



# Ida Aukens tale ved konferencen om ballastvand

**Taler**

Ida Auken  
Miljøminister

**Dato**

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**Sted**

Copenhagen Marriott Hotel

**Omstændigheder**

Deltagerene er fra en lang række interessenter, bl.a. skibsfarten (fx Mærsk), producenter af ballastvandanlæg (også danske producenter), andre danske myndigheder, NGO'er, nationale og internationale branche-organisationer, FN's Søfartsorganisation og en masse forskellige konsulenter med forstand på ballastvand. De fleste er repræsenteret på mellem-niveau, og en del er det på højere niveau.

## Opening

Welcome to Copenhagen

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and gentlemen. It is a privilege for me to speak to you today about the Ballast Water Management Convention.

The organizers and I look forward to a fruitful discussion on the different topics that this convention covers.

## **We are not done, but we are on the right track**

This is not a new concern.

As some of you know, the issue of invasive alien species and ballast water caught the attention of the scientific community as far back as the 1970's.

Greater international interest was seen in the late 1980's, where countries like Australia and Canada were facing crucial issues with invasive species.

In the early 90's international agreements – such as the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity – began to regard ballast water as a threat to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and marine ecosystems.

Similarly, the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable development called for measures to address the issue of invasive species in ballast water.

And also in the EU, the marine invasive species is treated as a subject of particular concern – for example in the EU's Marine Strategy Framework Directive, which dates back to 2008.

In this respect the UN Ballast Water Convention is expected to play an important role in meeting the goals set by the EU.

Right now the Marine Strategy Framework Directive is underway in the Member States. And it includes an obligation to establish good environmental status in all our sea areas by applying an ecosystem approach to management of human activities.

## **The Ballast Water Convention**

As you know, The Ballast Water Convention was adopted in 2004 – with the goal to minimize the impact from aquatic alien species and ultimately eliminate the risks to the environment and humans.

The Convention is one of the first international agreements to address a global sector and its impact on aquatic ecosystems – such as oceans, coastal waters and lakes and rivers.

With this in mind, it is no surprise that new technology and management must be developed, before the convention can function in the real world.

In fact, the novelty factor is the number one explanation offered, when one asks why the convention has not yet entered into force.

Still, more than 30 countries have ratified already. And, as soon as the ratifying countries together represent 35 percent of the world fleet, the convention can enter into force.

At the moment, less than 9 percent is needed before this target is reached.

That is why I am pleased to announce that Denmark will soon be able to contribute.

**Denmark will soon be contributing**

In the coming weeks, the Ministry of the Environment will initiate a public consultation of a draft ministerial regulation on ballast water.

Not long after this consultation, the regulation will enter into force, and Denmark will be able to ratify the Convention. A Danish ratification will contribute with 2 percent of the world fleet – and we will only be 7 percent short. We are closing in on the target.

Also the Danish ratification process has had to await the technical development in IMO and in the industry but now we are almost there.

On a more internal Danish note, we also had to ensure that the coming requirements on ballast water treatment did not collide with certain guarantees in our Constitution.

An issue which was only resolved recently, and which will result in Denmark ratifying with a time limited reservation for some groups of ships – giving them more time before they have to start using a ballast water treatment system.

## **Invasive species – a significant challenge**

There is no doubt in my mind that the Ballast Water Convention is of great importance: We are facing a very real and increasing problem with invasive species.

In this part of the world we have – so far – only seen relatively mild damage done by invasive species. But our scientists tell me that we have coastal areas in Denmark – and in Europe – where alien species have become dominating, and that the rate of new alien species is increasing.

Nearly all Danes are familiar with one or more instances of new alien species, such as American clam known as “razor-shell” or “jack knife”[1] which is found in the North Sea and other areas, or the “Round Goby” fish[2] which is normally found in the Black Sea, but is now also caught on a regular basis in coastal waters in the southern part of Denmark.

Some species attracts special interest, such as the jellyfish known in English as the “warty comb jelly” or in Denmark under its new Danish nick-name: ”the killer jellyfish”[3]. This jellyfish is now present in both the Baltic and the North Sea.

Now we just have to learn to live with them, because we know that in most cases it is virtually impossible to remove an invasive species, once it has established itself in a new aquatic area.

But from now on, I hope we will not have to put up with any more of these destroying and annoying aliens in our waters.

And while shipping is not the only source of invasive species, it is one of the biggest. In this light, I find it very promising that shipowners will try to prevent further problems with alien species.

### **Not doing anything isn't a realistic alternative**

I know that many of you find the convention to be both complicated and expensive.

However, it is not only my hope, but indeed my expectation that the remaining

technical challenges will be overcome – and that the costs of complying with the requirements in the Convention will continue to be reduced in the coming years.

So far we have seen a positive trend with a relative fast development of new technologies. The last few years have seen the introduction of simpler, more efficient and greener solutions, which in turn cost less to acquire and operate than past generations of ballast water technology.

I don't think the alternative – doing nothing – can be considered a real alternative. The impact of invasive species is already considerable today, from both an environmental and a financial perspective.

### **We face more than one crisis**

Denmark holds the Presidency of EU in these months – and one of the main topics right now is of course the economic crisis which is threatening the entire European economy.



This is obviously a very difficult starting point for a new Convention, but I think everyone can agree that the answer to the present crisis is not a business as usual scenario.

Right now the burning platform beneath our feet urges us to find new solutions.

And at the same time the EU – and the rest of the world – also face other crisis: a climate and a resource crisis. To me these crises are mutually interlinked and must be solved coherently:

No solution without renewed economic growth and job creation!

No economic growth and job creation in Europe without improved competitiveness!

And no improved competitiveness without a substantial improvement in resource efficiency!

I believe that we have to continue the work for a sustainable development in shipping and other marine sectors, so that we can protect our seas and oceans and their biodiversity better.

The oceans actually provide us not only with food, but also form the basis of the livelihood of millions of people, and they provide us with genetic resources that can be used for medicine and many other things.

### **Resource efficiency is one of the keys – but not the only one**

I generally find that improved resource efficiency is necessary to restore the European economy and to encourage the competitiveness of European businesses.

It will also help us ensure a sustainable management of natural resources in a broad sense and give a better protection of resources such as air, water and biodiversity.

However, we have to look at our resources in a broader perspective.

If we do not protect our resources from threats such as invasive species, the effect of an improvement in resource efficiency may end up being undermined.

The key to solving the problems we currently face, are therefore not just resource efficiency. We need to see the big picture, and ballast water management is part of this picture.

## **A green transformation of the economy**

The Danish Presidency believes that it is essential to develop a new green approach that can pave the way towards a resource efficient, green economy in Europe.

In line with the Europe 2020-strategy it is a key priority for the Danish Presidency to place the environmental policy at the heart of this green transition.

A policy framework is needed in order to create coherence and integration between policies that shape our economy and our lifestyle:

A framework that will create the playing field where innovation and resource efficiency is rewarded.

A framework where economic opportunities and enhanced security of supply of resources are created through smart regulation, product design, eco-innovation, sustainable management of our natural capital, increased recycling, recovery and substitution of materials and resource savings.

These areas are indeed key areas of our environmental policy.

**Is the Convention even ready for implementation?**

So where does this leave the Ballast Water Convention?

I know some of you may think that the Convention has yet to become fully “mature” – that it still needs to be further developed, before it can enter into force.

Nevertheless, I firmly recommend that you support its implementation and help find solutions for the remaining problems through relevant IMO bodies, back home in your individual countries, and in your strategies for your individual businesses.

I am sure we will be on the right track when the Convention enters into force.

And don't forget the important goal: to protect our biodiversity and natural resources, when you are struggling with the – sometimes frustrating – details in the Convention.

I know that the industry in many countries has increased the pace of development of new solutions in order reach the market ahead of time.

I know that authorities have to draw up new legislation and find new ways for international coordination.

And I also know that ship-owners have to invest in – and install – several thousand new Ballast Water Systems in the years to come.

I fully recognise all these challenges. But to me these are necessary steps to take to reduce the impact from shipping on the aquatic environment.

And I strongly support cooperation between the shipping industry, ship-owners and authorities – at the national, regional and global level. I am certain that this is the way – the only way – forward to respond to the challenges we face.

### **A partnership helps finding lasting solutions**

Shipping has always been important for Denmark. In fact, without ships our

many islands would never have become one nation.

Today, shipping is our largest export industry and Danish shipping companies transport 10 percent of world trade.

With respect to the environment, most efforts in shipping so far have focused on minimizing the discharge of oil, chemicals and other pollutants into the oceans and the air above it.

My guess is, however, that we in the coming years will see an increased focus on the protection of the marine biodiversity itself in coastal areas, on the high seas and in the arctic.

In dealing with a Convention with such a complexity as the Ballast Water Convention, forming a Partnership is one way forward.

The Danish Partnership on Ballast Water involves numerous stakeholders from industry and government alike. It helps us find lasting solutions that will be effective in the real world.

Having this Partnership means that authorities, ship-owners and the shipping industry work together to find common solutions.

And the organization of this conference is just one example of this fruitful collaboration.

I am also pleased by the fact that the Danish Ministry of the Environment – together with the Partnership on Ballast Water – is actively supporting the development of new greener technologies in Denmark.

Technologies which we hope will have the potential to compete on the world market.

At present we support 6 different eco-innovation projects in total with 2.4 million Danish kroner – more than 320.000 Euros.

Some of these projects are Ballast Water Management Systems which are being tested at the new Danish Ballast Water Test Centre.

The Test Centre is established by a Danish institute of hydraulics, DHI, and is



one of only 7-8 similar centres in the world. I wish you all the best of luck in those endeavours.

## **Wrapping up**

Finally I wish you all a fruitful day here in Copenhagen. I am sure you will find useful information to bring back home and I hope that you will all contribute and find solutions to the challenges that still have to be overcome both at national, regional and global level.

In my opinion the most important challenge right now is to ensure that the Ballast Water Convention enters into force.

In many ways we face environmental crises and challenges, and I sincerely hope that you will participate in the search for solutions – greener solutions – in the IMO, in our region and on your ships.

That is the way forward as I see it. And that is a high priority for me during the Danish Presidency.

Thank you very much for your attention!

[1] Amerikansk knivmusling

[2] Sortmundet kutling

[3] Ribbegoplen/dræbergoplen

**Kilde**

Manuskript tilsendt fra taler

**Kildetype**

Digitalt manuskript

**Tags**

Politisk tale, Socialistisk Folkeparti

**Relateret**

Ida Aukens tale ved European Resource Efficiency Platform  
14. december 2012

Ida Aukens tale ved KL's skybrudskonference  
15. november 2011

**URI**

<https://www.dansketaler.dk/tale/miljoeminister-ida-aukens-tale-til-konference-om-ballastvand>