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Circular Letter No.4422  
5 July 2021

To: All IMO Members  
United Nations and specialized agencies  
Intergovernmental organizations  
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO  
Liberation movements

Subject: **Seventy-seventh session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (22 to 26 November 2021)<sup>1</sup>**

1 Pursuant to the decisions of the Council at its thirty-second extraordinary session, the Secretary-General has the honour to invite representation at the seventy-seventh session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee, which will be held remotely,<sup>2</sup> from Monday, 22 November 2021, to Friday, 26 November 2021. Upon conclusion of the final virtual meeting on 26 November 2021, the Secretariat will prepare the final draft report for publication on IMODOCS. The session will remain open, by correspondence, for a further five working days, to allow for any comments with a view to finalizing the report of the Committee, in accordance with the *Interim guidance to facilitate remote sessions of the Committees during the COVID-19 pandemic* (MSC-LEG-MEPC-TCC-FAL.1/Circ.1). The virtual meeting will commence on Monday, 22 November 2021, at 11 a.m. (UTC).

2 The provisional agenda for the session (MEPC 77/1) is attached to this circular letter. Further documentation, including a provisional timetable for the session, will be issued in due course.

3 Having considered the working arrangements for MEPC 77, MEPC 76 agreed that the Chair would issue a document prior to MEPC 77, setting out the proposals by the Chair with regard to arrangements for the session; and encouraged Member States and international organizations to take into account the heavy workload of the Committee when considering submitting to MEPC 77 new documents which were not related to currently considered issues.

### **Submission of documents**

4 In accordance with the *Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies* (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.2), the deadlines and the method of submitting documents are specified in paragraph 1 of the notes to the provisional agenda for MEPC 77 (MEPC 77/1).

<sup>1</sup> These dates correspond to the meeting days but the remote session will formally close after the five working day correspondence period, in accordance with the *Interim guidance to facilitate remote sessions of the Committees during the COVID-19 pandemic* (MSC-LEG-MEPC-TCC-FAL.1/Circ.1).

<sup>2</sup> Refer to paragraphs 7 to 16 below for further information regarding the holding of remote sessions.

5 Further to the decision taken by the Council, at its 120th regular session (C 120/D, paragraph 4.9), and by the Committee at its seventy-third session (MEPC 73/19, paragraph 15.29), regarding the issue of access to information and transparency, submitters of meeting documents are invited to give their consent for their documents to be released to the public prior to the meeting by checking the "opt-in box" at the top right corner of the new document template provided on IMODOCS (pre-session public release). In the absence of explicit consent, submissions will not be released to the public prior to the meeting.

### **Working and drafting groups**

6 The Chair of the Committee will advise, well in time before MEPC 77, on the selection of and modalities for any working and drafting groups to be established.

### **Waivers of the rules of procedure and interim guidance to facilitate remote sessions of the Committee**

7 Due to the prevailing exceptional circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, certain rules of procedure which presuppose in-person Committee sessions and meetings need to be waived to allow for MEPC 77 to take place remotely. In this regard, the remote extraordinary session of the Committees (ALCOM/ES), held from 16 to 21 September 2020, invoked rule 49 of their respective rules of procedure and waived rule 3 in part, for ALCOM/ES and future remote sessions, regarding the requirement for a session to be held at IMO Headquarters.

8 The waiver of rule 3 therefore applies to MEPC 77 which will be held remotely pending the IMO Headquarters building becoming available for hybrid sessions or full in-person sessions, as indicated in paragraph 2 above. Any comments or objections regarding the waiver of this rule for MEPC 77 will be considered before the adoption of the agenda, at the opening of the session.

9 The *Interim guidance to facilitate remote sessions of the Committees during the COVID-19 pandemic* (MSC-LEG-MEPC-TCC-FAL.1/Circ.1) approved by ALCOM/ES, will therefore be applicable to the remote session of MEPC 77 as well. The report of ALCOM/ES is set out in document ALCOM/ES/5/1.

### **Modalities and platform for the virtual meeting**

10 MEPC 77 is expected to take place from Monday, 22 November to Friday, 26 November 2021, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (UTC), including a 15-minute break approximately halfway through the proceedings, using the e-conferencing platform KUDO, which allows simultaneous interpretation into the Organization's six official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

11 Detailed information on how to use the e-conferencing platform KUDO, including connectivity testing, is available under the "IMO Meetings on KUDO" section on IMODOCS (KUDO user guide long version: <https://docs.imo.org/Shared/Download.aspx?did=124855> and short version: <https://docs.imo.org/Shared/Download.aspx?did=125612>).

12 Given the additional challenges for interpreters working remotely, delegates are urged to use appropriate equipment, including a headset with microphone, and pay special attention to speech delivery. For the same reason, delegates are kindly requested, when making interventions, in particular when reading written reports or statements, to wait a few seconds before they start to speak and to speak slowly in order to assist the interpreters, especially if the subject matter is very technical. Delegates are also requested to provide the Secretariat, if possible, with advance copies of their statement to facilitate interpretation, to be submitted to [statements@imo.org](mailto:statements@imo.org)

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## Technical recommendations

13 To ensure the best possible sound quality and connectivity, the recommended equipment is:

- .1 USB headset (with microphone);
- .2 wired Internet connection (20mbps download and 10mbps upload speed);
- .3 laptop or PC with Intel 5 or higher and 8GB memory (RAM) or higher; and
- .4 latest version of Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox (Chrome v68+ or Mozilla Firefox v77+)<sup>3</sup> with access to microphone and camera in browser settings when prompted.

14 Delegates are encouraged to test connectivity and audio-video quality, following the link <https://live.kudoway.eu/test> at any time.

## How to join a meeting with KUDO

15 After receiving the link to the meeting from the Secretariat, participants are invited to proceed as follows:

- .1 go to the link provided, and insert the PIN code also provided in the invitation;
- .2 to join the session, fill in the two boxes on the screen by entering your display name, with the name of your delegation first (for example COUNTRY – John Doe), and email; and
- .3 once you are in, choose your preferred language by clicking on "Floor" and selecting from the drop-down list. To speak, click on the blue "Request to Speak" button (if required), and activate the camera and microphone by clicking on the two red buttons once invited to take the floor. Before you start speaking, please ensure your language selection is back to "floor". If this is your first time on KUDO, you will have to click "Allow", when prompted in a pop-up message, to enable the use of your devices.

16 The Secretariat will arrange a two hour on-boarding session for delegates before the session. Details will be emailed to OMRS registered delegates. On each day of the session, the platform will open one hour before the starting time so that participants can check again their connectivity and audio output before the meeting starts. It is strongly recommended to check audio settings before the meeting in order not to delay the proceedings.

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<sup>3</sup> References to "Google Chrome" or "Mozilla Firefox" do not in any way imply or constitute an endorsement of these products by the Organization. The recommendations are those of the KUDO provider.



## ANNEX

### REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION

#### Registration

Member Governments, UN agencies, IGOs and NGOs are required to provide, prior to the meeting date, the names of all the members of their delegations attending the meeting via the Online Meeting Registration System (OMRS), as advised in Circular Letter No.4336 of 5 November 2020.

Any matters relating to the use of the OMRS and the participation in the forthcoming virtual meetings of MEPC 77 should be communicated to:

Registration Unit  
Meeting Services and Interpretation Section  
Email: [onlineregistration@imo.org](mailto:onlineregistration@imo.org)

Members of delegations will not be registered to attend the meeting without authorization from their OMRS Delegation Coordinator. Delegates whose names do not appear on the OMRS list will be requested to contact their OMRS Delegation Coordinator in order to process their authorization to attend the meeting.

A link for the virtual meeting and joining instructions will be sent to those delegates who have been duly registered in OMRS.

#### Accreditation

In addition to registering through OMRS, each Member or Government entitled to participate in a session of the Committee must submit a letter of credentials for its representatives and alternates, if any.

As required by rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee, credentials are to be issued by the Head of State, the Head of Government, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister concerned or by an appropriate authority properly designated by one of them for this purpose. In the latter case, the designated signatory should state in the letter by which of the above-mentioned authorities he/she has been authorized to issue credentials. Model letters of credentials are available upon request from the External Relations Office (Legal Affairs and External Relations Division).

Credentials should reach the Secretariat as soon as possible and, preferably, by the start of the meeting. Considering that this session of the Committee will be held remotely, **electronically submitted credentials, with originals to follow, will be accepted** under rule 9. It would be appreciated if all delegations could kindly send the copy of their credentials to the following email address: [credentials@imo.org](mailto:credentials@imo.org)

Any matters relating to letters of credentials should be communicated to:

External Relations Office  
Legal Affairs and External Relations Division  
Email: [credentials@imo.org](mailto:credentials@imo.org)

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MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION  
COMMITTEE  
77th session  
Agenda item 1

MEPC 77/1  
5 July 2021  
Original: ENGLISH  
Pre-session public release:

## PROVISIONAL AGENDA

**for the seventy-seventh session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee  
to be held remotely<sup>1</sup> from Monday, 22 November, to Friday, 26 November 2021**

**Session commences at 11 a.m. (UTC) on Monday, 22 November 2021**

Opening of the session

- 1 Adoption of the agenda
- 2 Decisions of other bodies
- 3 Identification and protection of Special Areas, ECAs and PSSAs
- 4 Harmful aquatic organisms in ballast water
- 5 Air pollution prevention
- 6 Energy efficiency of ships
- 7 Reduction of GHG emissions from ships
- 8 Follow-up work emanating from the Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships
- 9 Pollution prevention and response
- 10 Reports of other sub-committees
- 11 Work programme of the Committee and subsidiary bodies
- 12 Application of the Committees' method of work
- 13 Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair
- 14 Any other business
- 15 Consideration of the report of the Committee

<sup>1</sup> Refer to the decisions of ALCOM/ES (ALCOM/ES/5/1) and MSC-LEG-MEPC-TCC-FAL.1/Circ.1 on *Interim guidance to facilitate remote sessions of the Committees during the COVID-19 pandemic*.

**Notes**

1 In accordance with the *Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies* (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.2)<sup>2</sup>:

- .1 documents should be received by the Secretariat as follows:<sup>3</sup>
  - .1 documents containing proposals for new outputs, by **Friday, 20 August 2021 (13-week deadline)**;
  - .2 documents (including information documents) containing more than six pages of text (bulky documents<sup>4</sup>), by **Friday, 20 August 2021 (13-week deadline)**;
  - .3 non-bulky documents including information documents (six pages or fewer) and bulky information documents submitted in electronic format, by **Friday, 17 September 2021 (nine-week deadline)**; and
  - .4 documents (four pages or fewer) commenting on those referred to in sub-paragraphs .1 to .3 above or on documents previously submitted to MEPC 74, MEPC 75 or MEPC 76 and whose consideration had been deferred to MEPC 77, by **Friday, 1 October 2021 (seven-week deadline)**. These documents should start with a paragraph clearly indicating the document on which comments are made and stating that the document is submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6.12.5 of the Committees' Method of Work;
- .2 for reasons of economy, documents should be submitted in single spacing, and be as concise as possible, and:
  - .1 all documents should include a brief summary prepared in accordance with the Committees' Method of Work;
  - .2 substantive documents should conclude with a summary of the action that the Committee is invited to take; and
  - .3 information documents should conclude with a summary of the information contained therein;

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<sup>2</sup> MEPC 76 encouraged Member States and international organizations to take into account the heavy workload of the Committee when considering submitting new documents to MEPC 77.

<sup>3</sup> Documents other than information documents and reports from sub-committees, working, drafting, correspondence and other working groups and the Secretariat, which contain more than 20 pages, in line with paragraph 6.11 of the Committees' Method of Work, will not be translated in their entirety. Such documents should include, for translation purposes, a summary not longer than four pages, with the technical content submitted as an annex in the language needed by working groups (i.e. English).

<sup>4</sup> In the case of documents containing more than 50 pages, the provisions of paragraph 6.12.1 of the Committees' Method of Work are to be applied.



.3 the following word processing format should be observed in order to standardize the presentation of documents:

- font: Arial;
- font size: 11;
- justification: full;
- margins: 2 cm top, 2.5 cm bottom, left and right.

A template is available on the IMODOCS website for use in the preparation of documents.

To facilitate the processing of documents, they should be sent via email in Microsoft Word to IMO's email address [info@imo.org](mailto:info@imo.org). It should be noted that the file size limit for the IMO email system is set at 10 Mbytes. If submitters do not receive an acknowledgement receipt by the Secretariat within five working days, they should contact [info@imo.org](mailto:info@imo.org) without delay, referring to the original email.

2 The Committees' Method of Work, inter alia, requests the Secretariat to strictly apply the rules concerning the submission of documents and not to accept late submissions from Governments or delegations.

3 In order to improve access to information and increase transparency, submitters of meeting documents are invited to give their consent for their documents to be released to the public prior to the meeting by checking the "opt-in box" at the top right corner of the new document template provided on IMODOCS (pre-session public release). In the absence of explicit consent, submissions will not be released to the public prior to the meeting.

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