

Question for written answer P-008499/2014
to the Commission
Rule 130
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)

Subject: Enforcement of rules on sulphur dioxide emissions from maritime shipping

When the new International Maritime Organisation rules on sulphur dioxide emissions under the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL Annex VI) come into force in SOx Emission Control Areas at the turn of the year, the maximum fines for non-compliance will be about USD 30 000 in the EU. However, the Danish Shipowners Association estimates that a 10 000 TEU container ship sailing from the English Channel to Gdansk, and back, can make a saving of up to USD 150 000 by using heavy fuel oil with an unlawfully high sulphur content instead of marine diesel oil, for instance.

1. Does the Commission agree that, for some shipowners, circumventing the rules will be profitable?
2. How, specifically, does the Commission propose to create a level playing field when the new rules mean, in fact, that it will be profitable for shipowners to circumvent them, since fines will be much lower than the gains to be made from using illegal fuel?
3. What action does the Commission propose to take to ensure that the rules are enforced in the same way in all Member States and that, in future, the level of fines is commensurate with the potential gains from circumventing the rules?