

List of jurisdictions restricting or banning scrubber wash water discharges

Last updated 16 December 2024

The MARPOL convention allows for the use of Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems¹ (EGCS, more commonly referred to as scrubbers) as an alternative means of complying with the 2020 low sulphur regulations.

However, some jurisdictions have imposed local regulations which restrict or prohibit the discharge of wash water from scrubbers within their waters.

The list below includes countries and ports where such restrictions are currently understood to be in place based on information received by the Association or the Clean Shipping Alliance at the time of publication. However, the list should not be seen as necessarily complete and is for guidance only, in particular noting that local legislation can be subject to change at short notice. It is therefore important that Members monitor the current situation closely and always contact their local agent/representative prior to arrival. This should include seeking confirmation of the latest situation regarding any applicable requirements relating to the operation of scrubbers and any permission required from the relevant local authorities for their use.

Please feel free to contact the Britannia's loss prevention department if further assistance or clarification is needed. Members are also welcome to notify us should they experience any restrictions or ban in a port or country not currently on the list.

COUNTRY	IS THE DISCHARGE OF WASH WATER PROHIBITED?	PORT/SEA AREA	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Argentina	No, the prohibition is currently suspended	All	<u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u> Disposición DISFC-2020-22-APN-DPAM#PNA dated 24/09/2020 issued by the Prefectura Naval, Dirección de Protección Ambiental suspended Disposición DISFC-2020-15-APN-DPAM#PNA dated 03/08/2020 which prohibited the

¹ Subject to approval by the Administration of its use in accordance with Regulation 4 of MARPOL Annex VI while taking into account the 2015 Guidelines for EGCS (IMO Resolution MEPC.259 (68)).

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			discharge of wash water in Argentinian territorial waters and ports. This took effect from 03/10/2020 .
Australia	Restricted	Territorial Waters of Australia	<p>As per Marine Notice 12/2022.AMSA allows vessels operating in Australian waters to use all scrubber systems – open, hybrid and closed – provided they are approved and operated in accordance with the IMO’s 2015 Guidelines for Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems.</p> <p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u> Port of Hastings According to information dated 27/01/2020 received from the harbour master, discharge of wash water from EGCS into Westernport waters are not permitted.</p>
Bahrain	Restricted	Within port limits of Bahrain including the anchorage area.	<p>The requirements are set out in Marine Notice PMA 03 2019. This confirms that wash water from open loop scrubbers is not permitted in Bahraini territorial waters and exclusive economic zone (EEZ) unless it can be proved that the discharge complied with MEPC 259(68) and there is no negative impact on marine ecosystems.</p> <p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p>

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			Vessels must obtain a permit from the Marine Safety & Environment Protection Directorate before discharging wash water anywhere in Bahrain waters.
Belgium	Yes	All ports and inland waters	The European Commission (EC)'s 2016 Note on discharge of scrubber wash water prohibits the discharge in ports and inland waters but is allowed in coastal and open seawaters when at least 3nm off the coast and if the discharge does not imperil the objectives of the EC Water Framework Directive (WFD), 2000/60/EC.
Belize	Yes	Territorial waters and port areas of Belize	<u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u> Discharge of wash water prohibited in territorial waters and port areas according to Marine Circular 01/2018 - BPA/MS/23-1/2018(98) dated 12/12/2018.
Bermuda	Yes	Territorial waters of Bermuda	The requirements are set out in the document Environmental Policy for Ships , which confirms that in Bermuda's waters open loop scrubbers are prohibited, while prior approval needs to be sought from the Environmental Authority to use a closed loop scrubber.
Brazil	Yes	Certain bulk terminals	<u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u>

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			<p>Diretoria de Portos e Costas (DPC) Carta Circular 7/2019 dated 22/12/2019 states:</p> <p><i>3.4 - The ships that choose to use the Exhaust Gas Cleaning System - EGCS (Scrubbers) must have the equipment approved by a Classification Society, have an approved SOx emission compliance plan, as well as the approved documentation in accordance with the guidelines from the MEPC 259(68).</i></p> <p>The exception to above are the bulk terminals/ports operated by Vale S.A., which specifically do not allow discharge of wash water within their waters as per Statement of 20 Dec 2019. Vale has also “recommended” that wash water is not discharged once entering into waters 24 nm from the coast line.</p>
Canada	Yes	Port of Vancouver	<p>According to the Port of Vancouver – Port Information Guide section 14.5. The discharge of wash water from exhaust gas cleaning systems (EGCS) from all fuel combustion machinery (excluding engines in use for propulsion) into the environment is not permitted while a vessel is at anchorage or at berth within the Port of Vancouver. The change-over should be affected as soon as possible after arrival to anchorage or berth and as late as possible before departure. EGCS overboard discharge valves should be shut and secured/sealed in closed position while the vessels are in the Port of Vancouver.</p>
China	Yes	All Inland river & coastal ECA ports including the Bohai Rim Sea	<p>Our correspondent has issued the following circular as guidance Huatai PNI1907 confirming further details of the restricted areas. Further details of the China MSA guidelines on Air Pollution</p>

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			Emissions are provided in Huatai PNI2001 , which includes details of the procedure which may be adopted by the Maritime Authorities for inspecting scrubbers.
Cyprus	Restricted	Anchorage and port areas	<p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>According to the Cyprus Port Authority (CPA) Regulations of CA 373/2016 Part II - Cyprus Port Authority, ships requiring to use scrubbers at Cyprus' ports or anchorage areas must submit a written request for assessment and approval by the CPA at least 48 hours prior to the arrival of the ship. The written request shall provide the following detailed information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the location that EGCS will be used (port, anchor); and - the type of EGCS to be used.
Denmark (From 1 July 2025)	Yes	Territorial waters of Denmark	The ban on ships' discharge of scrubber water will apply in the Danish territorial sea, 12 nautical miles (about 22 km) from the coast. The ban will come into effect on 1 July 2025, for ships with scrubbers in open operation, where the wash water is discharged into the sea. For ships with scrubbers in closed operation, the ban on water discharge will take effect on 1 July 2029
Egypt	Yes	Suez canal waters Egyptian territorial waters and all Egyptian ports, including Alexandria and Damietta	SCA Circular No 8/2019 and subsequent Clarification circular issued confirm that no waste water discharges are permitted during Suez canal transits.

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			In addition, our correspondent has reported that the use of all types of scrubber (open/closed/hybrid) is prohibited in Egyptian territorial waters and all Egyptian ports, including Alexandria and Damietta, until Egypt ratifies Annex VI of MARPOL.
Estonia	Restricted	All ports	Estonian Transport Administration Circular No.4 states detailed requirements for waste water discharge, including the need for prior port authorisation if wash water is to be discharged in port areas.
Finland	Yes	Port of Porvoo (Neste Refinery Terminal)	It has been reported by our correspondent that the discharge of wash water is prohibited at the Neste Refinery, but no formal notice is available or of other similar port prohibitions. <u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u> Correspondence with the Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communication, dated 05/03/2021: Under Finnish legislation, the discharge of wash waters from open-loop scrubbers is allowed in Finnish ports and territorial waters. However, some ports such as Porvoo may have restricted the discharge in the port area under their own competence.
France	Yes	Cannes Cannes Bay Sustainability Charter	<u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u> Cannes - Restriction applies to cruise ships only in accordance with the Cannes Bay Sustainability Charter .

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		<p>Marseille, Le Havre, Cherbourg</p> <p>Reunion</p> <p>Dunkerque</p>	<p>Marseille, Le Havre, Cherbourg - French Code of Transports (Code de Transports), article R5333-28</p> <p>Reunion - Following correspondence with the Harbour Master, but no formal notice is available</p> <p>Dunkerque - Notification received by Clean ship Alliance Member on 04/05/2021, but no formal notice is available</p>
Germany	Yes	Inland waterways intended for general traffic including the Rhine, except for the stretch upstream of Rheinfelden. This includes ports along these waterways, for example on the Wesser, Rhine, Elbe and Kiel Canal.	Discharge is not allowed according to the Convention on the Collection, Deposit and Reception of Waste Generated during Navigation on the Rhine and Other Inland Waterways CDNI Convention .
Ghana	Yes	Territorial waters of Ghana	<p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>Ghana Maritime Authority informs that the operation of open-loop scrubbers are not allowed in Ghanaian waters</p>
Gibraltar	Yes	Waters of Gibraltar	Our correspondent has reported that:

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			“Closed loop scrubbers are permitted in Gibraltar waters, Hybrid scrubbers operating in closed loop mode are also permitted, and open loop scrubbers are temporarily not permitted as a precautionary measure until the Gibraltar Government arrives at a definitive policy decision with regards to (solely) open loop scrubbers”
Hong Kong	Restricted	Hong Kong Waters	No stated ban on the discharge of waste water. However, use of scrubbers of any kind or other equivalent means in order to comply with the 2020 low sulphur requirements requires an exemption as detailed in the Air Pollution Control (Fuel for Vessels) Regulation, L.N. 135 of 2018 .
India	No	N/A	<u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u> The previous restriction on the discharge of wash water in Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (Circular APSEZL/Marine'16'2020) was revoked by Circular APSEZL/Marine/18/2020 dated 05/11/2020
Ireland	Yes	Ports of Dublin, Waterford, Cork and Shannon	Discharge of wash water is prohibited as per the following notices: Dublin Port NtM no. 37 of 2018 Port of Waterford Marine Notice of 2 January 2019 Port of Cork NtM no. 15 of 2018 Shannon Foynes Port

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Israel	Yes	All ports including ports anchorage area	Notice MP27 dated 11/01/2023 issued by the State of Israel Ministry of Transport states that discharging of wash water from open loop mode EGCS (scrubber) is prohibited when ship is berthing alongside in any Israeli port, including ports anchorage area.
Kenya	Yes	All ports	<p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>Kenya's National Guidelines for Implementation of IMO 2020 December 2019 include:</p> <p>7.1. The discharge of wash-water from open-loop scrubbers is prohibited in the Kenyan Ports limits. This is to maintain the standard of Kenya marine water quality.</p> <p>7.2 While in the port of Mombasa, ships fitted with hybrid type of scrubbers shall switch to the closed-loop mode of operation. Ships fitted with open-loop scrubbers shall switch over to compliant fuel oil.</p>
Latvia	No	N/A	<p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>Correspondence with the Maritime Administration of Latvia dated 17/02/2021 clarified that according to national legislation there are no restrictions on discharge of wash water from open loop scrubber systems in Latvia (within the territorial sea of Latvia).</p>

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			Further correspondence with the Harbour Master Port of Riga dated 16/02/2021 clarified that there are no special rules regulating operation of class approved exhaust gas cleaning system operation in port of Riga, therefore discharge of wash water is allowed in the port.
Lithuania	Restricted	Territorial waters of Lithuania	<u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u> Correspondence with the Deputy Harbour Master of Klaipeda Port dated 18/02/2021 clarified that Lithuanian legislation allows the discharge of wash water from open loop scrubbers within the territorial waters of Lithuania as well as the port of Klaipeda. However, for those using sodium hydroxide (caustic soda) as a main reagent the pH of the discharged water has to be below 8.0. All other chemical reagents alternative to sodium hydroxide is strictly prohibited to discharge in Lithuanian waters and scrubber has to be in closed loop mode.
Malaysia	Yes	Territorial waters of Malaysia (but see Additional Information re Malacca Strait transits)	Marine Department Malaysia Circular MSN 07/2019 confirms the discharge of open loop scrubbers is prohibited 12 nm from the nearest land. However, ships transiting the Malacca Strait and not bound for any Malaysian port are excluded from this ban, as per MSN 08/2019
Mauritius	Yes	Territorial waters of Mauritius	<u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u>

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			<p>Merchant Shipping Notice 2 of 2019 includes:</p> <p>3.9 ...except in the case of innocent passage, ships proceeding to Mauritius or other islands forming part of the territory of Mauritius that use high sulphur fuel oil (HSFO) in combination with open-loop scrubber shall changeover from HSFO to compliant fuel oil whenever they enter the territorial waters of Mauritius i.e. within 12 nm from the shore. Environmental legislation presently in force in Mauritius prohibits the discharge of wash water from open-loop scrubber.</p>
Mozambique	Yes	Prohibited in Nacala Port while restricted on other ports and waters of Mozambique	<p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>From correspondence with the harbour master of the Port of Maputo dated 18/03/2021 it was informed:</p> <p>a) Open loop scrubbers are allowed in the Mozambique territorial waters as long as they are working properly and following all the regulations.</p> <p>b) Within ports, estuaries or bays where the water salinity values fall from the standard ones considered for salt water (1,025 or more), Open Loop Scrubbers are not allowed and the ships must operate using compliant fuel.</p>

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			<p>From correspondence with the Chief Operating Officer of Nacala Port dated 22/03/2021 it was informed that discharge of wash water is not allowed in the Nacala Port in accordance with Decree 45/2006.</p>
New Zealand	No – but discouraged	Territorial waters of New Zealand	<p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>Ministry of the Environment's has issued its "Guidance on the use of Exhaust Gas cleaning Systems (scrubbers) for Ports, Regional Authorities and Ships" While the guidance is not statutory it encourages the industry to take the following measures until work currently underway in respect to the use of scrubbers has been completed.</p> <p>They request that all ships carrying scrubbers and operating in New Zealand's territorial waters engage with the relevant port and regional authorities, and as a precautionary measure that where possible they avoid discharging scrubber effluent close to shore by utilizing alternate options such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) preparing for entry into New Zealand waters by carrying compliant low sulphur fuel in order to use this when operating in sensitive environments, as identified by the relevant regional authorities. b) operating closed loop scrubber functionality in zero discharge mode and retaining any effluent on board until able to dispose of at the next available port facility.

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			c) discharging any open loop scrubber wash water outside territorial waters.
Norway	Yes	The recognised world heritage fjords consisting of the Geirangerfjord and Nærøyfjord areas	As per Section 14b of the Norwegian Maritime Authority's Regulations of 30 May 2012 No. 488 on environmental safety for ships and mobile offshore units , the use of open loop scrubbers is not permitted in the Norwegian world heritage fjords .
Oman	Yes	Territorial waters of Oman	<p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>Marine Notice No. 09/2020 includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ships that use open-loop ship exhaust gas- cleaning systems are prohibited from discharging washing water into Omani ports and territorial waters. 2. Ships that use hybrid exhaust gas cleaning systems must switch from the open loop mode to the closed loop mode when they reach the territorial waters and keep the washing residues on board and dispose of them in the designated facilities at the port. 3. Ships using closed-loop exhaust gas cleaning systems must be keep the washing residues onboard when they reach territorial water and dispose of it at designated facilities at the port.

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Pakistan	Yes	Port of Karachi	The Government of Pakistan's Ministry of Maritime Affairs (Ports & Shipping Wing) Circular No. 001/2020 confirms that the discharge of wash-water from open-loop scrubbers is prohibited in port (Karachi). While in port, ships fitted with hybrid scrubbers should switch to the closed-loop mode of operations. Ships fitted with open-loop scrubbers need to switch over to compliant fuel instead. It is advised that the switch over is carried out well in advance of the ship's arrival in port waters.
Panama	Yes	Panama Canal waters	Panama Canal Authority (ACP) NT Notice to Shipping No. N1 2020 Section 28 confirms that discharge of open loop scrubber waste water is not permitted, but the use of closed loop systems is permitted.
Portugal	Yes	Ports of Lisbon, Aveiro, Sines and Leixoes	<u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u> While federal Decree-Law no. 170/B/2014 allows the use of the open loop scrubbers as an alternative option to the compliant fuel, the ports' administrations can go beyond the federal regulation and apply additional restrictions. Discharge of wash water is not allowed from entry of the port, along the port channel and at berth (moored), until the ship leaves the port.
Qatar	Yes	Territorial waters of Qatar	<u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u> Qatar Petroleum MIC [Mesaieed Industrial City] Port Information and Regulations Guide - January 2020 states:

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			“As per Environmental Law, wash water originated from open loop scrubbers, containing chemicals and /or metals are prohibited to be discharged in Qatari waters.”
Romania	Yes	All ports	<u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u> Information received from the Romanian Naval Authority dated 30/03/2021 states there is no restriction of using open-loop scrubbers within Romanian territorial water but use is forbidden within port limits.
Saudi Arabia	Yes	All ports	The Saudi Ports Authority’s Circular No.(55) 2020 confirms that the discharge of wash water from scrubbers operating in open-loop mode is prohibited within Saudi Arabian ports until further notice.
Singapore	Yes	Port of Singapore (but see Additional Information re ships transiting the TSS)	Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) Port Marine Circular No. 19 of 2019 confirms that the discharge of wash water from scrubbers operating in open-loop mode is prohibited within the Singapore port limit from 1 January 2020. This does not apply to ships transiting the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) without calling into the Port of Singapore.

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			Further information can be found in the MPA guidance , including details of the expected switch over arrangements if a ship is fitted with a hybrid or open loop system.
Slovenia	Yes	Territorial waters of Slovenia	<p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>The Slovenian "Water Act" (Official gaz. no. 67/02) Article 66, paragraph 4 states: <i>"Waste water generated on vessels shall be prohibited from being discharged into waters directly from vessels, except for unpolluted cooling water"</i>.</p> <p>This prohibiting the use of open loop scrubbers and discharge of its wash water within the territorial waters of Slovenia.</p>
Spain	Yes	Port of Gijón	<p><u>Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>Information received from the port authorities of the Port of Gijon is that discharge of wash water is not permitted while within the port limits.</p>
Sweden	Yes	Petroport, Stenungsund, Trelleborg, Gothenburg, Oxelösund	<p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>That the authorities of the following ports have reported that the discharge of wash water is not allowed:</p>

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			<p>Petroport, Stenungsund – Section 12 of the harbour regulations states that “vessels calling at the Port are not allowed to use Open-loop System for scrubbers”.</p> <p>Port of Trelleborg – Paragraph 29 of the harbour regulations states “...nor is it permitted to discharge scrubber water from onboard treatment plants into the harbour basin”</p> <p>Port of Gothenburg – Item 8.10 of the harbour regulations states that it is not permitted to discharge contaminated water within the port area. Scrubbers used for exhaust gas cleaning are only permitted if operated in closed loop mode.</p> <p><u>Port of Oxelösund</u> The harbour regulations states that Open loop generated wash water is not allowed within the port basin.</p>
Trinidad & Tobago	Restricted	Territorial waters of Trinidad & Tobago	<p><u>The Clean Shipping Alliance advise:</u></p> <p>As per Shipping Notice SN5 – 2019 wash water residue generated by EGCS shall be delivered ashore to reception facilities and shall not be discharged to sea or incinerated unless authorization is given.</p>
Turkey	Yes	Territorial waters of Turkey	<p>Our correspondent has issued following circular [link] after the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization of Turkey has announced that wash water discharge is prohibited in Turkish waters. Vessels operating with open-loop scrubber will have to switch to low-sulphur compliant fuels when entering / sailing in</p>

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			Turkish waters. Circular from the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Urbanization number E-84973951-140.99-698452 dated 06/04/2021
UK	Yes	Ports of Forth and Tay	According to Notice to Mariners No 45 of 2019 Forth Ports and Port of Dundee Byelaw 59 specifically prohibits the discharge of materials into the Forth and Tay. This applies to discharge water from an “Open Loop” scrubber.
UK	Restricted	Port of Milford Haven	Milford Haven Port Authority’s (MHPA) Annual Standing Notice No 24 prohibits the discharge of exhaust gas scrubber wash water within its jurisdiction, unless the discharge is covered by a marine licence from Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
UK	Yes	Port of Tilbury	Forth Ports Limited’s Marine Guidelines and Port Information for the Ports of Tilbury and Tilbury 2 section 4.13 states the use of open scrubbers within Tilbury dock or Tilbury riverside berths is prohibited.
UAE	Yes	Fujairah	The Port of Fujairah’s Notice to Mariners No. 252 confirms that the use of open loop scrubbers is prohibited in port waters. Our correspondent has reported not having received notification of any such ban being in place in other ports in the UAE
USA	Restricted	US waters subject to the 2013 Vessel General Permit regulations (within 3 NM of US shores)	The U.S. federal 2013 Vessel General Permit (VGP) section 2.2.26 cover the discharge limits for scrubber wash water and has one variation compared to IMO MEPC 259(68) guidelines : that the pH of the discharged wash water to be no less than 6.0, as measured at the vessel’s overboard discharge.

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USA	Restricted	State of California	California – California Air Resource Board (CARB) regulations prohibits the use of scrubbers within 24nm of the California coast as an alternative air emissions means of compliance. A reminder of the requirements was issued on 21/01/20 at CARB MN 2020-1 .
USA	Yes	State of Connecticut	Connecticut – Section 6.5.9 of the 2013 VGP confirms that discharge of wash water into Connecticut waters from any vessel covered under the VGP or small Vessel General Permit (sVGP) is prohibited.
USA	Restricted	State of Hawaii	Hawaii - Section 6.7 of the 2013 VGP states that the conditional section 401 WQC (Water Quality Certification) effectively allows for discharge of wash water in Hawaii, subject to compliance with certain terms (pH levels of wash water must be 8.0 +/- 0.5pH) as stipulated in the same section of the 2013 VGP.