

IMO'S SUB COMMITTEE ON POLLUTION PREVENTION AND RESPONSE (PPR)

12th Session, 27th – 31st January 2025

Session Outcome



IRCLASS
Indian Register of Shipping

The 12th Session of IMO's Subcommittee on Pollution Prevention and Response was held from 27 – 31 January 2025.

Concise Summary of Important Decisions made

- ✓ Agreed with the Interim Guidance on the carriage of blends of biofuels and MARPOL Annex I cargoes by conventional bunker ships (expected to be approved by MEPC 83).
- ✓ Development and finalisation of the draft Guidance on the in-water cleaning of ships' biofouling. (MEPC 83 for adoption).
- ✓ Approval of draft 2025 Guidelines on Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) Systems (to be adopted by MEPC 83).
- ✓ Approval of draft amendments to Appendix 6 of MEPC.379(80) 2023 Guidelines for the development of the Inventory of Hazardous Materials, reflecting different cybutryne threshold for wet paints versus hull samples.
- ✓ Agreed with MEPC.2/Circ.30 on Provisional Categorization of Liquid Substances in Accordance with MARPOL Annex II and the IBC Code prepared by the ESPH Technical Group.
- ✓ Development and finalisation of the draft 2025 Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships, and a revised grouping and prioritisation of actions, updating annex 1 of MEPC.341(77) Strategy to address marine plastic litter from ships.

Carriage of biofuels and biofuel blends by bunker ships

PPR 12 agreed to a draft circular on Interim Guidance on the carriage of blends of biofuels and MARPOL Annex I cargoes by conventional bunker ships with a view to approving these at MEPC 83.

The Interim Guidelines recognise a need to develop carriage requirements for the carriage of biofuels on conventional bunker ships certified for the carriage of oil fuels under MARPOL Annex I. It therefore sets out that conventional bunker ships certified for the carriage of oil fuels under MARPOL Annex I may be considered for the transport of blends of not more than 30% by volume of biofuel, providing all residues or tank washings are discharged ashore unless the onboard discharge monitoring equipment (ODME) is approved/certified for the biofuel blend(s) being shipped.

The Interim Guidelines state that an IOPP certificate showing “oil tanker” issued to a conventional bunker ship carrying blends between 25% and 30% biofuel or synthetic fuel does not need to be modified.

Also, the Interim Guidelines clarify that in their scope, a ‘conventional bunker ship’ is an oil tanker defined in regulation 1.5 of MARPOL Annex I, that is engaged in the transport and delivery of fuel oil for use by ships.

Safety and pollution hazards of chemicals and preparation of consequential amendments to the IBC Code

Agreed with the next edition of the MEPC.2 Circular on the Provisional categorisation of liquid substances in accordance with MARPOL Annex II and the IBC Code (MEPC.2/Circ.30) which was issued on 1 December 2024.

Also considered a proposal to review the carriage requirements for FAME products listed in chapter 17 of the IBC Code with a view to including operational requirement 16.2.7 (pre-wash and discharge ashore). This matter was forwarded to ESPH Technical Group for consideration at its next session in November 2025.

Amendments to MARPOL Annex II to improve the effectiveness of cargo tank stripping, tank washing operations and prewash procedures for products with a high melting point and/or high viscosity

Proposed Prewash procedure: Considered the further information provided for a prewash procedure to support MARPOL Annex II regulation 13.7.1.4, specifically to improve Appendix 6 of that Annex - Prewash Procedures.

Concurred that the output will focus on cargoes assigned pollution category Y within the geographical areas for special requirement 16.2.7 and will address operational procedures for more effective tank stripping, tank washing and prewashes through development of amendments to appendices IV and VI of Annex II and associated guidance.

Development of guidance on matters relating to in-water cleaning

Developed and finalised the draft Guidance on the in-water cleaning of ships' biofouling (will be sent to MEPC 83 for approval)

It was noted that the following elements of the draft Guidance on the in-water cleaning of ships' biofouling could benefit from further scientific and technical development, and information on experience gained:

- the size threshold for the release of captured particles, including organisms, in the case of cleaning with capture;
- the recommendation to test IWCS for at least 90 minutes as IWCS technology may develop to

- potentially clean at more rapid rates; and
- procedures related to documentation, reporting and inspection in the context of novel and emerging technologies.
 - Interested parties were invited to submit information on these matters to a future session of PPR.
 - Following the finalisation of the draft Guidance on the in-water cleaning of ships' biofouling, PPR agreed that the following matters should be further considered with a view to developing additional guidance in due course:
 - The methodology for testing the compatibility between IWCS and various coating types.
 - Methods for assessing the minimum performance standard after IWCS enter into service.
 - How to conduct in-water inspections to determine if in-water cleaning is needed. (This will further develop information related to chapter 8 of MEPC.378980) 2023 Biofouling Guidelines.)

Invited proposals to be submitted to PPR 13 addressing these matters.

Reduction of the impact on the Arctic of Black Carbon emissions from international shipping

Development of a Polar fuel standard

Invited further concrete proposals to PPR 13 on a polar fuel concept where it is expected the standard will be further developed.

Evaluation and harmonisation of rules and guidance on the discharge of discharge water from EGCS into the aquatic environment, including conditions and areas identification and development of regulatory measures on the discharge of wash water from EGCS

Noting continued diverging views and a lack of new substantive proposals for developing regulatory measures, PPR invited new concrete proposals to PPR 13.

Also noted that the consideration of a global total ban on the use of EGCS was outside the scope of this output.

Consideration of emission factors for use in the environmental risk assessment of the discharge of wash water from EGCS

Considered proposals for emissions factors and agreed on terms of reference for a GESAMP Task Team on EGCS to develop such emissions factors. These terms of reference recognise that emissions factors are needed for port States to complete environmental risk assessments, and that unified and representative emission factors need to be determined based on a standard method to ensure harmonisation in risk assessment application.

It is expected that GESAMP will report to PPR 13 in 2026.

The 2025 Guidelines will apply to marine diesel engines fitted with SCR for compliance with regulation 13 of MARPOL Annex VI. However, the implementation timeline is yet to be decided by the Secretariat.

It was also confirmed that the draft 2025 Guidelines should apply only to SCR systems installed after the dates to be determined in the covering resolution, and that existing Technical Files should not be revised and re- approved to reflect changes made to the draft Guidelines.

Review of the IBTS Guidelines and amendments to the IOPP Certificate and Oil Record Book

PPR considered such amendments, however noted diverging views on these proposals and forwarded them to PPR 13 for further consideration. PPR invited proponents and interested parties to take into account comments made at this session and to work intersessionally to further progress their proposals.

Revision of MARPOL Annex IV and associated guidelines

PPR 12 agreed on the following progression and prioritisation of work:

- 1) The 2012 Guidelines on implementation of effluent standards and performance tests for sewage treatment plants (MEPC.227(64)) should be finalised initially, ahead of;
- 2) Revisions to MARPOL Annex IV and;
- 3) Development of new draft Guidelines on the implementation of MARPOL ANNEX IV for sewage treatment plants.

It was agreed that all three should be adopted as a complete package at MEPC 88/89 in 2028/29.

Draft amendments to MARPOL Annex IV and associated guidelines

Amendments to MARPOL Annex IV concerning sewage management plans (SMP) and sewage record books (SRB):

PPR re-established the correspondence group on Revision of MARPOL Annex IV and Associated Guidelines, reporting back to PPR 13, with the view to on the finalisation of the work related to the requirements for the SRB and SMP.

Regulations concerning sewage treatment plant (STP) performance testing and indicative monitoring within MARPOL Annex IV were discussed by PPR, with a focus on if such performance standards should have mandatory retrospective application for ships with STP's already installed.

PPR decided that the MARPOL Annex IV application of requirements for performance testing and indicative monitoring to existing ships with STP's should be considered once the draft revisions to MARPOL Annex IV and associated guidelines are more mature. Work on this matter should account for the general principles that ships with existing STP's are not unduly penalised and seafarer workload is not exacerbated.

A voluntary data collection period was proposed to gain more information on the performance of STP onboard vessels, specifically the quality of effluent discharges that are subject to MAPROL Annex IV. The possible data to be collected and best ways to progress this work was discussed by the PPR sub-committee. This topic will be kept within the current scope of work and the correspondence group re-established by PPR has been tasked to develop draft guidance on how to collect data on the quality of effluent discharges, reporting back to PPR 13.

It was proposed that the IMO should develop a database of local/regional regulations on treated sewage/grey water discharges within the public area of the port reception facilities as a matter of priority. Member States were invited to submit information on local or regional regulations on the discharge of treated effluent and grey water from ships using the national maritime legislation module in GISIS.

Follow-up work emanating from the Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships

Review of the Action Plan to Address Marine Plastic Litter from Ships

Agreed the draft 2025 Action Plan to address marine plastic litter from ships, and the updated grouping and prioritisation of actions, to update annex 1 of MEPC.341(77) Strategy to address marine plastic litter from ships. Both the draft 2025 Action Plan and revised annex 1 of MEPC.341(77) will be sent to MEPC 83 for adoption and approval respectively, with an invitation for member States to submit proposals on how to proceed with either merging these two resolutions, or keeping them separate.

Reducing the environmental risk of the maritime transport of plastic pellets

As part of the review of the Action Plan on Marine Plastic Litter from Ships, PPR developed text for a specific

action to be taken, concerning the development of mandatory measures to reduce the environmental risks of plastic pellets transported by sea in freight containers.
PPR further considered potential mandatory instruments that could be amended to regulate the carriage of plastic pellets.

Reporting the loss and discharge of fishing gear

Work on data to be collected to report on the accidental loss, or discharge of fishing gear under MARPOL Annex V, regulations 7.1.3 and 7.1.4 was further progressed by PPR. However, due to time constraints work will continue at a future session.

Submissions were invited to develop the specifics of the agreed data reporting requirements.

Any Other Business

Clarification of the relevant threshold in respect of cybutryne in the MEPC.379(80) 2023 Guidelines for the development of the Inventory of Hazardous Materials

Draft amendments to Appendix 6 of the 2023 IHM guidelines reflecting different cybutryne threshold for wet paints versus hull samples, were considered and approved by PPR (Will be sent to MEPC 83 for adoption.)

For any queries, you can reach out to:

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