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## **Cruise Industry Report Shows Measurable Progress in Environmental Technologies and Practices**

*Latest data from Cruise Lines International Association show increasing use of non-HFO fuels alongside measurable progress in shore power readiness, advanced wastewater treatment, onboard freshwater production, fuel flexibility, and energy-efficiency systems.*

**WASHINGTON – 16 September 2026** – Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), the leading voice of the global cruise industry, today released its annual *Environmental Technologies and Practices (ETP)* report.

Published annually since 2018, the CLIA report is the only industry-wide source that consistently tracks year-over-year fleet data on the adoption of environmental technologies and practices across more than 90% of global oceangoing cruise capacity.

This year's report shows continuous and measurable progress by CLIA-member cruise lines in the adoption of environmental technologies and practices — from testing and piloting biofuels, to expanding shore power readiness, increasing fuel flexibility, maximizing energy-efficiency measures, utilizing advanced wastewater treatment systems, increasing onboard freshwater production, and deploying other reported environmental practices.

"Year after year, the data show cruise lines continuing to invest in the technologies, fuels, and operational capabilities that are making the global cruise fleet more efficient and positioning it for the future," said Bud Darr, president and CEO of CLIA. "The progress reflected in this report is the result of sustained investment and innovation by the world's cruise lines — from more efficient ships and fuel-flexible engines to onshore power capability and advanced environmental systems."

"Cruise lines are continuing to invest in support of ambitious decarbonization objectives by building ships capable of using new and lower-emissions energy sources alongside a range of other environmental technologies and practices," Darr added. "Realizing the full potential of those investments will require fuel producers, governments, ports, energy providers, and other stakeholders to help create the conditions for safe, competitively priced renewable and lower-emissions fuels to be available at scale, supported by the infrastructure needed to deliver them."

Highlights of this year's report include the following:

### **Fleet Profile**

- **CLIA-member cruise lines:** As of August 2026, the 45 CLIA-member oceangoing cruise lines operate a combined total of 327 ships and approximately 692,000 lower berths, which represents more than 90% of global oceangoing cruise capacity.
- **ETP reporting ships:** This year's report reflects environmental technologies in place on CLIA-member cruise line ships in operation through 2025, which covered 297 oceangoing ships, representing 96% of CLIA-member ships and 98% of CLIA-member global capacity during the year.
- **Member fleet profile:** Analysis of the current CLIA member cruise line fleet indicates that the majority of oceangoing cruise ships—72%--are small- to mid-size ships (<3,000 lower berths), with the percentage of ships by size remaining relatively balanced through 2039 (the last reporting year of the current orderbook):

| Ship Category                                       | % of Ships: 2026 | % of Ships: 2039 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Small ships</b> (<1,000 lower berths)            | 34.5%            | 33.6%            |
| <b>Mid-size ships</b> (1,000 to 3,000 lower berths) | 37.2%            | 34.6%            |
| <b>Large ships</b> (>3,000 lower berths)            | 28.3%            | 31.8%            |

## Emissions Reduction and Operational Efficiency

- **Multi-fuel capable ships:** <sup>1</sup> Multi-fuel engine technology provides the fuel flexibility needed to utilize zero- and near-zero emissions fuels as they become available at scale, with little to no engine modifications.
  - The number of CLIA-member ships operating with multi-fuel engines that can switch from conventional fuels to zero- and near-zero emission fuels both in port and at sea has increased from just one ship in 2018 to 30 ships today.
  - Based on the August 2026 orderbook, 31 CLIA-member multi-fuel capable ships are forecast to be in service by year-end 2026, and 56 CLIA-member multi-fuel capable ships are scheduled to be in service by year-end 2030.
  - Through 2039, 69 CLIA-member multi-fuel capable ships are forecast to be in service, including the 30 ships in service today and 39 additional CLIA-member multi-fuel ships still scheduled for delivery.
- **Uptake of alternative, lower-sulfur and lower-emissions fuels:** Cruise lines continue to reduce reliance on traditional heavy fuel oil (HFO) as lower-sulfur and lower-emissions fuel pathways emerge. These results reflect the combined impact of more efficient ships, operational improvements, itinerary planning, and continued investment in fuel flexibility, while underscoring the need for zero- and near-zero emission marine fuels to be safe and available at scale.
  - ***According to data reported to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) by cruise passenger ships <sup>2</sup>, the use of heavy fuel oil by oceangoing cruise lines declined*** from 74.2% of reported fuel use in 2019 to 60.6% in 2024, while the combined use of non-HFO fuels—including marine diesel/gas oil, very-low and ultra-low sulfur fuel oil, LNG, and other reported fuel pathways—increased from 25.8% to 39.4%.
  - **The IMO data are largely consistent with CLIA's ETP tracking** of member cruise line use of non-HFO fuels at 40.3% in 2025.
  - ***An analysis of the latest data reported to the European Maritime Safety Agency via the EU THETIS-MRV database <sup>3</sup> shows improved average per-ship efficiency indicators for cruise ships sailing in Europe.*** From 2018 through 2025, average fuel consumption per ship reporting fuel and emissions data into the EU-MRV database declined about 18.5% and average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per ship declined about 19.4%.
- **Onshore power supply (OPS) connectivity:** Also referred to as shoreside electricity (SSE) capability or cold ironing, OPS allows ships to turn off their engines while in port, where the necessary infrastructure is available for cruise ships, and can significantly reduce emissions at berth depending on the local energy mix. The reduction in emissions can be as high as 98%, with all emissions covered, according to studies conducted by a number of the world's ports and regulatory agencies, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
  - ***The number of CLIA-member cruise line ships with the ability to connect to OPS has more than tripled since 2018***, increasing from 55 ships in 2018 (representing 25.0% of ships and 27.9% of capacity) to 193 ships today (representing 65% of reporting ships and 72.5% of reporting capacity).
  - ***In addition, 47 ships are planned to be retrofitted with shoreside electricity systems, and 39 newbuild ships are specified to be fitted*** with the technology.
  - ***By 2039 an estimated 279 ships (representing 74% of ships and 82% of capacity) are forecast to have OPS capability***, based on the 193 ships currently fitted with shoreside electricity systems, the 39 newbuilds scheduled to enter service with OPS/SSE capability, and 47 ships planned to be retrofitted.
  - ***Currently, 40 ports worldwide where cruise ships call — fewer than 3% — have at least one cruise berth with OPS.*** These projections underscore the cruise industry's continued investment in ship-side readiness, while realizing the full emissions-reduction potential of OPS/SSE will depend on continued investment in compatible port and energy infrastructure where cruise ships call.
  - ***As part of the EU's Fit for 55 decarbonization regulations, by 2030 major ports in Europe will be required to have OPS***, which will further accelerate port infrastructure investment in that region.
  - **To view a map of ports that have at least one cruise berth with OPS**, please go to this [link](#).

- **Selective Catalytic Reduction Technology (SCR):** SCR systems reduce nitrogen oxide emissions, helping ships meet IMO Tier III standards for NOx emissions.
  - *The number of CLIA-member cruise line ships fitted with SCR systems has increased significantly*, from seven ships in 2018, representing 3.2% of capacity, to 96 ships in 2026, representing 32.3% of reporting ships and 27.6% of reporting capacity.

## Freshwater Production and Wastewater Treatment Systems

- **Freshwater Production:** State-of-the-art systems enable most CLIA-member cruise ships to produce the majority of their water needs on board rather than drawing from ports and destinations where resources may be limited. This is made possible by a range of technologies and practices, including steam evaporation, reverse osmosis, aeration, and other systems that support water conservation.
  - *Today, 293 ships, representing 98.7% of reporting ships and 99.9% of reporting capacity, are able to produce freshwater on board.*
  - *Of this total number, 218 ships, representing 73.4% of reporting ships and 83.3% of reporting capacity, are able to produce 100% of their freshwater needs on board*, meaning they can theoretically operate without bunkering water.
- **Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems (AWTS):** *All CLIA-member cruise ships sailing today have onboard wastewater treatment systems, and the majority utilize Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems*, which are capable of exceeding MARPOL Annex IV requirements. In addition, as part of their overarching sustainability focus, CLIA cruise line members have committed to not releasing untreated sewage anywhere in the world during normal operations.
  - *Across the fleet of CLIA cruise line members reporting, 249 ships, representing 83.8% of reporting ships and 86.2% of reporting capacity, are equipped with AWTS* that are approved, used, and capable of meeting or exceeding IMO MARPOL Annex IV discharge standards. This represents an increase from 136 ships in 2018 to 249 ships in 2026, reflecting continued investment in advanced wastewater treatment technology across the fleet.
  - *Of this total number, 124 ships with AWTS are capable of meeting the more stringent wastewater standards of the IMO MARPOL Annex IV Baltic Sea Special Area*, compared with 16 ships in 2018.

## Waste Management

- **Waste Management:** Alongside the uptake of lower-emissions fuels and increasingly energy-efficient fleets, cruise lines continue to deploy advanced shipboard waste management technologies and practices designed to reduce waste at the source, increase recycling and reuse, and reduce the volume of waste sent to landfill. Some ships are now able to recycle or repurpose nearly all waste generated on board.
  - **Waste-to-energy gasification systems:** Waste-to-energy gasification remains an emerging shipboard waste-management technology within the cruise fleet. Currently in use on seven ships, representing 12,276 lower berths, or 1.8% of reporting capacity, these systems convert waste into usable energy to support ship operations and offset some onboard energy demand.
  - **Microbial digesters for food waste:** Currently in use on 137 ships, representing 46.1% of reporting ships and 51.3% of reporting capacity, microbial digesters help process and reduce the volume of food waste onboard, supporting more efficient waste management. This compares with 103 ships in 2022, representing 42.7% of ships and 44.7% of capacity, when tracking for this metric began.

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**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> **Regarding multi-fuel capable ships:** Virtually all engines using conventional fuels such as HFO, V/ULSFO, and MGO are capable of operating on renewable drop-in biofuels and synthetic diesel both in port and at sea, and this remains an important component of decarbonization. For the purposes of tracking year-over-year technological advancements, only ships equipped with newer multi-fuel engines designed to operate on zero- and near-zero emission fuels are included in this metric (e.g., ships capable of using methane or methanol on a pathway to uptake of bio and synthetic versions of those fuels when available at scale).

<sup>2</sup> **Source information for IMO fuel data cited:** IMO Ship Fuel Oil Consumption Database reports for 2019 and 2024; CLIA analysis of cruise passenger ship fuel volumes and IMO carbon conversion factors. Data for 2025 has not yet been reported. For more information, please see the [IMO Data Collection System \(DCS\)](#) reports.

<sup>3</sup> **Source information for EU THETIS-MRV fuel and emissions data cited:** CLIA analysis of verified EU THETIS-MRV ship-level data for cruise passenger ships covered by the EU MRV Maritime Regulation, reporting years 2018–2025. While the database covers ships sailing in Europe, it is important to note that many of those ships also sail in other parts of the world based on seasonal operational decisions. For more information, please see the [EU THETIS-MRV](#) website.

**About the Environmental Technologies and Practices Report**

The CLIA Environmental Technologies and Practices Report has been published annually since 2018 and provides highlights of environmental technologies and practices in use by CLIA-member cruise lines. Each year, the report may include additional technologies tracked that were not tracked in prior years. The 2026 report includes highlights of environmental technologies and practices currently in use by CLIA-member cruise lines and is not intended to be a comprehensive review of all technologies and practices cruise lines employ. All information provided in the annual ETP report is sourced from the annual CLIA Environmental Technologies and Practices survey report, unless otherwise noted.

**Notes to editors:**

- To view the summary chart of results, please go to this [link](#)
- To view a list of CLIA-member cruise lines, please go to this [link](#)

**About Cruise Lines International Association**

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) provides a unified voice for the industry and its members as the leading authority of the global cruise community. CLIA represents oceangoing member lines which comprise more than 90% of global cruise passenger capacity, including the world's most prestigious ocean and specialty cruise lines, river cruise marketing affiliates, and a business community of leading ports, destinations, shipyards and maritime product and service providers, plus the largest network of travel professionals who specialize in cruise travel. Together with its members and partners, CLIA supports policies and practices that foster safe, secure, healthy and sustainable cruise operations and maximize the socioeconomic benefits of cruise travel. The organization's global headquarters are in Washington, DC, with regional offices located in North and South America, Europe, and Australasia.

For more information, please visit [cruising.org](https://cruising.org) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), and [YouTube](#) with our handle @CLIAGlobal—or on [LinkedIn](#).