

I. IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee, 2nd extraordinary session (MEPC/ES.2)

The Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) mainly deals with environmental issues within the purview of the IMO, including the control and prevention of ship-source pollution covered by the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ship (MARPOL convention), including oil, chemicals carried in bulk, sewage, garbage, and emissions from ships, including air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions. Other matters covered include ballast water management, anti-fouling systems, ship recycling, pollution preparedness and response, and identification of special areas and particularly sensitive sea areas (PSSA) ([Note 1](#)).

According to Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure of the MEPC: "*The Committee shall meet at least once a year in regular session and more frequently with the approval of the Council. The Committee may meet in an extraordinary session upon a request made in writing to the Secretary-General by at least 20 of its respective Members....*" The extraordinary mainly work towards consensus on the IMO Net Zero Framework (IMO NZF).

MEPC 2nd extraordinary session (ES.2) was held on 14 to 17 October 2025. This meeting will mainly focus on issues related to the IMO Net-Zero Framework. Key outcomes of the meeting are as follows:

1. Consideration and adoption of amendments to mandatory instruments

The amendment supports the implementation of the IMO Net-Zero Framework in order to accelerate the progress of the regulatory documents for global maritime decarbonization. The consolidated version of which was approved at both MEPC 82 and MEPC 83, including the following issues:

- (1) Mid-term GHG reduction measures;
- (2) Addition of the North-East Atlantic Ocean as NO_x, Sox, PM Emission Control Areas (ECAs);
- (3) Revised the NO_x regulations for marine diesel engines;
- (4) Consider the accessibility to the IMO Fuel Consumption Reporting (IMO DCS) database.

The main topic of discussion at the meeting was the "Mid-term Measures for GHG Emission Reduction". However, there were still significant differences among the delegations of various countries regarding whether to adopt such amendments, and ultimately, no consensus was reached. The key points of contention included:

- (1) the acceptance procedure (tacit vs. explicit);

- (2) whether the inclusion of a clause recognizing the IMO Net-Zero Framework as the sole global mid-term measure for international shipping.

Furthermore, several delegations expressed concerns over the potential impact of this measure on the shipping industry, particularly regarding the increase in costs, administrative burdens, and the possible financial pressure it might impose on some countries. After the discussion reached a deadlock, a representative proposed to postpone the review of the relevant issues for one year. After a vote, the majority of member states agreed to the proposal, and thus the adoption discussions of all the amendments to the MARPOL Convention Annex VI were postponed for one year.

2. Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships

The 20th session of the Intersessional Meeting of the Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships (ISWG-GHG) was held from October 20th to 24th, 2025. The meeting will discuss the following matters ([Note 2](#)):

- (1) Development of new and/or revision of existing guidelines, provisions, guidance, and other documents, as appropriate, for supporting the uniform and effective implementation of the IMO Net-Zero Framework**
 - 1.1 Developing fuel certification guidelines;
 - 1.2 Define the definition and/or Reward Mechanism for the implementation of the IMO Net-Zero Framework –Zero or Net Zero (ZNZs) definitions;
 - 1.3 IMO Net-Zero Fund ([Note 3](#));
 - 1.4 Developing the Fuel GHG Fuel Intensity (GFI) and its underlying mechanism;
 - 1.5 Considerations for the development of the GFI Registry.
- (2) Further consideration of the development of the IMO Life Cycle GHG Assessment (LCA) Framework;**
- (3) Finalization of the draft terms of reference for the Fifth IMO GHG Study.**

The meeting reached some preliminary consensus as follows:

- (1) Setting a working plan for developing the draft guidelines for mid-term emission measures;**

- (2) **Approved by the principal to establish a subsidiary body under MEPC, the ‘Sub-Committee on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships’ to deal with related technical and policy issues for the Net-Zero framework, which will mainly discuss the issues as shown in Table 1.**

Table 1: Subject issues the Sub-Committee on Reducing GHG Emissions from ships is scheduled to discuss.

No.	The subject for discussion
2.1	Further development for the IMO Net-Zero Framework, as well as the revision of the current guidelines and procedures related to its implementation.
2.2	Further development of measures for reducing GHG emissions in international shipping
2.3	The development of techniques and operational measures to enhance the IMO energy efficiency of international shipping
2.4	Review of the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy and development of the future IMO GHG Strategy
2.5	Assess the impact of GHG emission reduction measures on various countries
2.6	Further development of the LCA framework.
2.7	Development of a regulatory framework for Onboard Carbon Capture and Storage (OCCS), as well as the measurement and verification of non-CO2 GHG emissions.
2.8	Further assessment of the potential impacts of an increase in maritime transport costs on ‘food security’
2.9	Carrying out the IMO GHG future studies
2.10	The support actions relating to the capacity-building and transfer of technology for reducing GHG emissions in international shipping.

Note 1: A Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) is referred to as an area that has been generally recognized as an ecological, socio-economic, or scientific reason and which may be vulnerable to damage by international maritime activities, needs special protection through action by the IMO. The criteria for determining PSSAs and the criteria for the designation of special areas are not mutually exclusive. In many cases, a PSSA may be identified within a Special Area and vice versa.

Note 2: Referring to the IMO meeting document MEPC/ES.2/3.

Note 3: ZNZ refers to the 'zero or near-zero' fuel, technology, or energy sources. Generally, the GHG Fuel Intensity (GFI) of ZNZ does not exceed 19.0 gCO₂eq/MJ. Compared to the current average of 93.3 gCO₂eq/MJ, the reduction rate is 80%. Ships using ZNZ may be eligible for financial rewards from the IMO Net Zero Fund.

References:

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