



## RESOLUTION #11

### **TITLE: Protecting Maritime Wilderness Parks from aquatic nuisance species transfers from ballasted ships.**

#### **WHEREAS**

Ballast contaminated with invasive non-indigenous aquatic nuisance species is a primary vector for invasive species transfers globally and within freshwater systems via commercial ships;

In the US alone, past invaders, such as zebra mussels and quagga mussels, are wrecking havoc with aquatic ecological systems and have control costs in the billions of dollars annually, and many other countries are experiencing similar crisis;

Introduced NIS have been cited as the second largest threat to endangered species after habitat loss (Wilcove and Chen 1998).

This issue has languished without resolution since the 1970s when the scientific community began reviewing the problem in detail. In the late 1980s, Canada and Australia were among countries experiencing particular problems with unwanted species, and they brought their concerns to the attention of IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC). The scope of the issue continues to expand.

International agreement on the methods to treat ballast under the International Maritime Organizations has only been signed by 18 out of 30 countries (representing only 18% of the 35% of the tonnage needed in total for ratification)

[http://www.imo.org/Conventions/mainframe.asp?topic\\_id=867](http://www.imo.org/Conventions/mainframe.asp?topic_id=867)

[http://www.imo.org/Conventions/mainframe.asp?topic\\_id=247](http://www.imo.org/Conventions/mainframe.asp?topic_id=247);

The United States Coast Guard is in the process of evaluating standards more stringent than the IMO treaty;

#### **THEREFORE**

The Wild9 Congress urges the remaining countries to sign the IMO treaty at a minimum and continue to support research and development of technology to further reduce the transfer of invasive species beyond current proposed IMO standards. In addition, until treatment is mandated by IMO or individual countries, the international wilderness community encourages voluntary sterilization of ballast for ships that discharge ballast

within or near national parks and marine sanctuaries or during emergency situations where release is imminent.

**BE IT RESOLVED**—that by January 30, 2010 a letter on behalf of the congress will be sent to the Presidents of the Countries who have not sign the IMO treaty to encourage them to do so; and by December 3, 2009 a letter on behalf of the congress to the US Coast Guard encouraging them to set the highest standard of protection for US marine parks and sanctuaries that the delegates agree to(recommend supporting alternative 5 of their draft Environmental impact statement which is complete sterilization at the earliest possible implementation date<http://www.regulations.gov> , and enter docket #USCG-2001-10486), and to bring the phased implementation of these standards on line as soon as possible.

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