Eni and MSC Cruises: Enilive's HVO diesel biofuel successfully tested for maritime transport

San Donato Milanese, 12 May 2026 – Eni and MSC Cruises have announced the completion of a test of the use of Enilive's HVO (Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil) diesel. This test confirmed the technical feasibility of using the biofuel in its pure form in the maritime sector to power cruise ship engines.

The initiative highlights the value of HVO as a strategic energy carrier to support the decarbonisation of maritime transport and the reduction of life-cycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, enabling shipowners to significantly cut emission-related costs and to meet the targets set by FuelEU Maritime regulation.

The trial was jointly carried out by Eni and MSC Cruises: during the tests, one of the engines of the cruise ship MSC Opera was powered for approximately 2,000 hours with pure HVO, without any engine modifications, while performance and emissions data were recorded.

This test demonstrated that HVO is an immediately applicable solution even for marine engines and without the need for technological upgrades, while ensuring performance in line with traditional marine fossil fuels.

The test also recorded lower emissions of both NOx (-16%) and particulate, as well as a significant reduction in GHG emissions inherent to the origin of the HVO product of around -80% compared to the use of traditional fuel; the reduction is due to the usage of 100% biogenic feedstocks in the HVO production process.

Technical data on engine performance and associated emissions were collected and assessed with the support of Wärtsilä, the engine manufacturer, and Bureau Veritas, which acted as an independent certifier to validate the experimental results.

Stefano Ballista, Chief Executive Officer of Enilive, commented: "The trial with MSC has demonstrated how HVO diesel biofuel can contribute immediately to the decarbonization of maritime transport. It can be used in its pure form in marine engines validated for its use, allowing a reduction in climate-altering emissions – calculated along the entire supply chain – of between 65% and 90% compared to traditional marine fossil fuels. HVO is produced at Enilive's biorefineries in Venice and Gela, mainly from waste feedstocks such as used cooking oils, animal fats, and residues from the agri-food industry. For several months now, Enilive's marine HVO diesel has been available at the ports of Genoa, Ravenna and Venice for direct delivery from the terminal to vessels via barge. The use of this fuel represents a viable solution for the decarbonization of maritime transport, contributing to compliance with the obligations set by the FuelEU Maritime regulation and reducing the emission-related costs".

Michele Francioni, Chief Energy Transition Officer di MSC Cruises, commented: "We are very pleased to have satisfactorily confirmed the technical feasibility of 100% HVO on our cruise ship as

part of our continuous decarbonization efforts. We believe HVO may play an important role in the decarbonisation of shipping and together with other immediately available fuels such as LNG and bio-LNG, constitutes an immediate opportunity that could be deployed on board cruise ships to accelerate the transition towards renewable fuels, bringing us a step closer to our ultimate goal of reaching net zero GHG emissions by 2050".

Eni Company Contacts:

Press Office*:* Tel. +39.0252031875 – +39.0659822030
Freephone for shareholders (from Italy): 800940924
Freephone for shareholders (from abroad): + 80011223456
Switchboard: +39-0659821
ufficio.stampa@eni.com
segreteriasocietaria.azionisti@eni.com
investor.relations@eni.com
Web site: www.eni.com

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