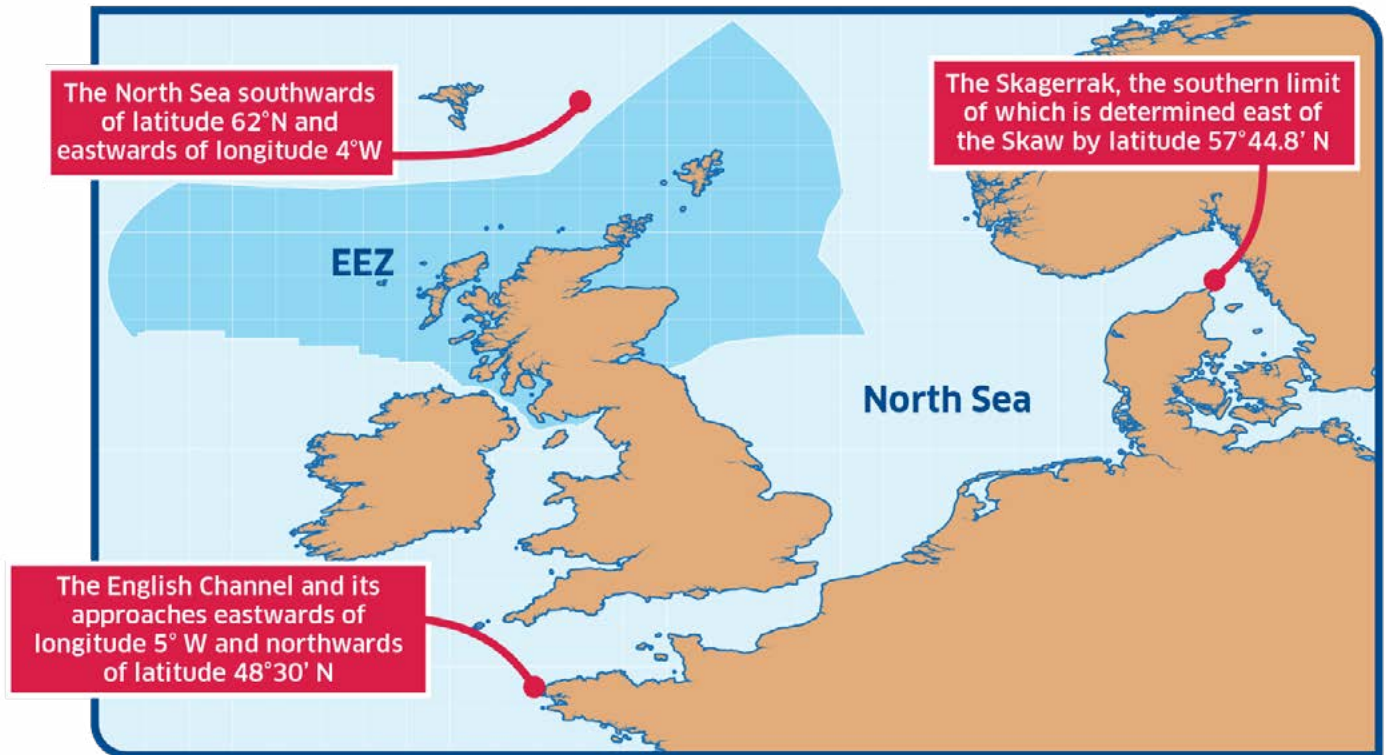


Caretakers of the Sea

Marine litter guidance and information for mariners



Overview

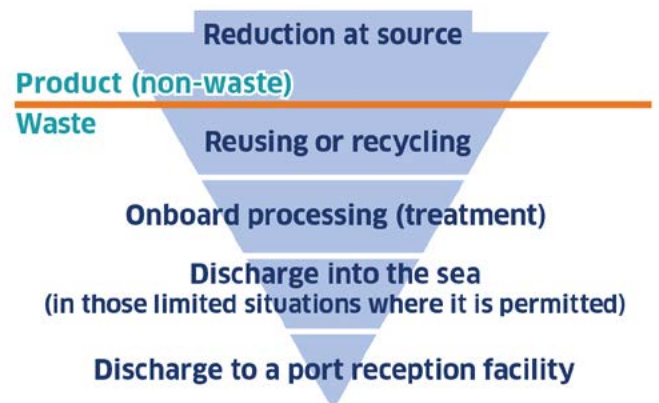
This leaflet is not a definitive statement of maritime law and does not constitute legal advice. It seeks to provide general guidance and insight on marine litter, garbage management and waste recycling. Individuals are responsible for seeking their own independent legal advice on the law and developing procedures in relation to waste management.

Background

Marine litter continues to be a global problem threatening ecosystems, and a proportion of that originates from marine industries. It also has socio-economic costs and can pose a threat to human health. We

are all caretakers of the sea and we each have a duty to ensure its sustainability and purity in the present and for the future.

Garbage management process



Discharge criteria

On 1 March 2018, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) introduced updated guidance on marine waste.

Table shows simplified overview of the discharge provisions of the revised MARPOL Annex V which entered into force on 1 March 2018. DISCLAIMER: Additional requirements may apply.

Garbage type ¹	All ships except platforms	
	Regulation 4 Outside special areas and Arctic waters (Distances are from the nearest land)	Regulation 6 Within special areas and Arctic waters (Distances are from nearest land, nearest ice-shelf or nearest fast ice)
Food waste comminuted or ground ²	>3 nm, en route and as far as practicable	>12 nm, en route and as far as practicable
Food waste not comminuted or ground	>12 nm, en route and as far as practicable	Discharge prohibited
Cleaning agents and additives ³ in deck and external surfaces washwater	Discharge permitted	Discharge permitted
All other garbage including plastics, synthetic ropes, fishing gear, plastic garbage bags, incinerator ashes, clinkers, cooking oil, floating dunnage, lining and packing materials, paper, rags, glass, metal, bottles, crockery and similar refuse	Discharge prohibited	Discharge prohibited

1 When garbage is mixed with or contaminated by other harmful substances prohibited from discharge or having different discharge requirements, the more stringent requirements shall apply.
 2 Comminuted or ground food waste must be able to pass through a screen with mesh no larger than 25 mm.
 3 These substances must not be harmful to the marine environment.



Waste reception facilities

The UK's Port Waste Reception Facilities Regulations put legal obligations on ports and vessels to manage ship generated waste. The requirements are set out as follows:

Ports and terminals

- All ports and terminals must provide adequate Port Waste Reception Facilities for waste generated by ships. Ports and terminals will have a Port Waste Management Plan in place and this plan will be available to the port users. The plan will provide information on the waste facilities including location of waste reception facilities, the types of wastes collected, contact details for service providers and procedures for delivery.
- If port users find that port waste facilities are not provided or are inadequate, an inadequacy report form can be completed this can be found in Annex D of MGN 563 Amendment 1.

Ships, fishing vessels and recreational craft

- Ships are required to notify the port about the waste they need to offload, they are required to deliver their waste and pay a mandatory charge for use of the port waste reception facilities.
- However, fishing vessels and recreational craft designed to carry less than 12 passengers are exempt from the requirement to notify and pay the mandatory charge. These vessels must make local arrangements for waste collection and pay for delivery of ship-generated wastes on a commercial basis.
- [Further guidance can be found here.](#)

North Sea special area

The North Sea area has been designated as a special area in relation to garbage since 1991. Within this special area, more stringent discharge requirements are applied for un-comminuted food waste (which has not yet ground down), non-harmful to marine environment cleaning agents, additives and animal carcasses. However the discharge of all other garbage remains prohibited.



Loss of fishing gear

MARPOL regulations require fishing vessels to record the discharge or loss of fishing gear in the Garbage Record Book or ship's logbook and require fishing vessels to report the accidental loss or discharge of fishing gear which poses a significant threat to the marine environment or navigation. Details of such losses or discharges should be sent to: environment@mcga.gov.uk

Fishing gear recycling

Scottish Government is committed to working with the fishing sector and coastal communities to develop proposals to tackle the issue of marine industry litter. In February 2019 we hosted the British-Irish Council Marine Litter Symposium to discuss with other administrations, fishers and experts how best to establish a recycling system for end of life fishing gear. We have begun work to better understand the volumes of fishing gear that reach their end of life annually and will use this information to inform collection and recycling options for the future.

Waste initiatives - 'Fishing For Litter'

KIMO's '[Fishing For Litter](#)' is an imaginative yet simple initiative that aims to reduce marine litter by involving one of the key stakeholders, the fishing industry. It raises awareness of marine litter within the fishing industry, local communities and with school children.

The project provides vessels in the scheme with waste bags which are then filled at sea with waste passively caught during normal fishing activities. Operational or galley waste bags are deposited in participating harbours on the quayside where they are moved by harbour staff to a dedicated skip or bin for disposal. Operational or galley waste generated on board, and hence the responsibility of the vessel, continues to go through established harbour waste management systems.

There are 20 harbours currently participating and providing cost free landing facilities for marine litter from fishing vessels. They encompass the whole of the Scottish coastline.



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