

International Maritime Organisation (IMO)**PREPARATORY BRIEFING FOR MEPC 64**

The 64th session of the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) meets from 1-5 October 2012. To help focus discussions at the Preparatory Briefing Meeting, this letter sets out views on those items that might be of interest at this session, but there is little of immediate concern for ISAF at the session. There are some weighty items for the convention shipping community covering greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and ballast water treatment that are likely to take a large part of the time available.

It is expected that the following Working, Drafting and Review Groups will be established:

Working Groups

1 Ship Recycling

2 Air Pollution and Energy Efficiency

Drafting Groups

Amendments to Mandatory Instruments

Review Group

Ballast Water Review Group

DISCUSSION OF MEPC 64 AGENDA ITEMS**Agenda Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda****Agenda Item 2: Harmful aquatic organisms in ballast water**

1. With 37 submissions on the agenda this is still an issue of some contention for convention shipping and the Committee will receive several requests for Basic or Final approval of Ballast Water Management Systems.

Agenda Item 3: Recycling of ships

2. The Committee will receive (MEPC 64/3/2) the report of the Intersessional Correspondence Group on this issue in producing the draft guidelines which will be further discussed in the Working Group.

Agenda Item 4: Air pollution and energy efficiency

3. The key greenhouse gases priority under this agenda item will be to reach agreement on the Resolution on the promotion of technical co-operation and transfer of technology which is part of the package which was agreed at MEPC 62 in July 2011. The draft resolution is likely to provoke a long debate between ICS and the USA standpoint on the assessment of fuel oil quality trials in advance of global fuel-sulphur limits that begin to apply in 2020.

Agenda Item 5: Reduction of GHG emissions from ships

4. The SECRETARIAT has presented (MEPC 64/5/5) a draft outline for an update of the greenhouse gases emissions estimate produced by IMO in 2009 for international shipping which was carried out in 2009.

5. The key greenhouse gases priority under this agenda item will be to achieve agreement on the Terms of Reference for the impact assessment of market-based measures to address greenhouse gas emissions from ships. This is an essential precondition of making further progress on market-based measures (and, in particular, reducing the number of market-based measures under consideration). A draft set of Terms of Reference was produced at MEPC and these are presented by the SECRETARIAT (MEPC 64/5) to be further considered at this session.

6. However, BRAZIL, CHINA, INDIA, PERU, SAUDI ARABIA and SOUTH AFRICA have submitted (MEPC 64/5/9) a proposal for guidance to the Committee on its further work on greenhouse gas emissions from ships. This reiterates their arguments that decisions must be achieved by consensus and follow the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

7. There is bound to be considerable opposition to the co-sponsored paper and a lively debate is expected.

Agenda Item 6: Consideration and adoption of amendments to mandatory instruments

8. MEPC 63 approved, in principle, amendments to chapters 17, 18 and 19 of the International Building Code, with a view to adoption at this session. After MSC 90's endorsement, the SECRETARIAT has submitted the complete text of the amendments for adoption. Since the earlier approval, some minor editorial amendments have been identified and these have been submitted (MEPC 64/6/1) to this session.

Agenda Item 7: Interpretations of, and amendments to, MARPOL and related instruments

9. At this stage there are a number of papers without any clear position of the issues emerging.

Agenda Item 8: Implementation of the OPRC Convention and the OPRC-HNS Protocol and relevant Conference resolutions

10. There is little of interest under this agenda item.

Agenda Item 9: Identification and protection of Special Areas and Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas

11. MEPC 62 approved, in principle, designation of the Saba Bank in the north-eastern Caribbean area of the Kingdom of the Netherlands as a PSSA. The proposers of this PSSA (the Netherlands) presented proposals for Associated Protective Measures to the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation. These were agreed by NAV 58. This should trigger the formal designation of the PSSA

12. The SECRETARIAT has submitted (MEPC 64/9) the necessary documentation on the reasonable assumption that the MEPC will approve the designation.

Agenda Item 10: Inadequacy of reception facilities

13. No papers have been received for this Agenda Item.

Agenda Item 11: Reports of sub-committees

14. The SECRETARIAT will present (MEPC 64/11 - MEPC 64/11/3) the outcomes of a number of IMO Sub-Committees and other international fora related to the marine environment. It should be noted that MEPC64 will be invited to approve the draft MEPC circular on the guidance for minimizing the transfer of invasive aquatic species as biofouling (hull fouling) for recreational craft (paragraph 5.5 and annex 5 of BLG 16/4).

Agenda Item 12: Work of other bodies

15. The SECRETARIAT will present (MEPC 64/12 - MEPC 64/12/5) a number of substantive papers which provide the outcomes of IMO Committees and other international fora related to the marine environment.

Agenda Item 13: Status of conventions

16. The SECRETARIAT will present (MEPC 64/163) a routine report on the status of IMO conventions and other instruments relating to marine environment protection.

Agenda Item 14: Harmful anti-fouling systems for ships

17. No papers have been received for this Agenda Item.

Agenda Item 15: Promotion of implementation and enforcement of MARPOL and related instruments

18. No papers have been received for this Agenda Item.

Agenda Item 16: Technical co-operation activities for the protection of the marine environment

19. The SECRETARIAT will present (MEPC 64/16) a routine report on activities of the Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme related to the protection of the marine environment undertaken from 1 December 2011 to 1 July 2012.

Agenda Item 17: Role of the human element

20. No papers have been received for this Agenda Item.

Agenda Item 18: Noise from commercial shipping and its adverse impacts on marine life

21. No papers have been received for this Agenda Item.

Agenda Item 19: Work programme of the Committee and subsidiary bodies

22. No papers have been received for this Agenda Item.

Agenda Item 20: Application of the Committees' Guidelines

23. No papers have been received for this Agenda Item

Agenda Item 21: Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Agenda Item 2: Any other business

24. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has submitted an information paper (MEPC 64/INF.25) presenting an excerpted Executive Summary of a recent publication entitled "The Protection and Management of the Sargasso Sea: Summary Science Case and Supporting Evidence Case". This report provides the scientific and other supporting evidence of

the importance of the Sargasso Sea located with reference to its importance as an ecosystem based upon floating Sargassum, as a cross-road in the Atlantic for species coming to it to feed, spawn and find protection amidst the Sargassum mats before moving through it and for local and global research and monitoring related to climate change and ocean acidification

25. This paper is being introduced by IUCN on behalf of the Sargasso Sea Alliance, a partnership created with the leadership of the government of Bermuda in 2010. The Alliance seeks to secure recognition of the importance of the Sargasso Sea and of establishing appropriate management and precautionary regimes within existing instruments and organizations such as the IMO.

26. No action is required at this stage, though it should be noted that it is the intention of the Alliance to examine possible protection measures, such as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area, in the future.

Agenda Item 23: Report of the Committee.

To Follow after MEPC 64

STUART CARRUTHERS

CHAIR INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS COMMISSION

10 September 2012