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Some Legal Aspects on Shipping Documents and Short Reflections on the Specialty of the Subject Matter

Undoubtedly, the bill of lading has to be considered as the most important document used in carriages of goods by sea. Born, most probably, in the Middle Age, the bill of lading at first developed its role as proof of the contract of carriage and receipt of the goods carried on board. Subsequently, it became also a document of title, so extending its capacity even to support the sale of the goods to be carried. At present, the bill of lading appears to be extended to the multimodal transports of goods with excellent results and can be used also in electronic applications.

The particular and unique role of this document confirms the speciality of the maritime traffic and, more generally, of the maritime field, and emphasizes the consequent need of relevant studies and special legal rules for the purpose of meeting the evolving demands of the modern transport operators through adequate measures.