

JAPAN P&I NEWS

To the Members

Turkey—Enhanced Marine Pollution Regulations and Substantial Fines for 2026

Following our previous Japan P&I News [No.1320](#), dated 4 August 2025, concerning the substantial marine pollution fines imposed by the Turkish authorities, we hereby inform the members that new fine tariffs for 2026, effectively from 1 January 2026, have been issued as detailed below.

Therefore, we urge all the members to pay close attention to the following points during their navigation and operations within Turkish waters, and to take all possible measures to prevent marine pollution.

Characteristics of Turkey's Fine System

Unlike other countries, Turkey's fine system determines the basic amount based on the gross tonnage of the vessel causing the spill, regardless of the type or volume of the marine pollutant to be spilled. Furthermore, the base rate is increasing annually, with a significant increase of approximately 25% from the 2025 rate, effective 1 January 2026.

The 2026 rates are as follows:

Vessel type and pollutant	Gross Tonnage	Tariff of Fine
Petroleum and Petroleum products spills from tankers (e.g. Crude Oil, Liquid Fuel, Greasy Waste, Oily Mud, Sludge)	Up to GRT1,000	TL5,752.34 per Ton
	GRT1,001 ~ GRT5,000	An additional TL1,438.13 per Ton
	Over GRT5,000	An additional TL143.75 per Ton
Dirty ballast spills from tankers	Up to GRT1,000	TL1,048.03 per Ton
	GRT1,001 ~ GRT5,000	An additional TL209.08 per Ton
	Over GRT5,000	An additional TL33.18 per Ton
Marine spills of petroleum products and dirty ballast from vessels	Up to GRT1,000	TL2,876.16 per Ton
	GRT1,001 ~ GRT5,000	An additional TL575.25 per Ton
	Over GRT5,000	An additional TL143.75 per Ton
Marine spills of waste and wastewater from vessels	Up to GRT1,001	TL1,438.24 per Ton
	GRT1,001 ~ GRT5,000	An additional TL287.64 per Ton
	Over GRT5,000	An additional TL33.18 per Ton

The above are the basic amounts depending upon the vessel's gross tonnage and not the final determined amount. Additionally, the following factors are considered depending on the details of the incident when determining the final fine amount:

1. Inclusion of hazardous substances: 10 times of the base amount
2. Spill occurring in an environmental protection zone (within the entire Sea of Marmara including the Istanbul Strait, the Çanakkale Strait and Izmit Bay): 2 times the base amount

3. Spill caused by a corporate-owned vessel: 3 times the base amount

However, since most major Turkish ports fall within the environmental protection zones and most of the ocean going vessels are corporate owned, a fine equivalent to at least 6 times the base amount (factors 2 and 3 above) is consistently applied. If hazardous substances are involved (factor 1 above), the final fine amount could be as high as 60 times the base amount.

Practical Procedures

In the event of a discharge of marine pollutants, before the vessel's departure, it is mandatory to provide a Club letter of guarantee to the Turkish authorities, with wording preferred by authorities ensuring payment of the fine amount within 30 days. After payment is successfully remitted, the letter of guarantee can be requested back and returned.

A 25% reduction is applied if early payment is made within 30 days of the final notification. Furthermore, an additional 1/3 reduction is granted if a voluntary and effective cleanup operation is undertaken by the crew of the vessel after the spill.

For details, please find attached the circular from our Turkish correspondent, Kalimbassieris Maritime A.S.

For the latest information, please contact local agents.

Yours faithfully,

The Japan Ship Owners' Mutual Protection & Indemnity Association

Attachment: Turkey pollution fines 2026 – Kalimbassieris



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TÜRKİYE POLLUTION FINES 2026

As stated previously in our annual Circulars regarding pollution fines, the fine amounts are updated each year based on the inflation adjustment rate. The Directorate of Revenue Administration under the Ministry of Treasury and Finance has announced the inflation adjustment rate in the Official Gazette dated 27 November 2025. The rate has been set at 25.49%, meaning that **fines in 2026 will increase by 25.49%** compared to the fine levels applied in 2025, effective from 1st January 2026.

The revised 2026 rates are outlined in the table below.

A- ARTICLE 20 (i) (1) Petroleum and petroleum products including but not limited to crude oil, liquid fuel, greasy waste, oily mud, slop, sludge by tankers

GROSS TONNAGE	Rates valid from 01.01.2026
Up to 1000 (inclusive) GT	TRY per GT (Base) 5.752,34
1001-5000 (inclusive) GT	TRY per GT (Additional) 1.438,13
5001 and up	TRY per GT (Additional) 143,75

GROSS TONNAGE	Rates valid from 01.01.2026
Up to 1000 (inclusive) GT	TRY per GT (Base) 1.048,03
1001-5000 (inclusive) GT	TRY per GT (Additional) 209,08
5001 and up	TRY per GT (Additional) 33,18

B- ARTICLE 20 (i) (2) Dirty ballast discharged by tankers

C- ARTICLE 20 (i) (3) Vessels / other sea vehicles releasing dirty ballast and petroleum products

GROSS TONNAGE	Rates valid from 01.01.2026
Up to 1000 (inclusive) GT	TRY per GT (Base) 2.876,16
1001-5000 (inclusive) GT	TRY per GT (Additional) 575,25
5001 and up	TRY per GT (Additional) 143,75

D- ARTICLE 20 (i) (4) Vessels and other sea vehicles discharging/releasing solid waste garbage/ domestic wastewater/ sewage/ detergent water/ foam/ scrubber water or similar wash water, etc.

GROSS TONNAGE	Rates valid from 01.01.2026
Up to 18 (inclusive) GT	TRY 31.898,91
18-50 (inclusive) GT	TRY 63.803,22
50-100 (inclusive) GT	TRY 127.606,45
100-150 (inclusive) GT	TRY 191.411,48
Up to 1000 (inclusive) GT	TRY (Base) 1.438,24
1001-5000 (inclusive) GT	TRY (Additional) 287,64

¹ In this circular, units denoting the next thousandth are denoted with a comma (",") and units denoting TRY cents are denoted by a full stop (".").



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5001 and up	TRY (Additional) 33,18
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* According to the provisions of the Environment Code (Article 23), the repetition of the same act by the same vessel within the next three years after the service date of the first fine will result in doubling the fine amount for the next pollution event and tripling for the following ones.

** If any hazardous waste or similar nature or of its substance is released / dumped to the sea, the fine to be imposed is 10 (ten) times of the announced tariffs under the category of "A" above.

*** If the vessel or the sea craft (offender) cleans the pollution caused by its own, by using her own means and efforts, the administrative fine shall be 1/3 of the total amount.

**** Payment of the fine within 30 days as of the service date provides an advantage of 25% discount over the total amount.

***** The above rates are tripled if the owner of the vessel, which caused pollution is a legal entity.

***** The above rates will be doubled for the pollution incurred at Special Environment Protection Zones. The special zone covers the Marmara Region and Straits which also cover the Marmara Region and Straits (contains all ports and anchorage areas within Istanbul, Kocaeli, Yalova, Bursa, Balıkesir, Canakkale, Tekirdağ).

***** Gross tonnage limitation has been introduced for additional amount per GT applicable for vessels exceeding 5,000 GT under article 20 (i) (4). Accordingly, the following table would be used and for tankers, ships and other marine vehicles which are larger than GRT 100,000, an administrative fine shall be imposed on the basis of those for GRT 100,000.

Statements and Sampling Process

When a pollution allegation arises, the vessel is detained by the Harbor Master, and the following procedure is initiated:

Coastguard personnel usually board the vessel to take crew statements, and if deemed necessary, will also collect samples from onboard the vessel. The Authorities may take samples from the polluted area (if possible) and from the open sea (clean area) during their inspection for comparison purposes. It is important to note that this procedure may vary depending on the specific case or region.

In cases where the source and type of the pollutant is unclear and a sample analysis is required, the administrative fine is issued after sample analysis is completed. However, if the source and type of the pollutant is evident or established by available evidence (i.e video recordings or photographs), the authorities can immediately proceed with issuance of the fine without waiting for any sample analysis to be completed.

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When samples are collected by the Authorities, they are sent to The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) for analysis.

Once the analysis is complete and if presence of pollutant in samples is confirmed, the Authorities will then issue a fine.

Payment and Objection Procedures

For the purpose of releasing the vessel from detention while the procedures, as explained above, are completed, the Authorities will request security from the vessel's interests in the form of Club Letter of Undertaking or Bank Guarantee issued by a Turkish bank.

In most cases, a Letter of Undertaking (LoU) from the vessel's P&I Club is usually acceptable. However, the LoU wording requested by the Turkish Authorities for pollution cases differs from the standard wording of a Club LoU. It is essentially an agreement to accept payment within 30 days after the fine is issued and to date, Authorities have not shown any sign of flexibility to accept amendments to this wording.

Once the Authorities formally issue a fine for the alleged pollution incident, it must be paid immediately, within 30 days. As outlined above, if the fine is paid within 30 days, a 25% discount will be applied.

Objections to fines can be filed with the Administrative Court within 30 days of receiving the fine notice. It should be noted that payment of the fine does not prejudice the Owner's right to appeal the fine within the given timeframe.

In this regard, in the event of an allegation of marine pollution, prompt appointment of P&I local correspondent is essential to ensure the efficient management of procedures with the Authorities from the outset of the matter for best possible protection of the vessel's interests.

Should you have any queries relating to this update, please contact Kalimbassieris Maritime Istanbul Office by email: istanbul@kalimbassieris.com or Tel: (+90) 2164575600.

Yours Sincerely,

Kalimbassieris Maritime A.S.

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