

**CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION OF MARINE POLLUTION  
BY DUMPING OF WASTES AND OTHER MATTER (1972)**

(This text contains all the amendments which entered into force)

THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THIS CONVENTION,

RECOGNIZING that the marine environment and the living organisms which it supports are of vital importance to humanity, and all people have an interest in assuring that it is so managed that its quality and resources are not impaired;

RECOGNIZING that the capacity of the sea to assimilate wastes and render them harmless, and its ability to regenerate natural resources, is not unlimited;

RECOGNIZING that States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction;

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**Article I**

Contracting Parties shall individually and collectively promote the effective control of all sources of pollution of the marine environment, and pledge themselves especially to take all practicable steps to prevent the pollution of the sea by the dumping of waste and other matter that is liable to create hazards to human health, to harm living resources and marine life, to damage amenities or to interfere with other legitimate uses of the sea.

**Article III**

For the purposes of this Convention:

1 (a) "Dumping" means:

- (i) any deliberate disposal at sea of wastes or other matter from vessels, aircraft, platforms or other man-made structures at sea;
- (ii) any deliberate disposal at sea of vessels, aircraft, platforms or other manmade structures at sea.

(b) "Dumping" does not include: ...

- (ii) placement of matter for a purpose other than the mere disposal thereof, provided that such placement is not contrary to the aims of this Convention . . .

4 "Wastes or other matter" means material and substance of any kind, form or description.

5 "Special permit" means permission granted specifically on application in advance and in accordance with Annex II and Annex III.

6 "General permit" means permission granted in advance and in accordance with Annex III.

7 "The Organization" means the Organization designated by the Contracting Parties in accordance with article XIV(2).

#### **Article IV**

1 In accordance with the provisions of this Convention Contracting Parties shall prohibit the dumping of any wastes or other matter in whatever form or condition except as otherwise specified below:

- (a) the dumping of wastes or other matter listed in Annex I is prohibited;
- (b) the dumping of wastes or other matter listed in Annex II requires a prior special permit;
- (c) the dumping of all other wastes or matter requires a prior general permit.

#### **Article VI**

1 Each Contracting Party shall designate an appropriate authority or authorities to:

- (a) issue special permits which shall be required prior to, and for, the dumping of matter listed in Annex II and in the circumstances provided for in article V(2);
- (b) issue general permits which shall be required prior to, and for, the dumping of all other matter;
- (c) keep records of the nature and quantities of all matter permitted to be dumped and the location, time and method of dumping;
- (d) monitor individually, or in collaboration with other Parties and competent international organizations, the condition of the seas for the purposes of this Convention.

2 The appropriate authority or authorities of a contracting Party shall issue prior special or general permits in accordance with paragraph (1) in respect of matter intended for dumping:

- (a) loaded in its territory;
- (b) loaded by a vessel or aircraft registered in its territory or flying its flag, when the loading occurs in the territory of a State not party to this Convention.

3 In issuing permits under sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b) above, the appropriate authority or authorities shall comply with Annex III, together with such additional criteria, measures and requirements as they may consider relevant.

4 Each Contracting Party, directly or through a Secretariat established under a regional agreement, shall report to the Organization, and where appropriate to other Parties, the information specified in sub-paragraphs(c) and (d) of paragraph (1) above, and the criteria, measures and requirements it adopts in accordance with paragraph (3) above. The procedure to be followed and the nature of such reports shall be agreed by the Parties in consultation.

#### **Article VII**

1 Each Contracting Party shall apply the measures required to implement the present Convention to all:

- (a) vessels and aircraft registered in its territory or flying its flag;
- (b) vessels and aircraft loading in its territory or territorial seas matter which is to be dumped;
- (c) vessels and aircraft and fixed or floating platforms under its jurisdiction believed to be engaged in dumping.

2 Each Party shall take in its territory appropriate measures to prevent and punish conduct in contravention of the provisions of this Convention.

3 The Parties agree to co-operate in the development of procedures for the effective application of this Convention particularly on the high seas, including procedures for the reporting of vessels and aircraft observed dumping in contravention of the Convention.

4 This Convention shall not apply to those vessels and aircraft entitled to sovereign immunity under international law. However, each Party shall ensure by the adoption of appropriate measures that such vessels and aircraft owned or operated by it act in a manner consistent with the object and purpose of this Convention, and shall inform the Organization accordingly.

5 Nothing in this Convention shall affect the right of each Party to adopt other measures, in accordance with the principles of international law, to prevent dumping at sea.

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#### **Article X**

In accordance with the principles of international law regarding State responsibility for damage to the environment of other States or to any other area of the environment, caused by dumping of wastes and other matter of all kinds, the Contracting Parties undertake to develop procedures for the assessment of liability and the settlement of disputes regarding dumping.

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#### **Article XIII**

Nothing in this Convention shall prejudice the codification and development of the law of the sea by the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea convened pursuant to resolution 2750 C(XXV) of the General Assembly of the United Nations nor the present or future claims and legal views of any State concerning the law of the sea and the nature and extent of coastal and flag State jurisdiction. The Contracting Parties agree to consult at a meeting to be convened by the Organization after the Law of the Sea Conference, and in any case not later than 1976, with a view to defining the nature and extent of the right and the responsibility of a coastal State to apply the Convention in a zone adjacent to its coast.

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