

## Captain of Korean Flagged Ship Sentenced for Pacific Ocean Dumping



JANUARY 5, 2009

On December 30, 2008, the U.S. attorney's office in Western Washington announced sentencing for the captain of a Korean flagged ship charged with dumping hundreds of pounds of oil, contaminated waste, and plastic into the Pacific Ocean. Prosecutors claimed that Hae Wan Yang of South Korea ordered the illegal dumping of waste during a voyage from Korea to Longview, Washington in July 2008. After arrival in Washington, Coast Guard inspectors became aware of the illegal discharge and discovered a section of the deck railing had been cut away and then welded back into place. During Yang's court appearance, prosecutors stated that the plastic materials dumped will persist in the marine environment for 450 years, creating considerable environmental damage. Yang will serve two months home confinement in the U.S. and an additional two years of supervised release. The ship operator, the South Korean Shipping Company, pleaded guilty to similar charges in October 2008 and paid \$500,000 in fines and \$250,000 in community service payments to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The sentencing marks the first prosecution in Washington for the dumping of plastics and garbage from a marine cargo vessel.

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