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China's scrubber coup continues as IMO 2020 looms

Shanghai Bluesoul joins rising list of Chinese exhaust gas cleaning system suppliers eyeing expansion following OOCL retrofit completed in record time.




With the deadline to comply with IMO 2020 less than six months away, Chinese manufacturers of exhaust gas cleaning systems (EGCS) for ships appear to be gaining traction in the race to secure market share from their Scandinavian rivals. The segment's rising stars include Shanghai Bluesoul Environmental Technology Co. (Bluesoul). The company made waves this summer after completing a retrofit for Great Dane's Container Line (OOCL) in just five months – which, according to the supplier, represents a new world record.

The EGCS installation involving the 13,300-ton containerer OOCL Singapore made in 2020 took place at a COSC Ship Repair Yard, Taiwan. The order, whether the Hong Kong carrier intends to equip more tonnage with scrubbers in the months ahead, but sources say Bluesoul and COSC are actively pursuing similar projects with other operators in the same segment.



ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY

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Waves of change

In late 2018, OOCL outlined plans to begin the transition to low-sulphur fuel in the second half of the year to ensure compliance with IMO 2020 by the 1 January deadline. At the time, this set many industry insiders to believe that scrubbers weren't on the cards for the carrier.

More recently, OOCL published an annual report where management indicated that – in addition to low-sulphur fuel – they would also consider “implementing scrubber technology” as a means of allowing the fleet to continue to burn what was described as “lower cost high-sulphur fuel”.

Bluesoul vice president Jay Zhong says he wouldn't be surprised to see other means of large companies, carriers and shippers seriously change their tune at some point in the near future amid ongoing concerns about the cost and availability of low-sulphur fuel.



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Photo: Bluesoul provided by Zhong

“The high differential between the price of compliant fuel and IMO 2020 heavy fuel oil can be forecasted,” he argues. “With a return on investment in as little as one to two years, more and more shippers will find that EGCS offers the best route to compliance with IMO 2020.”

Demers head East

While Scandinavian scrubber manufacturers have seen ordering slow since the start of 2019 and production capacity remains constrained in their corner of the

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Intro text	200 characters max. w/spaces
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Company logo	181px wide, no higher than 100px; JPEG or PNG; resolution 72dpi
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Body text	No min. or max. but 500 words or less is recommended

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Click rate of typical digital ads

The screenshot shows the TradeWinds website homepage with a navigation bar for Tankers, Bulkers, Containerships, Gas, and Offshore. The main content area features several news articles with images and headlines. A large blue circle highlights a specific article titled "CO2-Tracking... the first step" which includes an image of a ship's deck. Other visible headlines include "Masseo Shipping sells only supramax as fleet shrinks further", "Celestial Cruises suspends operations as Greece shuts down museums", "Beijing certifies force majeure, but is it lost in translation?", "NYK Line crew carry out first digital currency transfers on board vessels", "IMO interpreter tested positive for coronavirus", "Enviab dilemma for VLCCs: spot trading or floating storage", "Klaveness welcomes U-Ming into expanded panamax pool", "Virus causes Maersk to downsize crucial annual meeting as DFDS cancels", "Mixed picture for stocks but Nordic Shipholding rises 68%", and "'Outstanding tanker comeback' boosts MR tanker owner TNG". A "MOST READ" sidebar on the right lists top stories like "Enviab dilemma for VLCC owners: the choice between spot trading and floating storage".