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

Subject: Call for applications to the Voluntary Multi-Donor Trust Fund (VMDTF) for financial support to participants from developing countries, particularly small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs) to attend meetings of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 81) and the Intersessional Working Group on Greenhouse Gas Emissions (ISWG-GHG 16)

Introduction

1 Further to Circular Letter No.4703 of 16 March 2023, the Secretary-General is pleased to announce that applications for financial support through the VMDTF are open for sponsored participation of SIDS and LDCs in the forthcoming sessions of ISWG-GHG 16 and MEPC 81, being held adjacently between 11-15 March 2024 and 18-22 March 2024, respectively.

2 The objective of the Fund is to provide financial assistance to representatives of SIDS and LDCs who are IMO Member States in attending the meetings of MEPC and meetings related to greenhouse gases (GHG) matters. The Fund will cover the cost of one delegate from each Member State to attend MEPC and ISWG-GHG sessions, including economy round-trip air fares and respective daily subsistence allowance (DSA).

Method of application for financial assistance

3 The requesting State, its Permanent Mission, or in its absence, its respective Ministry, shall send a formal communication to the IMO Secretariat VMDTF email address, together with an application form, requesting financial assistance from the Fund. The request should be made as soon as possible, but at least three months before the meeting starts. The Fund application form is annexed to this circular letter.

4 IMO is strongly committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Accordingly, Member States are encouraged to include women in their nominations for delegations.
Status of the Fund and eligibility for funding

5 The current balance of the fund, including pledges yet to be received, is £520,000. Member States are strongly encouraged to continue contributing to the Fund to ensure its sustainability. The Fund is also open for contributions from non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, other interested entities, and individuals, noting that contributions will remain anonymous, unless otherwise requested, without the option of donors to target specific beneficiary States or regions with their contributions, beyond supporting the Fund’s overall mandate.

Submission of completed application forms

6 IMO Member States that are developing countries, and particularly those that are SIDS or LDCs in line with the official United Nations List of SIDS and LDCs* are eligible and strongly encouraged to apply for financial assistance to attend the above-mentioned meetings. Completed application forms should be addressed to Director TCD, Mr. Xiaojie Zhang, at the email address: vmdtf-developingcountries@imo.org

Closing date for the submission of applications

7 Please be advised that the closing date for the submission of all completed application forms is 11 December 2023. Participants to be sponsored by the Fund will be notified by 22 December 2023 to allow Member States sufficient time to apply for entry visa to the United Kingdom and to make other logistical arrangements.

8 It will therefore be appreciated if applying authorities give this circular letter urgent attention.

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* https://www.un.org/ohrlls/
ANNEX

TRUST FUND APPLICATION FORM

IMO Voluntary Multi-Donor Trust Fund – assistance to small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs) to attend MEPC 81 and ISWG-GHG 16

General Instructions: This form must be completed in "TYPE WRITTEN" format and submitted within the established deadlines with the following supporting documents.

1) A note verbale conveying the nomination through the Government’s Permanent Mission in London, United Kingdom;
2) A copy of the biodata page of the applicant’s national passport; and
3) Completed payment instructions form.

Meeting Information

Name of Meeting: Sixteenth session of ISWG-GHG (11-15 March 2024) and eighty-first session of MEPC (18-22 March 2024)
Location of Meeting: IMO Headquarters, London
Date of first working day: 11 March 2024
Date of last working day: 22 March 2024

Participant Information:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Surname or Family Name (as in passport)</th>
<th>Given Name</th>
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Contact Information:

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<td>City</td>
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<td>email address</td>
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| Phone number (including international dialling code) | Mobile number (including international dialling code) |

I hereby certify that I will adhere strictly to the rules of the International Maritime Organization, including those governing the granting of assistance under trust funds and those applicable to travel.

Signature | Date

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