

**STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK  
FOR MULTILINGUALISM AT THE  
INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION  
(IMO)**

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## I INTRODUCTION

1 For the purpose of this Strategic Framework, multilingualism is defined as the ability of individuals and the capacity of organizations to communicate verbally and in writing in multiple languages.<sup>1</sup>

2 Multilingualism is a defining characteristic of IMO as a specialised UN agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine pollution by ships. This requires the mainstreaming of the use of all six IMO languages, as appropriate, in the delivery of the Organization's mandate and aligns with the UN Strategic Framework on Multilingualism.

3 The general policy for multilingualism of IMO has been established in the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, Council and Committees of the Organization. These determine that the six official languages are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, and the three working languages are English, French, and Spanish.

4 In addition, the IMO Assembly, at its thirty-second session, adopted resolution A.1152(32) on the 2021 *Amendment to the Convention on the International Maritime Organization* which provided for equally authentic texts of the IMO Convention, including consolidated texts, in the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish languages to ensure the authoritative interpretation of the Convention in all the six official languages of the Organization.

5 Since the 2022-2023 biennium, there has been increased demand for, and commitment to, multilingualism at IMO as signified in Assembly resolution A.1180(33) adopted at the thirty-third session of the Assembly. The recognition by the Assembly that multilingualism is a core value of the Organization clearly demonstrates the importance that Member States attach to this shared responsibility.

6 The Secretariat has consistently affirmed its commitment to integrating linguistic factors into every process of the Organization, from within existing resources and on an equitable basis. This includes decision-making, policy formulation, the development of strategic frameworks and budget outlines, programme implementation, communications activities, knowledge management and reporting.

## II OBJECTIVE

7 The primary objective of this Strategic Framework is to elevate the balanced and coherent usage of all IMO official languages to ensure that linguistic diversity is seamlessly integrated into all facets of the Organization's work. This includes standardizing language usage in official documents, meetings, communications, and reports, thereby enhancing the clarity and accessibility of information to all Member States and stakeholders.

8 Recognizing that IMO pursues multilingualism as a means of promoting, protecting, and preserving diversity of languages and cultures, as well as of improving the efficiency, performance, and transparency of the Organization, it is of paramount importance to progress towards parity of all six official languages. In this regard, it is essential to ensure the full and equitable treatment of all six languages with the aim of eliminating the disparity between those designated as working and official. This will require the necessary staffing capacity in all the official languages to achieve this.

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<sup>1</sup> Multilingualism in the United Nations system, JIU/REP/2020/6.

9 A holistic approach is needed to enhance the performance and optimise resource allocation towards multilingualism within IMO. This should not only bolster the use of six official languages but also harness the full potential of the Organization's cultural and linguistic diversity in augmenting the overall efficiency and effectiveness of communication, decision-making, and operational activities within the Organization.

10 The framework acknowledges the current state of multilingualism and outlines a series of measures and strategies that the Organization will adopt and implement, including the relevant administrative and operational guidelines to support the practical implementation of multilingualism within the Action Plan. Such administrative and operational guidelines should define the scope for implementation, evaluate the necessary human resources and conduct an analysis of budgetary and structural implications. Additionally, they will establish the procedural mechanisms necessary for effective and efficient implementation. Following the adoption of the Action Plan, the areas of possible improvements of multilingualism will be established for implementation in the short, medium- and long-term in accordance with available resources.

11 Member States are expected to take an active part in promoting multilingualism, embracing its benefits, and playing a pivotal role in this endeavour. Their engagement is crucial, as they lead by example and drive progress forward. It is worth emphasizing that delegates and observers can significantly enhance the diversity and multilingual nature of the Organization by expressing themselves in the IMO official languages they are most proficient or comfortable in, whenever feasible.

12 Member States are encouraged to support the Secretariat by helping to develop partnerships for the language training of IMO staff. Member States are strongly encouraged to consider sending a JPO and/or SPO of language specialists to support the work of the language and publications departments as well as the promotion of multilingualism across the Organization, as appropriate. Furthermore, Member States may also consider voluntary contributions to specific initiatives such as the translation of the IMO public website and of certain regulatory documents that are not yet available in some working languages.

### **III COORDINATOR FOR MULTILINGUALISM**

13 A coordinator for multilingualism will be designated for the successful integration and promotion of multilingualism across the Secretariat and to implement this strategic policy framework and its accompanying action plan. The coordinator's responsibilities encompass the oversight of the entire lifecycle of the multilingualism process, from initiation and planning to execution and monitoring.

14 The coordinator supports the required planning, monitoring and delivery of language services covering the spectrum of collaborators from upstream originators to downstream in-house language expertise; and leads the definition and updating of relevant processes and workflows, including the associated submission deadlines and other requirements, as well as underlying technological enhancements. The coordinator will be responsible for reporting to the Secretary-General on the implementation of this strategic framework.

### **IV IMO'S MULTILINGUAL SERVICES AND PRODUCTS**

15 As a knowledge-based organization experienced in arranging and coordinating large conferences and meetings, multilingualism is embedded in IMO's administrative, operational and governance processes through its rule making. This involves delegates and experts from **176** Member States, three Associate Members, IMO's training institutions (WMU and IMLI)

and complemented by technical expertise of staff members of the Secretariat. IMO provides a wide range of multilingual products and services for various purposes.

16 The landscape of IMO's multilingual products and services are categorised into the following groups:

- Language services
- Meeting services
- Publications services
- Technical Cooperation and Partnerships
- External/internal communication and outreach
- Training and staffing

17 All these products and services are available to the Member States, industry, partners, research institutions, and the general public to serve various purposes.

18 However, it should be noted that different users have different priorities for multilingual services, which must be taken into due account in order to optimise the use of limited human and financial resources to meet the growing demand across the spectrum. Among those priorities are the accuracy and quality of language services, time sensitivity in delivery of the same, reliable, and quality source of knowledge and expertise such as IMO's terminology databases that are built on continuous refinement and updating.

19 The following sections are dedicated to assessing the present landscape of multilingual services within the Organization. This evaluation is pivotal for aligning these services more precisely with the diverse needs and objectives of varied audiences. Furthermore, it lays the groundwork for both enhancing existing services and developing new ones to meet specific requirements and purposes.

## **A. LANGUAGE SERVICES**

20 In alignment with its commitment to quality and accessibility, the Secretariat provides high quality **interpretation, translation, and documents services** in all official languages. IMO's goal is to ensure timely and accurate language support, leveraging the latest technologies and collaborative efforts to enhance efficiency and reduce resource strain.

### **Interpretation Services**

21 The Secretariat ensures the provision of high-quality simultaneous interpretation in its six official languages. The Conference Division undertakes forward planning to ensure that suitable interpretation teams have been contracted before meetings. Owing to the limited market for London-domiciled freelance interpreters compared to other UN headquarters duty stations, IMO has to hire significant qualified interpreters from abroad when needed. This service is available for all plenary meetings of the IMO organs, including the Assembly, Council, Committees, Subcommittees, and the London Convention. Annually, this amounts to approximately 18 weeks of meetings, encompassing around 158 interpretation sessions.

22 IMO adheres strictly to the agreement established between the United Nations Common System/Chief Executive Board for Coordination and the Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence. This agreement outlines the specific Conditions of Employment for Short-Term Conference Interpreters, ensuring professional standards and working conditions are maintained.

23 It is noteworthy that certain IMO activities, such as workshops, seminars, and symposia, predominantly operate in English only.

### Translation services

24 Translation Services ensure timely translation, word-processing (formatting and proofreading) and editing of IMO meeting documents, as well as publications, in the six official languages<sup>2</sup>.

25 The translation scope is guided by **IMO's Rules of Procedure and/or the Guidelines on organization and method of work of the various IMO bodies**. The Rules of Procedure establishes that:

"All supporting documents to agenda items of the [Assembly, Council and Committees] and its subsidiary bodies shall be issued in the working languages. All reports, resolutions, recommendations, and decisions of the [Assembly, Council and Committees] and its subsidiary bodies shall be drawn up in one of the official languages and translated into the other five languages." Therefore:

### 26 Working languages (English, French, Spanish)

1. Translation and processing of **meeting documents**<sup>3</sup> (pre-session, in-session, and post-session) is specially challenging with in-session working papers, as these are produced under time pressure and often during night shift work.
2. The English Translation Section extends word-processing support for intersessional meetings and offers editorial assistance for all meetings.
3. To ensure better uniformity of IMO documentation, the English Translation Section regularly improves and updates the **IMO Style Guide**, which represents a useful tool for the internal technical divisions and for external use.
4. Unique practice at IMO is to prepare draft reports by the end of meetings. IMO's established practice to translate draft reports into the three working languages by the end of meetings, for all official meetings including working groups, can be considered unique and rare compared to other UN agencies, which presents added challenges for the Secretariat.

### 27 Official languages (Arabic, Chinese, Russian)

1. These sections provide translation, word-processing, and documentation services in their respective languages, including key documents like **Assembly resolutions, Council decisions, and Committee reports and several IMO flagship publications of IMO instruments**.
2. Strategic distribution of work ensures the translation of reports and decisions from major IMO bodies and updated editions of key IMO instruments.

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<sup>2</sup> Please refer to Annex 4 – Document's life cycle.

<sup>3</sup> Please refer to Annex 5 – Trends in translation workload, resources and technological utilization at IMO.

3. The translation sections manage the entire process from the translation and production of texts of IMO publications to the preparation of final proofs (for Arabic, Chinese and Russian) prior to publication.

### **Translation quality assurance**

28 Translation services, when translating, editing, proofreading and formatting texts to be issued as official IMO documents and publications, ensure that the correct terminology is used and that the certified copies of those texts meet the highest standards of quality that are expected in all the official languages of the Organization.

### **Translation volume and workload**

29 Over the past two years, there has been an average of 44,000 pages received for processing annually. During the same period, an average of 58,000 pages were translated each year. Notably, 80% of these translations were in working languages, while 20% were in official languages.

## **Challenges and Strategic Response**

### **Working languages**

30 For the working languages, in the existing governance framework of IMO, Member States play a significant role in driving the workload in relation to the number of documents submitted to the various IMO bodies. After the decision by C 104 to reduce the volume of translation, together with a reduction in the number of sub-committees in 2014, the volume of translation in the three working languages showed a downward trend until 2016. However, since 2016, there has been an upward trend. This trend is aggravated where the submission of most documents is made close to the established deadlines which significantly strains resources and creates bottlenecks. The challenges particularly increase during meeting weeks due to unpredictable workloads that vary at short notice with only fixed resources available for night shifts (typically on Thursdays, with Wednesdays added for MSC and MEPC).

### **Official languages**

31 For the official languages other than the working languages, namely Arabic, Chinese, and Russian, the current staff composition includes two translators and two proofreaders for each language section. This team is responsible for the successful translation of all documentation in these languages. This process is managed through a strategic distribution of work across the year, aiming to maintain a steady workflow and avoid extreme fluctuations in work volume. While this approach has proven effective, it is important to acknowledge that it has brought the three translation sections to their maximum capacity.

32 In an effort to enhance efficiency, the Secretariat has been leveraging technology, as outlined in paragraph 33. At the core is eLUNa (electronic languages of the United Nations), a computer-assisted translation tool based on artificial intelligence (AI) developed by the United Nations, which has been implemented by the Secretariat (refer to paragraph 33, item 1). This tool significantly boosts efficiency and throughput, but it is crucial to understand that it supplements, rather than replaces, the expertise of language professionals, even as the technology continues to advance<sup>4</sup>. The United Nations has recognized these efficiencies, and they have been duly integrated into the workload standards applied in IMO's systems and

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<sup>4</sup> Refer to Annex 5 – Trends in translation workload, resources and technological utilization at IMO.



calculations. This was formalized in resolution 75/252 (A/RES/75/252), adopted by the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly on 31 December 2020, which increased the workload standards for translation services. This adjustment recognizes the productivity improvements facilitated by innovative working methods and technologies such as eLUNa.)

### Documentation services

33 Documentation services at IMO are integral to ensuring efficient and systematic handling of documents. This department collaborates closely with both internal and external stakeholders, guaranteeing the timely and predictable submission of documents. Key to the efficacy of these services is the implementation of the UNITE Conference Portal, a comprehensive suite of applications developed by the United Nations. This system enhances both the efficiency and effectiveness of documentation services and is in alignment with similar initiatives across various United Nations agencies. It supports multilingualism and encourages inter-agency cooperation. The primary components of this system include:

1. **gDocs 2.0** – gDocs 2.0 is a vital IT application employed by IMO and across the United Nations system, designed to streamline and manage the processing of documents efficiently. To ensure smooth operations, all documents intended for processing or translation into any of the six official languages by the Conference Division must be submitted through gDocs 2.0. This system enhances the workflow, ensuring that document handling is effective and aligns with the required standards.
2. **eLUNa** (*electronic Languages of the United Nations*) is a computer-assisted translation (CATT) tool, integrated with the UNTERM terminology database, providing access to an up-to-date document archive of previously translated texts through Document Storage. This tool retrieves terminology from UNTERM and offers a neural machine translation solution, resulting in greater accuracy, consistency in translation quality and formatting in IMO documents.
3. **Document Storage** is a multilingual repository integrated in the UNITE Conference Portal. This repository serves the primary purpose of facilitating translation work and optimizing information searches within the eLUNa system. Its content originates from both the original source documents and their corresponding requested translations. Furthermore, the repository's content is enriched through the incorporation of specialized translation memories known as "bitexts."
4. **UNTERM** is a multilingual database for official terminology relevant to the work of the United Nations including **IMO**. It is a public website used by UN delegates and staff, as well as other users who are interested in the work and activities of the United Nations around the world. Official terminology is provided in the six official languages of the United Nations in line with the General Assembly mandate on multilingualism. This portal is publicly available at <https://unterm.un.org/unterm2/en/>. The IMO terminology database ranks as the third largest within the UNTERM network. With a total of 48,496 terminology records available in all six official languages, it follows UNHQ and UNOG in terms of scale within the UNTERM user network.

34 The web-based nature of the UNITE Conference Portal ensures these tools are accessible to IMO staff, supporting remote work and enhancing productivity. In alignment with environmental sustainability efforts, IMO advocates a paper-smart policy to reduce document printing.

35 To further advance linguistic capabilities, IMO is planning to deploy eLUNa Search, an innovative online search engine for efficient access to translated documents. This tool will simplify the search process for translators by displaying translations in various formats. IMO's active participation in international forums such as the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentations and Publications (IAMLADP) and the International Annual Meeting on Computer-Assisted Translation and Terminology (JIAMCATT) underscores its commitment to staying abreast of the latest developments in language technologies and translation processes. This commitment ensures IMO remains at the forefront of providing cutting-edge multilingual documentation and translation services, effectively serving its global stakeholders.

36 **IMODOCS**, the Organization's central electronic repository for electronic meeting documents, plays a critical role in disseminating expert knowledge from Member States, Treaties, Circulars, Circular Letters, Codes, Guidelines, and Rules of Procedures. The platform provides content in six official languages, although the extent of availability varies. Serving as the primary conduit for relaying information to Member States, IMODOCS requires user registration for access, with a portion of its content being publicly accessible. In the last decade, owing to the PaperSmart policy adopted by the Organization, the functionality of the platform has increased and now it offers additional features such as virtual portal, document submission portal, meeting audio files, and IMO meetings streaming facilities in all official languages. Given its importance and to enhance the users experience in accessing the relevant information contained therein, a further improvement especially on the search engine capability is required.

## **B. MEETINGS SERVICES**

### **Meeting rooms**

37 IMO has 14 committee rooms, with three—Committee Room 9, Committee Room 10, and the Main Hall—equipped with a Simultaneous Interpretation (SI) system. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the Organization has enhanced its capability to accommodate various meeting formats, including in-person, in-person complemented with hybrid and fully remote meetings. Multilingual meetings are feasible in all three equipped rooms when conducted in person, and multilingual hybrid meetings in Committee Room 9 and Main Hall only.

### **Digital recordings**

38 IMO has recorded and published indexed audio of plenary and committee meetings since 2012. Audio recordings published on the existing IMODOCS are available in six official languages.

## **C. PUBLICATIONS**

39 The Publishing Service (PUBS) plays an important and unique role in disseminating IMO instruments in the six official languages of the Organization. There are over 200 titles in the sales catalogue, in both print and electronic formats<sup>5</sup>. The titles are available in English,

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.imo.org/en/publications/Pages/CatalogueAndBookCodeLists.aspx>

with many translated into other official languages of the Organization. Publications evolve from a document or collection of documents generated from IMO committees, conventions, and meetings. The process involves an interdependency between PUBS and the technical divisions, with the latter responsible for defining content.

40 Generally, IMO treaties and conventions are available in six languages, codes and guidelines are available in three working languages, while some other publications are only available in English. At its 114th session, the Council "endorsed the proposal that the IMO titles produced in digital format be made available, on a read-only basis, to all Member States through the IMODOCS site and, in addition, that each Member State may request a maximum of one printed copy of any specific title upon publication." (C 114/D, item 5.13).

41 A new electronic publication platform is expected to be available by the end of June 2024. This platform will be available in all six languages and will enable users to conduct text searches within publications which allow direct electronic access.

## **D. TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS**

42 Multilingualism is integral to IMO technical cooperation and partnerships as it enhances accessibility, communication, collaboration, and inclusivity within the global maritime community.

43 Technical cooperation programmes conducted by IMO involve capacity-building activities, such as workshops, training sessions, and seminars. For national activities, the programmes are delivered in all six official languages, based on the preference expressed by the recipient Member State. However, for regional events that mix Member States with different linguistic backgrounds, activities are mostly delivered solely in English, on some occasions with interpretation covered by the Organization. By improving the offering of the delivery of these activities in multiple languages, IMO ensures that participants from diverse linguistic backgrounds can fully engage and benefit from shared knowledge and expertise.

44 In addition, e-Learning is an example of how new tools are also being used to improve multilingualism in technical cooperation activities. Over the past two years, IMO has introduced e-Learning courses, predominantly developed in English. These courses are currently undergoing translation into French and Spanish for a scheduled launch in 2024.

45 In parallel, TCID and some of its projects are studying how to integrate multilingualism into communication materials in order to increase engagement among stakeholders with different linguistic backgrounds, with the aim of facilitating improved collaboration and effective work towards common goals.

## **A. EXTERNAL/INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH**

### **Social media**

46 IMO follows the United Nations' recommendations for public information policies and global communication outreach. Social media accounts for IMO Headquarters were launched in 2011, initially with Twitter (now X) and YouTube, followed by Facebook, and later Instagram and LinkedIn. Social media platforms for IMO are managed by the Outreach and Communication Office (OCO) of the Legal Affairs and External Relations Division. The primary objective of IMO's social media engagement is to enhance awareness of the Organization and to promote its activities and work to a broader audience. The language used for communication on these platforms is mostly English.

47 Social media has become an increasingly vital part of IMO's outreach efforts. Currently, the Organization's account on platform X, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts have seen significant growth and engagements, supporting the dissemination of information and the Organization's activities. The OCO is responsible for generating a substantial amount of original content for these platforms, including videos, infographics, and digital cards. A key element of social media is curation of content on the various platforms: engaging with users and sharing content or using platforms as a "call to action" for a specific IMO observance day. The online International Day of the Seafarer campaign now reaches millions of people globally, annually. There has been a move to further push online campaigns for the World Maritime theme each year and the International Day for Women in Maritime.

### **IMO website**

48 In 2015, IMO embarked on a major redesign of its official website, [www.imo.org](http://www.imo.org). This overhaul was aimed at incorporating the Organization's working languages: English, French, and Spanish. In 2020, a revamped and updated web design was implemented, specifically making the website more accessible for mobile and tablet devices. This initiative significantly enhanced the website, transforming it into a key digital hub for disseminating information about IMO's activities and initiatives. The OCO manages the publication and maintenance of the news and media website content in these three languages. News items, hot topics, IMO Secretary-General's statements, meeting summaries and IMO events pages are all translated and posted in French and Spanish in a timely manner by the two OCO media and communications specialists for French and Spanish. Currently, 45% of the website content has been translated into French and 39% of the website content has been translated into Spanish

49 IMO issues press releases, news items, hot topics, Secretary-General's statements, meeting summaries and IMO events in **English, French, and Spanish**, thus ensuring wider reach and engagement with a global audience. This multilingual approach has been pivotal in bolstering the website's effectiveness as a communication tool.

50 English is the dominant language for website visits (around 10 million a year). Visits to the Spanish webpages account for about 10% of visits. Visits to the French webpages account for about 5%. A significant portion of the website's traffic, approximately **35%** comes from mobile device users, highlighting the importance of mobile-friendly design and accessibility in reaching a diverse and global audience.

### **Maritime Knowledge Centre**

51 The Maritime Knowledge Centre (MKC) collates relevant news items and provides information resources and services to support the IMO Secretariat, Member States, representatives and delegates. Its specialized collections comprise the archives of official documents and IMO publications. The MKC also collects resources covering maritime affairs, shipping and other subjects relevant to the work of the Organization.

52 The MKC provides a daily curated electronic news service for the Secretariat, delegates and other external subscribers. A key product of the daily news is the MKC Current Awareness Bulletin (CAB), a monthly, digital, retrospective digest of global news focusing on topics related to the work of IMO. CAB is disseminated to global subscribers via the MKC Internet site, in English only.

53 From 2024, the index of IMO Resolutions is accessible on the MKC's public website<sup>6</sup>. This is currently in English only. This covers all resolutions from every IMO body.

## B. TRAINING AND STAFFING

54 The Secretariat currently provides language courses in English, French, and Spanish for its staff and which is extended to their families with the application of a course fee. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the format of the training has been adjusted to virtual to ensure ongoing access to language training, IMO also ensures language capability for posts requiring such competence by recruiting staff with the relevant capability in addition to the language of the duty station (English).

## V FUTURE DIRECTION AND STRATEGIC GOALS

### 55 Future Direction

- .1 **Policy Development:** Formulate and implement policies promoting linguistic equality and accessibility in all IMO services and provide budgetary resources to match ambitions.
- .2 **Enhanced Multilingual Communication:** Strengthen multilingual practices within IMO, enabling effective and inclusive communication across all official languages.
- .3 **Member State Engagement:** Encourage active participation of Member States in multilingual activities, ensuring their representatives utilize IMO's working languages efficiently.
- .4 **Service Improvement:** Continuously analyse and enhance existing multilingual services, addressing gaps and aligning with the requirements of Assembly Resolution A.1180 (33).
- .5 **Innovation and Adaptability:** Stay abreast of technological advancements, integrating them into the multilingual framework.
- .6 **Culture of Multilingualism:** Strengthen efforts to foster a culture of multilingualism as an integral part of diversity and inclusion initiatives.

### 56 Strategic Goals

- .1 **Member State Engagement and Collaboration:** The enhancement of multilingualism at IMO relies on the active engagement and support from its Member States. Therefore, active participation in multilingual practices is essential. This includes utilizing the official languages of IMO in all forms of communication and contributions. By encouraging their representatives and experts to communicate in the language they are most proficient in, Member States can enrich the discourse and inclusivity within IMO's multilingual environment.

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<sup>6</sup> It can be accessed at:  
<https://www.imo.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/IndexofIMOResolutions/Pages/Default.aspx>.

- .2 **Linguistic Diversity Advocacy:** Promoting the importance of linguistic diversity within Member States and the Secretariat. This involves, among others, creating awareness about the benefits of multilingualism to enhance global maritime safety and environmental protection.
- .3 **Improvement of Current Services:** In order to achieve the goals outlined in the Assembly resolution A.1180(33), it is necessary to analyse the current services. This involves evaluating existing multilingual resources and services, identifying areas for enhancement, and implementing necessary changes to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.
- .4 **Development of New Multilingual Policies:** Developing policies that ensure equal prominence and accessibility for all six official languages in all services of the IMO is crucial. These policies should aim to create a multilingual environment to promote equal participation for all Member States.
- .5 **Continuous Improvement and Innovation:** IMO is committed to the ongoing improvement and innovation of its multilingual services. This continuous development is vital in responding to the evolving needs of its Member States and adapting to new challenges and technologies including in the field of maritime communication and safety.

## **VI. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Resource allocation for sustaining and expanding current multilingual services.**

57 For the purpose of the implementation of the Strategic Framework, the Secretariat must undertake a comprehensive assessment of the financial, resource, and operational implications associated with enhancements to IMO's current multilingual services and the introduction of new multilingual policies. These adjustments may significantly affect IMO's organizational structures and workflows, therefore a careful examination is required to ensure alignment with the strategic objectives.

58 Within the current budget, the Secretariat is committed to improving the current multilingual services. Any enhancement or new policies that require resources beyond the current financial capacity will be evaluated and reported. This evaluation will include a detailed cost-benefit analysis to ensure that any additional expenditures are justified by the potential benefits they bring. Any necessary additional funding will be strategically planned, reported, and integrated into future budget cycles if needed. By doing so, the Secretariat aims to maintain financial sustainability while ensuring that multilingual services continue to meet the standards expected by Member States and the Strategic Framework.

## **VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

59 In order to ensure the implementation and progress of the Strategic Framework, monitoring mechanism will be established to regularly track the implementation and collect relevant data, including the challenges and opportunities that might arise in the future.

60 Evaluation will be made to assess the effectiveness of the Strategic Framework, taking into account the information from monitoring processes. The result of the evaluation will provide indicative direction for future multilingualism policy and approach, aiming to further strengthen the Secretariat's effort to promote multilingualism.

## ACTION PLAN

<b>IMPLEMENTATION STEPS</b>			
<b>Steps</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Note</b>
<b>Phase 1:</b> Assessment of current services and needs analysis	Conduct a comprehensive review of existing multilingual services.	January-July 2024	This result of this phase will be used for the development of draft Strategic Framework
	Perform a needs analysis to identify gaps and areas for improvement.	January-July 2024	
	Engage with Member States and other stakeholders to gather feedback and insights.	January-July 2024	
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Strategic Framework for Multilingualism at IMO (to be presented at Council 132)</b>		
<b>Phase 2:</b> Development and approval of new policies and strategies.	Draft and refine new multilingual policies and cost implication.	July-September 2024	Post C132, the cross-divisional group on multilingualism will start to develop the accompanying guidelines and the internal assessment, taking into account comments from Council 132
	Develop comprehensive guidelines (administrative and technical) to support the effective implementation of multilingual policies.	July-September 2024	
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Administrative and operational guidelines and report of assessment (to be presented at Council 133)</b>		
<b>Phase 3:</b> Implementation of enhanced services, new policies, and training programs.	Implement enhanced services and new policies.	Starting after C133 (December 2024)	Implementation should be carried on based on the priorities of the area
	Identify the necessity and accommodate suitable training programs.	Starting after C133 (December 2024)	
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Implementation report, including progress and challenges (to be presented at Council 134)</b>		
<b>Phase 4:</b> Feedback Mechanism	Establish feedback mechanisms to gather input and suggestion for continuous improvement.	July 2025	Feedback to be reviewed and reported to Council on November 2025
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Report of progress and feedback (to be presented at Council 135)</b>		

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**Milestones and Objectives:**

**Phase 1:** Establish clear, measurable objectives for each phase of the implementation (SMART objectives).

**Phase 2:** Feasible timelines and milestones for the assessment, development, and deployment stages.



ANNEX 1

Status of documents and their translation

DOCUMENT TYPE	LANGUAGE		NOTES
<b>MEETING DOCUMENTS</b>			
<b>Pre-session documents</b>			
Circular Letters of invitation	WL		
Meeting documents (Plenary documents)	WL		Translated for Assembly, Council, Committees, Sub-Committees, London Convention;
Information Papers			The document is provided in its original language.
Intersessional meetings			EO
J papers information			EO Published on IMODOCS before/during meeting weeks. (e.g. HTW 10-J-4)
Meeting Briefs			EO In preparation for the Assembly, Council and other official meetings as well as during the meetings,
Chair's/President's Brief	WL	OL	Briefing documents are provided to the Chair or President in any of the official languages, upon request.
<b>In-session documents</b>			
Working papers (Including draft report WP.1)	WL		
Meeting briefs			EO In preparation for the Assembly, Council and other official meetings as well as during the meetings, briefing documents are provided to the Chair or President in the working languages, subject to the decision of the Chair or President.
<b>Post-session documents</b>			
Assembly resolutions	WL	OL	Translated into all official languages (post-Assembly).
Meeting reports	WL	OL	
Summary of decisions	WL	OL	Council and Assembly

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<b>OTHER DOCUMENTS</b>			
<i>Circular Letters</i>	<b>WL</b>		<i>*All Circular Letters (CLs) are translated into the working languages. CLs will be translated into the official languages upon necessity as requested by the initiated Division at the Secretariat. *For CLs related to vacancies: Professional and higher category vacancies are available in working languages, translation into official languages will be made available upon request. *All JPO and SPO vacancies are available in all official languages.</i>
<i>Circulars (e.g. MEPC.1/Circ.X)</i>	<b>WL</b>		
<i>Notes Verbales (NV)</i>		<b>OL</b>	<i>NV are translated into the six official languages except for the notices of assessment, which are only translated into working languages.</i>
<i>Administrative documents</i>			<b>EO</b> <i>Correspondence letters and memorandums.</i>
<i>Certified copies of authentic legal texts.</i>	<b>WL</b>	<b>OL</b>	
<i>Publications</i>	<b>WL</b>	<b>OL</b>	<b>EO</b> <i>*IMO treaties and conventions are available in six languages. *Codes and guidelines are available in three working languages. *Some other publications are only available in English.</i>
<i>Programme of meetings (PROG)</i>	<b>WL</b>		<b>EO</b> <i>Preliminary Programme of meetings in English Only</i>

**WL:** Working Languages, **OL:** Official Languages: **EO** English only.

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ANNEX 2

**Current process for translating IMO public website<sup>7</sup>**

<b>TYPE OF WEB PAGE</b>	<b>LANGUAGE</b>	<b>NOTES</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
News items - top stories (press briefings/what's new)	E, F, S	Generally prepared in English, immediate translation and posting of news stories in French and Spanish by in-house OCO media specialists (one French, one Spanish)	Very dynamic, frequent updates is very likely.
IMO Events pages (conferences, WMD, DOTS, IDWIM, etc)	E, F, S	Generally prepared in English, immediate translation and posting of pages in French and Spanish by in-house OCO media specialists (one French, one Spanish)	
IMO hot topic pages	E, F, S	Generally prepared in English, immediate translation and posting of pages in French and Spanish by in-house OCO media specialists (one French, one Spanish)	
IMO SG statements	E, F, S	Generally prepared in English, immediate translation and posting of pages in French and Spanish by in-house OCO media specialists (one French, one Spanish)	
IMO SG speeches to meetings	E, S	Provided by EOSG in English together with Spanish translation provided by CD	
Main About section pages, FAQ, structure etc	E, F, S	Generally prepared and updated in English, immediate translation and updating of pages in French and Spanish by in-house OCO media specialists (one French, one Spanish)	
Home page and Media centre pages, SG page, meeting summaries, etc.	E, F, S	Generally prepared and translated and updated in English, immediate translation and updating of pages in French and Spanish by in-house OCO media specialists (one French, one Spanish)	
Our work section - top level pages	E, F, S	Generally prepared and translated and updated in English, immediate translation and updating of pages in French and Spanish by in-house OCO media specialists (one French, one Spanish)	
Second and subsequent level "Our Work" section pages	E	Pages prepared by divisions. Where a need is identified, F and S versions are identified and translated by in-house OCO media specialists (one French, one Spanish)	

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Maritime Knowledge Centre pages	E		English only
Careers pages	E (some F and S)	Part translated	
Vacancies e-page	E	E only	<a href="https://imo-recruit.azurewebsites.net/vacancies">https://imo-recruit.azurewebsites.net/vacancies</a> is English only
Publications	E, F, S	Part translated	
Project websites e.g. GloFouling, GV2050, FutureFuels	E	Project websites are in E only	<p>Project websites are developed by project teams with cooperation from OCO on branding and design and content. Thereafter, project websites are updated by the project teams.</p> <p>It should be noticed that Projects sometimes provide Spanish and French (and other language) version, however these are accessible only via English website. For example, <a href="https://greenvoyage2050.imo.org/download-publications/">https://greenvoyage2050.imo.org/download-publications/</a> has publications to download in E and S.</p>

E: English; F: French; S: Spanish

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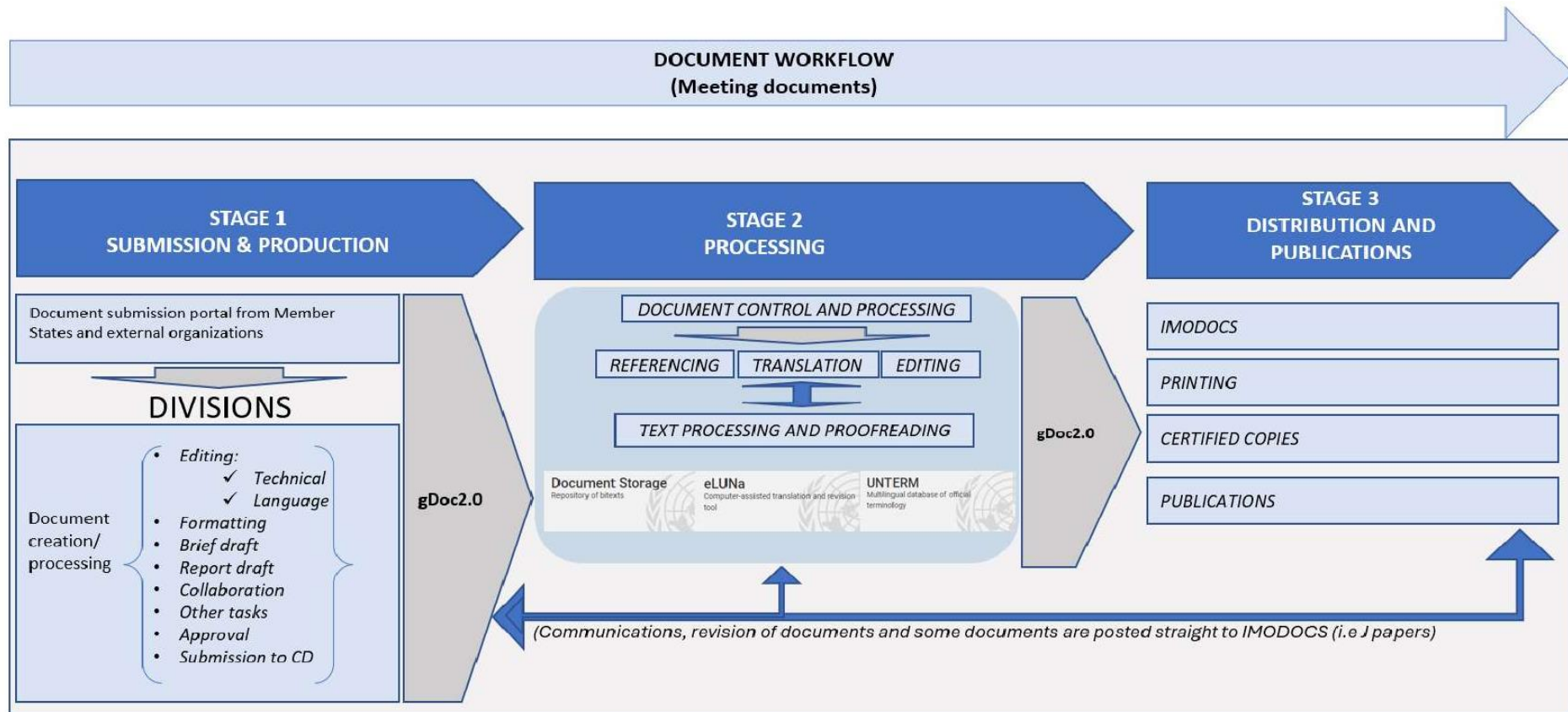
## ANNEX 3

**Distribution of publication titles by language**

LANGUAGE	NUMBERS OF TITLE
English (WL)	242
French (WL)	127
Spanish (WL)	129
Chinese (OL)	27
Arabic (OL)	37
Russian (OL)	32
Bilingual English/French	4
Other multilingual	5 (1 title in 6 languages; 1 title in French and Spanish; 3 titles in English, French and Spanish)

## ANNEX 4

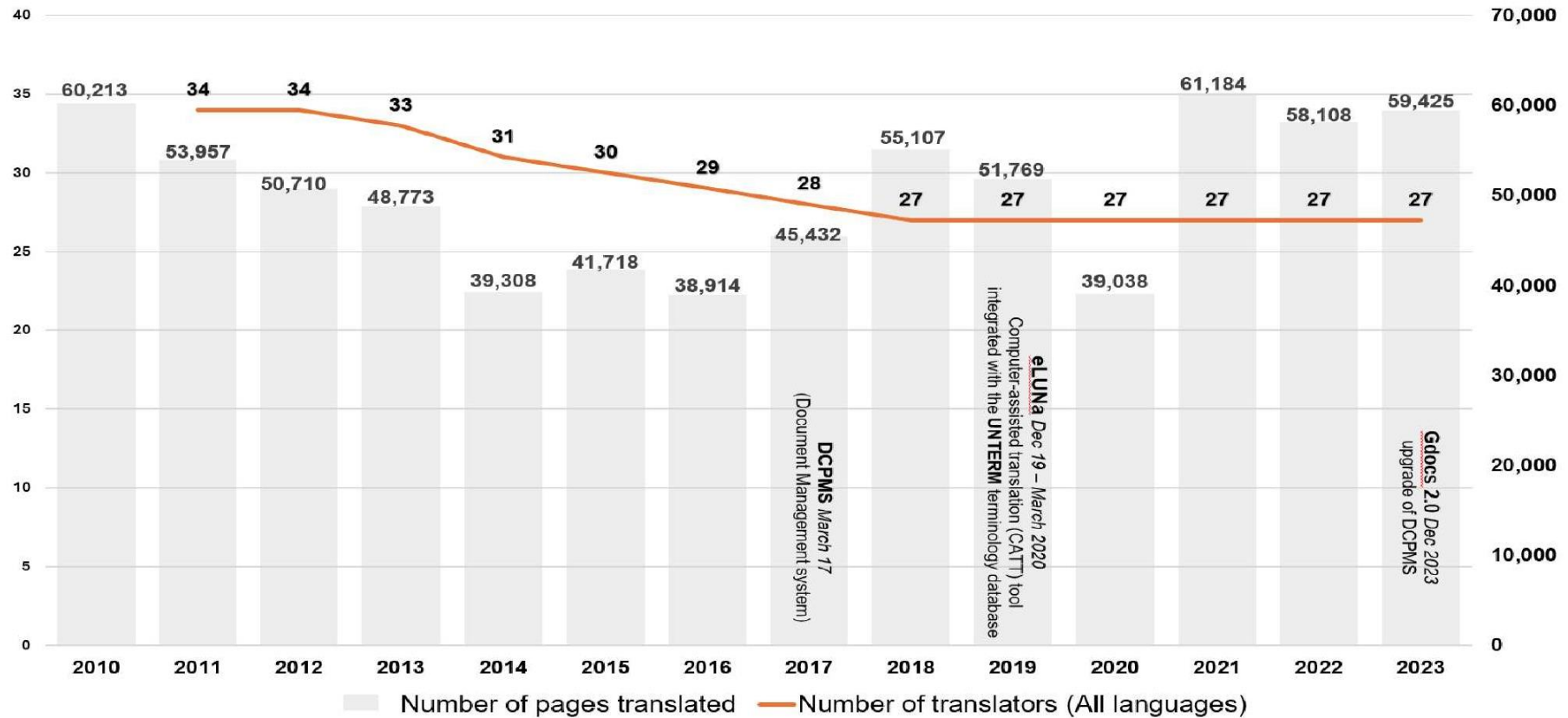
### Document life-cycle representation



The processing and creation of documents constitute a core function at IMO and involve a lengthy and intricate series of steps. This complex process encompasses numerous subprocesses, each requiring the utilization of various specialized systems such as gDoc 2.0, SharePoint, eLUNa, UNTERM, etc. Effective collaboration among all stakeholders is essential throughout these stages. The overall document life cycle at IMO can be categorized into three main stages as shown.

## ANNEX 5

### Trends in translation workload, resources and technological utilization at IMO



The graph above illustrates changes over recent years. The number of translators has decreased over this period, yet the volume of pages requiring translation has continued to rise since 2016, reflecting a growing need of translation. This increase has been effectively managed, in part by the increased use of technology. The integration of technological solutions has been essential in upholding the high standards of service delivery within current resources.