associação sistema terrestre sustentável

For the past two days we've been rightly discussing how the growing pressure from our activities has been impacting our oceans and degrading their health and in doing so, identifying crucial ways forward to reverse the ocean's decline. However, we find that there is one issue that hasn't been touched upon and that is directly related to some of the impacts of the growing shipping sector. We've heard about reducing shipping's greenhouse emissions, about scaling up renewable fuels and developing port infrastructure to enable bunkering for green fuels and shore-side electricity. Those are undoubtedly relevant and necessary solutions for some very tangible problems. But we should not forget about the air pollution resulting from shipping either.

The sulphur and nitrogen oxides emissions caused by ships lead to a cumulative effect, which results in increasing air quality related problems, such as negative health effects, especially on coastal communities, and occurrence of acidification. Moreover, NOx emissions cause eutrophication, which leads to the disruption of marine and terrestrial ecosystems. As we all know, acidification and eutrophication pose serious problems to our ocean and must, therefore, be tackled.

The direct solution for this problem already exists, it just needs to be rightly implemented. By establishing Emissions Control Areas, the so called ECAs, the IMO can regulate the maximum amount of Sulphur content in naval fuels, limiting it to 0,1%, and also determine that new ships must comply with Tier III NOx emission standards, meaning that news ships must be equipped with technologies which allow for significant NOx emission reductions.

We congratulate the Portuguese government for committing to establish an ECA in Portuguese waters and urge others to follow suit. Let's work together for cleaner air and a healthier ocean!

Thank you.

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