

Action Required: IR Commission members are invited to note the relevant outcomes of MEPC 83.

1. Tackling climate change – Mid-term measures to reduce GHG emissions approved

The Committee finalized and approved the draft legal text for the "IMO Net-Zero Framework", to be included as a new chapter in Annex VI to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships ([MARPOL](#)). The draft amendments to MARPOL Annex VI were circulated to Member States immediately after the meeting, with a view to adoption at an extra-ordinary session of MEPC in October 2025. (See Circular Letter: [CL No.5005 - Draft Revised MARPOL Annex VI](#))

The IMO Net-Zero Framework includes a set of "mid-term measures" aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping, in line with the reduction targets set out in the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy. These measures consist of:

- **a technical element:** a goal-based marine fuel standard designed to gradually lower the GHG intensity of marine fuels; and
- **an economic element:** a pricing mechanism for maritime GHG emissions.

Following adoption, the measures are expected to enter into force 16 months later, under the "[tacit acceptance](#)" procedure, in accordance with the amendment provisions in MARPOL. (More details: [IMO approves net-zero regulations for global shipping](#))

Relevance to World Sailing: to be aware of these aspirations, which may potentially be extended to include vessels under the current 500GT applicability threshold.

2. Review of the short-term measure to reduce GHG emissions – Phase 1 completed

The Committee finalized Phase 1 of the review of IMO's [short-term](#) GHG reduction measures, which were adopted in 2021 and entered into force in 2022. Key elements of the short-term measures include: Energy Efficiency Existing Ship Index (EEXI), enhanced Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP), and Carbon Intensity Indicator (CII) rating scheme. The measures aim to improve ship energy efficiency and reduce carbon intensity by at least 40% by 2030 compared to 2008.

Relevance to World Sailing: to be aware of these aspirations, which may potentially be extended to include vessels under the current 500GT applicability threshold.

3. Addressing marine plastic litter from ships – Action Plan adopted

The Committee adopted the 2025 Action Plan to Address [Marine Plastic Litter](#) from Ships (2025 Action Plan) agreed by the Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response ([PPR 12](#)), and approved updated groupings of short-, mid- and long-term actions under this plan. The 2025 Action Plan is expected to be eventually combined with the [Strategy to Address Marine Plastic Litter from Ships](#) in a single resolution at a later date, after the Strategy has been reviewed and updated by the PPR Sub-Committee.

Relevance to World Sailing: to be aware of these aspirations, which may potentially be extended to include vessels under the current 500GT applicability threshold.

4. North-East Atlantic Ocean Emissions Control Area approved and Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas off Peru agreed in principle

The Committee approved a proposal to designate the North-East Atlantic Ocean as an [Emissions Control Area](#) for Sulphur oxide emissions (SOX), particulate matter (PM) and nitrogen oxide emissions (NOX). The associated draft amendments to MARPOL Annex VI will be submitted to the extraordinary MEPC session in October 2025, with a view to adoption as part of the revised MARPOL Annex VI.

The Committee agreed in principle to the designation of the "Reserva Nacional Dorsal de Nasca" (Nasca Ridge National Reserve) and the "Reserva Nacional Mar Tropical de Grau" (Grau Tropical Sea National Reserve) as Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs). The Committee invited Peru to further develop the proposed associated protective measures and submit them to MEPC for consideration and approval at MEPC 84.

Relevance to World Sailing: to be aware of these changes, which may affect the freedom of navigation for sport and leisure craft, or may require specific operating modes, in these sensitive sea areas.

5. Addressing harmful aquatic organisms in ballast water – BWM Convention review ongoing

The Committee continued its ongoing review of the Ballast Water Management ([BWM](#)) Convention, including stocktaking of the progress made and consideration of the way forward with regard to the overall plan for completion of the review, with some high-level decisions needed to facilitate the achievement of the review targets.

Relevance to World Sailing: the Convention currently applies only to vessels constructed to carry ballast water which are engaged in international voyages. Hence only the very largest yachts, including superyachts of around 50m or more in length, which can carry 8 cubic metres of ballast water or more, are subject to the Convention.

6. Air pollution prevention – various developments

Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems (scrubbers)

The Committee noted an update from the Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR) on regulating the discharge from EGCS or "scrubbers". Interested Member States and international organizations were invited to submit new proposals on regulatory measures addressing the matter to PPR 13 in early 2026.

Black Carbon emissions

The Committee noted the ongoing work on the concept of "polar fuels" (fuels that are most suitable for use in the Arctic to minimize environmental impact) and extended the target completion year for this output to 2027, to allow additional time to further develop the concept.

Relevance to World Sailing: small vessels for sport and leisure are not yet captured by these potential regulatory measures, but we should watch how they evolve in detail.

Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) emissions

The Committee adopted the 2025 Guidelines on Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) Systems. SCR systems are active emission control technology systems used to reduce NOx emissions. The Committee also adopted detailed amendments to the [NOx Technical Code 2008](#), allowing ships to optimize fuel consumption based on their operational profile, thus improving energy efficiency, while ensuring compliance with NOx emission requirements.

Relevance to World Sailing: . Very limited relevance currently. The Nox emission regulations apply to installed marine diesel engines of over 130kW output power: typically in vessels (including

superyachts) of 24m length or more. This minimum power criterion could possibly be reduced in future, thus capturing the largest sailing yachts fitted with hefty auxiliary engines.

7. Pollution prevention and response

The Committee considered and approved the report of the Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR12) and took the following actions:

- approved Interim guidance on the carriage of blends of biofuels and MARPOL Annex I cargoes by conventional bunker ships;
- approved Guidance on in-water cleaning of ships' biofouling.

8. New outputs approved, including development of a legally binding instrument on biofouling, as well as assessment of the implementation of the Hong Kong Convention and development of amendments and clarifications as appropriate

The Committee approved the following proposals for new outputs:

- Development of a legally binding framework for the control and management of ships' biofouling to minimize the transfer of invasive aquatic species;
- Assessment of the implementation of the [Hong Kong Convention](#) (on ship recycling) through an experience-building phase and development of clarifications and amendments to the Convention;
- Review and amendment of the NOX Technical Code 2008 to provide a means for certification of engines that operate on non-carbon-containing fuel or mixtures of carbon-containing and non-carbon-containing fuels.