

The Latest Issues in International Maritime Jan. 2026

➤ IMO International Maritime News(p2-8)

- Reviewing from Dec. 2025 to Jan. 2026 Maritime News

➤ IMO Meeting Highlights(p6-28)

- IMO Assembly 34th session (A 34) (p9-18)
- IMO Council 135, 136th session (C 135, 136) (p19-26)

SCOPE Project targets domestic ferry safety gaps in South East Asia



On Dec. 10 to 11th, 2025, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) held a two-day workshop in held in Bali, Indonesia, under the IMO-EU-ASEAN Sustainable Connectivity Package (SCOPE) Ship Safety Project. The project aims to improve domestic ferry safety gaps in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, while enhancing regional connectivity and sustainability. Maritime administration representatives and experts from participating countries jointly discussed prioritizing risk control options (RCOs).

There are 4 identified critical barriers to implementing prioritized risk control options that need to be addressed, including:

- 1. complex legislative processes;**
- 2. limited resources for enforcement and technology adoption;**
- 3. deep-rooted stakeholder perceptions; and**
- 4. long delays to develop new policies and training.**

The three-year SCOPE Project, launched in January 2025 and funded by the European Union (EU), supports the implementation of international regulatory frameworks, the development of technical solutions, and the strengthening of stakeholder capacity. To ensure it builds a strong foundation for ship safety, including the IMO Model *Regulations on Domestic Ferry Safety* (Res. [MSC.518\(105\)](#)), providing a comprehensive framework for national improvements. (Find more information on domestic ferry safety [here](#).) • [IMO-EU-ASEAN Sustainable Connectivity Package \(SCOPE\) Ship Safety Project](#)

IMO two international treaties to protect the ocean reach 100 accessions



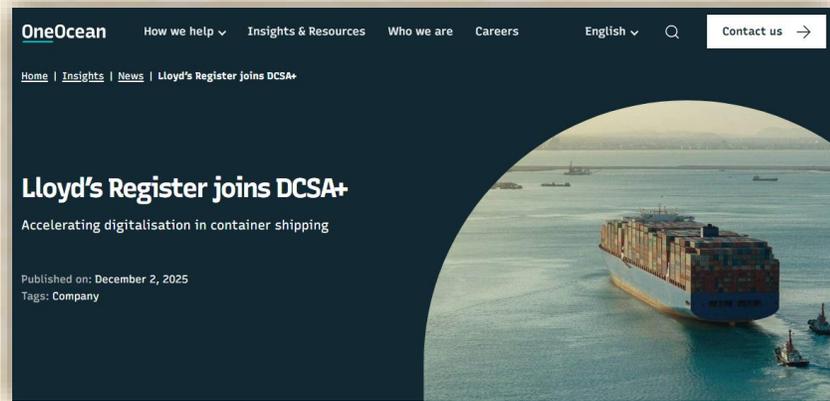
IMO recently announced that the two conventions relating to the marine environment protection— [the Ballast Water Management Convention \(BWM Convention\)](#) and [the Anti-Fouling Systems Convention \(AFS Convention\)](#) —have reached the milestone of 100 ratifications.

The Solomon Islands deposited its instrument of accession on 27 November, becoming the 100th State Party to the BWM Convention. On the other hand, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea also had deposited its instruments of accession for both the BWM Convention and the AFS Convention, becoming the 100th State Party to the AFS Convention and bringing the number of Parties to the BWM Convention to 101.

With the recent ratifications taking effect, the mandatory requirements for ballast water management now apply to 93.73% of the world's merchant fleet by gross tonnage, while the requirements relating to ship anti-fouling systems cover 95.77% of global merchant shipping gross tonnage.

- The Ballast Water Management Convention (BWM Convention) was adopted in 2004 and entered into force in 2017, preventing the spread of harmful aquatic organisms to new environments via ships' ballast water (seawater taken on board for ship stability). Regulations require ships to manage their ballast water and sediments through ship-specific plans that include operational practices, record-keeping, and certification, to achieve a mandatory discharge standard.
- The Anti-Fouling Systems Convention (AFS Convention) was adopted in 2001 and has been in force since 2008, prohibiting the use of anti-fouling paints that contain certain harmful substances (used on ships to prevent organisms such as algae and molluscs from attaching themselves to the hull), which can harm marine life and ecosystems.

Lloyd's Register joins DCSA+



Source: One Ocean.

Lloyd's Register (LR) has recently joined the Digital Container Shipping Association (DCSA)'s DCSA+ partnership programme. The partnership provides a structured collaboration platform that enables partners to connect with industry peers and directly contribute to the development of practical, scalable digital solutions for the container shipping ecosystem. With LR joining the initiative—bringing together global carriers, shippers, terminals, freight forwarders, and technology providers—collaboration in the maritime industry around open digital standards is underway.

As an official partner, LR will first participate in developing the Operational Vessel Schedules (OVS) standard, an effort to enhance visibility and coordination across the vessel scheduling value chain. DCSA+ expands DCSA's scope of work beyond carriers to the wider maritime ecosystem, enabling technology providers and other partners to actively shape the standards that power global trade.

World's largest registries move forward with International Flag-State Association (IFA)



Source: safety4sea.com.

The International Flag-State Association (IFA) had gathered the world's three largest ship registries—Liberia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Panama. It represents the first alliance established with flag States as its core, and since 2021, these three major registries have held regular meetings.

As the first alliance of flag states, IFA, formed on the basis of ship registries, was established to provide its members with a global platform for more targeted and effective communication and cooperation to address shared global challenges. Through this mechanism, flag States are better positioned to enhance their capabilities in promoting international maritime safety and security, protecting the marine environment, safeguarding seafarers' welfare, and supporting the development and effective implementation of international regulatory requirements.

For example, in 2024, IFA members enhanced the functionality of the Registry Information Sharing Compact (RISC) by integrating online databases to improve information-exchange channels.

Although information sharing has always been IFA's top priority, one of its next steps is to apply to the IMO for consultative status, enabling it to take a more proactive role in international policy development and to bring flag State operational experience and perspectives into global regulatory discussions. Bringing together the world's most influential flag States, IFA represents fleets accounting for over 40% of global gross tonnage, and is committed to advancing maritime safety and security, environmental protection, and seafarers' welfare, while promoting practical, workable, and globally harmonized regulatory frameworks. As shipping is inherently a global industry, maritime regulations must retain their international and uniform character.

- The Registry Information Sharing Compact (RISC) is an information-sharing arrangement among flag registries. The RISC database serves as an online consultation tool for subscribing flag States, enabling more convenient access to information on vessels of concern that may be evading regulatory requirements or engaging in suspicious activities.



Source: Nautical Voice.

AI Revolutionizes Berthing Operations at Qingdao Port

Qingdao Port in Shandong Province, China—an affiliate of Shandong Port Group—is one of the world’s busiest maritime hubs. Recently, the port showcased its newly developed AI-driven berth planning agent, which can analyze multiple variables in real time, including vessel schedules, tidal data, and operational constraints. During berthing operations, the process is managed by the AI system, eliminating the need for ad hoc recalculations and paper-based procedures, thereby significantly streamlining workflows. The system can generate an optimal berth allocation plan within seconds and transmit synchronized instructions directly to port equipment and terminal operating systems.

According to the Director of the Safety, Environmental Protection, and Technology Department at Qingdao Port, berth allocation has long been one of the most labour-intensive aspects of port operations. Since the AI agent was implemented last year, the system has continued to evolve by learning from real-world operational scenarios, refining its decision-making capabilities with each additional vessel it handles.

Enhancing Safety and Efficiency Through AI Technologies

Qingdao Port is one of China’s first national pilot testbeds for AI applications in transportation. It has taken the lead in addressing common industry challenges, including congestion, safety risks, and increasingly complex cargo flows. In the Dagang Port Area, where operations involve general cargo and dry bulk, safety remains the top operational priority. Port surveillance cameras have now been equipped with an AI model that includes 208 predefined rules covering key port regulations and common standards. The system can identify safety violations in real time; once a breach is detected, it immediately captures relevant footage and triggers an alert.

Automation has also transformed bulk cargo handling processes. Before conveyor belts are started, the AI system automatically reviews full-process video feeds to accurately detect foreign objects, achieving a reported detection rate of up to 90% with a very low false-alarm rate. In addition, stacker-reclaimers equipped with integrated camera and radar technologies enable precise distance measurement and collision avoidance, supporting smarter and safer material handling. Officials have indicated that the overall level of automation has reached approximately 90%. The Director of the safety, environmental protection, and technology department at Qingdao Port emphasized that the port has established 187 data standards and integrated more than 20 data models and application systems, delivering over 1,000 data services to support port-wide operations. (Source: [Nautical Voice](#), article by Yukta Sharma, 8 January 2026.)

Xeneta: 2026 could mark the large-scale return to the Red Sea (1/2)



According to Emily Stausbøll, Senior Shipping Analyst at the Norwegian maritime analytics platform Xeneta, there are indications that container vessels may return to Red Sea routes in 2026, following a year marked by instability in the region, including pirate attacks and ongoing geopolitical tensions. As shipping heavyweight CMA CGM announced that parts of its services will resume transits via the Suez Canal, market expectations have been rising that container carriers could return to the Red Sea in greater numbers in 2026. However, Xeneta’s analysis also highlights that restoring “normality” to the Red Sea region remains a long way off. This will not be an overnight shift but rather a gradual, challenging process. Shippers are therefore advised to remain realistic and closely monitor market developments.

FAR EAST TO MEDITERRANEAN					
	Announced transit time	Actual transit time	Schedule Reliability	Spot freight rates	Long-term freight rates
1 Oct 2023	33 days (spread 28-39)	34 days (spread 28-39)	45.31%	USD 1714 per FEU	USD 1970 per FEU
23 Dec 2025	46 days (spread 39-52)	49 days (spread 41-55)	28.80%	USD 4139 per FEU	USD 3049 per FEU
Change	+13 days	+15 days	-16.5pp	+141.5%	+54.52%

FAR EAST TO NORTH EUROPE					
	Announced transit time	Actual transit time	Schedule Reliability	Spot freight rates	Long-term freight rates
1 Oct 2023	38 days (spread 34-43)	40 days (spread 35-44)	48.81%	USD 1066 per FEU	USD 1278 per FEU
23 Dec 2025	46 days (spread 41-50)	52 days (spread 44-59)	27.5%	USD 2586 per FEU	USD 2182 per FEU
Change	+8 days	+12 days	-21.3pp	+142.61%	+70.7%

The number of transit times and freight rates changes between October 2023 (pre-Red Sea crisis) and December 2025 (currently) are clearly illustrated in the chart on the left, highlighting the “cost” of today’s shipping conditions compared with two years ago: cargo now takes significantly longer—around two additional weeks—to arrive, the likelihood of on-time delivery has dropped to below 30%, and transportation costs have surged, with spot freight rates more than doubling. This also explains why shippers are closely watching whether a return to Red Sea routes will be possible in 2026.

Source: Xeneta ; SAFETY4SEA.

Comparing “Far East to Mediterranean” and “Far East to North Europe” two main shipping routes, from Oct. 2023 to Dec. 2025.

Xeneta: 2026 could mark the large-scale return to the Red Sea (2/2)

◆ Five Key Considerations for Shippers



- 1. Carrier return strategies vary—actions will not be synchronized across the market.** CMA CGM has already announced that certain services will resume Red Sea transits, while other carriers, such as Maersk—despite conducting trial passages—have not formally declared a large-scale return. This lack of alignment means the market is likely to operate in a “hybrid mode” for some time. Shippers should therefore assess each carrier individually, taking into account differing risk appetites and service network arrangements.
- 2. Positive signals notwithstanding, a full return to pre-crisis transit levels remains a long way off.** Best timing: Analysts suggest the prime window for carriers to adjust routing would be after the Lunar New Year in 2026 (mid-February). Leveraging the traditional post-holiday slack season to reconfigure networks can help minimize disruption across supply chains.
- 3. Potential knock-on effects from a Red Sea return.** A gradual, phased resumption could reduce the risk of port congestion. However, if one or two major carriers commit to a full return, others may face significant pressure to follow suit. During the transition period, short-term disruption may occur, including schedule instability, changes to berth planning, and operational bottlenecks at key ports.
- 4. Freight rates and supply–demand dynamics.** Reopening the Red Sea corridor would substantially shorten voyage distances, effectively releasing additional available capacity into the market almost immediately. With 2026 already expected to see significant newbuilding deliveries and growing overcapacity pressure, the additional capacity unlocked by a Red Sea return could trigger a sharp decline in freight rates. While this would generally benefit shippers, it may challenge carriers’ commercial stability. Cargo owners should closely monitor transit-time reliability and freight-rate trends over the coming weeks and months to anticipate schedule shifts early and mitigate supply chain disruption risks.
- 5. Contractual terms on surcharges must be clearly defined.** If large-scale Red Sea transits resume, shippers should ensure that contracts explicitly address the reduction or removal of “Red Sea surcharges.” It is advisable to set clear triggers—for example, specifying that surcharges are automatically withdrawn once a defined percentage of services or vessels resume Red Sea routing—so that shippers are not required to continue paying elevated fees after conditions normalize.

A photograph of a meeting in progress at the International Maritime Organization. The room features wood-paneled walls and a large, ornate IMO emblem on the wall behind the participants. Several individuals are seated at a long table with microphones and laptops. A semi-transparent blue box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text.

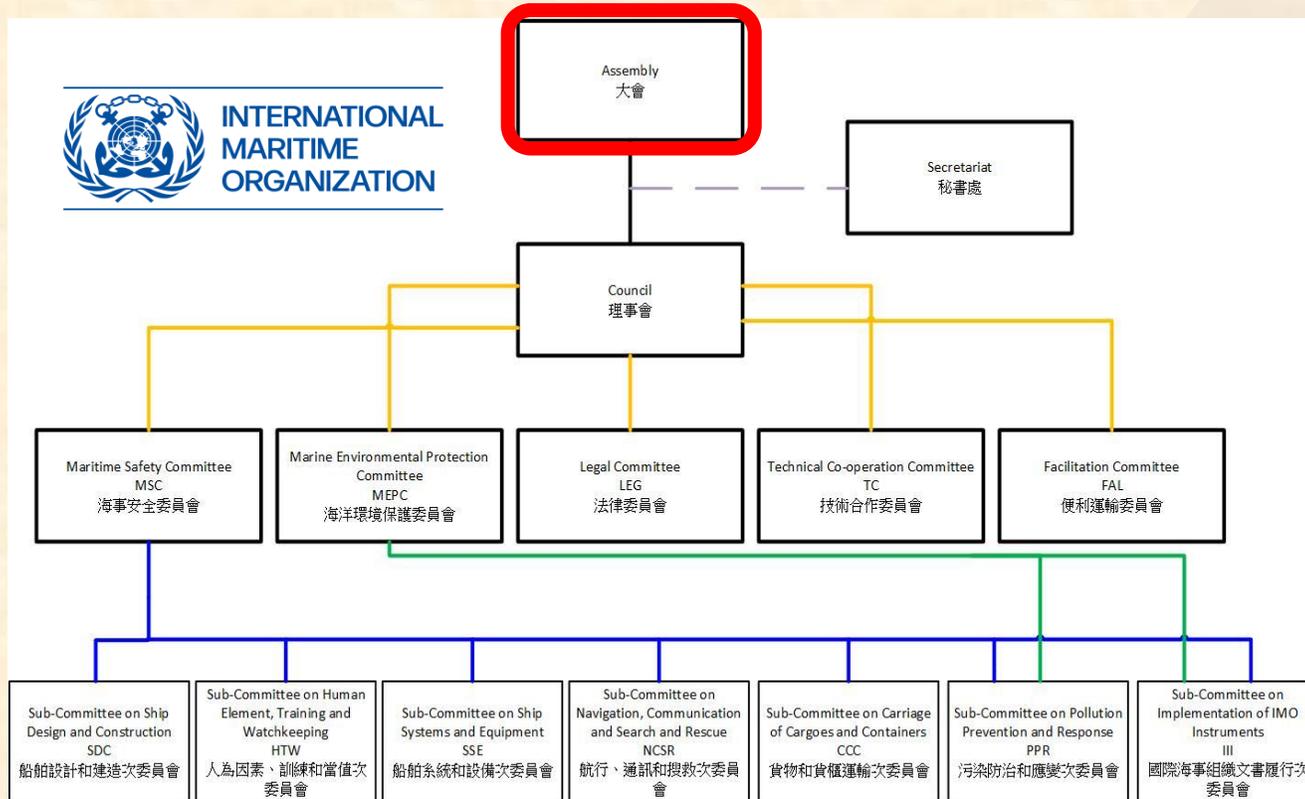
International Maritime Organization

Assembly 34th session (A 34)

24th November – 3rd December 2025

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Organization Structure of IMO



Source: Made by NKUST-CIMCS.

Assembly (A)

The Assembly, the IMO's highest decision-making body, is responsible for approving the work programme and budget, determining financial arrangements, and electing the IMO Council.

The Assembly consists of all IMO Member States and meets once every two years.



Source: IMO.

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

A 34 Agenda-1

Item No.	Agenda	Item No.	Agenda
1	Adoption of the agenda	8	Strategy, planning and reform (a) Strategy and planning (b) Reform (c) Internal Oversight, Ethics and Joint Inspection Unit
2	Rules of Procedure of the Assembly	9	IMO Member State Audit Scheme
3	Election of the President and the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly	10	Consolidated text of the IMO Convention
4	Application of Article 61 of the IMO Convention – Report of the Council to the Assembly on any requests by Members for waiver	11	Enhancement of multilingualism
5	Consideration of the report of the Committee	12	Consideration of the reports and recommendations of the Maritime Safety Committee
6	Establishment of committees of the Assembly: (a) Establishment of the Credentials Committee (b) Establishment of other committees, as necessary	13	Consideration of the reports and recommendations of the Legal Committee
7	Consideration of the reports of the committees of the Assembly: (a) Report of the Credentials Committee (b) Reports of other committees	14	Consideration of the reports and recommendations of the Marine Environment Protection Committee

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

A 34 Agenda-2

Item No.	Agenda	Item No.	Agenda
15	Consideration of the reports and recommendations of the Technical Cooperation Committee	21	External relations: (a) Relations with the United Nations and the specialized agencies (b) Relations with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (c) International Days established by IMO (d) IMO Awards
16	Consideration of the reports and recommendations of the Facilitation Committee	22	Report on the status of conventions
17	Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, 1972 and the 1996 Protocol thereto: report on the performance of Secretariat functions and other duties	23	Election of Members of the Council, as provided for in Articles 16 and 17 of the IMO Convention
18	Resource management: (a) Report on Member State contributions (b) Financial reports (c) Results-based budget for the 2026-2027 biennium	24	Election of Members of the IMO Staff Pension Committee
19	IMO Number Scheme	25	Date and place of the thirty-fifth regular session of the Assembly
20	Global maritime training institutions: (a) Report on the World Maritime University (b) Report on the IMO International Maritime Law Institute	26	Supplementary agenda items, if any

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Capacity Development Strategy

Agenda Item 8

- A 34 had adopted a new strategy, the IMO Capacity Development Strategy, to strengthen Member States to comply with the IMO rules, by expanding capacity-development support. The Strategies were approved earlier by the Technical Cooperation Committee (TC 75), including:
 1. Improve the effective implementation of IMO instruments
 2. Expand the suite of capacity-development offerings
 3. Enhance international and regional cooperation and partnerships
 4. Improve effective management, coordination, and delivery of capacity development and technical cooperation
 5. Secure and mobilize sustainable funding and resourcing

The IMO Capacity Development Strategy establishes a streamlined and consistent support architecture to assist all Member States—particularly Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs)—in effectively implementing IMO instruments by strengthening national maritime policies and strategies. This approach aims to foster economic growth while simultaneously protecting the marine environment and promoting sustainable shipping.

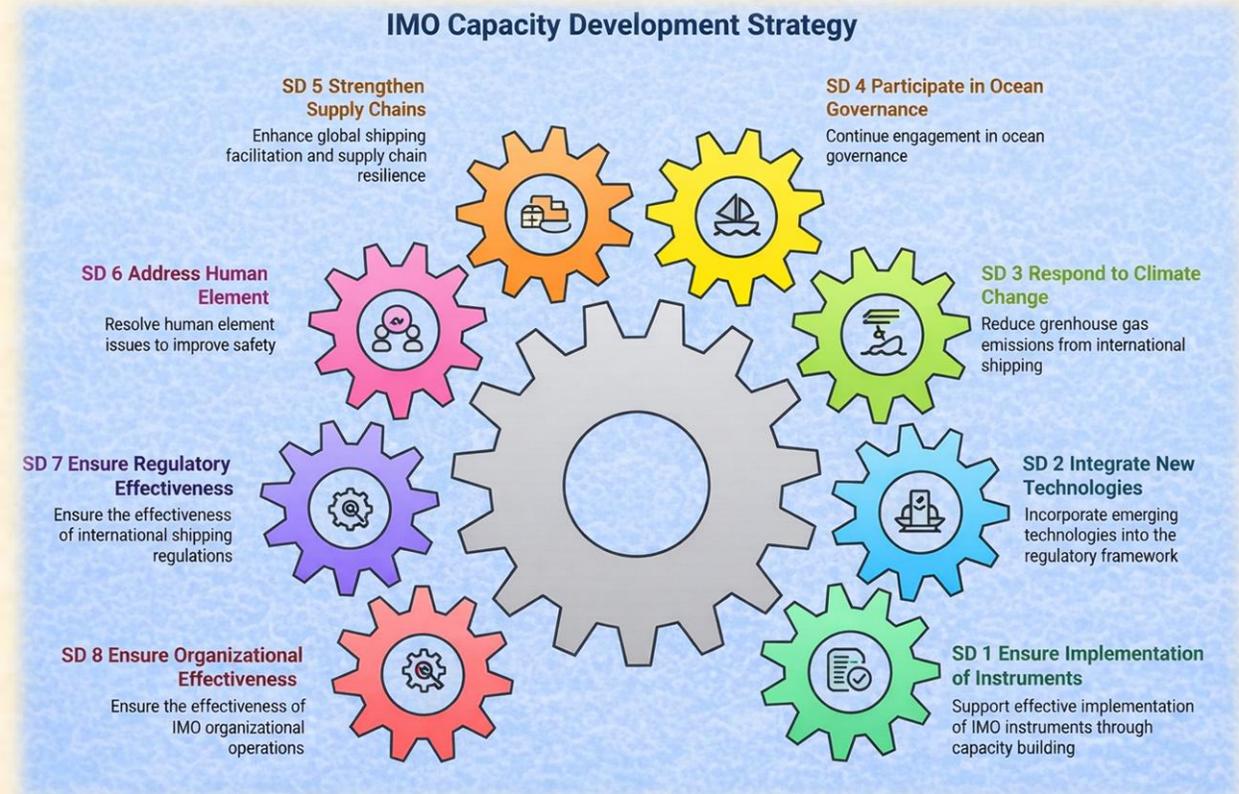
The “capacity building” focuses on external inputs and addressing specific gaps through an “engineering-based” approach. “Capacity Development” emphasizes the continuous evolution of endogenous institutional and governance capabilities, with a core focus on sustainability and autonomous implementation. In contrast to “Capacity Building,” which implies building new capabilities from scratch based on predefined designs, “Capacity Development” is recognized as a dynamic and flexible transformation process. It builds upon existing skills and knowledge and is driven by local actors to ensure long-term resilience.

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Revised Strategic Plan

Agenda Item 8

- The updated work plans and performance indicators for 2026-2027 of the IMO bodies were adopted through the revised strategic plan applicable for the six-year period of 2024-2029, which encompasses eight strategic directions as shown in the right figure.
- Additionally, the Assembly also adopted a strategic plan implementation approach for consistent application by all IMO bodies, aiming to strengthen the planning and reporting procedures to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation.



II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Election of members of the IMO Council

Agenda Item 3

- A new 40-member IMO Council for the 2026-2027 biennium was elected on Friday, 28th November at the 34th session Assembly. The newly elected Council members held the 136th meeting of the Council on December 3rd, immediately after the conclusion of the A 34 meeting.
- The 40 member countries of the council are composed of 10 category a member countries, 10 category b member countries and 10 category c member countries. The list of various types of member countries of the council elected in this election is as follows:
 - ✓ **Category (a) “States with the largest interest in providing international shipping services,” including:** China, Greece, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Norway, Panama, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America °
 - ✓ **Category (b) “States with the largest interest in international seaborne trade,” including:** Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, the Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Spain, Sweden, the United Arab Emirates
 - ✓ **Category (c) “States not elected under (a) or (b) above which have special interests in maritime transport or navigation, and whose election to the Council will ensure the representation of all major geographic areas of the world” including:** Bahamas, Belgium, Chile, Cyprus, Egypt, Finland, Indonesia, Jamaica, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, and Türkiye.

Recommendation for A 34

1. In accordance with Assembly resolution A.1206(34), *Procedures for Port State Control, 2025*, adopted at this session, a new Appendix 20 has been introduced to clearly define the respective roles and responsibilities of Port State Control Officers (PSCOs) and Duly Authorized Officers (DAOs) in relation to security matters. This aims to prevent any ambiguity of authority when port State control activities involve ship security information. Given that the current port State control (PSC) regime in our country is primarily based on standard operating procedures and training programmes, it is recommended that the competent authority review and revise existing PSC operational guidelines and training materials in line with the above resolution. In particular, the scope of inspection and enforcement boundaries when implementing *the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code* should be clearly delineated to reduce enforcement-related risks and maintain consistency and enforcement credibility under the Tokyo Memorandum of Understanding (Tokyo MoU) framework.

Recommendation for A 34

2. In response to Assembly resolution A.1207(34), which amends the survey guidelines under *the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC)*, the resolution has formally incorporated survey items related to the *Code of Safety for Ships Carrying Industrial Personnel (IP Code)*. It has concurrently adjusted the principles governing the application of Remote Surveys. In view of the continued increase in the number of offshore wind operation vessels in our country and the differences in their operational profiles compared with conventional ships, the competent authority should assess the need to explicitly incorporate IP Code survey requirements into the *Regulations for Inspections of Vessels* or the supervisory and audit requirements applicable to delegated recognized organizations.

Regarding Remote Surveys, it is also recommended that the latest IMO guidance be fully implemented, including the principle that Remote Surveys shall not be applied to the same survey item for two consecutive years, to ensure survey quality and the effectiveness of oversight and control.

Recommendation for A 34

3. In response to Assembly resolution A.1204(34), which adopts *Code on Alerts and Indicators, 2025*, and Assembly resolution A.1208(34), which adopts the *2025 Non-exhaustive list of obligations under instruments relevant to the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code)*, the Assembly has updated the functional positioning of alert systems as well as the scope of auditable obligations applicable to Member States. These updates cover matters including exhaust gas cleaning systems (EGCS), ballast water management systems (BWMS), the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), and the management of firms engaged in thickness measurement of hull structures.

Given that the relevant provisions in our current *Regulations on Equipment of Ships* adopt a decentralized approach to regulating related equipment, it is recommended that the authority review the need to supplement the legal status of alert and indicator functions. Furthermore, it is advisable to update the self-assessment checklists for the voluntary audit under the III Code simultaneously.

These measures will strengthen the verifiability of institutional implementation and ensure that our national maritime regulatory regime remains consistent with the international audit framework.



International Maritime Organization

**Council 135th & 136th session (C 135 & C 136)
19-21th November & 3rd December 2025**

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Organization Structure of IMO

Council (C)



Source: Made by NKUST-CIMCS.

The Council is the executive body of the IMO, it's under the Assembly, and is responsible for supervising the work of the Organization. The Council is formed by the Representatives of 40 Member States, elected by the Assembly for two-year terms.

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

C 135 Agenda

Item No.	Agenda	Item No.	Agenda
1	Adoption of the agenda	8	Report of the Maritime Safety Committee
2	Report of the Secretary-General on credentials	9	Report of the Extraordinary Session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee
3	IMO International Maritime Law Institute	10	Report of the Consultative Meeting of Contracting Parties to the London Convention 1972 and the Meeting of Contracting Parties to the 1996 Protocol to the London Protocol
4	Resource management: (a) Human resources matters (b) Financial reports (c) Report on Member State contributions (d) Consideration of requests by Members, if any, for waiver of the application of Article 61 of the IMO Convention (e) Results-based budget for 2026-2027	11	External relations: (a) Relations with the United Nations and the specialized agencies (b) Relations with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (c) International Days established by IMO (d) IMO Awards
5	Enhancement of multilingualism	12	Report on the status of conventions
6	IMO Number Scheme	13	Items for inclusion in the agenda for the next session of the Council (C 136)
7	IMO International Maritime Law Institute	14	Supplementary agenda items, if any

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Integrated IMO Number Scheme

C 135 Agenda Item 6

- C 135 approved the integration of the regulatory framework for the IMO ship identification number scheme, the IMO unique company and registered owner identification number scheme, and tonnage assessment calculation.
- C 135 had submitted the draft amendment to A 34 for approval, making the two systems consolidated into a single integrated system to enhance overall operational efficiency and consistency of the system.

Under the IMO Number Scheme, each ship is assigned a permanent and unique seven-digit IMO number. This number remains unchanged throughout the ship's entire life cycle and is not affected by changes in the ship's name, ownership, or flag. The purpose is to enhance maritime safety and help prevent maritime fraud.

Under the IMO Unique Company and Registered Owner Identification Number Scheme, permanent and unique IMO numbers are assigned to shipowners and operating companies and are used across various certificates and compliance regimes, so as to clearly identify the entity responsible for a ship's operation or ownership.

2026/1/28

Report on the Status of Conventions

C 135 Agenda Item 12

The Council noted that there are several IMO Conventions and instruments that have not yet reached the conditions to take into force, including:

1. *The 2021 Amendment to the Convention on the International Maritime Organization;*
2. *The 2010 Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances (the 2010 HNS Protocol);*
3. *The 2012 Cape Town Agreement (2012 CTA).*

Other amendments to the IMO instruments that require explicit acceptance include:

1. *The 2008 Convention on the International Maritime Satellite Organization;*
2. *The 2009 Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter and the 1996 London Protocol (2009 London Protocol);*
3. *The 2013 amendments to the London Protocol.*

The Council appreciated the efforts made by the Member States and the Secretariat to bring them into force at the earliest opportunity.



II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

C 136 Agenda

Item No.	Agenda
1	Adoption of the agenda
2	Election of the Chair and of the Vice-Chair
3	Place, date and duration of the next session of the Council (C 137) and items for inclusion in the provisional agendas for the next two sessions of the Council (C 137 and C 138)
4	Supplementary agenda items, if any

Election of the Chair and of the Vice-Chair

C 136 Agenda Item 2

- At the IMO Assembly 34th session, the new IMO Council 40 members had been elected, and the newly elected members held the 136th session right away on 3rd December.
- The Council had elected Mr. Victor Jiménez (Spain) as its Chair, and Mrs. Amani Fethallah (Morocco) as Vice-Chair.



Photo by IMO on Flickr



Photo by IMO on Flickr

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Recommendation for C 135 、 C 136

1. Regarding the integrated IMO ship identification number scheme approved during the C 135 session, the core objective is to consolidate the ship identification number with the Company and Registered Owner Identification Number into a unified regulatory framework. This measure aims to enhance traceability and mitigate risks associated with maritime fraud. It is recommended that the competent authority review the design of identification fields within the current ship registration and inspection databases. Furthermore, an assessment should be conducted to determine if adjustments to the subsidiary regulations of *the Law of Ships* are necessary. Ensuring that the identification formats for ships, shipowners, and ship operators align with the new IMO system is crucial to preventing identification discrepancies or data inconsistencies during future Port State Control (PSC) inspections.
2. During the C 135 session, the Council reviewed the status of several conventions and protocols not yet in force, paying particular attention to the progress towards the entry into force of *the Cape Town Agreement (CTA)* and *the HNS Protocol*, and urged accelerated implementation. Given the significant scale of our nation's distant-water fisheries and the sustained international attention to fishing vessel safety, it is advisable for the competent authority to proactively initiate an analysis to domesticate the CTA and adjust the fishing vessel inspection regime. This proactive approach will mitigate compliance pressure resulting from intensified Port State Control inspections following the Agreement's entry into force, thereby protecting the industry from sudden operational risks.

As the CTA involves fishing vessel safety and inspection systems—falling under the scope of maritime safety regulation—while significantly impacting the distant-water fishing industry, it is recommended that the Maritime and Port Bureau (MPB) and the Fisheries Agency adopt an inter-agency collaborative approach to address these challenges.

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Recommendation for C 135 · C 136

3. The C 136 meeting IMO Council had concluded the election of its Chair and Vice-Chair, and had confirmed the budget for the 2026-2027 biennium and governance directions for the upcoming two years, while deferring the agenda items regarding "multilingualism" and resource allocation to subsequent sessions.

Our authority should continue to follow the IMO policy directions of the newly elected Council regarding Rules of Procedure, language policies, and financial allocation. This will enable a more accurate assessment of how procedural adjustments and resource distribution may impact our nation's rights and interests when participating in Technical Committees or Assembly deliberations.

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Next Council Meeting

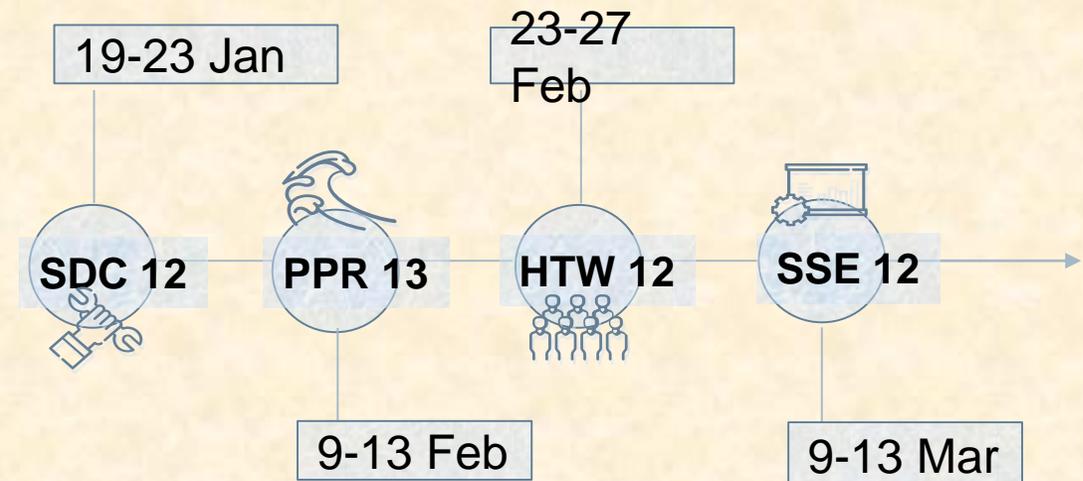
C 137 may be held from July 6th to 10th, 2026.



Source: IMO

Meeting schedules for IMO

- SDC 12 meeting from January 19th to 23rd 2026.
- PPR 13 meeting from February 9th to 13th 2026.



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It's all for Jan. 2026

Thank you!

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Center for International Maritime Convention Studies

