

outline possible means of mitigating hazards in order to comply with the Polar Code and are intended to assist ship designers, shipowners or operators, and flag Administrations in the uniform implementation of relevant provisions of the Polar Code, complementing existing requirements of the International Life-saving Appliance (LSA) Code.

In June 2023, MSC adopted a first set of amendments to the Polar Code, together with associated amendments to the Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS), to incorporate new requirements for certain non-SOLAS ships concerning safety of navigation and voyage planning. The amendments will be applicable to fishing vessels of 24 m in length and above, pleasure yachts of 300 GT and upwards not engaged in trade, and cargo ships of 300 GT and upwards but below 500 GT. The amendments aim to enhance the safety of ships operating under the special conditions the polar areas present, as well as that of persons on board ships.

PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AT SEA

(refer to paragraphs 139-143, 150-160, 164, 169 of UN General Assembly Resolution 77/248)

MSC continued to consider the latest updates on global trends relating to piracy and armed robbery against ships at its sessions in November 2022 and June 2023. Significant highlights include an increase in the number of incidents in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore with 72 incidents reported in 2022, compared to 70 incidents in 2021. The number of incidents that took place in the Gulf of Guinea decreased to 21 from 38 incidents in 2021, thanks to the enforcement agencies of coastal States in the region and ongoing international support. The number of incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships reported in the South China Sea is 4, compared to 15 incidents in 2021. This represents a decreasing trend by 73% since 2013, when 142 incidents were reported. No incidents were reported off the coast of Somalia during the reporting period. Overall 131 incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships were reported to the Organization as having occurred or been attempted in 2022, a decrease of approximately 24% at the global level compared to 2021.

IMO continued to undertake efforts to ensure continued implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC) and encouraged Member States to continue to support the DCoC Trust Fund; and called upon Member States, in line with resolution A.1159(32),

harmonizing the representation of such regions in electronic format and determining any necessary actions to ensure the correct dissemination of search and rescue related information to ships through different recognized mobile satellite services and the relay of distress alerts.

Work with ICAO continues to progress with the assistance of an ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group which meets on an annual basis, resulting in relevant updates to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual which provides guidelines for a common aviation and maritime approach to organizing and providing search and rescue services.

IMO is a member of the "Inter-agency group on protection of refugees and migrants moving by sea", an initiative launched by UNHCR in 2021 to discuss, plan and execute coordinated joint action and advocacy to support the prevention of dangerous journeys at sea, SAR activities and safe disembarkation.

In November 2022, MSC 106 adopted resolution MSC.528(106) on *Recommended cooperation to ensure the safety of life at sea, the rescue of persons in distress at sea and the safe disembarkation of survivors* intended to emphasize the importance of effective and timely involvement of Governments in cases of rescue of migrants at sea by merchant ships.

STOWAWAYS

(refer to paragraph 186 of UN General Assembly Resolution 77

The Legal Committee was also informed by a Member State that they intended to submit a proposal to review the 1986 United Nations Convention on Conditions for Registration of Ships which establishes international standards for the registration of vessels in a national registry, including references to the genuine link, ownership, management, registration, accountability and the role of the flag State and which has not entered into force. Pursuant to Article 68 of the IMO Convention, the International Maritime Organization may take over

The well-being of seafarers

Cooperation Program (ITCP). In line with this, MSC 107, in June 2023, considered a proposal for the comprehensive review of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code and its related guidelines, which would assist in furthering the promotion of a culture of safety at sea. Meanwhile, the Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping, also recently initiated the comprehensive review of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, with due priority given to developing training provisions addressing bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH), approved by MSC 107 in June 2023. Bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including SASH, will also be considered by the Joint ILO/IMO Tripartite Working Group to identify and address seafarers' issues and the human element, in order to provide recommendations to relevant ILO and IMO bodies.

MEASURES TO ADDRESS THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING

(refer to paragraph 131-132 of UN General Assembly Resolution 77/248)

The *Joint Action Group to review the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world's transport workers and the global supply chain (JAG-TSC)*, established at a meeting of the Director-Generals of ILO and WHO with the Heads of international transport organizations on 6 December 2021, brought together heads of ILO, WHO, ICAO, IMO, and International Air Transport Association (IATA), International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), International Road Transport Union (IRU) and International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). The JAG-TSC was established to address the serious and urgent challenges faced by transport workers resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and their protection during future Public Health Emergencies of International Concern (PHEICs), with a view to minimizing adverse impacts on workers, their families and global supply chains, while at the same time ensuring that public health needs are fully safeguarded. Following three technical meetings, the JAG Principals met on 24 January 2023 and adopted recommendations, including those aimed at specific UN agencies and the UN system as a whole. These recommendations are expected to be submitted as a draft resolution to the thirty-third session of the IMO Assembly with a view to adoption in December 2023.

UNSAFE MIXED MIGRATION BY SEA

(refer to paragraph 165 of UN General Assembly Resolution 77/248)

The Maritime Safety Committee continues to consider the impact of unsafe mixed migration by sea on shipping and the need for cooperative arrangements among Member States and relevant organizations. As reported above, MSC adopted a resolution on *Recommended cooperation to ensure the safety of life at sea, the rescue of persons in distress at sea and the*

MARINE ENVIRONMENT

REDUCTION OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM SHIPS

(refer to paragraphs 251-252 of

(covering designated coastal areas off the United States and Canada); and the United States

The work of IMO in this regard is supported by the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP), which established the Working Group on sea-based sources of marine litter (GESAMP Working Group 43), co-sponsored by FAO and IMO, with additional support from the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). The overall objective of GESAMP Working Group 43 is to build a broader understanding of sea-based sources of marine litter, in particular from the shipping and fishing sectors, including the relative contribution of different sources, analysis of plastic use and management within both industries and the range and extent of impacts from sea-based sources of marine litter. In the period under review, GESAMP published two Reports and Studies No. 108 and No. 109 available on www.gesamp.org.

In addition, the IMO Secretariat commissioned a study on the end-of-life management of fibre-reinforced plastic (e.g. fibreglass) vessels and a study on hull scrapings and marine coatings as a source of microplastics.

BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT TREATY IMPLEMENTATION

(refer to paragraphs 245-247 of UN General Assembly Resolution 77/248)

The *International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004* (BWM Convention), entered into force in September 2017. As of June 2023, it has been ratified by 95 countries, representing 92.41% of world merchant shipping tonnage. The BWM Convention aims to stop the spread of potentially invasive aquatic species in ships' ballast water and requires ships to manage their ballast water to remove, render harmless or avoid the uptake or discharge of aquatic organisms and pathogens within ballast water and sediments. In addition, the mandatory *Code for Approval of Ballast Water Management Systems* (BWMS Code) has been in effect since October 2019.

Following the BWM Convention's entry into force, the main focus of IMO has been on its effective and uniform implementation and enforcement. In this regard, MEPC had established the experience-building phase (EBP) associated with the BWM Convention (resolution MEPC.290(71)) in order to carry out a systematic and evidence-based review of the BWM Convention, set out in three stages: data gathering, data analysis and Convention review. Following consideration of the data analysis report on the EBP in June 2022, MEPC agreed in principle to develop a BWM Convention Review Plan (CRP) and to embark on a holistic review of the treaty concluding with the approval and adoption of a package of amendments tentatively envisaged for 2026.

SHIP RECYCLING

(refer to paragraph 254 of UN General Assembly Resolution 77/248)

the London Protocol, in order to remove sewage sludge from the list and assessment of wastes or other matter that may be considered for dumping. In accordance with Article 22.4 of the Protocol, the amendments concerned entered into force on 15 January 2023, except for those Contracting Parties which had before that made a declaration that they were not able to accept the amendment at that time.

Recognizing the growing interest into marine geoengineering techniques and their potential to cause pollution or other adverse effects on the marine environment, the LC/LP Parties also adopted a statement on marine geoengineering, identifying the need to carefully evaluate marine geoengineering techniques, which may have potential for mitigating the effects of climate change but may have adverse impacts on the marine environment. The statement identified four techniques which need priority evaluation, involving either carbon dioxide removal (CDR) or solar radiation modification (SRM).

To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the London Convention in 1972, IMO in cooperation with the World Maritime University (WMU) organized a joint international academic conference entitled "Protecting the Ocean Moving forward at 50: London Convention & Stockholm Declaration", which was held at WMU and online from 10 to 13 October 2022. Conference proceedings and a special issue of a peer reviewed academic journal are in preparation.

PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE SEA AREAS

(refer to paragraph 291 of UN General Assembly Resolution 77/248)

In December 2022, MEPC considered

