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Circular Letter No.5093
27 November 2025

To: All IMO Member States and Associate Members
United Nations and specialized agencies
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO

Subject: **Twenty-first meeting of the Intersessional Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships (ISWG-GHG 21) (20 to 24 April 2026)**

1 Pursuant to the decisions of the Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its eighty-third session (MEPC 83), the Secretary-General has the honour to invite participation at the twenty-first meeting of the Intersessional Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships (ISWG-GHG 21). ISWG-GHG 21 will meet in person from 20 to 24 April 2026 at IMO Headquarters, 4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR. The meeting will be conducted in English without interpretation.

2 The provisional agenda for the session (ISWG-GHG 21/1) is attached to this circular letter. Further documentation, including an annotated agenda identifying which items will be considered during the session, as well as a provisional timetable, will be issued in due course.

Terms of reference for ISWG-GHG 21

3 The terms of reference for ISWG-GHG 21, as approved by MEPC 83 (MEPC 83/17, paragraph 7.48), are as follows:

"The Group is instructed, taking into the account documents submitted, including relevant documents submitted to previous sessions, and in accordance with the Work plan to prepare for the entry into force of the IMO Net-Zero Framework, to be approved by MEPC/ES.2, to:

- .1 develop new and/or revise existing guidelines, provisions, guidance and other documents, as appropriate, for supporting the uniform and effective implementation of the IMO Net-Zero Framework;
- .2 further consider the development of the IMO Life Cycle GHG Assessment (LCA) framework;
- .3 finalize the draft terms of reference for the Fifth IMO GHG Study, using document MEPC 83/7/2 as the basis and taking into account documents MEPC 83/7/14, MEPC 83/7/24 and MEPC 83/7/42; and
- .4 submit a written report on the outcome of ISWG-GHG 20 and 21 to MEPC 84."

Documents to be considered at ISWG-GHG 21

4 In taking into account the outcomes of ISWG-GHG 20, as set out in document MEPC 84/7/14, ISWG-GHG 21 is expected to consider relevant documents submitted to ISWG-GHG meetings and MEPC sessions and other relevant documents submitted to MEPC 84.

5 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.6), the deadline and the method for submitting documents to the session are specified in paragraph 1 of the notes to the provisional agenda in document ISWG-GHG 21/1. The Meeting Document Submission Portal, established to help streamline and harmonize the process of submitting documents for consideration by the different IMO bodies, is available on the IMODOCS home page (<https://docs.imo.org>) and should be utilized for the submission of documents (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6, paragraph 6.2).

Use of hybrid meeting facilities to complement in-person participation

6 Pursuant to the decisions of the Council at its 132nd regular session (C 132), the utilization of hybrid capabilities to support in-person meetings has been permanently established. Information on hybrid meetings is provided in Circular Letters Nos.4623 and 4627.

Registration at IMO meetings and procedure governing support for visa applications

7 With a view to facilitating the registration as well as visa applications by those delegates who require United Kingdom entry visas, instructions on registration at IMO meetings and the procedure governing IMO support for visa applications are set out in the annexes.

Financial support to participants from developing countries, particularly SIDS and LDCs, to attend ISWG-GHG 21

8 Circular Letter No.4703 of 16 March 2023 communicated information relating to the establishment of the Voluntary Multi-Donor Trust Fund to support participants from developing countries, particularly small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs), in attending IMO meetings. Circular Letter No.5094 provides further information on applications for sponsored participation at ISWG-GHG 21.

Presentations

9 Member Governments and international organizations planning presentations during ISWG-GHG 21 are requested to contact the Secretariat at ghg@imo.org with a defined title for the presentation as soon as possible following the issuance of this Circular Letter so that necessary arrangements can be made in time. Given the limited number of available time slots for presentations (no more than five slots), these will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

ANNEX 1

REGISTRATION, ACCREDITATION AND CODE OF CONDUCT

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 including Permanent Representatives, Assistant Permanent Representatives and Members of Permanent Missions attending the meeting via the Online Meeting Registration System (OMRS), as advised in Circular Letter No.4336 of 5 November 2020.

Active participants are those registered as either *physical* (attending meetings at IMO Headquarters in person) or *remote-active*. They are authorized to take the floor and make interventions. Passive participants are those only able to follow proceedings remotely via live-streaming.

Remote-active participants will receive a personalized joining link via email daily before each session starts at approximately 08.30 UTC+1. The Zoom link is unique to the recipient and should not be shared with anyone. Accuracy of the registered email address in OMRS is crucial.

Remote-passive participants automatically receive a link, once their registration is approved, to a web stream of the session (live-streaming), which will be broadcast via the IMODOCS page. It is important to note that the option for remote-passive participation is available only if the meeting is live-streamed.

In-person participants should not join the Zoom meeting when physically present in the Main Hall or Committee Rooms, as this will have a detrimental impact on the hybrid system and reduce the number of licences available for those joining remotely.

Delegates wishing to change their participation status from in-person to remote-active or vice versa must do so in the OMRS through their respective OMRS Delegation Coordinator(s). Subsequently, they will receive a joining link for the meeting.

Delegates attending the meeting in person who have completed the registration procedure will be issued with an electronic access card at IMO to pass through the security barrier in the IMO Headquarters.

Issue of the access card will require photographic proof of identity, e.g. passport, identity card or driving licence. Delegates may also be required to show proof of identity at any time while they are in the IMO Headquarters if requested by IMO Security. In view of the significant costs incurred in producing access cards, delegates who have previously been issued with one are kindly requested to bring it with them for reactivation.

Any matters relating to the use of the OMRS and participation in the forthcoming meeting of ISWG-GHG 21 should be communicated to:

Registration Unit
Meeting Services and Interpretation Section
Email: onlineregistration@imo.org

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

Delegates are advised that the Registration Desk will be open from 07.30 UTC+1 on Monday, 20 April 2026, when early arrival would be appreciated.

Remote or hybrid participation

Delegates joining the meeting remotely are urged to use appropriate equipment, and are kindly requested to wait a few seconds before starting to speak and to endeavour to speak slowly and clearly, to facilitate interpretation in other languages.

Code of Conduct

Delegates, participants, attendees and guests are subject to the Code of Conduct for Delegates, Observers and Other Participants at IMO Meetings, Events and Activities to Prevent Harassment including Sexual Harassment (Circular Letter No.4908).

ANNEX 2

PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE SUPPORT BY IMO OF VISA APPLICATIONS

As established in article 7.2 of part III on Access and communications of the Headquarters agreement, delegates are entitled to have their entry into the United Kingdom authorized without delay and without charge.

All delegates who are travelling to participate in this meeting will require an entry visa for the United Kingdom. Delegates should not apply for an electronic travel authorisation (ETA) but instead apply for an **"EXEMPT"** visa at www.gov.uk/exempt-vignette, note the reference numbers and follow the online instructions to attend either the nominated Visa Application Centre or the United Kingdom Embassy or High Commission. Those delegates travelling to the United Kingdom on a regular basis may apply for a multi-entry exempt visa. United Kingdom visa applications should be accompanied by the following documentation:

- i. a copy of this circular letter (numbered CL.5093) to be used as the official letter of invitation;
- ii. the nomination letter; and
- iii. a note verbale from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Delegates must be nominated by their competent ministry (usually the Ministry of Transport or the National Maritime Administration). The nomination letter should be accompanied by a note verbale issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

This exercise should be undertaken as early as possible, but no later than **six weeks** before the date of arrival in the UK.

If delegates encounter visa problems, either the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Transport, the National Maritime Administration or the competent ministry should send an official communication to the Head of the IMO External Relations Office requesting visa assistance. The communication should state the reasons given by the British Embassy/High Commission as to why visas have been or may be refused and contain the following details:

- i. First name
Family name
Profession
Date of birth
Passport no.
Valid until
Visa reference number
Date and place of visa application
- ii. Purpose of visit
- iii. Duration of anticipated stay in the United Kingdom

Any requests for visa assistance should be communicated to visa@imo.org.

INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE
WORKING GROUP ON REDUCTION OF
GHG EMISSIONS FROM SHIPS
21st session
Agenda item 1

ISWG-GHG 21/1
27 November 2025
ENGLISH ONLY

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

**for the twenty-first meeting of the Intersessional
Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships
to be held at IMO Headquarters, 4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR
from Monday, 20 to Friday, 24 April 2026**

Session commences at 9.30 a.m. (UTC+1) on Monday, 20 April 2026

Opening of the session

- 1 Adoption of the agenda
- 2 Development of new and/or revision of existing guidelines, provisions, guidance and other documents, as appropriate, for supporting the uniform and effective implementation of the IMO Net-Zero Framework
- 3 Further consideration of the development of the IMO Life Cycle GHG Assessment (LCA) framework
- 4 Finalization of the draft terms of reference for the Fifth IMO GHG Study
- 5 Any other business
- 6 Consideration of the report to MEPC 84

Closing of the session

Notes:

1 Taking into account 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.6):

- .1 all documents should be received by the Secretariat by **Friday, 6 March 2026**;
- .2 for reasons of economy, documents should be submitted in single spacing, be as concise as possible and:
 - .1 all documents should include a brief summary prepared in accordance with MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6; and

- .2 documents should conclude with a summary of the action which the Intersessional Working Group is invited to take;
- .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.

In this respect, a template is available on the IMODOCS website for use in the preparation of documents; and

To facilitate processing, documents should be submitted via the new Meeting Document Submission Portal on IMODOCS (Submission Portal), as set out in Circular Letter No.4662. Should any problems be encountered that prevent submission of a document via the Submission Portal, submitters should contact the Secretariat at team@imo.org and copy ghg@imo.org without delay.

2 The Committees' Method of work, inter alia, requests the Secretariat to strictly apply the rules concerning the submission of documents and not 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.
