

## International Maritime Organization (IMO)

### IMO's input to the ECOSOC 2016 Integration Segment on "Implementing the 2030 Agenda through Policy Innovation and Integration"

#### 1 Introduction

1.1 IMO's role is to set standards for international shipping – an international transportation system which supports sustainable development across the globe, by providing a dependable, low-cost means of transporting goods globally, facilitating commerce and helping to create prosperity among nations and peoples. International maritime transport, unlike land-based industries which are regulated mainly through national legislation, requires global regulations to continue functioning as the principal vehicle for the movement of more than 90% of global trade.

1.2 In the last 15 years following the Millennium Declaration which was adopted by the UN General Assembly, IMO took a number of policy initiatives, including adoption of an Assembly resolution, to align its work on technical cooperation with the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Following the end of the MDGs in December 2015, IMO has commenced arrangements to implement activities related to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the post-2015 development agenda.

1.3 During the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) held in 2012, IMO highlighted its contribution and that of the shipping industry to sustainable maritime development. In anticipation of the development of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), IMO developed a concept of a Sustainable Maritime Transportation System (SMTS) and dedicated the theme for the 2013 World Maritime Day to **sustainable shipping**. The SMTS concept identified the various 'imperatives' that should be met to implement an SMTS, and the activities that will need to be undertaken to achieve them. This Concept was developed to draw attention to the vital importance of shipping and to highlight that cooperation was needed amongst all maritime stakeholders to realize its potential.

#### 2 IMO's Strategic Plan for the six-year period 2016 to 2021

2.1 In December 2015, the 29th session of the IMO Assembly adopted a resolution on the Strategic Plan for the Organization for the six-year period 2016 to 2021 which took into account implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Indeed, one of the Strategic Directions states that "IMO will actively promote its role as the primary international forum on matters within its competence and ensure and strengthen the linkage between safe, secure, efficient and environmentally friendly maritime transportation, the development of global trade, the world economy, and the realization of new United Nations development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)".

2.2 Bearing in mind that implementation of Agenda 2030 would require use of an innovative and integrated policy approach, the Organization's strategic directions have been developed in the context of emerging trends, developments and challenges, including globalization. Today's globalized world is characterized by freer movement of people, goods, services and information. It is a more interconnected world, in which the actions taken in one place have implications elsewhere and require global solutions.

2.3 The World Maritime Day theme for 2016 is "Shipping: indispensable to the world". The theme was chosen to focus on the critical link between shipping and global society and to raise awareness of the relevance of the role of IMO as the global regulatory body for

international shipping. International shipping is inherently indispensable for economic growth and sustainable development and therefore indirectly plays a role in all of the SDGs.

### **3 IMO's Innovative role in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

3.1 It is the responsibility of Governments to implement those international standards and regulations adopted by IMO. As many developing countries cannot yet give full and complete effect to IMO instruments, and as mandated by its Convention, IMO has established an Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP), with the purpose of assisting countries to build capacity to implement IMO instruments for safer and more secure shipping, enhanced environmental protection and facilitation of international maritime traffic. In addition, the ITCP will be expected to assist Governments to implement Agenda 2030 in the same way it made a contribution to assisting developing countries to achieve relevant MDGs.

3.2 The fact that the 2030 Agenda calls upon global partnerships not just amongst countries, but also other stakeholders including the private sector, to work together to ensure its implementation is encouraging because IMO, through an existing Assembly resolution on **"Development and improvement of partnership arrangements for technical cooperation"** has been working with many different partners in its delivery of technical cooperation. These mechanisms will be strengthened in the implementation of Agenda 2030.

3.3 In the last four years, and within the framework of the Organization's review and reform, IMO has introduced two major innovative policy decisions on the delivery of its technical assistance with a view to align same with the post-2015 development agenda. The introduction of Country Maritime Profiles (CMP) and the concept of providing technical assistance to its member States in the formulation of their national maritime transport policies (NMTPs) will be critical in the implementation of the SDGs.

3.4 In introducing Country Maritime Profiles, IMO recognizes that in order for Member States and the UN System to implement the Agenda 2030, the new normative framework will have to be translated into national policies and strategies taking into account cross-cutting issues. As the implementation of the Agenda 2030 will take place principally at the country level, IMO has had to introduce innovative policies to respond to the needs of the countries at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. An example of this approach is the role IMO played in assisting the African Union to formulate Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy 2050 (AIMS 2050) and Africa's Agenda 2063, taking into account that Africa was the only region that presented a common position during the negotiations leading to the adoption of the SDGs.

3.5 IMO further recognizes that a strategic platform needs to be formulated, first as the basis for coordinated and integrated planning and decision making, and subsequently as a mechanism for translating those goals into specific measurable objectives at the national level. While the formulation of a national maritime transport policy is a dominant shaper of a country's economic infrastructure, it will also foster the environmental and economic sustainability of the national maritime industry by serving as a fundamental guidance document while mainstreaming the SDGs into national policies. National maritime transport policies will also be complimentary to the concept of the "Blue Economy" that is closely associated with sustainable development and Small Island Developing States.

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