

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION**Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) 77, 22-26 November 2021**

Action Required: IR Commission members are invited to note the relevant outcomes of MEPC 77.

Tackling climate change - cutting GHG emissions from ships

The MEPC agreed to initiate a revision of the Initial IMO Strategy on Reduction of GHG emissions from ships, recognizing the need to strengthen the ambition during the revision process. This came in the wake of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26), held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, (1-12 November) and in view of the urgency for all sectors to accelerate their efforts to reduce GHG emissions.

The Committee invited interested Member States and international organizations to work together and to submit concrete proposals for a revised IMO GHG Strategy to MEPC 78 (June 2022) for consideration.

Discussion of proposals to further reduce GHG emissions from shipping

A number of proposals for further mid-term GHG reduction measures, including market-based measures, to address GHG emissions from shipping were discussed, as well as a proposal to establish an International Maritime Research and Development Board. This followed presentation of a number of proposals in the Intersessional Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships ([ISWG GHG 10](#)).

Impact assessment of GHG measures

The Initial IMO GHG strategy recognizes that the impacts on States of a proposed measure should be assessed and taken into account as appropriate, with particular attention paid to the needs of developing countries, especially small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs).

Black carbon in the Arctic - resolution adopted

The MEPC adopted a [resolution](#) which urges Member States and ship operators to voluntarily use distillate or other cleaner alternative fuels or methods of propulsion that are safe for ships and could contribute to the reduction of Black Carbon emissions from ships when operating in or near the Arctic. The resolution encourages Member States to commence addressing the threat to the Arctic from Black Carbon emissions, and report on measures and best practices to reduce Black Carbon emissions from shipping

Strategy to address marine plastic litter from ships adopted

The MEPC, in order to enhance implementation of IMO's mandatory international regulations, adopted the Strategy to address marine plastic litter from ships, which sets out the ambitions to reduce marine plastic litter generated from, and retrieved by, fishing vessels; reduce shipping's contribution to marine plastic litter; and improve the effectiveness of port reception and facilities and treatment in reducing marine plastic litter.

The Strategy also aims to achieve further outcomes, including: enhanced public awareness, education and seafarer training; improved understanding of the contribution of ships to marine plastic litter; improved understanding of the regulatory framework associated with marine plastic litter from ships; strengthened international cooperation; and targeted technical cooperation and capacity-building.

The adoption of the Strategy follows the adoption, in 2018, of the IMO Action Plan to address marine litter (read more here: <https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Pages/marinelitter-default.aspx>)

IMO, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), is implementing the GloLitter Partnerships Project which aims to help shipping and fisheries move to a low-plastics future. (Read more here: [https://wwwcdn.imo.org/localresources/en/OurWork/PartnershipsProjects/Documents/DPP-Factsheets/DPP%20one-page%20fact%20sheets \(25-10-21\) FINAL ONLINE GLOLITTER.pdf](https://wwwcdn.imo.org/localresources/en/OurWork/PartnershipsProjects/Documents/DPP-Factsheets/DPP%20one-page%20fact%20sheets%20(25-10-21)%20FINAL%20ONLINE%20GLOLITTER.pdf))

Marking of fishing gear

The Committee considered proposals related to making the marking of fishing gear mandatory. It agreed to refer relevant documents to PPR 9 for further discussion.

Garbage Record Book

The MEPC considered a proposal to extend the requirement for a Garbage Record Book to ships less than 400 GT and equal to or greater than 100 GT. It agreed to instruct the PPR Sub-Committee to prepare draft amendments to MARPOL Annex V.

Harmful aquatic organisms in ballast water

The MEPC was updated on the experience-building phase associated with the Ballast Water Management Convention (BWM), which has been in force since 2017 and aims to prevent the spread of invasive aquatic species in ballast water. The Committee was informed that there is now available data from 35 Member States and seven other stakeholders. corresponding to approximately 15,000 ships. This is currently being analysed by the World Maritime University (WMU) and a full data analysis report will be submitted to MEPC 78.

The MEPC approved a unified interpretation of the Date to be used for determining the implementation of mandatory commissioning testing of individual ballast water management systems in accordance with resolution MEPC.325(75). The MEPC also established fundamental elements to be taken into account for the further development of guidance on measures that may be taken when ballast water management systems encounter challenging water quality on uptake.

There were no other issues of note for World Sailing arising from this session.