


# NOAA

OFFICE OF  
GENERAL COUNSEL

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION



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## MARINE POLLUTION

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The global marine environment faces threats of pollution from a variety of land, sea and air-based sources. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (LOSC) addresses these threats primarily in Articles 207-212. Over the years since the LOSC was negotiated, several additional agreements have been developed to address specific types of pollution. In addition, with the growing recognition of the importance of the marine environment and the increasing threats to its health, many of these agreements have been strengthened to improve their effectiveness. These include the following agreements followed by their date of entry into force:

- [The London Dumping Convention \(08/30/75\)](#) ([document download](#)) and its 1996 Protocol (03/24/06) ([document download](#))
- [The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships \(MARPOL\)](#) ([document download](#)) and its six Annexes:
  - [I. Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Oil \(10/02/83\)](#) and ([document download](#)),
  - [II. Regulations for the Control of Pollution by Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk \(04/06/87\)](#) and ([document download](#)),
  - [III. Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Harmful Substances Carried by Sea in Packaged Form \(07/01/92\)](#), ([document download](#)),
  - [IV. Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Sewage from Ships \(09/27/03\)](#), and ([document download](#))
  - [V. Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Garbage from Ships \(12/31/88\)](#), and ([document download](#)), and
  - [VI. Regulations for the Prevention of Air Pollution from Ships \(05/19/05\)](#) and [document download](#)
- [International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships \(09/27/08\)](#)
- [International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments](#) (not yet in force) and [document download](#).
- [Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution \(03/16/83\)](#) and [document download](#)
- [The Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea \(07/15/97\)](#)
- [International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation \(05/13/95\)](#)
- [International Convention Relating to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties \(05/06/75\)](#) and [document download](#).
- [United Nations Environment Programme, Global Programme of Action \(N/A\)](#)

The United States is a party to each of these agreements except the 1996 Protocol to the London Dumping Convention, the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, and MARPOL Annex IV.

Additional reference information:

- [White House Press Release](#), Statement by the President on the Coast Guard Authorization Act




Photo 23: A dead fish floats on the surface after an oil spill  
(NOAA Photo Library.)

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