

ANNEX 2

RESOLUTION MEPC.341(77) (adopted on 26 November 2021)

STRATEGY TO ADDRESS MARINE PLASTIC LITTER FROM SHIPS

THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE

RECALLING Article 38(a) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization (the Organization) concerning the functions of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (the Committee) conferred upon it by international conventions for the prevention and control of marine pollution from ships,

ACKNOWLEDGING that work to prevent pollution by garbage from ships has been undertaken by the Organization since the adoption of MARPOL Annex V,

ACKNOWLEDGING ALSO the relevance of the work on marine plastic litter undertaken by the Parties to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972 and its 1996 Protocol, including the adoption in 2016 of a "Recommendation to Encourage Action to Combat Marine Litter",

ACKNOWLEDGING FURTHER the relevant work of other international organizations in relation to marine plastic litter, in particular FAO and UNEP and work under the United Nations Environment Assembly, as well as the importance of existing advisory and cooperation mechanisms, including GESAMP, the Joint FAO/IMO Ad Hoc Working Group on IUU Fishing and Related Matters, and the Global Partnership for Marine Litter,

RECALLING the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development,

RECALLING ALSO that the Assembly, at its thirtieth session, in December 2017, recognized the ongoing problem of marine plastic pollution, as addressed in MARPOL Annex V, which required further consideration as part of a global solution within the framework of ocean governance, in pursuance of the target of SDG 14 to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds by 2025,

RECALLING FURTHER resolution MEPC.310(73) by which it adopted the Action Plan to Address Marine Plastic Litter from Ships (the Action Plan),

1 ADOPTS the Strategy to Address Marine Plastic Litter from Ships (the Strategy) to guide, monitor and oversee the timely and effective implementation of the Action Plan, as set out in the annex to the present resolution;

2 INVITES the Secretary-General of the Organization to make adequate provisions in the Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) to support relevant follow-up actions of the Strategy;

3 AGREES to undertake a review of the Strategy in 2025 and notes that a review of the actions within the Action Plan will be undertaken in 2023.

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1 Background

1.1 IMO has recognized the importance of preventing pollution by garbage, including plastics, from ships since the adoption of MARPOL Annex V. IMO has also recognized the importance of preventing the dumping of various types of waste, including plastics, into the sea through the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972 (London Convention or LC) and its 1996 Protocol (London Protocol or LP). IMO has also committed to working closely with a number of partners to address the issue of marine plastic litter. However, studies demonstrate that, despite the existing regulatory framework to prevent marine plastic litter from ships, discharges into the sea continue to occur.

1.2 IMO recognized the ongoing problem of marine plastic pollution required further consideration, in pursuance of the target of Sustainable Development Goal 14 to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds by 2025. In recognition of the urgency to address marine plastic litter from ships, IMO adopted the *Action Plan to Address Marine Plastic Litter from Ships* (resolution MEPC.310(73)).

2 Vision

2.1 IMO remains committed to reducing marine plastic litter entering the marine environment from all ships, including fishing vessels. As a matter of urgency, IMO aims to strengthen the international framework and compliance with the relevant IMO instruments, endeavouring to achieve zero plastic waste discharges to sea from ships by 2025.

3 Objective and outcomes

3.1 The objective of this Strategy is to guide the implementation of the Action Plan to best achieve the outcomes of the Action Plan, by the establishment of a timeline and identification of appropriate modalities.

3.2 In considering the Action Plan, it is useful to consider the following outcomes as key goals:

- .1 reduction of marine plastic litter generated from, and retrieved by, fishing vessels;
- .2 reduction of shipping's contribution to marine plastic litter; and
- .3 improvement of the effectiveness of port reception and facilities and treatment in reducing marine plastic litter;

and the following further efforts which could aid in achieving the goals, inter alia:

- .4 enhanced public awareness, education and seafarer training;
- .5 improved understanding of the contribution of ships to marine plastic litter;
- .6 improved understanding of the regulatory framework associated with marine plastic litter from ships;

- .7 strengthened international cooperation; and
- .8 targeted technical cooperation and capacity-building.

4 Time frame

4.1 The following groups of actions under the Action Plan have been identified:

- .1 actions that can be progressed now by relevant sub-committees, which could be referred to as short-term actions;
- .2 actions that may be reliant on the outcomes of the IMO Study on marine plastic litter, or other relevant research, in order to progress, which could be referred to as mid-term actions;
- .3 actions which require concrete proposals to the Committee in order to progress, and could therefore be considered long-term actions; and
- .4 actions which would continuously be addressed over the life of the Action Plan.

4.2 The table grouping short-, mid-, long-term and continuous actions is set out in annex 1.

4.3 In line with the time frames provided in Sustainable Development Goal 14, the actions of the Action Plan should be completed or in progress by 2025. The time frame and actions associated with progressing short-, mid-, long-term and continuous actions; the IMO Study on Marine Plastic Litter; and the review and evaluation of actions up to 2025; is set out in annex 2.

5 Method of work

5.1 The impact on small island developing States and on remote locations such as polar regions when planning for the discharge of waste to land-based facilities (action item 18), should be considered when progressing each individual action related to addressing the discharge of plastic litter to reception facilities.

5.2 The actions in the Action Plan will be reviewed at MEPC based on follow-up proposals and commenting documents by interested Member States and international organizations. Following such a review, the Committee would instruct the PPR Sub-Committee or other sub-committees, as appropriate, to undertake work only on actions for which a well-defined scope of work had been developed.

5.3 During the ongoing development of the Action Plan, consideration should be given to how to assess compliance and effectiveness of actions.

5.4 For actions where the coordinating/associated organ is a sub-committee under MSC, the preferred way forward will be for proposals for a new output to be submitted to MSC in order for MSC to instruct the appropriate sub-committee accordingly.

5.5 For actions where the coordinating/associated organ is another committee, submission of documents to the relevant committee will be the preferred way forward.

6 Monitoring, evaluation and review

6.1 This Strategy will be monitored and evaluated to ensure that it continues to deliver against its objective and outcomes. In this regard, IMO will carry out a comprehensive review of the Strategy in 2025.

6.2 In accordance with resolution MEPC.310(73), IMO will also undertake a review of the Action Plan in 2023.

ANNEX 1

**GROUPING OF SHORT-, MID-, LONG-TERM AND CONTINUOUS ACTIONS
OF THE ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS MARINE PLASTIC LITTER FROM SHIPS**

	Outcome	Actions
Short-term actions		
4	Reduction of marine plastic litter generated from, and retrieved by, fishing vessels	Preparation of a circular reminding IMO Member States to collect information from their registered fishing vessels regarding any discharge or accidental loss of fishing gear
7		Review the application of placards, garbage management plans and garbage record-keeping (regulation 10, MARPOL Annex V), for example making the Garbage Record Book mandatory for ships of 100 GT and above
8		Preparation of a circular reminding Member States to enforce MARPOL Annex V on fishing vessels through PSC measures Encourage port State control MoUs to develop PSC procedures that include fishing vessels
9	Reduction of shipping's contribution to marine plastic litter	Review the application of placards, garbage management plans and garbage record-keeping (regulation 10, MARPOL Annex V), for example making the Garbage Record Book mandatory for ships of 100 GT and above
10		Consider the establishment of a compulsory system of formatted declarations of the loss of containers and the means on board to easily identify the exact number of losses Also, consider establishing an obligation to report through a standardized procedure the loss of containers
11		Consider ways to communicate the location of containers lost overboard based on additional information to be provided by interested parties
13		Consider enhancing the enforcement of MARPOL Annex V, including, where possible, through a risk-based approach
17	Improvement of the effectiveness of port reception and facilities and treatment in reducing marine plastic litter	IMO to encourage Member States to effectively implement their obligation to provide adequate facilities at ports and terminals for the reception of garbage, as required by regulation 8 of MARPOL Annex V Take into consideration work being undertaken under the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972 (London Convention or LC) and its 1996 Protocol (London Protocol or LP) (LC/LP) on this issue
19	Enhanced public awareness, education and seafarer training	Consider ways to promote the work of IMO to address marine plastic litter generated from ships

	Outcome	Actions
20		Consider tasking the HTW Sub-Committee with reviewing chapter III of STCW-F (Basic safety training for all fishing vessel personnel) to ensure that all fishing vessel personnel, before being assigned any shipboard duties, receive basic training on marine environment awareness oriented on marine plastic litter including abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG)
21		Consider how the model course "Marine Environmental Awareness 1.38" could be amended/revised to specifically address marine plastic litter Further consider how to ensure familiarization of all seafarers within the existing STCW (International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers) minimum requirements and taking into account existing best practice, guidelines and programmes
22	Improved understanding of the contribution of ships to marine plastic litter	Consider extending the reporting requirement in regulation 10.6 of MARPOL Annex V to include reporting data on discharge or accidental loss of fishing gear by the flag State to IMO via GISIS or other means, if appropriate
23		Encourage Member States and international organizations that have conducted any scientific research related to marine litter to share the results of such research, including any information on the areas contaminated by marine litter from ships
24		Conduct a study on marine plastic litter, including macro and microplastics, from all ships
25		Invite Member States and international organizations to undertake studies to better understand microplastics from ships
26	Improved understanding of the regulatory framework associated with marine plastic litter from ships	Consider the development of a regulatory framework matrix for the purpose of a gap analysis
27	Strengthened international cooperation	Make information available to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)
28		Continue work with other United Nations bodies and agencies, as well as with international forums, which are active in the matter of marine plastic litter from shipping, such as through the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML)
Mid-term actions		
2		Consider making mandatory, through an appropriate IMO instrument (e.g. MARPOL Annex V), the marking of fishing gear with the IMO Ship Identification Number, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

	Outcome	Actions
3		Further investigate logging of the identification number for each item of fishing gear on board a fishing vessel
5		Consider the development of best management practice to facilitate incentives for fishing vessels to retrieve derelict fishing gear and deliver it to port reception facilities, in collaboration with FAO
6		Consider the issue of waste that has been collected during fishing operations building on experience gathered from established projects
14	Improvement of the effectiveness of port reception and facilities and treatment in reducing marine plastic litter	Consider the requirement for port reception facilities to provide for separate garbage collection for plastic waste from ships, including fishing gear to facilitate reuse or recycling
15	Improvement of the effectiveness of port reception and facilities and treatment in reducing marine plastic litter	Consider mechanisms to enhance the enforcement of MARPOL Annex V requirements for the delivery of garbage to reception facilities
16		Consider the development of tools to support the implementation of cost frameworks associated with port reception facilities, taking into account the need to not create disincentives for the use of port reception facilities, the potential benefits of cost incentives that provide no additional fees based on volume and identifying waste types that can be reduced, reused or recycled through schemes that identify waste revenue
17		Consider facilitating the mandatory use of port waste management plans to ensure the provision of adequate waste reception facilities Encourage Member States to address the entire process of plastic garbage handling and ensure that landed garbage is managed in a sustainable manner ashore Identify information from the port waste management plans that can be shared via the Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS)
18		Further consider the impact on small island developing States and on remote locations such as polar regions when planning for the disposal of waste to land-based facilities
Long-term actions		
1	Reduction of marine plastic litter generated from, and retrieved by, fishing vessels	Consider making the IMO Ship Identification Number Scheme mandatory for all fishing vessels over 24 metres in length through an amendment to the Cape Town Agreement once it enters into force Encourage the ratification of the Cape Town agreement

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	Outcome	Actions
12	Reduction of shipping's contribution to marine plastic litter	Consider the most appropriate instrument to address the responsibility and liability for plastic consumer goods lost at sea from ships
Continuous actions		
29	Targeted technical cooperation and capacity-building	Address implementation issues related to the Action Plan to Address Marine Plastic Litter from Ships in the context of IMO technical cooperation and capacity-building activities
30		Consider the establishment of externally funded major projects under the auspices of IMO in support of the action plan to address marine plastic litter from ships
1	Reduction of marine plastic litter generated from, and retrieved by, fishing vessels	Encourage the ratification of the Cape Town agreement

ANNEX 2

TIMELINE OF FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS FOR THE ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS MARINE PLASTIC LITTER FROM SHIPS


