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Circular Letter No.5031
11 June 2025

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

Subject: **Eighty-fourth session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (27 April to 1 May 2026)**

1 The Secretary-General has the honour to invite representation at the eighty-fourth session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee, which will be held from Monday, 27 April to Friday, 1 May 2026.

2 The provisional agenda for the eighty-fourth session of the Committee (MEPC 84/1) is attached to this Circular Letter. Further documentation, including an annotated agenda and a provisional timetable, will be issued in due course.

Use of hybrid meeting facilities to complement in-person participation

3 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 can be found in Circular Letters Nos.4623 and 4627.

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.6), the deadlines for the submission of documents to the session and the method of submitting documents are specified in paragraph 1 of the notes to the provisional agenda for MEPC 84 (MEPC 84/1). Documents should be submitted through the Meeting Document Submission Portal, available on the IMODOCS home page (<https://docs.imo.org>) under the "Submissions" tab, to help streamline and harmonize the process of submitting documents for consideration by the different IMO bodies (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6, paragraph 6.2).

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, review and technical groups

6 The Chair of the Committee will advise, well in time before MEPC 84, on the final selection and modalities for any working, review and technical groups to be established (maximum of five groups, in accordance with the Committees' method of work (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6, paragraphs 5.24 and 5.25). Candidate groups for the final selection are listed below:

- .1 Ballast Water Review Group;
- .2 Working Group on Air Pollution and Energy Efficiency;
- .3 Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships;
- .4 Working Group on Marine Plastic Litter;
- .5 Working Group on Reduction of Underwater Radiated Noise from Commercial Shipping; and
- .6 Technical Group on the Designation of PSSA and Special Areas.

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 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. **Remote-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 livestreamed.

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 MEPC 84 should be communicated to:

Registration Unit
Meeting Services, Meeting Support Section
Email: 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.

Delegates are advised that the Registration Desk will be open from 07.30 (UTC+1) on Monday, 27 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.

Statements

To facilitate the interpretation of interventions during the session, delegations are encouraged to provide advance copies of statements to the Secretariat by email to statements@imo.org.

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 Committee's Rules of Procedure, 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 or 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. It is advisable to send an advance copy of the letter of credentials by email at credentials@imo.org. Original letters of credentials can be either posted, or handed over during registration upon arrival, at the Meeting Services Desk on the second floor, or at the External Relations Office on the eighth floor.

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

External Relations Office
Legal Affairs and External Relations Division
Email: credentials@imo.org

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 IMO SUPPORT FOR 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.5031), 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.

If, after following the above-mentioned procedure, delegates still encounter visa problems, either the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Transport, the National Maritime Administration or the competent Ministry should request visa assistance in writing to the Head of the IMO External Relations Office, on paper bearing the official letterhead. The letter 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
Type of passport
Passport No
Place of issue
Date of issue
Valid until
Visa reference number
Date and place of visa application
- ii. Purpose of visit
- iii. Duration of anticipated stay in the United Kingdom

This exercise must be undertaken **at least six weeks** before the date on which the session begins, to enable the Organization to support the visa application accordingly and the visa to be issued in good time.

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

MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION
COMMITTEE
84th session
Agenda item 1

MEPC 84/1
11 June 2025
Original: ENGLISH
Pre-session public release:

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

**for the eighty-fourth session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee,
to be held from Monday, 27 April to Friday, 1 May 2026
at IMO Headquarters, 4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR**

Session commences at 09:30 (UTC+1) on Monday, 27 April 2026

- Opening of the session
- 1 Adoption of the agenda
 - 2 Decisions of other bodies
 - 3 Reports of other sub-committees
 - 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 Experience-building phase for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from shipping
 - 10 Pollution prevention and response
 - 11 Identification and protection of Special Areas, ECAs and PSSAs
 - 12 Application of the Committees' method of work
 - 13 Work programme of the Committee and subsidiary bodies
 - 14 Any other business
 - 15 Consideration of the report of the Committee

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.6):

- .1 documents should be received by the Secretariat as follows:¹
 - .1 documents containing proposals for unplanned outputs, by **Friday, 23 January 2026 (13-week deadline)**;
 - .2 documents (including information documents) containing more than six pages of text (bulky documents²), by **Friday, 23 January 2026 (13-week deadline)**;
 - .3 non-bulky documents including information documents (six pages or fewer) and bulky information documents submitted in electronic format, by **Friday, 20 February 2026 (nine-week deadline)**; and
 - .4 documents (four pages or fewer) commenting on those referred to in sub-paragraphs .1 to .3 above by **Friday, 6 March 2026 (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;
- .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.

¹ 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).

² 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.

To facilitate processing, documents should be submitted via the Meeting Document Submission Portal on IMODOCS (Submission Portal) (see 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 imodocs@imo.org and copy MED@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 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.
