



Kuwait joins India in ban on single-use plastic onboard ships

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Foreign ships must keep plastic items such as water bottles, hot drink cups and food containers locked in a store while operating in Kuwaiti waters and will no longer be permitted to discharge such items to Kuwaiti port reception facilities.

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On 28 November, the Kuwaiti Ministry of Communications issued [Kuwaits_circular_on_single-use_plastic_ban.pdf](#) announcing its policy to prohibit the use of certain single-use plastic items onboard Kuwaiti and foreign ships while in port in Kuwait or in Kuwaiti waters. The items banned have been divided into two categories; items which are banned with immediate effect, and items which will be prohibited as of 1st January 2020.

Items prohibited with immediate effect:

- cutlery, plates and cups
- bottles up to 10 liters for water and other drinks
- garbage and shopping bags
- dispensing containers for cleaning fluids that are less than 10 liters in volume

Items prohibited from 1 January 2020:

- bags, trays, containers, food packaging film;
- milk bottles, freezer bags, shampoo bottles, ice cream containers;
- bottles for water and other drinks, dispensing containers for cleaning fluids, biscuit trays;
- hot drink cups, insulated food packaging, protective packaging for fragile items; and
- microwave dishes, ice cream tubs, potato chip bags, bottle caps.

The new rule prohibits *the carriage* of any of the above items onboard Kuwaiti flagged ships. Foreign flagged ships are only prohibited from *using* any such item while operating in Kuwaiti waters and must keep all their single-use plastic items locked in a store during their stay in Kuwaiti ports and during their passage through the territorial waters of Kuwait.

Ensuring compliance

In order to document compliance during port state control, foreign flagged ships intending to enter a port in Kuwait will be required to make a log entry identifying:

- the single use plastic items available onboard the ship;

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- where the items are stored while the ship operates in the country's territorial waters; and
- when (time, latitude and longitude) the items were placed in the store prior to entering territorial waters.

However, the government states that no detention of foreign ships will be enforced on basis of the single-use plastic prohibitions when in force. It is also important to note that, Kuwait will no longer permit single-use plastic items to be discharged to its port reception facilities. Ships trading frequently to Kuwait may therefore have to adjust their garbage management plan accordingly in order to facilitate discharge of single use plastic items elsewhere. Remember – under MARPOL Annex V, all plastic waste generated during the normal operation of the ship is strictly banned from discharge in any waters!

Please refer to our alert “ [New implementation strategy for India's single-use plastic ban](#) ” of 13 January 2020 for the latest position on India's ban of single-use plastic onboard ships.

Avoiding single-use plastic

Even if the marine industry is not a major source of single-use plastic waste, it must still align its efforts with those of other industries to ensure its relative share of waste from marine-based activities and ports does not grow.

[Guidelines adopted by the IMO](#) recommend that " *all shipowners and operators should minimize taking on board material that could become garbage* ".

Specifically, the guidelines recommend that shipowners and operators, where possible with the ship's suppliers, should consider the products being procured in terms of the garbage they will generate. Options include:

- using supplies that come in bulk packaging, taking into account factors such as adequate shelf-life (once a container is opened) to avoid increasing garbage associated with such products;
- using supplies that come in reusable or recyclable packaging and containers;
- avoiding the use of disposable cups, utensils, dishes, towels and rags and other convenience items whenever possible; and
- avoiding supplies that are packaged in plastic, unless reusable or recyclable plastic is used.

The problem of plastics in the ocean is global and growing. Change requires action from everyone, everywhere - on land and on sea. Further information is also available in our publications “ [Plastic in the Ocean – Why we should all be concerned](#) ” and “ [MARPOL Annex V – the international convention banning the discharge of plastic and garbage from ships](#) ”.

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