



**INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION OF
THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND THE HIGH-LEVEL ACTION PLAN
(RESOLUTION A.1099(29))**

1. PURPOSE OF THE APPLICATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND HIGH-LEVEL ACTION PLAN

The document (hereafter referred to as the "DAP") was adopted by IMO's Assembly, at its twenty-ninth session in November 2015 (Resolution A.1099(29)), in order to provide a uniform basis for the application of the Strategic Plan and High-level Action Plan of the Organization by all its organs.

The purpose of this introduction is to highlight the key elements of the DAP. However, it does not cover all aspects of the DAP. It should therefore not be used as a substitute for Resolution A.1099(29) or for the relevant parts adopted by the various IMO organs on the organization and methods of their work, which should always be consulted as well.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DAP

Member States and the Secretariat share the overall responsibility for ensuring consistency and discipline in the IMO's strategic planning and reporting processes. The chairmen, vice-chairmen and secretaries of the Council, committees and sub-committees have specific responsibilities for the consistent and rigorous use of the DAP, as they go about implementing the agendas associated with the agreed Strategic Plan and High-Level Action Plan. Furthermore, they should always make sure that the DAP is read in conjunction with the Council's or committees' own guidelines on the organization and methods of their work, as appropriate.

3. IMO'S MISSION OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The **mission of IMO** is to promote safe, secure, environmentally sound, efficient and sustainable shipping through cooperation.

The **challenges** for IMO emanate from the general **trends and developments** in the shipping industry, which require continuous monitoring and analysis in order to ensure informed decision-making on the strategic directions of the Organization.

The **strategic directions** of IMO set out the general responses of the Organization to the challenges it faces and are designed to achieve its mission objectives.

The relevant tools for supporting the IMO's strategic planning process are adopted by the Assembly on a biennial basis, by way of three documents: the **Strategic Plan (SP)**, the **High-Level Action Plan (HLAP)**, and the **Results-Based Budget (RBB)**, including the Secretariat's Business Plan.

By adopting the HLAP and the RBB for the coming biennium, the Assembly expresses its satisfaction that there is a reasonable match between the two and, in particular, that the available resources (as specified in the RBB, including the budgetary allocation for the biennial programme of meetings) adequately support and justify the delivery of the planned activities and expected outputs specified in the HLAP. A simple depiction of IMO's strategic planning process is presented in Diagram 1.

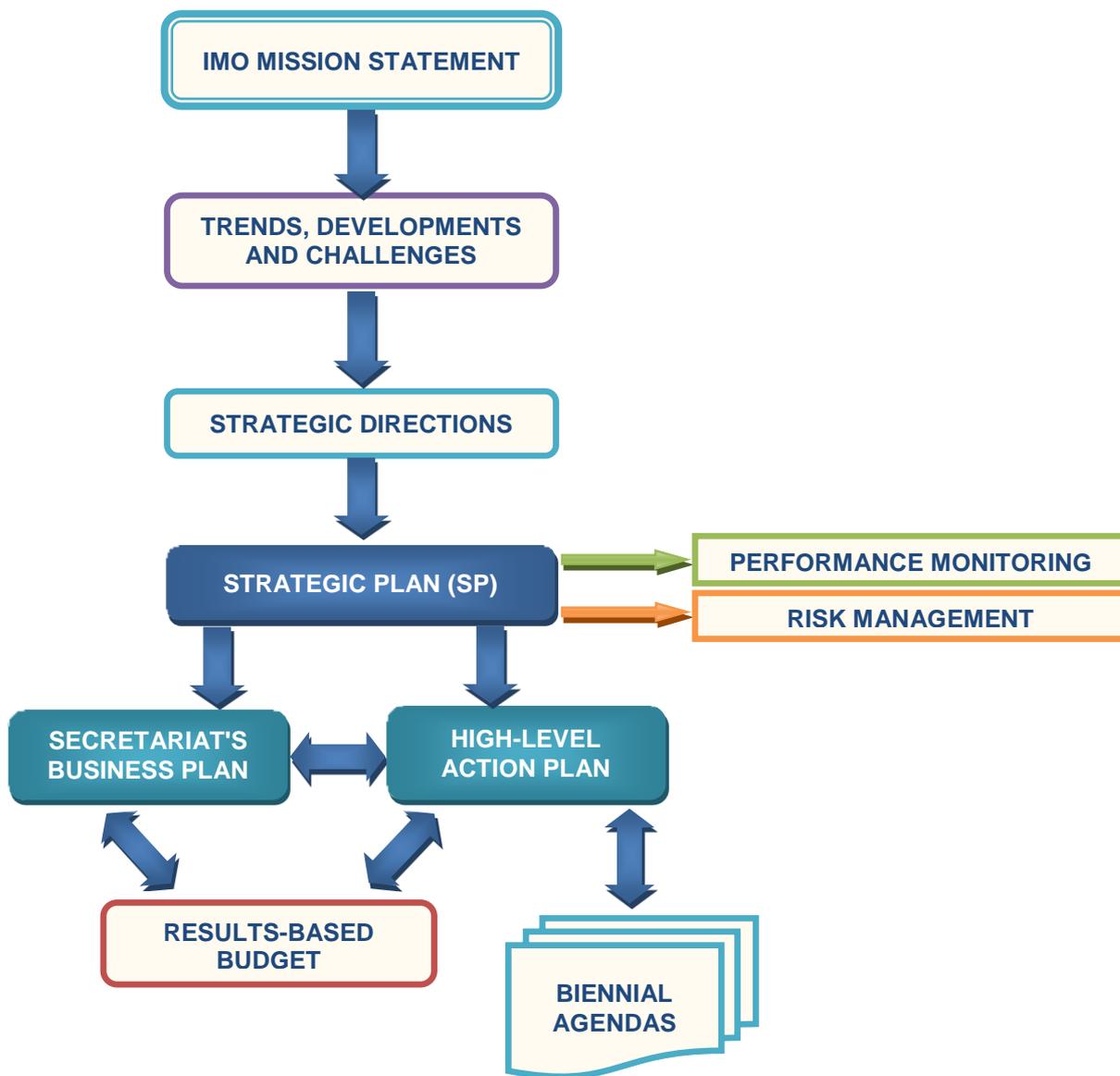
It is important to bear in mind the distinct functions of the SP, the HLAP and the RBB, namely:

- A. The **Strategic Plan (SP)** covers a six-year period and establishes:
 - 1. the outcome of the analysis of shipping trends and developments, and the consequential challenges; and
 - 2. the strategic directions for enabling IMO to achieve its mission objectives.
- B. The **High-level Action Plan (HLAP)** covers a biennium and sets out:
 - 1. the high-level actions necessary to achieve the strategic directions included in the SP; and
 - 2. the outputs to be delivered over the biennium, as a result of undertaking the high-level actions.

The HLAP provides the linkage between the Organization's strategic directions and its day-to-day work and, therefore, effectively constitutes the work programme of the IMO organs for a biennium and forms the basis of the associated biennial RBB, including the Secretariat's Business Plan.

C. The **Results-Based Budget (RBB)** covers a biennium and provides the financial resources for governance, direction and management, capacity building and technical cooperation, resource management, technical and legal work, programme of meetings, external relations and public information services, and general operating expenses.

DIAGRAM 1: OVERVIEW OF IMO'S STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



4. OUTPUTS

The outputs set out in the biennial High-level Action Plan should be delivered by the Organization during the biennium concerned.

Principles

A number of principles should be observed with respect to the outputs:

- ▶ outputs established in the biennial HLAP form the basis of the work of all IMO organs during the biennium concerned and underpin the RBB for that biennium; and
- ▶ biennial agendas should only contain items explicitly related to the established outputs that are included in the HLAP for the biennium concerned.

Submission of proposals for outputs

Submissions of proposals for the inclusion of outputs in the biennial HLAP must be made by a Government or intergovernmental organization - or where the proposal originates from a non-governmental organization be co-sponsored by a Government, and they should be submitted to the relevant committee(s). They should never be submitted to sub-committees.

In order to enable the relevant IMO organ to make an informed decision on the inclusion of a new output, the proposal should contain at a minimum all the information specified in the table below:

INFORMATION REQUIRED IN SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS FOR INCLUSION OF AN OUTPUT	
IMO's objectives	<i>Provide evidence whether and how the proposal (1) is within the scope of IMO's mission objectives; and (2) is strictly related to the scope of the SP and contributes to the implementation of the high-level actions established in the SP.</i>
Need	<i>Demonstrate and document (1) the need for an output in terms of the risks or hazards which are considered necessary to be addressed¹; and (2) the evidence to support the perceived need.</i>
Analysis of the issue	<i>Provide an analysis of the proposed measure, including an assessment of its practicability, feasibility and proportionality.</i>
Analysis of implications	<i>Provide an analysis of the implications of the proposal, addressing the cost to the maritime industry as well as the relevant legislative and administrative burdens (including the proposed method(s) of fulfilling any resulting administrative requirement).</i>
Benefits	<i>Provide evidence that the benefits vis-à-vis enhanced maritime safety, maritime security or protection of the marine environment expected to be derived from the inclusion of the new item justify the proposed action.</i>
Industry standards	<i>Provide information on whether adequate industry standards exist or are being developed and the intended relationship between such standards and the output.</i>
Intended output	<i>Specify the intended output in SMART terms (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) including the scope of application.</i>
Urgency	<i>Provide, with reference to the current Strategic Plan and High-level Action Plan, evidence on (1) the urgency of the output including any proposal to include the output on the biennial agenda and (2) the date that the output should be completed.</i>
Action required	<i>Specify the action required by the IMO organ.</i>

Decision on the inclusion of outputs

In deciding on the inclusion of outputs, the relevant IMO organ should give due consideration to the implications of doing so, in particular, it should determine the potential impact on:

- ▶ the timely delivery of the outputs already included in the HLAP;
- ▶ the workload of IMO organs;
- ▶ the personnel and budgetary resources available; and
- ▶ the potential adverse impact on IMO's ability to meet its objectives if the output is *not* included.

¹ If the output included the development of a new Convention or the amendment of an existing Convention then the principles contained within A.500(XII) and A.998(25) of the demonstration of a "compelling need" should be respected.

It is the responsibility of the Chairman of the IMO organ concerned to undertake a preliminary assessment of proposals for outputs. This should ascertain if the proposal complies with the relevant requirements for proposals for an output and, in particular, if the demonstrated urgency of the output requires its inclusion in the biennial agenda of the organ concerned.

On the basis of the Chairman's preliminary assessment, the IMO organ concerned conducts an assessment of the proposal against the established requirements to determine that:

- (1) the necessary information has been provided by the proponent(s) of the proposal; and
- (2) the proponent(s) have demonstrated the need for the proposal, and, in particular, why the output should be included in the agenda for the biennium and if a decision *not* to accept the proposal would pose a risk to IMO.

Based on its assessment the IMO organ may then decide, taking due account of the implications for the workload:

- ▶ not to accept the inclusion of the output due to the proposal not meeting one of the established requirements, including that the output is not within the scope of the current SP; or
- ▶ to accept the inclusion of the output in:
 - its agenda for the *current* biennium; or
 - its proposals for outputs for the HLAP for the *next* biennium.

Managing outputs in the biennial agenda of subsidiary bodies

The decision of the IMO organ concerned to include an output in the biennial agenda of one or more subsidiary bodies should include clear and detailed instructions for the work to be undertaken by the subsidiary bod(y)(ies) concerned, preferably by establishing the terms of reference under which such work should be undertaken.

When an output requires work by more than one subsidiary body, a coordinating subsidiary body should be designated and care should be taken to ensure that the coordinating subsidiary body can complete the work by the agreed date; this will require proper oversight that the work is effectively included in the biennial agendas of all subsidiary bodies concerned.

A flow chart depicting the stages in the management of proposals for outputs is presented in Diagram 2.

Planning and reporting of outputs

In order to optimize the effective planning and reporting of the outputs for a biennium, it is important to follow a consistent and transparent procedure to steer and manage the whole process, as depicted in Diagram 3. Member States should therefore make every effort to familiarise themselves with this procedure, which captures the basic planning and reporting responsibilities, and associated roles and tasks, of the various IMO policy-making, executive, legal and technical bodies that, together, make up the 'working structure' of the Organization.

Note:

The Assembly, which is open to all Member States, is the principal governing body, which meets biennially to decide on the general direction of the Organization and to agree on the budget and the programme of work. The Council is the elected executive body of 40 Member States which normally meets twice a year (once a year during Assembly year) and which monitors the status of the biennial budget and the progress of work by the legal and technical bodies, i.e. the Legal, Facilitation, Technical Cooperation, Maritime Safety and Marine Environment Protection Committees, with the latter two – the MSC and the MEPC – acting as the 'parent bodies' of specialist sub-committees. The Secretariat, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, provides the necessary services to facilitate the work of the Organization.

DIAGRAM 2: MANAGEMENT OF PROPOSALS FOR OUTPUTS

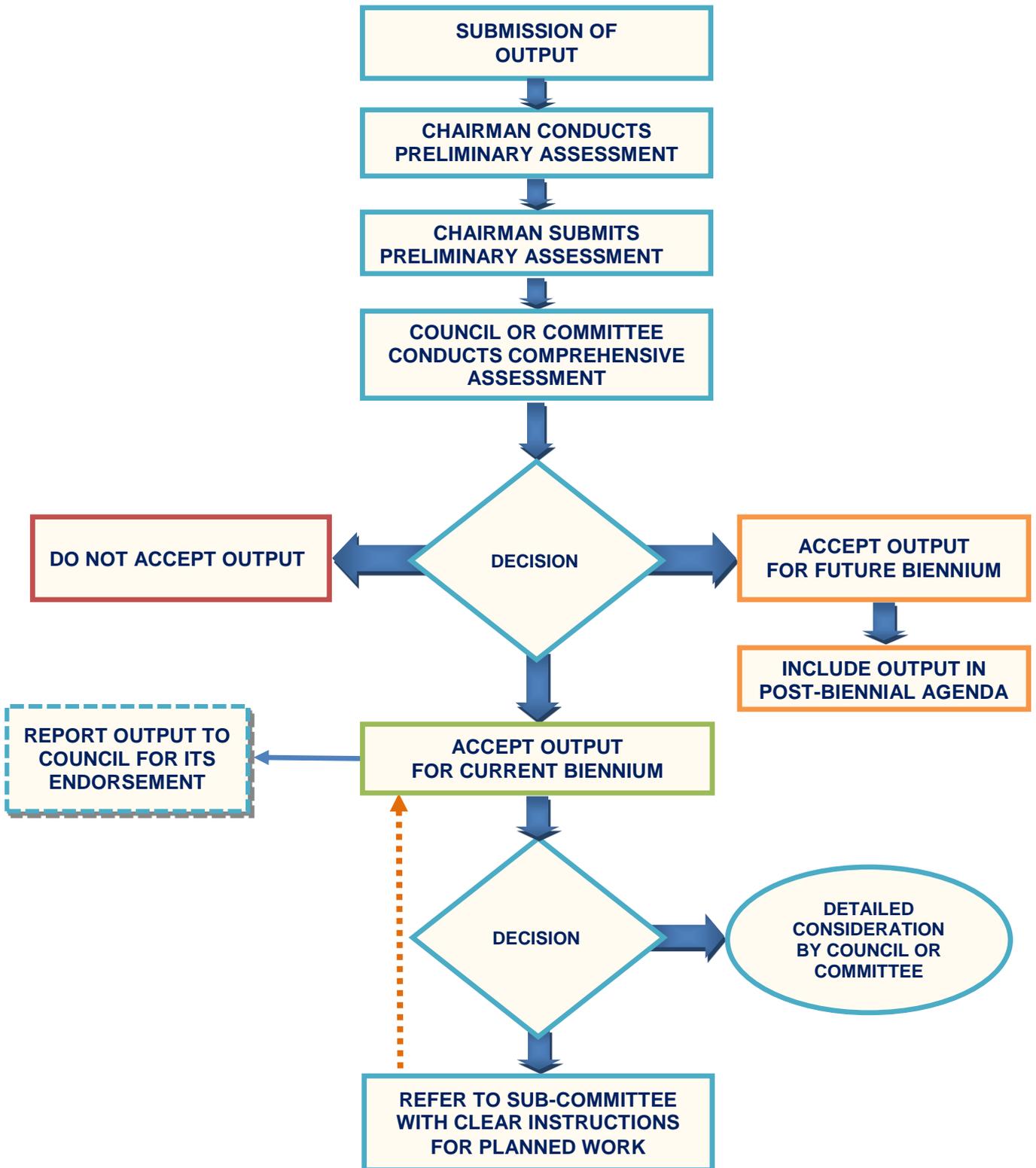
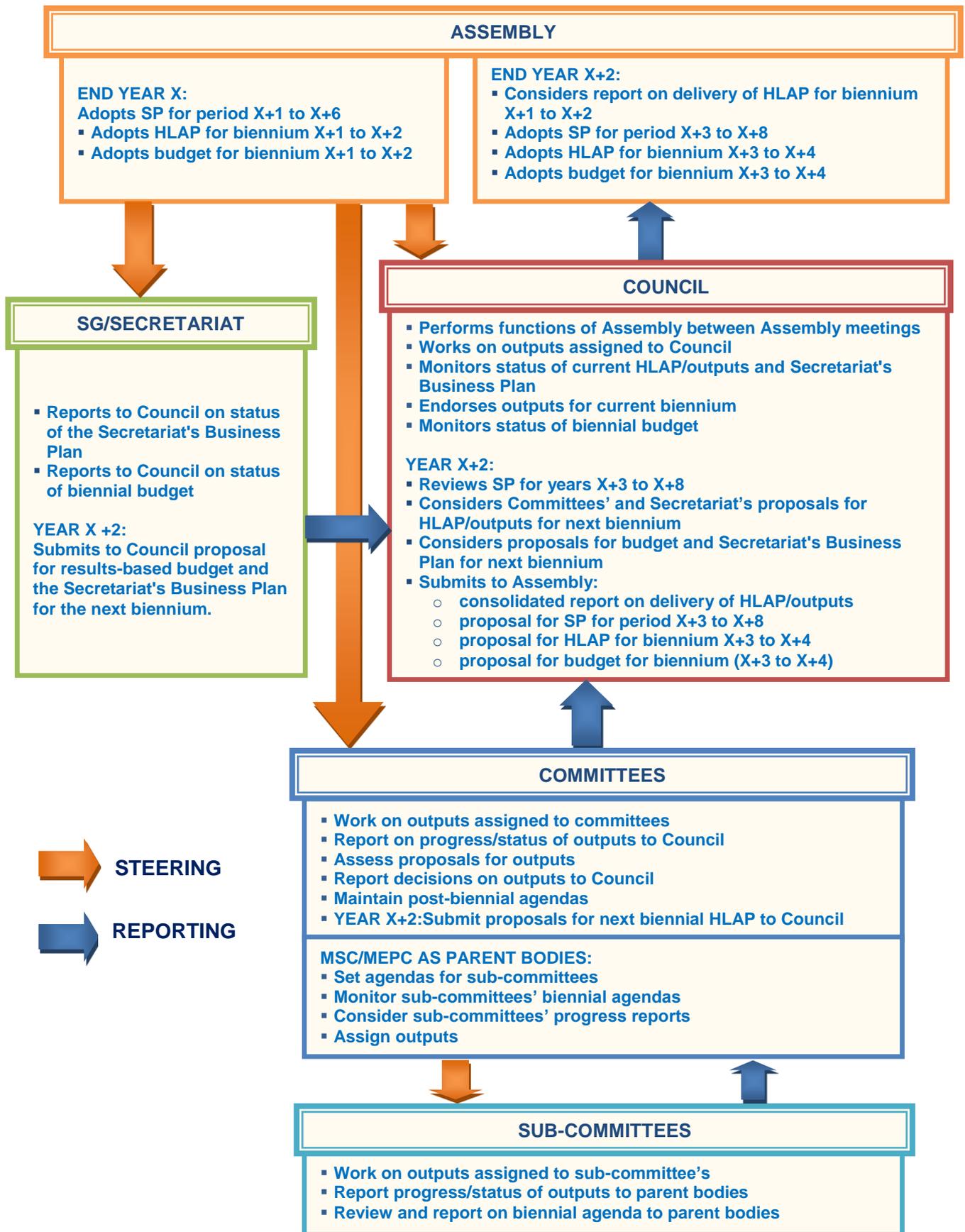


DIAGRAM 3: PLANNING AND REPORTING OF OUTPUTS²



² A reference to "Year X" means a year where the Assembly at its regular session adopts the SP, HLAP and RBB. A biennium therefore covers "Year X+1 and X+2".

IMO, Executive Office of the Secretary-General, January 2016