

Marine Invasive Species: Introduction and Prevention Policy Measures

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Marine invasive species have the potential to cause the degradation of ecosystems, loss of biodiversity, negatively affect human health, and impacts the marine economy in a number of ways. The costs associated with marine invasive species, both ecological and economic, can be high. Marine invasive species are introduced into new habitats through a number of vectors, most significantly ballast water and biofouling on hulls. There are incentives for shippers to limit biofouling and policies in place to reduce the number of invasions through ballast water exchange practices, however current practices are not sufficient to eliminate introductions. New technologies are being considered to minimize introductions, and policies are under development by the IMO and the US Coast Guard to address the continuing challenges in invasive species management caused by global transportation.