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ASSEMBLY  
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Agenda item 19

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**Resolution A.963(23)**

**Adopted on 5 December 2003  
(Agenda item 19)**

**IMO POLICIES AND PRACTICES RELATED TO THE REDUCTION OF  
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM SHIPS**

THE ASSEMBLY,

RECALLING Article 15(j) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Assembly in relation to regulations and guidelines concerning the prevention and control of marine pollution from ships and other matters concerning the effect of shipping on the marine environment,

RECALLING FURTHER that, in accordance with Article 212 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982 (UNCLOS), resolution A.719(17) invited the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) to develop legally binding measures to reduce air pollution from ships through the preparation of a new Annex to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto (MARPOL 73/78),

RECALLING ALSO that, on 26 September 1997, the Conference of Parties to MARPOL 73/78 (the Air Pollution Conference) adopted a new Annex VI - Regulations for the Prevention of Air Pollution from Ships - to the Convention in order to reduce the contribution by shipping to air pollution,

NOTING that the Air Pollution Conference, by its resolution 8 concerning CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from ships, invited the Organization, in co-operation with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to undertake a study of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from ships for the purpose of establishing the amount and relative percentages of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from ships as part of the global inventory of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions,

NOTING ALSO that the Air Pollution Conference invited the MEPC to consider what CO<sub>2</sub> reduction strategies may be feasible given the relationship between CO<sub>2</sub> and atmospheric pollutants, especially NO<sub>x</sub> whose emissions can exhibit an inverse relationship to CO<sub>2</sub> reductions,

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RECOGNIZING that the most comprehensive assessment to date of the contribution made by international shipping to these problems is contained in the IMO Study on Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships, which was published in June 2000 as a follow-up to resolution 8 of the Air Pollution Conference,

RECOGNIZING FURTHER that the IMO Study on Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships estimates that ships contribute about 1.8 per cent of the world's total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and also states that emission reductions are feasible through technical and operational measures, as do studies on greenhouse gas (GHG) conducted by the Ship and Ocean Foundation of Japan,

BEING AWARE of the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC, which is to achieve stabilization of GHG concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference in the climate system,

BEING AWARE ALSO that the Kyoto Protocol, which was adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in December 1997 and has yet to enter into force, requires the countries listed in Annex 1 to the UNFCCC to pursue the limitation or reduction of GHG emissions from marine bunker fuels, working through IMO (article 2.2),

BEING AWARE ALSO that in its Decision 2/CP.3 the December 1997 Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, recalling the 1996 Revised Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change which state that emissions based upon fuel sold to ships engaged in international transport are not to be included in national totals but reported separately, urged the Conference's Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) to further elaborate on the inclusion of emissions from international bunker fuels in the overall inventories of Parties to the UNFCCC.

NOTING that the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC has adopted reporting requirements and agreed on guidelines and good practice guidance concerning methodologies for calculating the emissions from international bunker fuels,

BEING AWARE ALSO that the SBSTA, at its sixteenth session in June 2002, invited IMO to report to the eighteenth session of SBSTA on its activities with regard to the consideration of methodological aspects related to the reporting of emissions based upon fuel sold to ships engaged in international transport,

BEING CONVINCED that the Organization should take the lead in developing GHG limitation and reduction strategies and mechanisms for international shipping and that, in doing so, it should co-operate with the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC,

RECOGNIZING that the projected adverse effects of climate change call for the implementation of measures to limit or reduce the emissions from international shipping which constitute one of the sources of anthropogenic GHG emissions,

HAVING CONSIDERED the recommendation made by the Marine Environment Protection Committee at its forty-ninth session,

1. URGES the Marine Environment Protection Committee to identify and develop the mechanism or mechanisms needed to achieve the limitation or reduction of GHG emissions from international shipping and, in doing so, to give priority to:

- (a) the establishment of a GHG emission baseline;
- (b) the development of a methodology to describe the GHG efficiency of a ship in terms of a GHG emission index for that ship. In developing the methodology for the GHG emission indexing scheme, the MEPC should recognize that CO<sub>2</sub> is the main greenhouse gas emitted by ships;
- (c) the development of Guidelines by which the GHG emission indexing scheme may be applied in practice. The Guidelines are to address issues such as verification;
- (d) the evaluation of technical, operational and market-based solutions;

2. REQUESTS the Marine Environment Protection Committee:

- (a) to consider the methodological aspects related to the reporting of GHG emissions from ships engaged in international transport;
- (b) to develop a work plan with a timetable;
- (c) to keep this matter under review and to prepare consolidated statements on the continuing IMO policies and practices related to the limitation or reduction of GHG emissions from international shipping;

3. REQUESTS the Secretariat of the Organization to continue co-operating with the Secretariat of UNFCCC and the Secretariat of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

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