

MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION  
COMMITTEE  
74th session  
Agenda item 7

MEPC 74/7/6  
7 March 2019  
Original: ENGLISH

## REDUCTION OF GHG EMISSIONS FROM SHIPS

### Considerations for effective uptake of alternative low-carbon/zero-carbon/fossil-free fuels under the programme of follow-up actions of the *Initial IMO Strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships*

Submitted by CESA and EUROMOT

#### SUMMARY

*Executive summary:* This document contains proposed definitions of alternative fuel terminology, such as *Low-carbon fuel*, *Zero-carbon fuel* and *Fossil-free fuel* with a view to adopting a common understanding in IMO. The document promotes the timely introduction of alternative fuels highlighting that the production of such fuels will require substantial amounts of renewable energy, which should be considered in future life cycle GHG/carbon intensity guidelines for fuels, research and development.

*Strategic direction, if applicable:* 3

*Output:* 3.2

*Action to be taken:* Paragraph 27

*Related documents:* MEPC 67/INF.3; MEPC 71/INF.34; resolution MEPC.304(72); MEPC 73/7/2, MEPC 73/7/3 and MEPC 73/19

#### Introduction

1 MEPC 73 noted the information contained in documents MEPC 73/7/2 (CESA and EUROMOT) and MEPC 73/7/3 (CESA), and invited Member States and international organizations to take them into account when preparing submissions to MEPC 74 (MEPC 73/19, paragraph 7.14).

2 MEPC 72 adopted the *Initial IMO Strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships* (the Strategy) as set out in resolution MEPC.304(72) and MEPC 73 approved its programme of follow-up actions (MEPC 73/19/Add.1, annex 9).

3 The Strategy and its programme of follow-up actions include candidate long-term, mid-term and short-term measures which are considered in the present document. Although the present document focuses on alternative fuels, other technical solutions will support the intended implementation programme. These solutions comprise the direct use of renewable energies like wind, solar, wave energy, etc. in future ship design as well as enhanced technologies for use of energy on board, including energy recovery.

4 The combination of alternative fuel, direct use of renewable energy and improved efficiency of onboard use of energy are three expected core pillars for the implementation programme.

### **Definitions**

5 In the context of the proposed candidate measures of the Strategy, the co-sponsors would like to offer the following definitions and explanations:

6 *Energy Carriers for use in the shipping industry* means all types of fuels, batteries or any other energy storing device to provide secondary energy for further conversion on board to mechanical, electrical and thermal energy.

7 *Zero-carbon fuel* means an energy carrier that does not contain any carbon, hence does not release any CO<sub>2</sub> when being used in internal combustion engines, gas turbines, fuel cells or any other energy converting device. Such fuels are for example hydrogen or ammonia. These fuels typically carry a CO<sub>2</sub>-backpack from production (well to tank) which must be considered when assessing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from well to propeller. In addition, electrical energy from renewable sources stored in batteries can be regarded as a zero-carbon fuel (or energy carrier). In this case, the emissions from well to propeller are depending on the production pathway (well to tank) of the electrical energy and the batteries.

8 *Fossil-free fuel* means a synthetic fuel (energy carrier) which is produced from other non-fossil sources using renewable energy sources, including biomass to liquid fuels (BtL) or power to liquid (PtL) / power to gas (PtG) fuels. Typical feedstock for such fuels is CO<sub>2</sub> from biomass or extracted from atmosphere. Fuel type candidates in this respect are, for example, methanol, synthetic methane (liquefied for storage purposes), Fischer-Tropsch diesel not excluding other types of energy carriers.

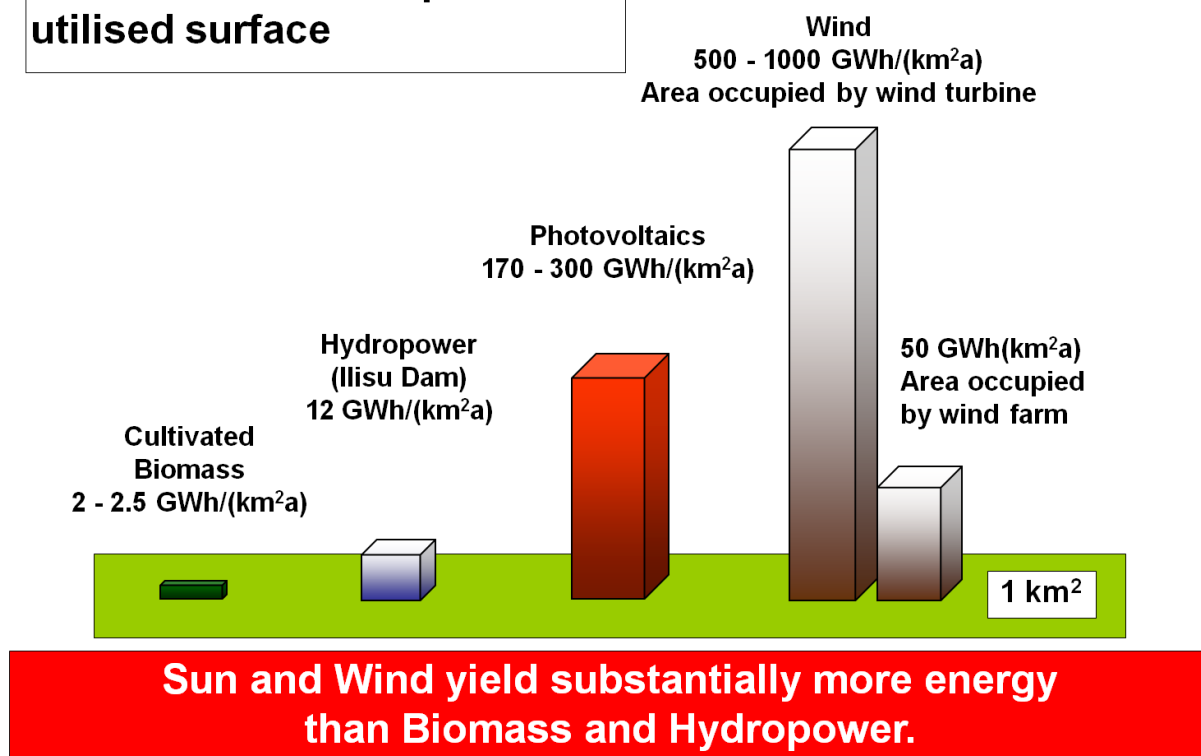
9 *Low-carbon fuel* means a fuel which uses CO<sub>2</sub> from industrial processes or other fossil CO<sub>2</sub> point sources as feedstock for a synthetic fuel with less GHG intensity.

10 *GHG intensity (CO<sub>2</sub> eq. emissions/MJ Fuel)* means a measure to define the total emission of greenhouse gases, in CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent, from production of the corresponding fuel and subsequent full conversion of the fuel's carbon content to CO<sub>2</sub> during combustion. The co-sponsors are of the opinion that the development of guidelines of GHG intensity of fuels is of utmost importance. A principal exercise has already been performed under the EU-funded JOULES project and corresponding information has been provided in document ISWG-GHG 3/INF.2 (CESA).

### **Key parameters for effective uptake of alternative fuels**

11 Beside GHG intensity other environmental key parameters must be included in a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) exercise. In particular, the use of land plays a dominant role for future decision-making. A simple example shows the potential of energy harvesting from different sources and provides a clear ranking for future considerations (see figure 1 below).

### Annual Power Yield per km<sup>2</sup> utilised surface



**Figure 1: Annual power yield per km<sup>2</sup> utilized surface**

Source: Bossel, *Energiewende zu Ende gedacht*, 2014 (ISBN: 9783033047730)

12 The production of future zero-carbon, fossil-free or low-carbon fuels will require substantial amounts of renewable energy, which should be considered in future LCA of such fuels.

13 Greenhouse gases are those gases which contribute to global warming with their characterization factors as defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2013. In this context, the role of methane slip should be further assessed due to the higher global warming potential of methane (1 kg of methane has the same impact equivalent to 28 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>). The methane slip is depending on the engine type (lean gas engine, dual fuel engine either two-stroke or four-stroke), the production pathway of liquefied natural gas (LNG), tank design (e.g. membrane tanks or type C-tank) and other effects like boil-off handling or operating profile (e.g. low load operation).

### Long-term perspective

14 As a long-term measure, the provision of carbon-free and/or fossil-free fuels (energy carriers) is necessary to ensure the fulfilment of the objectives of the Strategy. The co-sponsors have reviewed document MEPC 67/INF.3 (Secretariat) as well as document MEPC 71/INF.34 (BIMCO) to reflect socio-economic pathways (SSPs) being in line with Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) 2.6 and Policy Assumptions (impact from today's and future IMO legislation on technology uptake and energy efficiency). For the 2050 CO<sub>2</sub> emission projections from international shipping, a range from approximately 1,000 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> to roughly 1,750 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> has been used to estimate the amount of such fuels needed in the future.

15 Using the baseline emissions of 810 million tonnes in 2008 and required 50% reduction of the total annual GHG emissions from the Strategy, the target emissions are 405 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2050 from international shipping. As an example, using above-mentioned emission projections and using diesel fuel as the predominant fuel with a fuel-to-carbon factor of 3.206, it is expected that fossil-free diesel fuel in a range between 185 million tonnes and 419 million tonnes will be needed in 2050. This amount will differ when other fuel types are used depending on fuel-to-carbon factor (See figure 2 below).

Figure 7 CO<sub>2</sub> emission projections of shipping in three 1.6 °C scenarios

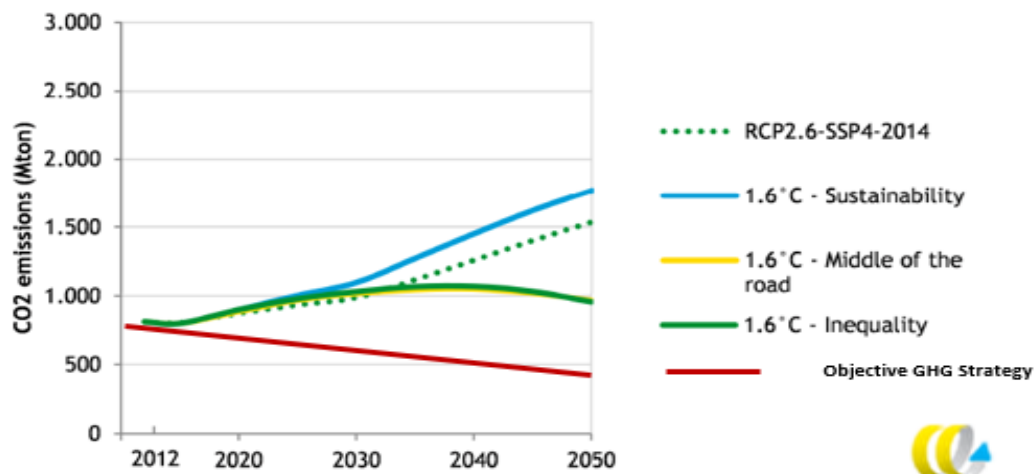


Figure 2: Modified ("Objective GHG Strategy" curve added) graph of CE Delft report as set out in document MEPC 71/INF.34

16 In order to be able to produce such an amount of fossil-free fuel, corresponding technology must be available in large industrial scale such as electrolysis, methane synthesis and subsequent liquefaction, methanol synthesis, Fischer-Tropsch synthesis, potential fresh water distillation from seawater (the production of 1 tonne of hydrogen needs 9 tonnes of water) and carbon capture and usage (CCU). Whilst the engineering principles of most of the above-listed technologies are well-known, CCU will especially require extensive research and development activities.

17 CCU technology is currently in a research and demonstration phase and needs significant development in the future to be able to play its role in the production of fossil-free fuels. In the future, CCU may be introduced in different ways in the fuel production process:

- .1 CO<sub>2</sub> can be extracted from industrial point sources (as long as sufficient point sources are available in the future);
- .2 CCU can be used in a shipping related circular CO<sub>2</sub> economy for fuel production (CO<sub>2</sub> extracted and stored on board ships and then sent ashore for new fuel production); and
- .3 CO<sub>2</sub> can be extracted from the atmosphere and released to the atmosphere again when used in corresponding synthetic fuels for shipping in a circular process.

18 Only if CO<sub>2</sub> is used in a circular economy (see paragraph 17 above), the corresponding fuels can be regarded as fossil-free fuels with zero GHG intensity. In case CO<sub>2</sub> from industrial point sources using fossil fuels is used, the CO<sub>2</sub> will be finally released into the atmosphere but has been reused for fuel production. It will then be credited with respect to the GHG intensity as so called low-carbon fuel in the context of the Strategy.

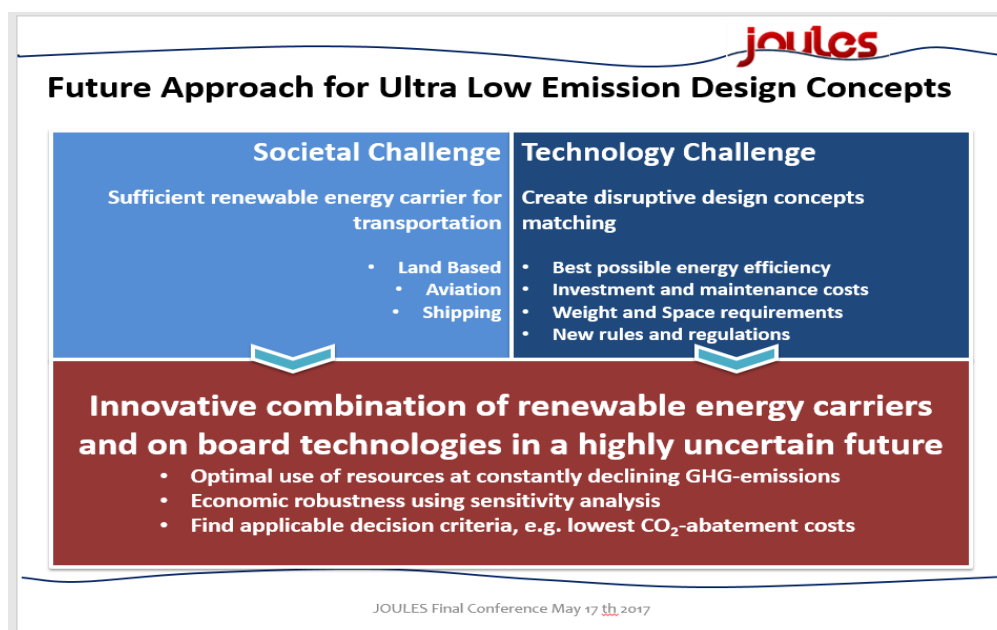
19 In order to achieve the objective of 50% GHG reduction compared to 2008 level in 2050, recent research projects, e.g. JOULES (EU funded) and MethaShip (funded by the German Ministry of Economics and Energy), revealed that a significant amount of renewable energy is needed to produce these fossil free-fuels. As a general indication, around 2.2 to 3 MJ of renewable energy is needed to produce 1 MJ of final fuel (being fossil-free) depending on types of future fuels. In the context of required GHG reduction, the accelerated build-up of energy infrastructure from renewable energy is of utmost concern.

### Mid-term perspective

20 In the mid-term aspect, an implementation programme for zero carbon and/or fossil-free fuels is required. From today's perspective, the optimal combination of fuel types, infrastructure and shipboard installations cannot be determined. Whilst electrification of short-sea shipping is an option to use renewable energy in an optimal way, liquid fuels with high energy density per tonne and cubic metre will however be required for longer distances. In addition, technical solutions on board ships will be implemented depending on the ship's type, operation profile and achievable prices for future fossil-free fuels. In the opinion of the co-sponsors, there will be no "one fits all" solution in the future, but different solutions will evolve over time.

### Short-term perspective

21 The predominant action on short-term perspective is an increased research activity to identify best possible solutions from a societal, technological and economical point of view. Such an approach is derived from the final conference of the JOULES project as an example as set out in figure 3 below.



**Figure 3: Future approach for ultra-low emission design concepts  
(example from the final conference of the JOULES project)**

22 These research activities need to include stakeholders from different industrial sectors and sciences (energy, chemistry, environmental sciences, macro-economic sciences, ship technology) with an open mindset to not prioritize any solution without accepting the complexity of the issue as addressed in the present submission.

23 A strategy for smooth transition from existing conventional fuel system to fossil-free fuels is required. As a result of research activities, future fossil-free or zero-carbon fuels candidates for the shipping sector will be identified and an implementation programme needs to be initialized. The implementation programme needs to include demonstration projects of such fuel production pathways and onboard installations before roll-out in large technical scale. The programme may also include adaptation of existing technology (e.g. internal combustion engines) to these new fuel types.

24 Rules and regulations have in many cases been identified to be an obstacle when introducing new technologies. The research projects must also be set up in a way that future development of rules and regulations is supported. Such an approach holds for new types of energy converters, proper representation of energy efficiency measures in existing regulatory framework, new energy distribution concepts on board ships, etc.

25 Investigations on future economic viability must be a central aspect for these research projects but need to include all kinds of costs involved (fuel production, infrastructure, societal costs including external costs from emissions, costs of onboard technology). Cost-effective solutions with the highest CO<sub>2</sub> reduction potential should be identified and further promoted.

26 As a possible indicator for decision-making (beside other important issues like, for example, land use for BtL production and renewable energy power plants for PtL/PtG production) are the CO<sub>2</sub> abatement costs curves considered for each BtL/PtL/PtG-fuel pathway. Policy instruments may also be considered to achieve the GHG reduction objectives based on the holistic macro-economic assessment. A multi-step approach to identify the optimum technological measures should be considered to comply with the strategic GHG reduction targets in the future at lowest possible costs and highest benefit for the society.

### **Action requested of the Committee**

27 The Committee is invited to consider:

- .1 the proposed definitions in paragraphs 5 to 10 with a view to adopting a common understanding in IMO of alternative fuel terminology, such as *Low-carbon fuel*, *Zero-carbon fuel* and *Fossil-free fuel*; and
- .2 an implementation programme for effective uptake of alternative fuels as described in paragraphs 11 to 26, and decide as appropriate.