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**MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN (MAP)  
REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE FOR THE  
MEDITERRANEAN SEA (REMPEC)**

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10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Focal Points of the Regional  
Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre  
for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC)

REMPEC/WG.32/INF.5

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Agenda Item 1

**ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION  
SINCE THE NINTH MEETING OF THE FOCAL POINTS OF REMPEC**

**Submitted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO)**

**SUMMARY**

**Executive Summary:** This report captures some of the salient achievements of the Organization within the framework of its Strategic Plan since the ninth meeting of REMPEC's focal points (21 – 24 April 2009) with a focus on protection of the marine and atmospheric pollution from ship related activities.

**Action to be taken:** Paragraph 35

**Related documents:** REMPEC WG.32/4/1; REMPEC WG.32/10

**Introduction**

1. Following IMO's Assembly resolution A.900(21) on "Objectives of the Organization in the 2000's", the work of the Organization is now defined through its Mission and Strategic Plan, developed to cover a period of six years. The latest plan, as contained in resolution Assembly resolution A.1011(26) spans the period 2010 to 2015 and sets out the trends, developments and challenges presently facing the Organization and the strategic directions, as well as objectives that the specialized UN body wishes to pursue in relation to identified challenges - challenges that are very often identified by Member States. The strategic plan also provides for specific outputs and deliverables expected during the biennium found in Assembly resolution A.1012(26) and all Committees are required to provide their inputs into the Strategic Plan of the Organization. The Assembly, meeting every two years, then receives the reports on the various Committees' work progress and provides further directions as appropriate, which are then included in the Work Programme for the following biennium.

2. With a focus on protection of the marine and atmospheric pollution from ship related activities, this reports attempts to capture the salient achievements of the Organization, of interest to this Meeting, within the framework of its Strategic Plan since the ninth meeting of REMPEC's focal points (21 – 24 April 2009). These achievements have been the result of work carried out by Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) in the main, and its subsidiary bodies. The next session of the Committee (MEPC 62) will take place from 11 to 16 July 2011.

**Oil pollution prevention**

3. The regulations introduced by MARPOL, which entered into force in 1983, have been a success, with statistics showing that these regulations, along with other safety-related regulations, have been instrumental in the decline of operational and accidental oil pollution.

4. In the period under review, Guidance for recording of operations in the Oil Record Book, Part I, was approved and a new chapter 9 of MARPOL Annex I on Special requirements for the use or carriage of oils in the Antarctic area was adopted, which is expected to enter into force on 1 August 2011.

#### **Chemical pollution from bulk chemicals**

5. Annex II of MARPOL provides for the prevention of pollution caused by noxious liquid substances in bulk. Its requirements, supplemented by those of the International Code for the construction and equipment of ships carrying dangerous chemicals in bulk (the IBC Code), ensure that chemical tankers conform with the most stringent standards of construction, including the protection of cargo tankers. New stringent operational discharges of tank washings, in force since January 2007, have also contributed to protect the marine environment from operational chemical discharges.

6. Work on the evaluation of the safety and pollution hazards of new bulk chemicals carried by ships has continued, while new guidelines are being proposed for approval by MEPC 62 to clarify the carriage conditions to be applied for petroleum oil / bio-fuel blends (as mixtures of MARPOL Annex I or Annex II cargoes).

#### **Prevention of pollution by harmful substances in packaged form**

7. The revised MARPOL Annex III regulations for the prevention of pollution by harmful substances carried by sea in packaged form were adopted and are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2014 in order for changes to Annex III to coincide with the next amendments of the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (36-12).

#### **Prevention of pollution by sewage**

8. Annex IV is one of the original technical annexes of the 1973 MARPOL Convention to regulate the discharge of sewage from ships. Under Annex IV the discharge of sewage into the sea is prohibited, except when the sewage is discharged through sewage treatment systems within a specific distance from land; or at more distances from land if not through such systems; or discharged to port reception facilities. Unlike MARPOL Annex I, II, V and VI there are no Special Areas under Annex IV.

9. At MEPC 60, the Baltic countries proposed to designate the Baltic Sea as a Special Area introducing more stringent discharge requirements for sewage from ships. MEPC 61 approved the draft amendments to Annex IV for circulation with a view to adoption at MEPC 62.

#### **Prevention of pollution by garbage**

10. The enforcement of when and where to dispose of all types of wastes produced on a ship's voyage is regulated through MARPOL Annex V. However, although Annex V obliges Governments to ensure the provision of facilities at all ports and terminals for the reception of garbage, more work needs to be done to ensure the availability of adequate reception facilities in every port. In this connection it is worth noting that some studies of port and coastal areas show that small fractions of plastic are accumulated in micro-organisms and causes infertility higher in the food chain. The Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP), an advisory body, established in 1969, that advises the UN system on the scientific aspects of marine environmental protection and presently sponsored by nine UN agencies ([IMO](#), [FAO](#), [UNESCO-IOC](#), [WMO](#), [IAEA](#), [UN](#), [UNEP](#), and [UNIDO](#)) identified this issue as an emerging concern among the sponsoring agencies. It has produced a scoping paper and subsequently a workshop was held in June 2010 with a report in October 2010. From the regulatory perspective, MEPC 61 considered and approved draft amendments to MARPOL Annex V (Revised Annex V) with a view to adoption at MEPC 62.

#### **Prevention of air pollution from ships**

11. MARPOL Annex VI, adopted in 1997, limits the main air pollutants contained in ships exhaust gas, including sulphur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), and prohibits deliberate emissions of ozone depleting substances (ODS). MARPOL Annex VI also regulates shipboard incineration, and the

emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOC) from tankers. In October 2008, IMO adopted the revised MARPOL Annex VI and NO<sub>x</sub> Technical Code 2008, which entered into force on 1 July 2010.

12. The main changes are a progressive reduction in emissions of SO<sub>x</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and particulate matter and the introduction of Emission Control Areas (ECAs) where the emission of NO<sub>x</sub> as well as SO<sub>x</sub> and particulate matter is further restricted. Under the revised MARPOL Annex VI, the global sulphur cap is reduced initially to 3.50% m/m (from the current 4.50%), effective from 1 January 2012; then progressively to 0.50%, effective from 1 January 2020, subject to a feasibility review to be completed no later than 2018. The limits applicable in ECAs for SO<sub>x</sub> and particulate matter were reduced to 1.00% on 1 July 2010 (from 1.50%); further reduced to 0.10%, effective from 1 January 2015.

13. Currently, there are two designated ECAs for the control of SO<sub>x</sub> emissions under Annex VI, the Baltic and North Sea area which also includes the English Channel. A third area, the North American ECA, was adopted in March 2010, with expected entry into force on 1 August 2011, for the control of both NO<sub>x</sub> and SO<sub>x</sub> emissions. A fourth ECA to designate certain waters adjacent to coasts of Puerto Rico (United States) and the Virgin Islands (United States) for the control of emissions of NO<sub>x</sub>, (SO<sub>x</sub>) and particulate matter has been approved by MEPC 61, which will be considered for adoption at MEPC 62.

### **GHG - The control of greenhouse gas emissions**

14. During the period under review, the Organization made solid progress on all three building blocks of the work on reduction of GHG emissions from ships, namely technical, operational and market-based measures. Technical and operational measures, proposed as amendments to MARPOL Annex VI, will be considered at MEPC 62 with a view to adoption. Market-based measures such as a fuel levy and an emission trading scheme (ETS) have been discussed at a recent inter-essional working group, the outcome of which will be considered at MEPC 62.

### **Anti-fouling Systems**

15. Ship's hulls need to be kept smooth from marine growth to ensure maximum performance and fuel efficiency. In the past, many of the coatings used were themselves harmful to the marine environment and more benign coatings needed to be developed to replace them.

16. IMO's International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships (AFS Convention), which entered into force in September 2008, prohibits the use of harmful organotins in anti-fouling paints used on ships and establishes a mechanism to prevent the potential future use of other harmful substances in anti-fouling systems. In this connection, Guidance on best management practices for removal of anti-fouling coatings from ships, including TBT hull paints" has been developed with the view to providing countries with practical guidance on anti-fouling waste disposal, as a consequence of entry into force of the Convention as ships either replace or overcoat their existing organotin-based anti-fouling systems.

### **Marine Biosafety**

17. In 2004, IMO adopted the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention), which, when in force, will require all ships to carry out ballast water management procedures to a given standard. IMO and the industry are working together to ensure that these procedures will not have an adverse effect on the safety of the vessel, and will not solve one environmental problem by creating another. A number of ballast water management systems have been approved as meeting the Convention standards.

18. Year 2010 was declared the "International Year of Biodiversity". Invasive species are widely seen as one of the major threats to global biodiversity and the topic is on the agenda of a number of UN agencies and programmes, as reflected in the UNEP/CBD strategic plan. A clear example of decisive and proactive action taken in the spirit of that strategic plan is IMO's BWM Convention and its aim to establish a realistic target for the eradication of invasive species and for putting in place mechanisms to control the pathways for their introduction. As of April 2011, twenty-eight States equivalent to 25.43% of the world's shipping tonnage, six of which from the Mediterranean region have ratified the Convention, and although encouraging, it still falls short of the required thirty States

representing 35% of the world's shipping tonnage. States are therefore encouraged to ratify the BWM Convention at their earliest convenience.

19. Member States of IMO made a clear commitment to minimizing the transfer of invasive aquatic species by shipping. Studies have shown that biofouling can also be a significant vector for the transfer of invasive aquatic species in some areas equal to that of ballast water. Biofouling on ships entering the waters of States may result in the establishment of invasive aquatic species which may pose threats to human, animal and plant life, economic and cultural activities as well as the marine ecosystem as a whole.

20. While the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships, 2001 (AFS Convention) addresses anti-fouling systems on ships, its focus is on the prevention of adverse impacts from the use of anti-fouling systems and the biocides they may contain, rather than preventing the transfer of invasive aquatic species.

21. The potential for invasive aquatic species transferred through biofouling to cause harm has been recognized by the IMO, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), UNEP Regional Seas Conventions, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC), and the Secretariat of the Pacific Region Environmental Program (SPREP) among others.

22. Guidelines for the control and management of ships' biofouling to minimize the transfer of invasive aquatic species are being proposed for adoption by MEPC 62, which are intended to provide a globally consistent approach to the management of biofouling. As scientific and technological advances are made, the Guidelines will be refined to enable the risk to be more adequately addressed.

### **Recycling of Ships**

23. The IMO Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, 2009 (Hong Kong Convention) adopted in May 2009 has been open for signature from 1 September 2009 until 31 August 2010. Five States, three from the Mediterranean region have signed the Convention subject to ratification. States are therefore encouraged to ratify the Convention at their earliest convenience.

24. In order to promote and facilitate the entry into force of the Convention, Guidelines for the development of the inventory of hazardous materials have been adopted whilst work is continuing on three other sets of priority guidelines, namely:

- .1 Guidelines for safe and environmentally sound ship recycling;
- .2 Guidelines for the development of the Ship Recycling Plan; and
- .3 Guidelines for the authorization of ship recycling facilities.

with a view to their adoption at MEPC 62.

### **Special Areas and Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs)**

25. In 2005, the IMO Assembly adopted revised Guidelines for the designation of Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs), which are deemed to require a higher degree of protection because of their particular significance for ecological, socio-economic or scientific reasons, and because they may be vulnerable to damage by international maritime activities.

26. To date, twelve PSSAs have been declared. A recent proposal submitted by France and Italy to designate the Strait of Bonifacio as a PSSA has been submitted to MEPC 61 for its consideration. The overwhelming majority of delegations that spoke agreed with the proposal, in principle, subject to a review by the PSSA Technical Group, which was unable to meet during the session due to time constraints but would be convened at MEPC 62. In the meantime, the proponents were invited to submit their proposed associated protective measures (APMs) for the PSSA to the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation in June 2011 (NAV 57) for consideration, the outcome of which would be reported to MEPC 62 and Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 90) for appropriate action.

### **Pollution Preparedness and Response**

27. The OPRC 90 Convention and the OPRC-HNS Protocol 2000 collectively provide a framework for establishing national and regional response systems of preparedness and response and a platform for facilitating international cooperation and mutual assistance in the event of a pollution incident.

28. Now with over 100 contracting parties representing some 68% of the world's shipping tonnage, the OPRC 90 Convention is widely considered to be a success. With the entry into force of the Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances (OPRC-HNS Protocol 2000), in June 2007, a comprehensive legal framework for global preparedness and response covering the full array of substances transported by ship exists.

29. As a subsidiary body of the MEPC, the OPRC-HNS Technical Group reports back to the Committee and meet the week before regular sessions of the Committee. In this connection, it continues to support the implementation of the two instruments. In the the period under review, the following are some of the tools and products that have been developed by the Technical Group and approved by the MEPC:

- .1 Manual on Oil Pollution, Section I – Prevention;
- .2 Guidance document on the implementation of an incident management system;  
and
- .3 Aerial Observation of Oil Pollution at Sea – Operational Guide which will be published as a joint publication to be included as a new volume in the IMO/IPECA report series.

30. MEPC 61 also endorsed the Organization's assistance to the Bahamas, Cuba and the United States in response to the Gulf of Mexico platform incident and noted the usefulness of the OPRC-HNS Technical Group network.

### **Liability and compensation**

31. IMO has put in place a comprehensive set of regulations covering liability and compensation for oil pollution damage caused by oil transported as cargo on oil tankers as well as by oil used as fuel in ships' bunkers. The International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea was adopted in 1996. By 2009, the HNS Convention had still not entered into force, and was some way from meeting the conditions for its entry into force. A diplomatic Conference, aimed at bringing the HNS Convention into effect was held in April 2010. The Conference adopted a Protocol to the HNS Convention (2010 HNS Protocol), which is designed to address practical problems that had prevented States from ratifying the original Convention.

32. Currently, the IMO Legal Committee is discussing liability and compensation issues connected with trans-boundary oil pollution damage from offshore oil exploration and exploitation activities, in the wake of the Gulf of Mexico platform incident and a submission to the Committee proposing a new work programme item following the incident on the Montara offshore oil platform, located in the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone, in which a well blew out, leading to a significant oil spill. This issue may be relevant to the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in light of the recent entry into force of the Offshore Protocol.

### **Technical co-operation**

33. While IMO adopts international regulations, providing a single, universal framework governing maritime operations, it is Governments that must implement these rules by incorporating them into their own national laws. To assist countries to give full and complete effect to IMO's instruments, the Organization has established an Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme (ITCP), the purpose of which is to assist regions and countries build their human and institutional capacities for uniform and effective implementation of the Organization's regulatory framework. By fostering capacity-building in the maritime sector, the ITCP helps regions and countries ensure safe, secure and efficient shipping and port services, and to protect their waters and coasts from the environmental degradation that can be caused by ships and related maritime activities. In this context, the Marine Environment Division of the IMO works very closely with REMPEC and provides administrative and financial

support and technically backstops its regional and national initiatives. The funding provided to REMPEC over the recent years is set out in the attached **Annex**.

**UN-wide activities**

34. The Organization, through the Marine Environment Division, contributes to the UN-wide activities and programmes for the protection of the marine and atmospheric environment such as: GESAMP, the Environment Management Group's activities; the work of other MEAs e.g., UNFCCC, CBD; UNEP's Regional Seas Programmes the "UN Oceans" Co-ordination mechanism. It also participates in the UNCSD 2012 Rio+20 process.

35. **The Meeting of Focal Points is invited to take note** the information provided in the present document

## ANNEX

<i>Period</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Host Country</i>	<i>Budget (USD)</i>
1999-2001	National Seminar on Contingency Planning and delivery of IMO model courses on marine pollution preparedness and response	Syria	\$144,511.00
	National Seminar on Contingency Planning and delivery of IMO model courses on marine pollution preparedness and response	Morocco	
	National Training Course on Contingency Planning and delivery of IMO model courses on marine pollution preparedness and response	Algeria	
	National Training Course on Contingency Planning and delivery of IMO model courses on marine pollution preparedness and response	Morocco	
	Sub regional Training Course on Contingency Planning and delivery of IMO model courses on marine pollution preparedness and response	Egypt	
	Sub regional Training Course on Contingency Planning and delivery of IMO model courses on marine pollution preparedness and response	Algeria	
2002-2003	Preparation of an emergency plan for the port of Nador	Morocco	\$226,710.00
	Sub regional Agreement between Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia concerning preparedness and response to pollution	Algeria	
	Sub regional Training Course for OSC for Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia	Algeria	
	Assessment for the situation and needs for port reception facilities	Libya	
2004-2005	Regional seminar on port Reception facilities in the Mediterranean	Malta	\$159,020.00
	Drawing up of a comprehensive training programme on prevention of pollution from ships	-	
	Sub regional Training Course on preparedness for and response to accidental marine pollution (IMO Level 2) for Arab speaking Mediterranean Coastal States	Egypt	
2007	Sub regional Workshop on Contingency Planning	Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia	\$31,201.00
2008	Introductory Training Course on Ballast Water Management Issues	Egypt	\$128,600.00
	National workshop on sensitivity mapping	Morocco	
	National workshop on the use of dispersant	Algeria	
	National Training Course OPRC (level 3)	Lebanon	

<i>Period</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Host Country</i>	<i>Budget (USD)</i>
2009-2010	Development of a Regional Strategy on ships' Ballast Water Management	-	€ 5,638.57
	GloBallast Regional Training Course on the legal aspect of the ballast water management convention	Turkey	\$177,500.00
	National Training Course/Awareness Raising Seminar on Ships' Ballast Water Management	Montenegro	
	GLOBALLAST National Rapid Status Assessment	Turkey	
	GLOBALLAST National Rapid Status Assessment	Croatia	
	GLOBALLAST Dev National Econ Impact Assessment	Turkey	
	GLOBALLAST Draft Amendments to the Ordinance on BWM and Control	Croatia	
	GLOBALLAST Dev National BWM Strategies	Turkey	
	GLOBALLAST Dev National BWM Strategies	Croatia	
	Sub-regional Train the trainer course on oiled shoreline assessment	Tunisia	
	National Training Course/Awareness Raising Seminar on Ships' Ballast Water Management	Syria	
RTF Harmonisation Workshop	Turkey		
2011	The Sub-regional Workshop on HNS Contingency Planning for Arab speaking countries	Egypt	\$122,000.00
	RTW on Ballast Water Management Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement in the Mediterranean region	Croatia	