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Ship emissions: 'We need to turn a corner'

As states, local governments, and port authorities move to implement new regulations for reducing ship emissions, environmental groups are watching closely to see if real progress is being made.



"We need to turn a corner," Teri Shore, Clean Vessels Campaign Director for Bluewater Network (pictured left at the *Marine Fuel Sustainability* forum in San Francisco last October) told Bunkerworld in a recent interview.

Based in San Francisco, environmental group Bluewater Network has been vocal recently in calling for stricter regulations on ship emissions in California, and in 2005 launched a campaign against the "poor environmental record and shipping industry bias" of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) with high-profile public protests in London.

In 2000, Boating Industry Magazine named Executive Director Russell Long as one of the 21 most influential people in the marine industry in the 21st century.

California has been tackling ship emissions head on recently, with port authorities implementing new schemes and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) imposing a new regulation for ship's auxiliary engines.

But the CARB regulation is likely to be challenged in court by shipowners wary of state-wide laws and preferring voluntary agreements.

"Industry wants voluntary agreements, of course," Shore told Bunkerworld. "But voluntary is not going to cut it - the big strides necessary need to be made through regulation."

With low-sulphur fuel oil bunkers likely to be in short supply in the future, other technologies such as exhaust scrubbers have been mooted as a solution to reducing ship emissions.

"We see a combination of technology and cleaner fuels," Shore said. "The environmental community is supportive of flexibility."

Cleaner fuels will carry a price premium for shipowners, already trying to absorb dramatic increases in fuel prices over the last year, and mitigation technologies will also be costly.

"Shipping companies and oil companies are profitable enough to absorb extra costs," Shore told Bunkerworld. "But the costs will need to be shared by industry, ports, governments, and consumers."

"Everyone has to be part of it," Shore added.

Environmental groups have typically been the nemesis of shipowners, but Bluewater Network simply wants to bring them into the regulatory fold.

"The marine industry has been under the radar for too long," Shore explained. "Land sources of pollution have been under decades of regulations - now it's their turn."

See Also:

- [California ports to cooperate on emissions monitoring](#) (January 02, 2006)
- [California ships face hefty emissions fines](#) (December 14, 2005)

Guy Wilson-Roberts | Tue Jan 3 20:46:56 GMT 2006