

IMO

**MARINE ENVIRONMENT
PROTECTION COMMITTEE**

(MEPC)

83rd Session, 07 April – 11 April 2025

Session Outcome



IRCLASS
Indian Register of Shipping

The 83rd session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 83) was held at IMO Headquarters from 07th of April to 11th of April 2024. A summary of important outcomes of MEPC 83 is given in the following.

Concise Summary of Important Decisions made

MEPC 83 adopted the following:

- ✓ amendments to the NOx Technical Code 2008 regarding the certification of an existing engine subject to substantial modification and associated draft guidance on the content of the Engine Emission test plan (to be issued as an MEPC circular)
- ✓ amendments to MAROL Annex VI and the NOx Technical Code 2008 on the use of multiple engine operational profiles
- ✓ amendments to the NOx Technical Code 2008 on Selective Catalytic Reduction Guidelines
- ✓ amendments to the 2021 Guidelines on the operational carbon intensity reduction factors relative to reference lines (CII reduction factors guidelines, G3) (reservations were expressed by one delegation)
- ✓ amendments to the 2024 Guidelines for the development of a Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP)
- ✓ guidelines for test-bed and onboard measurements of methane (CH₄) and/or nitrous oxide (N₂O) emissions from marine diesel engines
- ✓ amendments to the 2022 Guidelines on survey and certification of the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI)

MEPC 83 approved the following:

- ✓ amendments of MARPOL Annex VI (chapter 5- Net Zero IMO Framework)
- ✓ amendments to regulation 27 of MARPOL Annex VI on accessibility to the IMO Ship Fuel Oil Consumption Database (IMO DCS) while agreeing on the need to further strengthen anonymization provisions in 2022 Guidelines for the development and management of the IMO Ship Fuel Oil Consumption Database the draft work plan for phase 2 of the review of the short-term GHG reduction measures
- ✓ North-Atlantic ECA
- ✓ Guidance on in-water cleaning of ships' biofouling and the associated draft MEPC circular with the prospect of adopting mandatory requirement
- ✓ the draft MEPC circular on Interim guidance on the carriage of blends of biofuels and MARPOL Annex I cargoes by conventional bunker ships (carriage of blends up to 30% biofuel)
- ✓ the draft 2025 Action Plan to Address Marine Plastic Litter from Ships and the updated grouping of continuous actions

A brief of relevant topics which were discussed at MEPC 83

Mid-term GHG Reduction Measures

The regulatory text was finalised and approved for the amendments to be circulated to the MARPOL Annex VI parties ahead of their anticipated adoption at the 2nd Extraordinary Session of MEPC in October 2025. The amendments, if adopted as above will **enter force on 1 March 2027**.

Application:

The regulations, if brought into force will apply to all ships of 5,000 gross tonnes and above along with the following exceptions:

- ships solely engaged in voyages within waters subject to the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the State the flag of which the ship is entitled to fly i.e. ships operating exclusively in the waters of their flag State.
- Ships not propelled by mechanical means, and platforms including FPSOs and FSUs and drilling rigs, regardless of their propulsion.
- Semi-submersible vessels until further review of the application of the new chapter to MARPOL Annex VI implementing the new requirements.

Energy Efficiency of Ships

Fuel oil consumption data reporting and access:

MEPC 83 approved amendments to MARPOL Annex VI regulation 27 which will increase access to the DCS data for greater transparency. These amendments which are **expected to enter force from 1 March 2027** will give additional access to the DCS database as follows:

- Full data access to the Recognised Organisations acting on behalf of an Administration of the ship.
- Full data access for all ships to the Parties of MARPOL Annex VI with the proviso that this is for analysis purposes.
- Anonymised data to public user accounts i.e. so that the individual ships cannot be identified.

MEPC.401(83) on Amendments to the 2024 Guidelines for the Development of a Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP) (Resolution MEPC.395(82))

MEPC 83 adopted amendments to the 2024 SEEMP Guidelines to support the collection of data that will become mandatory for ships entering service on or after 1 August 2025 and for ships already collecting data before that date 1 January 2026 contained in MARPOL Annex VI amendments adopted in MEPC.385(81).

Carbon Capture and Storage

MEPC 83 approved a work plan on the development of a regulatory framework for the use of onboard carbon capture and storage (OCCS) with the exception of matters related to accounting of CO₂ captured on board ships.

This workstream has the goal of developing a regulatory framework for the use of onboard carbon capture and storage (OCCS), in order to reduce net GHG emissions from ships without negatively affecting the environment.

MEPC.400(83) on Amendments to the 2021 Guidelines on the Operational Carbon Intensity Reduction Factors Relative to Reference Lines (CII Reduction Factors Guidelines, G3) (Resolution MEPC.338(76))

MEPC 83 has agreed to complete Z factors through to 2030 in phase 1 and adopted amendments to the 2021 Guidelines on the Operational Intensity Reduction Factors Relative to Reference Lines (CII Reduction Factors Guidelines, G3) (MEPC.338(76)) with the following Z factors:

Year	Reduction factor relative to 2019
2027	13.625%
2028	16.25%
2029	18.875%
2030	21.5%

Non-CO2 GHG Measurement and Monitoring

MEPC 83 adopted MEPC.402(83) on Guidelines for Test-Bed and Onboard Measurements of Methane (CH₄) and/or Nitrous Oxide (N₂O) emissions from marine diesel engines.

The purpose of these Guidelines is to specify a procedure for test-bed and onboard measurements and reporting of CH₄ and/or N₂O emission values from marine diesel engines as well as documentation and verification of the same.

The measurements, calculations and reporting for CH₄ and N₂O emission values are to be carried out in accordance with the NO_x Technical Code 2008 as amended, other than specifically provided for in the Guidelines.

MEPC 83 adopted amendments to the NO_x Technical Code concerning the use of multiple engine operational profiles of a marine diesel engine, and certification of an engine subject to substantial modification or being certified to a NO_x Tier which it was not certified to at time of installation.

MEPC confirmed that the amendments will **enter into force on 1 March 2027**.

Air Pollution Prevention

Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems as an alternative to MARPOL Annex VI regulation 14

MEPC 83 considered a proposal to develop a Particulate Matter standard under regulation 14 (where only the sulphur content is specifically cited in the regulation at present) and forwarded this proposal to PPR 13 (expected February 2026) for further consideration.

2025 Action Plan on Marine Plastic Litter from ships

MEPC 83 considered the draft 2025 Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships, and the updated grouping and prioritisation of actions, to update annex 1 of MEPC.341(77) Strategy to address marine plastic litter from ships.

MEPC 83 adopted resolution MEPC.404(83) 2025 Action Plan to Address Marine Plastic Litter from Ships, on the understanding that it will be superseded at a future session by single resolution containing a combined strategy and action plan, following additional work to be carried out by PPR 13.

MEPC.1/Circ.918 Guidance on the in-water cleaning of ships' biofouling

MEPC 83 approved a new circular Guidance on the in-water cleaning of ships' biofouling.

The intent of these guidelines is to support the global availability of safe and environmentally responsible in-water cleaning services to support the universal application of the 2023 Biofouling Guidelines

Interim Guidance on the Carriage of Blends of Biofuels and MARPOL Annex I Cargoes by Conventional Bunker Ships

MEPC 83 approved Interim Guidance on the carriage of blends of biofuels and MARPOL Annex I cargoes by conventional bunker ships (MEPC.1/Circ.917). These Interim Guidelines collate relevant IMO instruments concerning the carriage of MARPOL Annex I against Annex II products.

2025 Guidelines on Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) Systems

MEPC.399(83) 2025 Guidelines on Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) Systems addressing additional aspects of the NOx Technical Code 2008 with regard to particular requirements related to marine diesel engines with Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) systems.

MEPC 83 adopted amendments to the 2017 Guidelines addressing additional aspects of the NOx Technical Code 2008 with regard to particular requirements related to marine diesel engines with Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) systems (Resolution MEPC.291(71)) to remove ambiguities and ensure consistent application.

The 2025 Guidelines will apply to marine diesel engines fitted with SCRs for compliance with regulation 13 of MARPOL Annex VI. Administrations are invited to apply the 2025 Guidelines to ships on a variety of dates related to keel laying date of the ship and the delivery of the SCR to the ship.

MEPC.405(83) Amendments to the 2023 Guidelines for the development of the Inventory of Hazardous Materials

Following approval by PPR 12, MEPC 83 adopted amendments to Appendix 6 of the 2023 IHM guidelines reflecting different cybutryne thresholds for wet paints versus hull samples. These amendments will provide clarity to any shipowners compiling or updating an IHM for any vessels of 500GT and above.

Review of the Ballast Water Management Convention

The Ballast Water Review Group discussed and concluded on the following issues associated with the ongoing revision:

- Code for approval of ballast water management systems (BWMS Code; resolution MEPC.300(72)), particularly regarding the requirement for:

Operation, Maintenance and Safety Manual (OMSM) amendments. It was concluded that a mandatory list of critical spares for each BWMS would not be required in the Code but should instead be provided by manufacturers. Regarding the OMSM timing of approval, it was concluded that this should be done concurrently with the approval of BWMS modifications.

– Clarification of major / minor component definitions, in association with modifications to BWMS. Work remains ongoing on this subject and will be further progressed by correspondence group.

– The linkage, relative scope and other aspects of objectives addressing BWMS testing parameters and test conditions. It was agreed that a new additional test on challenging water quality (CWQ) performance evaluation, which would be mandatory for all BWMS, should be introduced in the BWMS Code.

- consequential amendments required, to:
 - BWM.2/Circ.62 - Guidance on contingency measures under the BWM Convention (in particular paragraph 6 therein), required to enhance the clarity of its application.
 - Appendix II (Form of BWRB), required to develop a template for a BWMS maintenance log (to be used by those ships that do not have an equivalent recording system).
 - BWM.2/Circ.80/Rev.1 Guidance on ballast water record-keeping and reporting required to reflect the amended form of the BWRB, due to the introduction of a BWMS maintenance log.
- Inclusion of the following topics as part of the review of the BWM Convention:
 - Port State Control (PSC) & Flag Inspections associated with ships transitioning from D-4 to D2 standards, establishing unified procedures to facilitate this transition and ensure consistent and effective implementation of the BWM Convention.
 - Amendment to resolution MEPC.252(67) PSC Guidelines to include in the initial PSC inspection checklist a review of both BWMS maintenance log (as part of BWRB) and the BWMS operation and alarm logs by to the PSC initial inspection checklist.
 - Standardisation of data logs to account for agreed and consistent use of terminology.
 - Training requirements, finalising amendments to regulation B-6 to reference ship-specific crew familiarisation training requirements.

MEPC 83 decided to re-establish the correspondence group (CG), to finalise draft amendments to mandatory provisions

Interim Guidance on the Carriage of Blends of Biofuels and MARPOL Annex I Cargoes by Conventional Bunker Ships

MEPC 83 approved Interim Guidance on the carriage of blends of biofuels and MARPOL Annex I cargoes by conventional bunker ships (MEPC.1/Circ.917). These Interim Guidelines collate relevant IMO instruments concerning the carriage of MARPOL Annex I against Annex II products.

Emission Control Areas (ECA)

MEPC developed an ECA for both NO_x and SO_x in the North-East Atlantic surrounding Greenland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, the west coast of the UK and Ireland extending south to Spain and Portugal.

The application relevant to NO_x Tier III requirements is to ships operating in the ECA which have a building contract placed on or after 1 January 2027, or in absence of contract, keel laying on or after 1 July 2027, or which are delivered on or after 1 January 2031.

Regarding SO_x requirements, the application is to require ships operating in the ECA to use fuel oil with sulphur content not exceeding 0.10% m/m. The effective date for these requirements is expected to be 1 March 2028 which is 12 months after the expected entry into force of the MARPOL amendments i.e. to ships operating in the ECA from 1 March 2028.

It is expected that the regulations bringing these requirements into force will be adopted at the extraordinary session of MEPC in October 2025 for entry into force from 1 March 2027.

Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs)

MEPC 83 considered and agreed in principle the designation of the Reserva Nacional Dorsal de Nasca and the Reserva Nacional Mar Tropical de Grau in Peru as Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas, subject to the further development and approval of the proposed associated protective measures.

Both PSSAs, once adopted, will apply to all types and sizes of ship. Any ship navigating through these areas will need to observe the associated protective measures (APMs) to prohibit the discharge of oil, oily mixtures and sewage into the sea; the offloading or dumping of residues, pollutants, waste or garbage and the changing of ballast water while transiting the areas.

For any queries, you can reach out to:

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