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**ANNEX 10****RESOLUTION MEPC.310(73)  
(adopted on 26 October 2018)****ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS MARINE PLASTIC LITTER FROM SHIPS**

## THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE

RECALLING Article 38(e) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization (the Organization) concerning the functions of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (the Committee) conferred upon it by international conventions for the prevention and control of marine pollution from ships,

ACKNOWLEDGING that work to prevent pollution by garbage from ships has been undertaken by the Organization since the adoption of MARPOL Annex V,

ACKNOWLEDGING ALSO the relevance of the work on marine plastic litter undertaken by the Parties to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972 and its 1996 Protocol, including the adoption in 2016 of a "Recommendation to Encourage Action to Combat Marine Litter",

ACKNOWLEDGING FURTHER the relevant work of other international organizations in relation to marine plastic litter, in particular FAO and UN Environment, and the importance of existing cooperation mechanisms, including GESAMP, the Joint FAO/IMO Ad Hoc Working Group on IUU fishing and related matters, and the Global Partnership for Marine Litter,

RECALLING the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development,

RECALLING ALSO that the Assembly, at its thirtieth session, in December 2017, recognized the ongoing problem of marine plastic pollution, as addressed in MARPOL Annex V, which required further consideration as part of a global solution within the framework of ocean governance, in pursuance of the target of Sustainable Development Goal 14 to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds by 2025,

- 1 ADOPTS the Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships (hereinafter the Action Plan) as set out in the annex to the present resolution;
- 2 NOTES the application of the Action Plan to all ships, including fishing vessels;
- 3 INVITES the Secretary-General of the Organization to make adequate provisions in the Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) to support relevant follow-up actions of the Action Plan;
- 4 AGREES to keep the Action Plan under review, with a view to assessing, in 2023, the effectiveness of the actions within the Action Plan against the intended outcomes.

## ANNEX

### **ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS MARINE PLASTIC LITTER FROM SHIPS**

#### **1 Background**

1.1 Marine plastic litter enters the marine environment as a result of a wide range of land- and sea-based activities. Both macroplastics (e.g. large plastic items such as plastic bags, water bottles and fishing gear) and microplastics (small plastic particles generally five millimetres or less in size) persist in the marine environment and result in harmful effects on marine life and biodiversity, as well as negative impacts on human health. In addition, marine plastic litter negatively impacts on activities such as tourism, fisheries and shipping. This plastic material has the potential to be brought back into the economy by means of reuse or recycling. Studies demonstrate that despite the existing regulatory framework to prevent marine plastic litter from ships discharges into the sea continue to occur.

1.2 IMO has recognized the importance of preventing pollution by garbage, including plastics, from ships since the adoption of MARPOL Annex V, as well as the dumping of various types of waste, including plastics, into the sea through the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972 (London Convention or LC) and its 1996 Protocol (London Protocol or LP). This commitment was reinforced by the IMO Assembly, at its thirtieth session, in December 2017, recognizing the ongoing problem of marine plastic pollution, as addressed in MARPOL Annex V, which required further consideration as part of a global solution within the framework of ocean governance, in pursuance of the target of Sustainable Development Goal 14 to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds by 2025.

1.3 IMO has committed to working closely with a number of partners to address the issue of marine plastic litter including, but not limited to:

- .1 FAO through the Joint FAO/IMO Ad Hoc Working Group on IUU Fishing and Related Matters (JWG);
- .2 the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP);
- .3 the UN Environment-managed Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML);
- .4 the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (ICP); and
- .5 the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA).

1.4 IMO recognizes the importance of continued action to manage this global issue with the development of an Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships. In addition, the thirty-eighth Consultative Meeting of Contracting Parties to the London Convention and the eleventh Meeting of Contracting Parties to the London Protocol adopted a "Recommendation to Encourage Action to Combat Marine Litter".

#### **2 Objective**

The Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships has been developed to contribute to the global solution for preventing marine plastic litter entering the oceans through ship-based activities. This Action Plan provides IMO with a mechanism to identify specific

outcomes, and actions to achieve these outcomes, in a way that is meaningful and measureable. The Action Plan builds on existing policy and regulatory frameworks, and identifies opportunities to enhance these frameworks and introduce new supporting measures to address the issue of marine plastic litter from ships.

### **3 Time frames**

3.1 In line with the time frames provided in Sustainable Development Goal 14, the measures within this Action Plan should be completed by 2025.

3.2 Priority actions under this plan, to be pursued upon adoption of this plan, have been identified in the below table of actions. Further specific time frames for individual measures should be evaluated during the annual review and evaluation process by the Marine Environment Protection Committee.

**4 Actions**

	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Parent Organ</b>	<b>Coordinating/ Associated Organ</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Associated partners</b>
1.	<b>Reduction of marine plastic litter generated from, and retrieved by, fishing vessels</b>	Consider making the IMO Ship Identification Number Scheme mandatory for all fishing vessels over 24 metres in length through an amendment to the Cape Town Agreement once it enters into force.  Encourage the ratification of the Cape Town agreement	MSC / MEPC			
2.		Consider making mandatory, through an appropriate IMO instrument (e.g. MARPOL Annex V), the marking of fishing gear with the IMO Ship Identification Number, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	MEPC	PPR / III (JWG)		FAO
3.		Further investigate logging of the identification number for each item of fishing gear on board a fishing vessel	MEPC	PPR / III		FAO
4.		Preparation of a circular reminding IMO Member States to collect information from their registered fishing vessels regarding any discharge or accidental loss of fishing gear	MEPC	PPR		
5.		Consider the development of best management practice to facilitate incentives for fishing vessels to retrieve derelict fishing gear and deliver it to port reception facilities, in collaboration with FAO	MEPC / MSC	PPR / III (JWG) / SDC		FAO

Outcome	Measures	Parent Organ	Coordinating/ Associated Organ	Priority	Associated partners
6.	Consider the issue of waste that has been collected during fishing operations building on experience gathered from established projects	MEPC	PPR		
7.	Review the application of placards, garbage management plans and garbage record-keeping (regulation 10, MARPOL Annex V), for example making the Garbage Record Book mandatory for ships of 100 GT and above	MEPC	PPR		
8.	Preparation of a circular reminding Member States to enforce MARPOL Annex V on fishing vessels through PSC measures.  Encourage port State control MoUs to develop PSC procedures that include fishing vessels	MEPC	PPR / III		
9. <b>Reduction of shipping's contribution to marine plastic litter</b>	Review the application of placards, garbage management plans and garbage record-keeping (regulation 10, MARPOL Annex V), for example making the Garbage Record Book mandatory for ships of 100 GT and above	MEPC	PPR		
10	Consider the establishment of a compulsory system of formatted declarations of the loss of containers and the means on board to easily identify the exact number of losses  Also, consider establishing an obligation to report through a standardized procedure the loss of containers	MSC / MEPC		X	

	Outcome	Measures	Parent Organ	Coordinating/ Associated Organ	Priority	Associated partners
11		Consider ways to communicate the location of containers lost overboard based on additional information to be provided by interested parties	MEPC			
12		Consider the most appropriate instrument to address the responsibility and liability for plastic consumer goods lost at sea from ships	LEG / MEPC	PPR		
13		Consider enhancing the enforcement of MARPOL Annex V, including, where possible, through a risk-based approach	MEPC	PPR / III		
14	<b>Improvement of the effectiveness of port reception and facilities and treatment in reducing marine plastic litter</b>	Consider the requirement for port reception facilities to provide for separate garbage collection for plastic waste from ships, including fishing gear to facilitate reuse or recycling	MEPC	PPR		
15		Consider mechanisms to enhance the enforcement of MARPOL Annex V requirements for the delivery of garbage to reception facilities	MEPC	PPR		

Outcome	Measures	Parent Organ	Coordinating/ Associated Organ	Priority	Associated partners
16	Consider the development of tools to support the implementation of cost frameworks associated with port reception facilities, taking into account the need to not create disincentives for the use of port reception facilities, the potential benefits of cost incentives that provide no additional fees based on volume and identifying waste types that can be reduced, reused or recycled through schemes that identify waste revenue	MEPC	PPR		
17	<p>IMO to encourage Member States to effectively implement their obligation to provide adequate facilities at ports and terminals for the reception of garbage, as required by regulation 8 of MARPOL Annex V</p> <p>Consider facilitating the mandatory use of port waste management plans to ensure the provision of adequate waste reception facilities</p> <p>Encourage Member States to address the entire process of plastic garbage handling and ensure that landed garbage is managed in a sustainable manner ashore</p> <p>Identify information from the port waste management plans that can be shared via the Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS)</p> <p>Take into consideration work being undertaken under the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972</p>	MEPC	PPR / III		

	Outcome	Measures	Parent Organ	Coordinating/ Associated Organ	Priority	Associated partners
		(London Convention or LC) and its 1996 Protocol (London Protocol or LP) (LC/LP) on this issue				
18		Further consider the impact on Small Island Developing States and on remote locations such as polar regions when planning for the disposal of waste to land-based facilities	MEPC	PPR		
19	<b>Enhanced public awareness, education and seafarer training</b>	Consider ways to promote the work of IMO to address marine plastic litter generated from ships	MEPC	PPR		
20		Consider tasking the HTW Sub-Committee with reviewing chapter III of STCW-F (Basic safety training for all fishing vessel personnel) to ensure that all fishing vessel personnel, before being assigned any shipboard duties, receive basic training on marine environment awareness oriented on marine plastic litter including abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG)	MEPC	HTW		
21		<p>Consider how the model course "Marine Environmental Awareness 1.38" could be amended/revised to specifically address marine plastic litter</p> <p>Further consider how to ensure familiarization of all seafarers within the existing STCW (International Convention on Standards and Training, Certification and Watch keeping for Seafarers) minimum requirements and taking into account existing best practice, guidelines and programmes</p>	MEPC	HTW / PPR		

	Outcome	Measures	Parent Organ	Coordinating/ Associated Organ	Priority	Associated partners
22	<b>Improved understanding of the contribution of ships to marine plastic litter</b>	Consider extending the reporting requirement in regulation 10.6 of MARPOL Annex V to include reporting data on discharge or accidental loss of fishing gear by the flag State to IMO via GISIS or other means if appropriate	MEPC	PPR / III		
23		Encourage Member States and international organizations that have conducted any scientific research related to marine litter to share the results of such research, including any information on the areas contaminated by marine litter from ships	MEPC	PPR	X	
24		Conduct a study on marine plastic litter, including macro and microplastics, from all ships	MEPC LC/LP	PPR	X	GESAMP, FAO, UN Environment, RFMOs, World Oceans Assessment, Regional Seas Conventions
25		Invite Member States and international organizations to undertake studies to better understand microplastics from ships			X	

	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Parent Organ</b>	<b>Coordinating/ Associated Organ</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Associated partners</b>
26	<b>Improved understanding of the regulatory framework associated with marine plastic litter from ships</b>	Consider the development of a regulatory framework matrix for the purpose of a gap analysis	MEPC	PPR / III	X	
27	<b>Strengthened international cooperation</b>	Make information available to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)	MEPC LC/LP	PPR		
28		Continue work with other United Nations bodies and agencies, as well as with international fora, which are active in the matter of marine plastic litter from shipping, such as through the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML)	MEPC LC/LP	PPR	X	
29	<b>Targeted technical cooperation and capacity-building</b>	Address implementation issues related to the action plan to address marine plastic litter from ships in the context of IMO technical cooperation and capacity-building activities	MEPC TCC	PPR / III		
30		Consider the establishment of externally funded major projects under the auspices of IMO in support of the action plan to address marine plastic litter from ships	MEPC	PPR		

## **5 Review and Evaluation**

5.1 This Action Plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it continues to deliver against the objective and outcomes identified within the plan. Periodic review and evaluation of the plan will facilitate assessing the effectiveness of the actions within the plan, updating the plan with new information and incorporating new actions identified based on the implementation of the Action Plan or as a result of new information.

5.2 IMO will undertake a review of the Action Plan (i.e. assess the need for updating actions and/or incorporating new actions to the plan) annually and a comprehensive review (i.e. assessing the effectiveness of the actions within the plan against the objective and outcomes identified within the plan) after five years.

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