



**KOMMUNENES INTERNASJONALE MILJØORGANISASJON
LOCAL AUTHORITIES INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL
ORGANISATION**

PRESS RELEASE

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**BIGGEST PLUTONIUM TRANSPORT IN HISTORY THREATENS MARINE
ENVIRONMENT**

Two British based ships are currently being loaded with deadly cargos of MOX nuclear fuel in France for transportation to Japan, the Pacific Pintail and Pacific Heron are expected to leave Cherbourg on Friday. The ships, which will carry a combined cargo of 1.8 tonnes of MOX, will most probably travel to Japan via the Cape of Good Hope and the Tasman Sea.



Above: the Pacific Pintail off the Barrow coast

While the ships are more robust than the single hull, single engined Atlantic Osprey used to transport nuclear waste around Europe KIMO is very concerned about the threats to security, safety and the environment of all countries en route to Japan. The vessels will be unescorted for most of the voyage and should the relatively unprotected shipments fall into terrorist hands the consequences are unimaginable.

KIMO resolution 1/96 calls for an end to the dangerous and potentially deadly transports of hazardous nuclear waste by air and sea. The lack of emergency planning in the event of a marine accident involving nuclear material; the questionable integrity of the flasks used to transport nuclear fuel; and evidence that ship borne fires last longer on average and at a more intense heat than the safety criteria used in flask stress tests are major issues for the organisation who have been campaigning for higher standards for many years. The question of liability and compensation in the event of a nuclear accident at sea continues to also be a major concern.

A KIMO spokesperson stated: "As an organisation KIMO is against all shipments of highly radioactive material by sea as they pose an unnecessary threat to the marine environment and to the coastal communities they pass. They are also vulnerable to terrorism as highlighted by the boarding of the Atlantic Osprey by Greenpeace activists last year. We can't stress enough that if an attack by terrorists succeeded in causing an incident involving a severe long-term fire, breaching shipping casks and/or sinking a nuclear transport vessel, the consequences would be severe."

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Notes to editors

KIMO (Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation) is an association of coastal local authorities whose goal is to eliminate pollution from the Northern Seas. The organisation's members include 120 local authorities representing over 6 million inhabitants in Norway, Denmark, Sweden, the Faeroe Islands, the Netherlands, Belgium, United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, the Isle of Man and has established a KIMO Baltic Forum involving 5 countries. KIMO UK is the United Kingdom network of the organisation and has a Secretariat based in the Shetland Isles.

A copy of KIMO Resolution 1/96 on the Transportation of Nuclear Waste by Air and Sea can be found at <http://www.kimointernational.org/Default.aspx?tabid=54>