



MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION
COMMITTEE
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Agenda item 4

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PREVENTION OF AIR POLLUTION FROM SHIPS

Comments related to the Outcome of informal consultations conducted by the Chairman and proposals for further progress

Submitted by Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF)

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document contains comments supporting the proposals by the Chairman to ensure the work on control of GHG emissions from international shipping is progressed under the framework of IMO
<i>Strategic direction:</i>	7.3
<i>High-level action:</i>	7.3.1
<i>Planned output:</i>	7.3.1.3
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 11
<i>Related documents:</i>	MEPC 59/4/9; MEPC 58/23 and MEPC 57/4/7

Introduction

1 This document comments on document MEPC 59/4/9 and is submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4.10.5 of the Guidelines (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.2).

2 OCIMF supports IMO's efforts and leadership to achieve limitation or reduction of GHG emissions from international shipping. The complex challenges associated with managing greenhouse gas emissions from shipping are best properly understood by IMO.

Background

3 Work on the prevention of air pollution and control of greenhouse gas emissions from ships engaged in international trade started within IMO in the late 1980s. The first steps were outphasing of ozone depleting substances both as refrigerant gases and in fire-fighting systems, later prevention of air pollution in form of cargo vapours and exhaust gas were targeted by, *inter alia*, adoption of strict limits for nitrogen oxides and sulphur oxides in ship exhaust. In recent years the focus has been control of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from ships.

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IMO as UN's specialized shipping agency plays a key role in ensuring that lives at sea are not put at risk and that the environment is not polluted by international shipping – as summed up in IMO's mission statement: Safe, Secure and Efficient Shipping on Clean Oceans.

4 There is no doubt that shipping is a clean and very efficient mode of transport. Overall, it is currently only a small contributor to the total volume of atmospheric emissions. Nevertheless, significant reductions in harmful emissions from ships and increases in fuel efficiency have been achieved over the past decades through enhancements in the efficiency of engine and propulsion systems and improved hull design. Larger ships and a more rational utilization of individual vessels have also contributed significantly to reducing the amount of energy needed to transport a given unit of cargo.

5 Shipping is a very positive force in sustainable development, making a massive contribution to global prosperity with only a marginal negative impact on the global environment. However, significant increases in global trade and international seaborne transport can bring negative consequences, as all human and industrial activity does, through increased emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases. Global warming and climate change are high on the international agenda. Although shipping is an environmentally friendly and carbon efficient mode of transport, the shipping industry should recognize their obligation to contribute to overall emission reductions as expected of all industry sectors and all nations.

6 MEPC 57 supported the proposal by the Secretary-General to expedite IMO's work on GHG emissions. The Secretary-General underlined the importance and urgency attached universally to the limitation and control of greenhouse gas emissions from all sources - including international shipping, as well as the need for IMO to act in concert with the wider international efforts - seeking the development and adoption of a global agreement by December 2009 and the coming into force of the new regime by 2012.

7 In the context of the ongoing efforts of the international community to address the phenomena of climate change and global warming (in particular through the mechanisms of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)), and in the light of the obligation given to the IMO Member States in the Kyoto Protocol to address the limitation or reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships through IMO, the MEPC maintained momentum on the issue and made substantive progress in developing technical and operational measures to address such emissions, including the development of an energy efficiency design index for new ships and an energy efficiency operational indicator, with associated guidelines for both; an efficiency management plan suitable for all ships; and a voluntary code on best practice in energy efficient ship operations.

8 IMO is the sole competent international organization with a clear global mandate from the IMO Convention itself to regulate all aspects of international shipping, including emissions and emission reductions from ships in international trade. As the legal advice from IMO's Sub-Division for Legal Affairs in document MEPC 58/4/20 clearly indicates, there is no potential treaty law conflict between the Kyoto Protocol and the provisions that may be developed by the Organization on GHG emissions from the combustion of marine bunker fuels, with a view to their incorporation in an appropriate IMO instrument.

9 There is no precedence in any of the more than fifty IMO treaty instruments currently in existence where measures are applied selectively to ships according to their flag. Moreover, one of the purposes for governments to establish IMO was to encourage the removal of any discriminatory action affecting ships engaged in international trade and to promote the availability of shipping services without discrimination by ensuring the freedom of shipping of all flags, as stated in Article 1(b) of the IMO Convention.

Conclusions

10 The Marine Environment Protection Committee has made substantive progress on addressing GHG from shipping and has an established work plan. It is our view that IMO has the competence, and with its global membership and global mandate, is in the right position to make balanced decisions on the global issue of emissions from international shipping.

Action requested of the Committee

11 The Committee is invited to note the information provided and take action as appropriate.
