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Circular Letter No.4297  
29 May 2020

To: All IMO Members  
Intergovernmental organizations  
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Informal preliminary discussion session (virtual meeting) on short-term measures for reduction of GHG emissions from ships**

## Background

1 As a result of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, ISWG-GHG 7 and MEPC 75 were postponed and concrete rescheduling of these meetings has not been concluded.

2 Even under these extraordinary circumstances, IMO remains committed to implement the *Initial IMO Strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships* (resolution MEPC.304(72)) and its *Programme of follow-up actions up to 2023*.

## Purpose of the informal preliminary discussion session

3 In order to keep the momentum on the implementation of the IMO Initial Strategy going and ahead of future deliberations at ISWG-GHG 7 and MEPC 75, the Secretary-General, after consultation with the Chair and the Vice-Chair of MEPC as well as the Chair of ISWG-GHG, proposes to hold an informal preliminary discussion session (hereinafter the "virtual meeting") on short-term measures for reduction of GHG emissions from ships.

4 The virtual meeting is planned to take place from 6 to 10 July 2020 and aims to enable interested Member States and international organizations to exchange views. In order to structure the discussion, it is suggested that the exchange of views be limited to documents submitted under agenda item 2 on *Further consideration of concrete proposals to improve the operational energy efficiency of existing ships, with a view to developing draft amendments to chapter 4 of MARPOL Annex VI and associated guidelines, as appropriate* (see document ISWG-GHG 7/1).

5 Participants are also expected to note recent developments, including progress on the informally coordinated work on the two approaches (e.g. technical and operational approach, see paragraph 32 of document MEPC 75/7/2) and impact assessments, as appropriate.

6 Given the informal and preliminary nature of the virtual meeting, it is noted that participants are not requested to take formal positions on the proposals submitted to ISWG-GHG 7, and that the virtual meeting is not expected to take any decisions.

7 Due to postponement of recent IMO meetings, the Organization has been preparing for holding virtual meetings. In this regard, this informal meeting will also have an experimental purpose to facilitate future virtual meetings at IMO.

### **Conduct of the virtual meeting**

#### ***Before the virtual meeting***

8 An agenda and information documents related to the virtual meeting will be made available in due course. Further additional documents by Member States and international organizations are not expected due to the informal and preliminary nature of the virtual meeting.

#### ***During the virtual meeting***

9 During the virtual meeting, the moderator will invite participants for additional information, questions and comments on the proposals contained in relevant ISWG-GHG 7 documents.

10 The virtual meeting will be held in English only, and, due to the private nature of the discussion, media attendance is not allowed.

#### ***After the virtual meeting***

11 Based on the views expressed during the meeting, the Chair of ISWG-GHG may further refine his proposal in document ISWG-GHG 7/2, for consideration by ISWG-GHG 7.

### **Virtual meeting information**

12 The informal virtual meeting will be convened from Monday, 6 to Friday, 10 July 2020 with daily sessions from 10:00 to 13:00 (GMT), which is 11:00 to 14:00 BST (British Summer Time). Depending on the progress, the meeting may be shortened, e.g. completing on Thursday, 9 July 2020.

13 The meeting will be moderated by Mr. Sveinung Oftedal (Norway), the Chair of ISWG-GHG.

### **Registration and meeting participation**

14 As this meeting is informal, participation is optional, but delegations wishing to participate should ensure that they have been registered in the Online Meeting Registration System (OMRS), including the email address they wish to use for the virtual meeting, as this system will be used to allocate the limited participation slots available, i.e. maximum two persons per Member States and one person per IGOs/NGOs, considering the limitations of the virtual meeting platform. Joining details will be sent in due course.

15 Details on the modalities of registration and participation in the virtual meeting are contained in the annex to this document.

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## ANNEX

### DETAILS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE INFORMAL PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION SESSION (VIRTUAL MEETING) PRIOR TO THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP ON REDUCTION OF GHG EMISSIONS FROM SHIPS (ISWG-GHG 7)

Monday, 6 to Friday, 10 July 2020  
10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (GMT)  
11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (BST)

### REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION

#### Registration and participation limitations

1 All delegations wishing to participate should ensure that they have been registered in the Online Meeting Registration System (OMRS), as advised in Circular Letter No.3463 of 14 July 2014, including a valid email address they wish to use for the virtual meeting. Members of delegations should register through their respective OMRS delegation coordinator. Joining instructions will be sent to the registered email addresses.

2 Any matters relating to the use of the OMRS should be communicated to:

Registration Unit  
Meeting Services and Interpretation Section  
Email: [onlineregistration@imo.org](mailto:onlineregistration@imo.org)

3 Based on available technology for this virtual meeting, participation will be limited as follows:

- .1 Delegations of Member States will be allocated maximum two participant slots each; and
- .2 Delegations of Intergovernmental and Non-Governmental Organizations (IGOs and NGOs) in consultative status with the Organization will be allocated one participant slot, each, as observers.