

**IMO**

**MARINE ENVIRONMENT  
PROTECTION COMMITTEE**

**(MEPC)**

**84<sup>th</sup> Session, 27 April – 01 May 2026**

**Session Outcome**



**IRCLASS**  
Indian Register of Shipping

## **IMO MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE - 84<sup>th</sup> session**

The 84<sup>th</sup> session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 84) was held at IMO Headquarters from 27<sup>th</sup> of April to 01<sup>st</sup> of May 2026.

### **Concise Summary of Important Decisions made**

#### **MEPC 84 adopted the following:**

- ✓ amendments to MARPOL Annex VI concerning the clarification of entries in data reporting required by Regulations 27 and 28
- ✓ designation of the North-East Atlantic as an Emission Control Area for Nitrogen Oxides, Sulphur Oxides and Particulate Matter
- ✓ accessibility to the IMO Ship Fuel Oil Consumption Database and review clause of the short-term GHG reduction measure
- ✓ amendments to MARPOL Annex VI concerning the use of multiple engine operational profiles for a marine diesel engine, including clarification of engine test cycles
- ✓ MEPC Resolution on amendments to the 2022 Guidelines on the Method of Calculation of the Attained Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) for new ships
- ✓ 2026 Guidelines on survey and certification of the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI)
- ✓ Amendments to 2022 Guidelines on operational carbon intensity indicators and the calculation methods (CII Guidelines, G1)
- ✓ amendments to the 2024 Guidelines for the development of a Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (2024 SEEMP Guidelines)
- ✓ 2026 guidelines for testbed and onboard measurements of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and/or nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) emissions from marine diesel engines
- ✓ guidelines for continuous emission monitoring systems (CEMS) used to quantify methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and/or nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) emissions from marine diesel engines
- ✓ guidelines for engine load monitoring (ELM) and calculation of emission values (ELM Guidelines)
- ✓ 2026 Guidelines for ballast water management and development of Ballast Water Management Plans (G4).

#### **MEPC 84 approved the following:**

- ✓ the draft final terms of reference for the Fifth IMO GHG Study
- ✓ amendments to the BWM Convention and the unified interpretation to regulation D-3 of the BWM Convention which is to be included in a revised Circular BWM.2/Circ.66
- ✓ amendments to the NTC 2008 concerning certification of engines that operate on non-carbon-containing fuel or mixtures of carbon-containing and non-carbon-containing fuels
- ✓ Revised interim guidance on the use of biofuels under regulations 26, 27 and 28 of MARPOL Annex VI, with an application date of 1 January 2027
- ✓ Work plan for the development of a regulatory framework for the use of OCCS
- ✓ Technical guidance on co-optimizing energy efficiency and underwater radiated noise at the design and retrofit stage

## **A brief of relevant topics which were discussed at MEPC 84**

### ***Consideration and adoption of amendments to mandatory instruments – Agenda Item 3***

#### **Proposal for North-East Atlantic Ocean Emission Control Area:**

MEPC 84 adopted the proposal to designate the North-East Atlantic Ocean as an Emission Control Area (ECA) for sulphur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), and particulate matter (PM).

NO<sub>x</sub> Tier III requirements for this ECA will apply to ships whose building contract was placed on or after 1 January 2027, or in absence of contract, whose keel laying took place on or after 1 July 2027, or which are delivered on or after 1 January 2031.

SO<sub>x</sub> requirements mandate the use of fuel oil with sulphur content not exceeding 0.10% m/m in the ECA starting on 1 September 2028. The ECA will come into force after a grace period of 1 year as prescribed in regulation 14.7.

#### **Amendments relating to multiple engine operational profiles for marine diesel engines**

The following related amendments to MARPOL Annex VI have been adopted by MEPC 84 subsequent to the amendments to the NO<sub>x</sub> Technical Code 2008 for marine diesel engines

- ✓ updating the definition of “irrational emission control strategy”;
- ✓ adding new rows for Tiers I, II, and III, to indicate Multiple Engine Operational Profiles in Appendix I (IAPP Certificate) updating the text in Appendix II (Test Cycles and Weighting Factors), to better reflect test cycle details for different types of marine diesel engines
- ✓ replacing references in regulation 3,5,13 and in Appendices I and II to "revised NO<sub>x</sub> Technical Code 2008" with "NO<sub>x</sub> Technical Code", to be consistent with regulation 1.27 which defines the Code.

The amendments will come into force on 1 September 2027.

#### **Clarification of entries in data reporting required by Regulations 27 and 28**

Amendments to Appendix IX (Information to be submitted to the IMO Ship Fuel Oil database) have been adopted by MEPC 84. These amendments introduce two sets of fuel reporting dates for ships that undergo a flag change within the year and replace the term “Oil-Fired Boiler(s)” with “Fired Boiler(s)” to reflect other equipment such as gas-fired boilers.

#### **IMO DCS accessibility**

Amendments to MARPOL Annex VI, Regulation 27, to broaden access to the DCS data and thereby increasing transparency, have been adopted at this session. These amendments, which will become effective on 1 September 2027, allow Recognized Organizations acting on behalf of an Administration to have full access to the DCS database, grant full access (for analytical purposes) to all Parties to MARPOL Annex VI, and provide anonymized data access to public user accounts so that individual ships cannot be identified.

MEPC 84 modified the amendments to allow Member States to notify the Secretariat that their express approval will be necessary before the data of ships entitled to fly their flag are included in the non-anonymized database. At a future session the Committee may restrict access to the non-anonymized database only to Member States that are willing to share their ships data (according to reciprocity rule).

## ***Harmful aquatic organisms in ballast water – Agenda Item 4***

### **Draft amendments to the BWM Convention**

MEPC 84 finalized and approved draft amendments to the Ballast Water Management Convention that had been prepared by the Correspondence Group on the Revision of the Ballast Water Management Convention.

### **Draft revised Guidelines (G4)**

MEPC 84 approved MEPC resolution on the 2026 Guidelines for ballast water management and development of Ballast Water Management Plans (G4), which revises and supplants the previous guidelines contained in the current resolution.

The updated BWM Convention will enter into force at a date that will be decided at MEPC 85, to ensure that it becomes effective concurrently with the Ballast Water Management System Code (BWMS Code).

### **Unified interpretation to regulation D-3**

MEPC 84 approved a unified interpretation to regulation D-3 stating that the installation of BWMS approved under the 2016 Guidelines (G8) should continue to be allowed due to the equivalency with the requirements of the BWMS Code. This UI addresses identified inconsistencies and interpretational difficulties between regulation D-3 and the BWMS Code regarding permitted installation dates, as well as recent port State control (PSC) observations, which indicated that these inconsistencies had resulted in confusion within the industry.

## ***Air Pollution Prevention – Agenda Item 5***

### **Draft amendments to the NOx Technical Code 2008**

MEPC 84 approved draft amendments to the NOx Technical Code 2008 (NTC 2008), concerning certification of engines that operate on non-carbon-containing fuel or mixtures of carbon-containing and non-carbon containing fuels.

### **Report of the Correspondence Group on Measurement and Verification of Non-CO2 GHG Emissions and Onboard Carbon Capture**

MEPC 84 adopted the following guidelines prepared by the correspondence group:

- ✓ draft 2026 Guidelines for test-bed and onboard measurements of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and/or nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) emissions from marine diesel engines, and the draft associated resolution;
- ✓ draft guidelines for engine load monitoring (ELM) and calculation of emission values, and the associated resolution;
- ✓ draft guidelines for continuous emission monitoring systems (CEMS) used to quantify methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and/or nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) emissions from marine diesel engines, and the associated resolution

## ***Energy Efficiency of Ships – Agenda Item 6***

### **Proposals related to the EEDI and EEXI framework**

MEPC 84 adopted amendments to the 2022 Guidelines on the method of calculation of the attained Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) for new ships (resolution MEPC.364(79)) and the 2022 Guidelines on survey and certification of the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) (resolution

MEPC.365(79)), to address dual-fuel engines using two liquid fuels, particularly methanol and ethanol.

### **Phase 2 of the review of the short-term GHG reduction measure,**

MEPC 84 adopted draft amendments to the 2022 Guidelines on operational carbon intensity indicators and the calculation methods (CII Guidelines, G1), and the 2024 Guidelines for the development of a Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (2024 SEEMP Guidelines), which clarifies that:

- ✓ supply-based transport work should continue to be used as the proxy for transport work until completion of phase 2 of the review
- ✓ total distance travelled for CII purposes should continue to aggregate both “under way” and “not under way” distances to maintain methodological consistency, and avoid inequitable impacts across ship types

### **Interim guidance on the use of biofuels under regulations 26, 27 and 28 of MARPOL Annex VI**

MEPC approved a proposal to amend MEPC.1/Circ.905 to clarify that, for blends, the carbon factor (Cf) should be based on the weighted average of the Cf for the respective amount of fuels by mass instead of energy, and that a biofuel blend should be treated as an equivalent fossil fuel type when the biogenic component is not certified.

The interim guidance will take effect on 1 January 2027, to align with the beginning of the next DCS data collection year.

## ***Reduction of GHG emissions from ships – Agenda Item 7***

### **Implementing guidelines for the Net Zero Framework (ISWG-GHG 21)**

The ISWG-GHG 21 which preceded the MEPC developed the various supporting technical guidelines for the IMO NZF. However, these were not approved pending the adoption of a global decarbonisation framework. These guidelines will help the establishment of common technical standards.

ISWG-GHG 22 and 23 will be held ahead of MEPC 85 to converge on a global measure.

### **Fifth IMO GHG Study**

The Committee approved the terms of reference for the 5<sup>th</sup> IMO GHG Study, which will deliver:

- ✓ - a GHG Emission inventory from international shipping 2018-2025 with estimates of GHG intensity and estimates of carbon intensity
- ✓ - a GHG Emission projection with scenarios for future international shipping emissions 2025-2050.

## ***Experience-building phase for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from shipping – Agenda 9***

MEPC 84

- ✓ agreed to prolong by two years the experience-building phase of the Revised guidelines for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from shipping to address the adverse impacts on marine life (Revised Guidelines, MEPC.1/Circ.906/Rev.1).
- ✓ adopted a draft MEPC circular containing technical guidance on co-optimizing energy efficiency and underwater radiated noise at the design and retrofit stages.

## **Pollution prevention and response – Agenda Item 10**

### **Biofouling Convention development**

MEPC 84 approved the terms of reference for output on the "Development of a legally binding framework for the control and management of ships' biofouling to minimize the transfer of invasive aquatic species".

### **Amendments to MARPOL Annex I**

MEPC 84 approved amendments to MARPOL Annex I, regulation 12B and amendments to appendix II – Form of the IOPP certificate and Supplements and appendix III – Form of the Oil Record Book, with a view to adoption at MEPC 85.

It approved in principle the draft 2026 Guidelines for systems for handling oily wastes in machinery spaces of ships incorporating guidance notes for an integrated bilge water treatment system (IBTS) and the accompanying draft MEPC circular, with a view to final approval by MEPC 85 in conjunction with the adoption of the draft amendments to MARPOL Annex I.

### **Amendments to MARPOL Annex VI**

MEPC approved the amendments to MARPOL Annex VI, amendments to Regulation 15 Volatile organic compounds and appendix I Form of International Air Pollution Prevention Certificate, with a view to adoption at MEPC 85.

### **Unified Interpretations**

MEPC 84 approved the following Unified Interpretations:

- ✓ A revised unified interpretation of Regulation 16.9 of MARPOL Annex VI, to clarify requirements regarding shipboard incinerator type approval testing
- ✓ A unified interpretation of Regulation 13.2.3 of MARPOL Annex VI, to clarify the application date for a major conversion
- ✓ A revised unified interpretation of Regulation 13.2.2 on "Time of replacement of an engine", following the introduction of the new ECAs

## **Any Other Business – Agenda Item 15**

### **Marine light pollution from ships**

MEPC 84 noted a proposal to develop a new output on voluntary guidelines for the mitigation of marine light pollution from ships

For any queries, you can reach out to:

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