

## **MEPC 80: the strategy to reduce emissions from the shipping sector**

### **International Maritime Organization**

**The Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC)** addresses environmental issues under IMO's remit. This includes the control and prevention of ship-source pollution covered by the MARPOL treaty, including oil, chemicals carried in bulk, sewage, garbage and emissions from ships, including air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions.

The MEPC 80 session, meeting in London 3-7 July 2023, adopted **the 2023 IMO Strategy on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships**, with enhanced targets to tackle harmful emissions.

The revised IMO GHG Strategy includes an enhanced common ambition to reach net-zero GHG emissions from international shipping close to 2050, a commitment to ensure an uptake of alternative zero and near-zero GHG fuels by 2030.

The 2023 IMO GHG Strategy is aimed at:

- a. enhancing IMO's contribution to global efforts by addressing GHG emissions from international shipping. International efforts in addressing GHG emissions include the Paris Agreement and its goals and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDG 13: "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts";
- b. identifying actions to be implemented by the international shipping sector, as appropriate, while addressing impacts on States and recognizing the critical role of international shipping in supporting the continued development of global trade and maritime transport services; and
- c. identifying actions and measures, as appropriate, to help achieve the above objectives, including **incentives for research and development** and monitoring of GHG emissions from international shipping.

Levels of ambition directing the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy are as follows:

- 1) carbon intensity of the ship to decline through further **improvement of the energy efficiency** for new ships to review with the aim of strengthening the energy efficiency design requirements for ships;
- 2) carbon intensity of international shipping to decline to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per transport work, as an average across international shipping, by at least 40% by 2030, compared to 2008;
- 3) uptake of zero or near-zero GHG emission technologies, **fuels and/or energy sources** to increase uptake of zero or near-zero GHG emission technologies, fuels and/or energy sources to represent **at least 5%**, striving for 10%, of the energy used by international shipping by 2030; and
- 4) GHG emissions from international shipping **to reach net zero to peak GHG emissions** from international shipping as soon as possible and to **reach net-zero GHG emissions** by or around, i.e. close to, 2050, taking into account different national circumstances. **Indicative checkpoints** to reach net-zero GHG emissions from international shipping: to reduce the total annual GHG emissions from international shipping by at least 20%, striving for 30%, by 2030,

compared to 2008; and to reduce the total annual GHG emissions from international shipping by at least 70%, striving for 80%, by 2040, compared to 2008.

The IMO GHG Strategy is subject to a five-yearly review with the first review due in 2028. The MEPC will undertake the review including defining the scope of the review and its terms of reference.

The other MEPC 80 highlights: **energy efficiency of ships** – draft amendments to IMO ship fuel oil consumption Data Collection System (DCS) approved; **ballast water management**; **biofouling management**; underwater noise: the MEPC approved revised Guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping to address adverse impacts on marine life. Moreover, **tackling marine litter**: the MEPC approved, for subsequent adoption, draft amendments to MARPOL protocol I referring to a procedure for reporting lost freight containers. Containers lost overboard can be a serious hazard to navigation and safety at sea as well as to the marine environment; **ship-to-ship transfer** - proposed Assembly resolution agreed to address the potential environmental risks and the consequences and concerns for the global marine pollution prevention and liability and compensation regimes relating to the increase in ship-to-ship transfers at sea.

In the end, special areas: effective date of 1 January 2025 set for the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden special areas under MARPOL Annexes I and V. Under the Convention, these special areas are provided with a higher level of protection than other areas of the sea