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MEPC 72's Action Agenda

Reference:	Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), 72nd session, Apr.09
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MEPC 72's Action Agenda

The upcoming Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), 72nd session, starting April 9, will discuss the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships and is expected to adopt an initial strategy on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships.

The strategy is expected to set out the future vision for international shipping, the levels of ambition to reduce GHG emissions and guiding principles; to include candidate short-, mid- and long-term further measures with possible timelines and their impacts on States as well as identify barriers and supportive measures including capacity building, technical cooperation and research and development. It is anticipated that MEPC will establish a working group on the reduction of GHG emissions from ships.

The Intersessional Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships, which holds its third meeting April 3-6, is expected to finalize the text of the draft initial strategy and provide a report to MEPC 72.

MEPC 72 will also discuss:

Further work on energy efficiency requirements

Energy-efficiency design standards for new ships and associated operational energy-efficiency measures for existing ships became mandatory in 2013, with the entry into force of relevant amendments to MARPOL Annex VI. The MEPC is expected to adopt draft amendments to regulation 21 of MARPOL Annex VI regarding Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) requirements for ro-ro cargo and ro-ro passenger ships.

The Committee will be informed that over 2,700 new ocean-going ships have been certified as complying with the energy efficiency standards. The MEPC will receive a report on progress by the correspondence group on review of the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) beyond phase 2. The correspondence group is expected to make an interim report to MEPC 73 (October 2018) with a final report to MEPC 74 (Spring 2019) providing a recommendation on the time period and reduction rates for EEDI Phase 3 requirements.

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Mandatory data collection system for fuel oil consumption of ships

MARPOL amendments to make mandatory the data collection system for fuel oil consumption of ships entered into force on March 1, 2018. They require data collection to start from calendar year 2019. MEPC 72 will be updated on the status of the development of the IMO Ship Fuel Oil Consumption Database which was launched in March 2018. Relevant matters concerning implementation of the requirement will be considered.

Implementation of sulfur 2020 limit

The 0.50 percent limit on sulfur in fuel oil on board ships (outside designated emission control areas or ECAs, where the limit is 0.10 percent) will come into effect on January 1, 2020. MEPC 72 is expected to consider for approval draft amendments to MARPOL Annex VI to prohibit the carriage of non-compliant fuel oil, with a view to adoption at MEPC 73 (October 22-26 2018).

The exception would be for ships fitted with a scrubber – which are already permitted under regulation 4.1 of MARPOL Annex VI. For a ship without an approved scrubber or equivalent arrangement, the effect of the draft amendment, which would enter into force on March 1, 2020 would be that the sulfur content of any fuel oil used or carried for use on board shall not exceed 0.50 percent.

IMO's Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR) is currently developing guidelines to support the implementation of the 2020 sulfur limit; an intersessional working group will meet in July 2018. MEPC 72 will be asked to approve receiving draft guidelines on ship implementation planning for 2020 directly from the intersessional working group to MEPC 73 in October, in order to ensure appropriate guidelines can be considered by MEPC 73 and issued in good time.

Fuel oil quality – best practice guidance

The MEPC will consider draft best practice guidance for fuel oil purchasers, users and providers.

Implementation of the Ballast Water Management Convention

The International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004 (BWM Convention), entered into force in September 2017 and has, to date, been ratified by 69 countries, representing 75.11 percent of world merchant shipping tonnage. MEPC 72 is expected to adopt amendments to the Convention which were approved at the last session. The draft amendments relate to the implementation of the treaty, including the schedule for ships to comply with the requirement to meet the so-called D-2 standard (draft amendments to section B). Other draft amendments (to sections A and D) make mandatory the Code for approval of ballast water management systems, which will also be adopted at the session. Further draft amendments relate to section E on survey and certification.

With the Convention's entry into force, and the approval of a first set of amendments at MEPC 71, there is now increased emphasis on its effective implementation and enforcement. The experience-building phase, (established through a resolution adopted at MEPC 71 (MEPC.290(71)), will enable port States, flag States and other stakeholders to gather, prepare and submit data. This will be used to review of the requirements and develop amendments to the Convention. MEPC 72 is expected to finalize the associated data gathering and analysis plan.

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MEPC 72 is expected to finalize and approve revised guidance on scaling of ballast water management systems and on the type approval process for treatment systems. MEPC 72 will also consider whether to review the Procedure for approval of ballast water management systems that make use of Active Substances (G9).

Heavy fuel oil in the Arctic

MEPC will consider the development of measures to reduce risks of use and carriage of heavy fuel oil as fuel by ships in Arctic waters. It is expected to consider submitted proposals on what type of measures should be developed, with a view to giving clear instructions to the Sub-Committee on Prevention of Pollution (PPR 6) to start the work when it next meets in early 2019.

Currently, the use and carriage of heavy fuel oil is banned in the Antarctic under MARPOL Annex I regulation 43. It is recommended in the Polar Code that the same rules are applied in the Arctic.

Marine litter

MEPC will be invited to consider including marine litter on its agenda, to address the issue of marine plastic litter from shipping in the context of 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14).

REFERENCES:

- (MEPC), 72nd session, April 9, 2018

- ATTACHMENTS: No.

kindest Regards,
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