MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (MAP)
REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC)

Thirteenth Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)

REMPEC/WG.45/6/1
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Agenda Item 6

DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN IMO RELATED TO THE OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF REMPEC

Note by International Maritime Organization (IMO)

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This document provides a summary of the latest developments within IMO in the fields of prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships. It also addresses the recent activities of IMO related to operational pollution, ballast water management, reduction in GHGs and measures for enhancing energy efficiency of shipping and technical cooperation. Special reference is made to the activities of IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) and Sub Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR).

Action to be taken: Paragraph 40

Related documents: MEPC 72/17, MEPC 73/19, and PPR 5/24

General

1 The IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee held its seventy-second session (MEPC 72) from 9 to 13 April 2018 and its seventy-third session (MEPC 73) from 22 to 26 October 2018. The reports of these sessions have been issued under the symbol MEPC 72/17 and MEPC 73/19, respectively. During the reporting period, the Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR) also held its fifth and sixth meetings, from 5 to 9 February 2018 and 18 to 22 February 2019, respectively. The report of the PPR 5 has been issued as PPR 5/24. The report of PPR 6 had not yet been published at the time of submitting this document. The outcome of these sessions on matters of interest to the Meeting of REMPEC Focal Points is summarized hereunder.

OPRC-HNS

2 MEPC 73 approved part IV of the Guidelines for the use of dispersants for combating oil pollution at sea, which focuses on the sub-sea application of dispersants. This is the final part of the revision and update of the IMO Dispersant Guidelines which was initiated following the Deepwater Horizon incident to reflect the latest developments in this field of response. The guidelines, once published in their entirety, will provide useful and practical advice for Governments in the process of preparing for and responding to oil spills at sea.

3 Following a submission by REMPEC containing recommendations resulting from MEDEXPOL 2018 addressing the outstanding challenges related to the ratification and implementation of the OPRC-HNS Protocol, PPR 6 agreed to:

.1 invite interested Member States to propose a new output on the development of an HNS Response Manual;

.2 request the Secretariat to consider updating the IMO Model Introductory Course on the Response to HNS in the Marine Environment – Manager Level;

.3 request the Secretariat to consider increasing the number of capacity-building activities related to HNS preparedness and response, through IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP), as well as through the different Regional Seas Programmes and relevant industry initiatives; and

.4 consider ways of exchanging experiences on responding to pollution incidents, including by regular reporting to the Sub-Committee, to enhance knowledge regarding the response to spill incidents, potentially supporting additional ratification to the OPRC-HNS Protocol and the HNS Convention.

Guide on practical method to implement the OPRC Convention and the OPRC-HNS Protocol

4 PPR 6 agreed the draft Guidance on practical implementation of the OPRC Convention and the OPRC-HNS Protocol. The guide is intended to: promote understanding of the overall OPRC Convention and OPRC-HNS Protocol concept; explain the benefits of participation in this international regime; provide a step-wise approach for the planning, preparedness and implementation process at national and regional levels; and identify existing publications and support mechanisms to assist with implementation. The Guide should be approved by MEPC 74.

5 PPR 6 also proposed several recommendations for promoting the Guide, once finalized, including the development of different communication tools and, possibly, e-learning course. PPR 6 also encouraged inter-governmental organizations, Regional Seas Programmes, and industry partners to create awareness about the Guide and disseminate information about it amongst its members.

Technical cooperation concerning the OPRC Convention and the OPRC-HNS Protocol

6 MEPC 73 took note of IMO's three main ways of delivering technical assistance aimed at enhancing preparedness, response and cooperation in case of incidents involving oil and HNS pollution, namely through:

.1 IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP);

.2 Multi-annual cooperation projects with industry or specific donors; and

.3 IMO's permanent support to Regional Activity Centres established under the Regional Seas Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme.

7 MEPC 73 agreed that additional technical assistance in the area of preparedness and response to spills involving oil and HNS was still needed, notably to support ratification of the OPRC-HNS Protocol. The Committee, having noted the need to assess possible ways of better pooling all the available resources for capacity-building in the area of spill preparedness and response, and to explore further cooperation with existing and new partners, invited interested Member Governments and other stakeholders to submit proposals to that end to a future session.

8 MEPC 73 also recognized the added value of the long-standing close cooperation on supporting implementation of the OPRC Convention and the OPRC-HNS Protocol between the Secretariat and regional centres like REMPEC, REMPEITC/Caribe and NOWPAP-MERRAC, which had been set up under the respective Regional Seas Programmes of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Operational pollution

9 MEPC 73 approved, for future adoption, draft amendments to MARPOL Annex II to strengthen, in specified sea areas, discharge requirements for tank washings containing persistent floating products with a high-viscosity and/or a high melting point that can solidify under certain conditions (e.g. certain vegetable oils and paraffin-like cargoes). The draft amendments follow

concerns about the environmental impact of permissible discharges of such discharges and would tighten requirements for the discharge from ships of tank washings containing such products.

10 Under the new requirements, a chemical tanker that would unload a cargo of such substance would have to carry out a prewash of its tanks and the residue/water mixture generated during the prewash would have to be discharged to a reception facility at the port of unloading. The requirements would be applied in North West European Waters; the Baltic Sea area, the Western European Waters and Norwegian waters north of 620 north.

Action plan on marine plastic litter

11 MEPC 72 adopted an action plan to address marine plastic litter from ships, intended to contribute to the global solution for preventing marine plastic litter entering the oceans through ship-based activities.

12 The Action Plan identifies a number of actions, which will be reviewed at MEPC 74 prior to further work being undertaken, including proposed study on marine plastic litter from ships; looking into the availability and adequacy of port reception facilities; consideration of making marking of fishing gear mandatory; promoting the reporting of loss of fishing gear; facilitating the delivery of retrieved fishing gear to shore facilities; reviewing provisions related to the training of fishing vessel personnel and familiarization of seafarers to ensure awareness of the impact of marine plastic litter; and strengthening international cooperation, in particular with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and UN Environment.

Ballast Water Management

13 The Ballast Water Management (BWM) Convention entered into force in September 2017. In October 2018 the Convention had been ratified by 79 countries, representing 80.94% of world merchant shipping tonnage.

14 MEPC 72 adopted amendments which will enter into force on 13 October 2019. These amendments relate to the implementation of the Convention, including the schedule for ships to comply with the requirement to meet the D-2 performance standard (amendments to section B), which specifies the maximum limits for the discharge of viable organisms as well as specified indicator microbes harmful to human health. Other amendments (to sections A and D) make mandatory the Code for approval of ballast water management systems, which was also adopted during MEPC 72. Further amendments relate to section E on survey and certification.

15 MEPC 72 also adopted the revised *Guidance for Administrations on the type approval process for ballast water management systems* (BWM.2/Circ.43/Rev.1).

16 MEPC 73 adopted amendments to update the *Guidelines for ballast water management and development of ballast water management plans* (G4) to address the incorporation of information on contingency measures in ballast water management plans.

Experience-building phase

17 The experience-building phase (EBP), established through resolution MEPC.290(71), will enable port States, flag States and other stakeholders to gather, prepare and submit data, the analysis of which will allow a systematic and evidence-based review of the requirements of the Convention. MEPC 72 approved the data gathering and analysis plan for the experience-building phase associated with the BWM Convention, which sets out the specific arrangements for data gathering during the EBP, as well as principles and organizational arrangements for analysing the data collected, and the timeline for the EBP.

18 Based on the experience and feedback gained, as well as the analysis of the data gathered, draft amendments to the Convention could be put forward for consideration at a future MEPC.

Reduction in GHGs and Measures for enhancing energy efficiency of shipping

IMO Initial GHG Strategy

19 MEPC 72 adopted the IMO *Initial Strategy on the reduction of GHG emissions from ships*, setting out the Organization's vision to reduce GHG emissions from international shipping. The Initial Strategy confirms IMO's commitment to reducing GHG emissions from international shipping and, as a matter of urgency, aims to phase them out as soon as possible in this century.

20 More specifically, under the identified "levels of ambition", the Initial Strategy envisages for the first time a reduction in total GHG emissions from international shipping which, it states, should peak as soon as possible, and to reduce the total annual GHG emissions by at least 50% by 2050 compared to 2008, while, at the same time, pursuing efforts towards phasing them out entirely. The Initial Strategy also includes a specific reference to "a pathway of CO_2 emissions reduction consistent with the Paris Agreement temperature goals.

21 MEPC 73 approved the Programme of follow-up actions of the Initial Strategy up to 2023. The programme of action is intended to be used as a planning tool in meeting the timelines identified in the Initial Strategy. The Committee also invited for concrete proposals on candidate short-term measures to MEPC 74 (May 2019), for consideration, as well as on the procedure for assessing the impacts on States.

Fourth IMO GHG Study

22 MEPC 73 developed the draft terms of reference for the Fourth IMO GHG Study, which should be initiated in 2019. The Fourth IMO GHG Study is intended to provide an update of emissions estimates for international shipping for the period from 2012 to 2018, and may include scenarios for future shipping emissions and estimates of carbon intensity.

23 An Expert Workshop to discuss the technical and methodological issues as well as the terms of reference of the Study took place in March 2019, the outcomes of which will be further discussed during MEPC 74.

Energy Efficiency Design Index

24 Following the entry into force of the energy efficiency standards for new ships and associated operational energy-efficiency measures for existing ships in 2013, MEPC 72 was informed that more than 2,700 new ocean-going ships have been certified as complying with the energy efficiency standards. MEPC 72 also adopted amendments to regulation 21 of MARPOL Annex VI regarding Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) requirements for ro-ro cargo and ro-ro passenger ships.

25 MEPC 73 adopted the 2018 *Guidelines on the method of calculation of the attained Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) for new ships*, incorporating updates to the 2014 guidelines.

Implementation of the sulphur limit

26 The 0,50% limit on sulphur in fuel oil on board ships (outside designated emission control areas or ECAs, where the limit is 0,10%) will come into effect on 1 January 2020.

27 To facilitate enforcement of the global sulphur limit, MEPC 73 adopted amendments to MARPOL Annex VI to prohibit the carriage of non-compliant fuel oil for combustion purposes for propulsion on board a ship. The exception would be for ships fitted with an approved "equivalent arrangement" to meet the sulphur limit – such as an exhaust gas cleaning system (EGCS) or so-called "scrubber".

28 MEPC 72 also approved IMO *Guidance on best practice for fuel oil purchasers/users for assuring the quality of fuel oil used on board ships*. The best practices are intended to assist in assuring the quality of fuel oil delivered to, and used on board ships, with respect to both compliance with the MARPOL requirements and the safe and efficient operation of the ship.

29 MEPC 73 approved two additional guidance documents facilitating the implementation of the global sulphur limit; *Guidance on ship implementation planning* and *Guidance on best practice for fuel oil suppliers*.

30 PPR 6 agreed a draft joint MSC-MEPC circular addressing the delivery of compliant fuel oil by suppliers, for approval at MEPC 74 and the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 101). The draft circular states that Member States should urge fuel oil suppliers to take into account, as relevant:

MEPC.1/Circ.875, *Guidance on best practice for fuel oil purchasers/users for assuring the quality of fuel oil used on board ships*; and MEPC.1/Circ.875/Add.1 *Guidance on best practice for fuel oil suppliers for assuring the quality of fuel oil delivered to ships.*

Draft guidelines on consistent implementation of the 0,50% sulphur limit

31 PPR 6 agreed draft Guidelines for implementation for consistent implementation of the 0,50% sulphur limit under MARPOL Annex VI, together with other relevant guidelines, forming a comprehensive package of new and updated instruments that will assist industry and Administrations to effectively and uniformly implement the 0,50% sulphur limit.

32 The draft Guidelines on consistent implementation of the 0,50% sulphur limit under MARPOL Annex VI, which should be adopted at MEPC 74, include sections on the impact on fuel and machinery systems resulting from new fuel blends or fuel types; verification issues and control mechanism and actions, including port State control and samples of fuel oil used on board; a standard reporting format for fuel oil non-availability (fuel oil non-availability report (FONAR)); and possible safety implications relating to fuel oils meeting the 0,50% sulphur limit.

33 PPR 6 also agreed, in principle, to draft 2019 Guidelines for port State control under MARPOL Annex VI, updating the 2009 guidelines. The Sub-Committee furthermore agreed draft 2019 Guidelines for on board sampling for the verification of the sulphur content of the fuel used on board ships, updating the previous version. MEPC 74 is expected to adopt these guidelines.

Mandatory data collection system for fuel oil consumption of ships

34 MEPC 72 was updated on the status of the development of the IMO Ship Fuel Oil Consumption Database which was launched in March 2018 following the entry into force of MARPOL amendments making the data collection system mandatory. The required data collection started on 1 January 2019.

Guidelines on Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems

35 PPR 6 noted the progress made by the Correspondence Group on review of the 2015 *Guidelines on Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems (EGCS)*. However, due to a lack of time, PPR 6 agreed to request an extension of the target completion year of the review to 2020 with a view to continuing the work on the review at the PPR 7.

36 PPR 6 also reviewed a submission from the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP), an advisory body that advises the UN system on the scientific aspects of marine environmental protection.

37 The Sub-Committee also heard from Member States who had carried out studies and preliminary studies related to washwater discharge (under the current washwater discharge standards set out in the 2015 guidelines) and the impact on the marine environment. PPR 6 encouraged Member States and international organizations to undertake further scientific research and to submit results to future sessions to facilitate the work on the revision of the 2015 EGCS Guidelines.

38 PPR 6 requested the IMO Secretariat to explore the possibility of GESAMP carrying out a review of the relevant scientific literature and overseeing a modelling study of the impacts of discharge wash water for EGCS.

Cybutryne

39 The IMO Convention for the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships (AFS Convention) controls only one active compound by prohibiting the use of biocides using organotin compounds (TBT). PPR 6 agreed that new controls on the biocide cybutryne should be included in the AFS Convention. Draft amendments to the AFS Convention's Annex 1 (controls on anti-fouling systems) to include controls on cybutryne were agreed for consideration by MEPC 74, with a view to approval and subsequent adoption.

Actions requested by the Meeting

40 **The Meeting is invited to**:

.1 **take note** of the information provided in this document; and

.2 **comment** as deemed appropriate.