

**IMO UPDATE:  
MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE – MEPC 78**



**(The 78th session of the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 78) was held remotely from 6 to 10 June 2022.)**

## MAIN HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MEETING

- Consideration of revisions to the IMO GHG Strategy and view to adopting a revised strategy in mid-2023.
- Finalization of technical guidelines for the upcoming EEXI, CII, and SEEMP regulations.
- The MEPC agreed to designate the entire Mediterranean Sea as an emission control area.
- Adoption of amendments to MARPOL Annexure I and IBC code with regard to watertight doors.
- Adoption of Amendments to MARPOL Annexure II with regard to GESAMP Hazard Evaluation Procedure.
- Evaluation of Experience Building Phase (EBP) related to BWM convention.
- Marine litter; with a special focus on fishing traceability

## STRATEGY ON GHG EMISSIONS

IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee has reiterated its commitment to review and strengthen the IMO Initial Strategy on the reduction of GHG emissions from shipping, with a view to adopting a revised strategy in mid-2023.

As initiated during the last session (MEPC 77), The MEPC 78 session made further progress with the discussions towards the revision of the Initial GHG Strategy. The revision will take into account the commitment to strengthen the levels of ambition of the Initial Strategy and the needs of developing States, in particular small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs).

It has been agreed upon in the meeting that, works on GHG emissions will continue in the intersessional GHG working group (ISWG-GHG 13) before the next session (MEPC 79) and in further sessions of the working group. There are two meetings of the intersessional GHG working group which are planned prior to MEPC 80 in order to keep up the momentum.

### Developing a basket of mid-term GHG reduction measures

The MEPC has noted the progress made by the Intersessional Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships ([ISWG-GHG 12](#)) in advancing towards the further development of a "basket of candidate mid-term measures"-integrating various technical elements (for example, a GHG fuel standard and/or

enhancement of IMO's carbon intensity measures) and carbon pricing elements (for example, a market-based measure). The MEPC noted the need for additional information on the proposed mid-term measures. It encouraged proponents of measures to work together intersessionally with a view to exploring how different elements of these proposals could be combined in the context of a basket of mid-term GHG reduction measures. Member States and international organizations were invited to submit new documents to a future session of ISWG-GHG, including refined proposals to this purpose.

### Guidelines adopted to support the short-term measure

The MEPC adopted a series of guidelines to support the implementation of the [short-term measure](#) to reduce ships' carbon intensity in accordance with the timelines set out in the Initial IMO GHG Strategy.

The short-term measure enters into force on 1 November 2022 and introduces the Energy Efficiency Existing Ship Index (EEXI); the annual operational carbon intensity indicator (CII) rating and an enhanced Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP).

The discussed guidelines include those relating to

- method of calculation of the EEXI,
- the revised SEEMP and
- possible correction factors for CII.

The MEPC also approved draft amendments to appendix IX of MARPOL Annex VI on the reporting of EEXI and CII values to the IMO Data Collection System (DCS). The Committee further agreed to include a new workstream on further revision of the IMO DCS in the agenda of ISWG-GHG 13.

### Guidelines for Development of a Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan

At the 76th session of the Committee, new MARPOL Annex VI regulations were adopted concerning mandatory goal-based technical and operational measures to reduce the carbon intensity of international shipping. In support of these new MARPOL Annex VI regulations, which enter into force on 1 November 2022, the Committee adopted the following resolutions related to the revision of the affected vessels' Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP): (the below listed resolutions are taken from the "List of resolutions/circulars(provisional)\* given towards the end of this document "

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| MEPC.346(78) | 2022 Guidelines for the Development of a Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP) (Revokes MEPC.282(70))                             |
| MEPC.347(78) | Guidelines for the Verification and Company Audits by the Administration of Part III of the Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP) |

All affected vessels must update their SEEMP to include Part III to establish the Ship Operational Carbon Intensity Plan and upon satisfactory assessment of it, receive an updated Confirmation of Compliance (CoC) by 31 December 2022. Resolution MEPC.346(78) provides a sample form for this new plan while Resolution MEPC.347(78) provides a sample form for the Confirmation of Compliance. The first reporting of the CII based on 2023 data is due no later than 31 March 2024.

### Guidelines Concerning Ship Fuel Oil Consumption Data

The MEPC adopted the following resolutions and approved the following guidance circular

related to the handling and verification of ship fuel oil consumption data and operational carbon intensity:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| MEPC.348(78)    | 2022 Guidelines for Administration Verification of Ship Fuel Oil Consumption Data and Operational Carbon Intensity (revokes MEPC.292(71))                            |
| MEPC.349(78)    | 2022 Guidelines for the Development and Management of the IMO Ship Fuel Oil Consumption Database (revokes MEPC.293(71))  |
| MEPC.1/Circ.901 | Guidance for Submission of Data to the IMO Data Collection System of Fuel Oil Consumption of Ships from a State Not Party to MARPOL Annex VI (revokes MEPC.Circ.871) |

These guidance documents have been updated to incorporate the achieved EEDI and EEXI, as well as the assessment and reporting of the operational carbon intensity rating to the IMO. On an annual basis, the attained annual operational CII must be documented and verified against the required annual operational CII to determine the operational carbon intensity rating for each affected vessel, and this information will be reported to the IMO along with the current reporting of fuel oil consumption data.

### Revised Guidance on EEXI and CII Calculations

The MEPC adopted the following guidelines supporting the implementation of the Energy Efficiency Existing Ship Index (EEXI) and Carbon Intensity Indicator (CII) as part of the IMO's carbon intensity reduction measures:

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| MEPC.350(78) | 2022 Guidelines on the Method of Calculation of the Attained Energy Efficiency Existing Ship Index (EEXI)<br><br>(revokes MEPC.333(76)) |
| MEPC.351(78) | 2022 Guidelines on Survey and Certification of the Attained Energy Efficiency Existing Ship Index (EEXI)<br><br>(revokes MEPC.334(76))  |
| MEPC.352(78) | 2022 Guidelines on Operational Carbon Intensity Indicators and the Calculation Methods<br><br>(revokes MEPC.336(76))                    |
| MEPC.353(78) | 2022 Guidelines on the Reference Lines for Use with Operational Carbon Intensity Indicators<br><br>(revokes MEPC.337(76))               |
| MEPC.354(78) | 2022 Guidelines on the Operational Carbon Intensity Rating of Ships<br><br>(revokes MEPC.339(76))                                       |
| MEPC.355(78) | 2022 Interim Guidelines on Correction Factors and Voyage Adjustments for CII Calculations   |

The revised 2022 EEXI guidelines now provide a method for in-service performance measurements while the revised 2022 CII

Guidelines incorporate changes in;

- 2022 CII Guidelines, G1:
- 2022 CII Guidelines, G2:
- 2022 CII Guidelines, G4:

### Correction Factors and Voyage Adjustments for CII (G5)

The MEPC invited the interested Member States and international organizations to collect relevant data in the early years of implementation of the CII rating system and to report relevant information to the Committee ahead of the review of the CII regulations and guidelines to be completed at the latest by 1 January 2026. This is to take into consideration of the proposals of including correction factors that address port waiting time and adverse weather conditions in the CII evaluation.

### Guidance on Methods, Procedures, and Verification of In-Service Performance Measurements for EEXI

The MEPC approved MEPC circular MEPC.1/Circ.902 which provides guidance on methods, procedures and verification of in-service performance measurements for the purpose of the EEXI calculation.

## THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA EMISSION CONTROL AREA FOR SULPHUR OXIDES APPROVED

The MEPC approved the proposal to designate the entire Mediterranean Sea as an emission control area. The proposal is subject for adoption at MEPC 79 in December of this year and is expected to take effect from 1 July 2025, meaning that ships will - from 2025 - have to comply with more stringent controls on sulphur oxide emissions. In a SO<sub>x</sub>-ECA, the limit for sulfur in fuel oil used on board ships is 0.10% mass by mass (m/m), while outside these areas the limit is 0.50% m/m.

There are currently four designated SO<sub>x</sub>-ECAs worldwide: the Baltic Sea area; the North Sea area; the North American area (covering designated coastal areas off the United States and Canada); and the United States Caribbean Sea area (around Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands).

# BWM CONVENTION EXPERIENCE-BUILDING PHASE AND APPLICATION

Based on information shared by the numerous Member States and after following consideration of the data analysis report on the Experience Building Phase (EBP) of the BWM Convention, the MEPC agreed in principle to develop a BWM Convention Review Plan (CRP) and established a Correspondence Group on Review of the BWM Convention to finalize the CRP.

The MEPC also approved revised Guidance on methodologies that may be used for

enumerating viable organisms for type approval of ballast water management systems (BWM.2/Circ.61/Rev.1), and guidelines for re-evaluations in cases where modifications have been made to a ballast water management system, for inclusion as a new chapter 12 in the revised Methodology for information gathering and conduct of work of the GESAMP-Ballast Water Working Group (BWM.2/Circ.13/Rev.5).

## UNIFIED INTERPRETATIONS OF PROVISIONS OF IMO ENVIRONMENT-RELATED CONVENTIONS APPROVED

The MEPC approved an interpretation of Appendix I (Form of the IBWM Certificate) of the BWM Convention, concerning the principal ballast water management method(s) employed for ships that occasionally engaged in international voyages, ships exempted due to voyages between specific ports or locations, and for ships with "other approach" in accordance with Regulations A-4, A-5, B-3.6 or B-3.7.

Unified interpretation on the application of regulation 18.3 MARPOL Annex VI to biofuels.

A new unified interpretation to provide clarity on the use of biofuels onboard vessels and its implication on Nox emission is approved a fuel oil that is a blend of not more than 30% by volume of biofuel should meet the requirements of regulation 18.3.1 of MARPOL Annex VI

- a fuel oil that is a blend of more than 30% by volume of biofuel should meet the requirements of regulation 18.3.2 of MARPOL Annex VI.

Revised unified interpretation of paragraph 4.4.6.1 of the NOx Technical Code 2008,

Revised unified interpretation of paragraph 4.4.6.1 of the NOx Technical Code 2008, to make the interpretation (see [MEPC.1/Circ.895](#)) applicable to the "Engine Family" concept under certain circumstances.

## DISCHARGE WATER FROM EXHAUST GAS CLEANING SYSTEMS (EGCS) – GUIDELINES APPROVED

The MEPC 78 approved guidelines to tackle issues related to discharge from exhaust gas cleaning systems (EGCS).

- MEPC Circular on 2022 Guidelines for risk and impact assessments of the discharge water from exhaust gas cleaning systems, to provide information on the recommended

methodology for risk and impact assessments that Member States should follow when considering local or regional regulations to protect the sensitive waters/environment from the discharge water from EGCS. (MEPC.1/Circ.899)

- MEPC Circular on 2022 Guidance regarding the delivery of EGCS residues to port reception facilities, providing best practices intended to assist both ship operators and port States in assuring the proper management and disposal of

EGCS residues and stored discharge water from EGCSs into port reception facilities. (MEPC.1/Circ.900)

The subcommittee of IMO has been considering and working on these issues for quite some time.

## FUEL FLASHPOINT IN BUNKER DELIVERY NOTE - AMENDMENTS APPROVED

The MEPC approved draft amendments to appendix V of MARPOL Annex VI, for adoption by MEPC 79, to include a flashpoint

of fuel oil or a statement that the flashpoint has been measured at or above 70°C as mandatory information in the bunker delivery note (BDN).

## MANDATORY GARBAGE RECORD BOOKS FOR SMALLER SHIPS APPROVED

The MEPC 78 approved amendments to MARPOL Annex V to expand the requirement for a garbage record book by lowering the threshold down to ships of 100 gross tonnage and above (from the current threshold 400 gross tonnage and above).

The Committee discussed a submittal originating from MEPC 75, proposing amendments to MARPOL Annex V to mandate the marking of fishing gear so that lost, abandoned or intentionally discarded fishing gear can be traced back to the owning vessel by the IMO Ship Identification Number.

## MARINE LITTER; MARKING OF FISHING GEAR

In 2021, MEPC 77 adopted the Strategy to address marine plastic litter from ships, which sets out to the following outcomes as key goals: reduction of marine plastic litter generated from, and retrieved by, fishing vessels; reduction of shipping's contribution to marine plastic litter; and improvement of the effectiveness of port reception and facilities and treatment in reducing marine plastic litter.

Actions have been agreed, to be completed by 2025, which relate to all ships, including fishing vessels. The action plan supports IMO's commitment to meeting the targets set in the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14) on the oceans.

The MEPC noted the ongoing work in the PPR Sub-Committee on marking of fishing gear, which has been identified as a key action in order to reduce marine plastic litter from lost, abandoned and otherwise discarded fishing gear.

Following discussion, the MEPC instructed the Sub-Committee to develop draft amendments to MARPOL Annex V and associated guidelines to make the marking of fishing gear mandatory, using a goal-based approach.

# REVISION OF THE ANTI-FOULING SYSTEMS CONVENTION - GUIDELINES ADOPTED

The MEPC adopted revised guidelines to support the implementation of the AFS Convention, following the adoption, in 2021, of amendments to include controls on the biocide cybutryne. The amendments enter into force on 1 January 2023. The consequential revisions relate to:

- Guidelines for brief sampling of anti-fouling systems on ships;
- Guidelines for inspection of anti-fouling systems on ships; and
- Guidelines for survey and certification of anti-fouling systems on ships.

## ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS (WATERTIGHT DOORS, GESAMP HAZARD EVALUATION PROCEDURE)

The MEPC adopted the following amendments to:

- MARPOL Annex I and the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code) in relation to watertight doors, with an expected entry into force date of 1 January 2024 and 1 July 2024, respectively; and
- MARPOL Annex II, updating the abbreviated legend to the revised GESAMP Hazard Evaluation Procedure, with an expected entry into force date of 1 November 2023.

## PROTECTING SEAS IN THE ARCTIC - REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR PORT RECEPTION FACILITIES

The MEPC approved, for subsequent adoption, draft amendments to the MARPOL annexes to allow States with ports in the Arctic region to enter into regional arrangements for port reception facilities. The draft amendments relate to MARPOL Annexes I (oil), II (noxious liquid substances),

IV (sewage), V (garbage) and VI (air pollution). Related draft amendments to the 2012 Guidelines for the development of a regional reception facility plan (resolution MEPC.221 (63)) were also agreed

# LIST OF RESOLUTIONS/CIRCULARS (PROVISIONAL)\*

| Resolutions<br>/Circulars | Topic   |
|---------------------------|---|
| MEPC.343(78)              | Amendments to MARPOL Annex I (watertight doors)   |
| MEPC.344(78)              | Amendments to MARPOL Annex II (abbreviated legend to the revised GESAMP Hazard Evaluation Procedure)  |
| MEPC.345(78)              | Amendments to the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code) (watertight doors) |
| MEPC.346(78)              | 2022 Guidelines for the development of a Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP)   |
| MEPC.347(78)              | Guidelines for the verification and company audits by the administration of Part III of the Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP)          |
| MEPC.348(78)              | 2022 Guidelines for administration verification of ship fuel oil consumption data and operational carbon intensity Resolution                       |
| MEPC.349(78)              | 2022 Guidelines for the development and management of the IMO ship fuel oil consumption database Resolution   |
| MEPC.350(78)              | Guidelines on the method of calculation of the attained Energy Efficiency Existing Ship Index (EEXI)  |
| MEPC.351(78)              | 2022 Guidelines on survey and certification of the attained Energy Efficiency Existing Ship Index (EEXI)  |
| MEPC.352(78)              | 2022 Guidelines on operational carbon intensity indicators and the calculation methods (CII guidelines, G1)   |
| MEPC.353(78)              | 2022 Guidelines on the reference lines for use with operational carbon intensity indicators (CII reference lines guidelines, G2)                    |
| MEPC.354(78)              | 2022 Guidelines on the operational carbon intensity rating of ships (CII rating guidelines, G4)   |
| MEPC.355(78)              | 2022 Interim guidelines on correction factors and voyage adjustments for CII calculations (CII guidelines, G5)                                      |
| MEPC.356(78)              | 2022 Guidelines for brief sampling of anti-fouling systems on ships   |
| MEPC.357(78)              | 2022 Guidelines for inspection of anti-fouling systems on ships   |
| BWM.2/Circ.61/Rev.1       | 2022 Guidance on methodologies that may be used for enumerating viable organisms for type approval of ballast water management systems              |
| BWM.2/Circ.66/Rev.3       | Unified interpretations to the BWM Convention   |
| BWM.2/Circ.13/Rev.5       | Methodology for information gathering and conduct of work of the GESAMP-BWWG  |
| MEPC.1/Circ.895/Rev.1     | Unified interpretation to the NOx Technical Code 2008, as amended   |
| MEPC.1/Circ.795/Rev.6     | Unified interpretations to MARPOL Annex VI  |
| MEPC.1/Circ.899           | 2022 Guidelines for risk and impact assessments of the discharge water from exhaust gas cleaning systems  |
| MEPC.1/Circ.900           | 2022 Guidance regarding the delivery of EGCS residues to port reception facilities  |
| MEPC.1/Circ.901           | Guidance for submission of data to the IMO data collection system of fuel oil consumption of ships from a State not Party to MARPOL Annex V         |

\*Prepared based on current information available, Resolution numbering and list may change.



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