

MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION
COMMITTEE
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Agenda item 16

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Prevalence of heavy fuel oil and black carbon in Arctic shipping, 2015 to 2025

Submitted by CSC, FOEI,
Pacific Environment and WWF¹

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document summarizes the key findings of a new report on the use and carriage of heavy fuel oil and black carbon emissions from ships in the Arctic in 2015 and projections to 2020 and 2025

Strategic direction: 7.1, 7.2, 7.3

High-level action: 7.1.2, 7.2.2, 7.3.1

Output: No related provisions

Action to be taken: Paragraph 4

Related documents: MEPC 69/20/1, MEPC 69/21; MEPC 70/17/4, MEPC 70/17/9, MEPC 70/17/10, MEPC 70/17/11, MEPC 70/18; MEPC 71/14/4 and MEPC 71/16/4

Introduction

1 At MEPC 69, the Committee considered document MEPC 69/20/1, which identified the hazards and risks posed by heavy fuel oil (HFO) to the Arctic environment, and invited interested Member Governments and international organizations to submit proposals to a future session for a new output to address this matter.² At MEPC 70, the Committee considered four submissions relevant to the use of HFO in Arctic waters, including: (1) MEPC 70/17/4, submitted by the co-sponsors; (2) MEPC 70/17/10, submitted by FOEI, WWF and Pacific Environment; (3) MEPC 70/17/9, submitted by the Russian Federation; and (4) MEPC 70/17/11, submitted by Canada and the United States. In the ensuing discussion at MEPC 70, several delegations stressed the importance of examining the risks of HFO in the

¹ The International Council on Clean Transportation and the Ocean Conservancy helped prepare this document.

² Document MEPC 69/21 Report of the Marine Environment Protection Committee on its sixty-ninth session, paragraphs 20.3 to 20.4.

Arctic and the need for further discussion. As a result, the Committee invited Member States and other stakeholders to submit relevant information to future sessions.³ Document MEPC 71/14/4, submitted by Canada et al., proposes a new output in the Committee's work programme to develop measures to reduce risks of use and carriage of heavy fuel oil as fuel by ships in Arctic waters.

2 Threats to the Arctic from using HFO as marine fuel have been elaborated in documents MEPC 69/20/1 and MEPC 70/17/4. For example, HFO is virtually impossible to clean up in the event of a spill compared to alternative fuels such as distillates and liquefied natural gas (LNG). To address the risks of HFO on the Arctic, one first needs to know the prevalence of HFO use and carriage as fuel by ships in the Arctic.

Heavy fuel oil use and carriage by ships in the Arctic

3 This document summarizes the results of a recent report by the International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT) that estimates HFO use, HFO carriage and BC emissions for the year 2015, with projections to 2020 and 2025.⁴ Key findings related to HFO in the Arctic include:

- .1 HFO is the most commonly used marine fuel in the Arctic, representing 57% of fuel use and more than 75% of the mass of bunker fuel on board ships in the Arctic in 2015;
- .2 ships use and carry HFO in previously inaccessible parts of the Arctic as ice dwindles;
- .3 general cargo ships used the most HFO (66,000 tonnes) in the Arctic in 2015, followed by oil tankers (43,000 tonnes), and cruise ships (25,000 tonnes);
- .4 bulk carriers, container ships, oil tankers, general cargo ships, and fishing vessels carry the most HFO fuel in the Arctic, accounting for 75% of HFO fuel carriage in 2015;
- .5 the 0.5% global fuel sulphur cap will not eliminate HFO use and carriage in the Arctic because some ships will comply by using scrubbers or HFO-blended fuel;
- .6 trans-Arctic diversions from the Suez and Panama canals will increase ship traffic, HFO use, and HFO carriage in the Arctic compared to business-as-usual growth scenarios; and
- .7 prohibiting the use and carriage of HFO as a marine fuel in the Arctic would greatly reduce the risks to the Arctic environment from HFO spills.

Action requested of the Committee

4 The Committee is invited to note the information provided in this document. The full report "Prevalence of heavy fuel oil and black carbon in Arctic shipping, 2015 to 2025," is available on the ICCT's website: <http://theicct.org/2015-heavy-fuel-oil-use-and-black-carbon-emissions-from-ships-in-arctic-projections-2020-2025>

³ MEPC 70/18 Report of the Marine Environment Protection Committee on its seventieth session, paragraph 17.20.

⁴ Comer, B., Olmer, N., Mao, X., Roy, B., and Rutherford, D. (2017). *Prevalence of heavy fuel oil and black carbon in Arctic shipping, 2015 to 2025*. The International Council on Clean Transportation. Available at: <http://theicct.org/2015-heavy-fuel-oil-use-and-black-carbon-emissions-from-ships-in-arctic-projections-2020-2025>