**Bunker Fuel Controversies**

Due to its low cost, most large cargo vessels are powered by bunker fuel also known as heavy fuel oil which contains higher sulphur levels than diesel. This level of pollution is accelerating: with bunker fuel consumption at 278 million tons per year in 2001, it is projected to be at 500 million tons per year in 2020. International standards to dramatically reduce sulphur content in marine fuels and nitrogen oxide emissions have been put in place. Among some of the solutions offered is changing over the fuel intake to clean diesel or marine gas oil, while in restricted waters and cold ironing the ship while it is in port. If the various requirements are enforced, the International Maritime Organization’s marine fuel requirement will mean a 90% reduction in sulphur oxide emissions; whilst the European Union is planning stricter controls on emissions.