

# Instructions for submitting Observer reports

## Introduction

This document provides the reporting template and instructions for Observers required to report during the **Icelandic Chairmanship (2019-2021)**.

The deadline for submission is **1 December 2020**.

According to the "[Arctic Council Rules of Procedure](#)" (Annex 2), every **two years** Observers are requested to submit to the Chairmanship up-to-date information about relevant activities and their contributions to the work of the Arctic Council. The following **19 Observers** are requested to submit their report by **1 December 2020**:<sup>1</sup>

- France;
- Italian Republic;
- Japan;
- People's Republic of China;
- Republic of India;
- Republic of Korea;
- Republic of Singapore;
- Spain;
- International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC);
- Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO);
- North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO);
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);
- Arctic Institute of North American (AINA);
- Association of World Reindeer Herders (AWRH);
- Circumpolar Conservation Union (CCU);
- International Arctic Social Sciences Association (IASSA);
- International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA);
- University of the Arctic (UArctic), and;
- International Maritime Organization (IMO).

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<sup>1</sup> These include Observers admitted at the 2019 Rovaniemi Ministerial meeting, who will be reviewed for the first time during the Russian Federation's Chairmanship (2021-2023).

## Role of Observers

The role and responsibilities of Observers, as well as criteria for admission to the Arctic Council, can be found in the “Arctic Council Rules of Procedure” (Annex 2) and the “[Observer Manual for Subsidiary Bodies](#).”

The primary role of Observers is to observe the work of the Arctic Council. Observers contribute to the Arctic Council primarily through engagement at the level of Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups. Observers are invited to the meetings and other activities of the Arctic Council unless the Senior Arctic Officials decide otherwise. Observers may also propose projects through an Arctic State or a Permanent Participant.

## Report submission

Observer reports should include the relevant information described below and in the template.

- (a) A description of the Observer’s contributions to the work of the Arctic Council since the time of the Observer’s most recent submission, or in the previous two years, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants;
- (b) If applicable, a description of the Observer’s future plans to contribute to the work of the Arctic Council, with special focus on contributions to the subsidiary bodies through project participation and support, as well as collaboration with Permanent Participants; and,
- (c) If applicable, a description of the Observer’s contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered in the previous sections since the time of the Observer’s most recent submission, or in the previous two years.

Observer reports should be submitted electronically to the **Arctic Council Secretariat** via email: [acs@arctic-council.org](mailto:acs@arctic-council.org) not later than **1 December 2020**. Please bear in mind while preparing your report that all Observer reports will be published online in the *Observer* section of the [Arctic Council online Library](#).

If an Observer fails to submit a report, the Arctic Council will consider this to mean that the Observer **is no longer interested in maintaining its status** as an accredited Observer to the Arctic Council.

## Cover sheet

Full name of state or organization:

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

Date of submission:

27 November 202-

Observer's website, if appropriate:

www.imo.org

### Information for appropriate contact person

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## Observer Report

Please describe in no more than two pages your state's or organization's contributions to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years. Please highlight contributions to specific projects, such as through proposals, concept development, in-kind and financial support, and hosting of meetings. Please detail any collaboration with Permanent Participants, such as project proposal endorsement and support.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is the specialized agency of the United Nations with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships. The Organization works towards the successful implementation of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals whereby the oceans goal, SDG 14, is central to IMO, although aspects of the Organization's work can be linked to all individual SDGs.

IMO was founded as the global standard-setting authority for the safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping which is estimated to transport more than 80 per cent of global trade as the most efficient and cost-effective method of international transportation for most goods.

Long before becoming an observer organization to the Arctic Council, IMO actively promoted the work of the Arctic Council with its goals and activities with a strong focus on the development of the IMO Polar Code, which entered into force on 1 July 2017 for all ships to which the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention applies and which operate in polar waters under SOLAS chapter XIV.

Associated amendments to chapter V of the 1978 STCW Convention were adopted in 2016, requiring continued seagoing service for masters and officers for the continued professional competence for ships operating in polar waters (regulation V/4 on "Mandatory minimum requirements for the training and qualifications of masters and deck officers on ships operating in polar waters").

IMO Secretary-General Emeritus Koji Sekimizu, the ambitious advocate and driver for the IMO Polar Code development and adoption, attended the Senior Arctic Officials meeting in Yellowknife, Canada, in 2014. The current Secretary-General, Kitack Lim, has also attended SAO meetings on occasion and the IMO Secretariat is regularly attending since IMO became an observer.

There is no doubt about the significance of IMO's Polar Code to the work of the Arctic Council in ensuring safe and environmentally friendly shipping in the pristine Arctic waters and in this regard IMO has actively cooperated with the Arctic Council's Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group (PAME). As early as October 2000 PAME, at the Ministerial Preparations of PAME for the 2nd Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Barrow, Alaska, agreed to undertake work to "assess current and potential shipping activities to assist in determining what, if any, additional Arctic shipping measures are required, including work on an International Code of Safety for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code) under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization (IMO)".

IMO has been working closely with PAME on many occasions with various IMO staff attending and contributing to PAME meetings and by providing expert advice to the PAME WebPortal. IMO is actively participating in the Arctic Shipping Best Practice Information Forum and agreed to host PAME's 4th Annual Meeting of the Forum, which was scheduled to take place at IMO HQs in May 2020, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting is now taking place virtually on 24 and 25 Nov 2020, co-organized by PAME and IMO.

In addition to attending and contributing to the meetings of the Senior Arctic Officials and PAME, IMO also provided support to the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR) Working Group and observes the work of the Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP), the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) and the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) Working Groups.

After the adoption of the Polar Code, IMO embarked on the second phase of work regarding the Code which denotes the actions and effort taken by the Organization to develop safety measures for ships not falling under the SOLAS Convention and operating in polar waters, such as fishing vessels, smaller cargo ships of less than 500 gross tonnage and pleasure yachts. This work also includes the development of guidance to support the implementation of the Polar Code.

Recent polar-related IMO instruments approved or in the final stage of development are:

*With respect to safety of non-SOLAS ships:*

- .1 draft Guidelines for safety measures for fishing vessels of 24 m in length and over operating in polar waters (finalized, awaiting approval at MSC 103 in May 2021);
- .2 draft Guidelines for pleasure yachts of 300 gross tonnage and above not engaged in trade operating in polar waters (finalized, awaiting approval at MSC 103);

*With respect to the protection of the marine environment:*

- .3 draft amendments to MARPOL Annex I approved by MEPC 75, introducing a prohibition on the use as fuel and carriage for use as fuel of heavy fuel oil (HFO) by ships in Arctic waters. The amendments are expected to be adopted at MEPC 76 (2021) and will result in a partial prohibition as of 1 July 2024 and an all-encompassing prohibition to take effect on 1 July 2029;
- .4 development of Guidelines on measures to reduce risks of use and carriage of HFO as fuel by ships in Arctic waters (expected to be completed for approval by MEPC 77 in 2021);

*With respect to safety of navigation:*

- .5 Guidance for navigation and communication equipment intended for use on ships operating in polar waters (MSC.1/Circ.1612, approved in June 2019);
- .6 a technical analysis is currently being undertaken to assess the feasibility and consequences of applying safety of navigation related provisions of the Polar Code to non-SOLAS ships, such as fishing vessels and pleasure craft, including consideration of possible amendments to the SOLAS Convention and/or the Polar Code;
- .7 ongoing review of SOLAS chapter IV for modernization of the GMDSS which includes distress and safety communications in polar waters;
- .8 approval of Iridium as maritime satellite service provider, thereby improving effective radiocommunications in polar areas;
- .9 safer ship transits through the establishment of ship reporting and ship routing measures, such as the mandatory ship reporting system "In the Barents Area (Barents SRS)" (June 2013) and the 2018 established ships' routing measures in the Bering Sea and Bering Strait;

*With respect to life-saving appliances:*

- .10 Interim guidelines on life-saving appliances and arrangements for ships operating in polar waters (MSC.1/Circ.1614, approved in June 2019)

*With respect to training of seafarers:*

- .11 Two IMO Model Courses on basic (7.11) and advanced (7.12) training for seafarers on ships operating in polar waters (approved in 2017).

In addition, IMO representatives are regularly attending international events dealing with polar shipping to inform experts and the wider public of the ongoing work.

If applicable, please describe in no more than one page your state's or organization's future plans for contributing to the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, Task Forces, and/or Expert Groups. Please highlight intentions to contribute to specific projects and to collaborate with Permanent Participants.

In addition to its regulatory work, IMO has developed an Arctic Strategy Plan to promote the implementation of the Polar Code in Arctic waters, in support of the Arctic Council's effort to protect Arctic communities, Arctic waters and the wider Arctic environment from pollution by ships through clean fuels and through standards of ship safety which reduce the risk of ship accidents.

This support includes training of seafarers using, as a framework, the IMO Model Courses on basic and advanced training for ships operating in polar waters whereby IMO has, and will continue to support, train-the-trainers programmes with the support of Transport Canada.

IMO and Transport Canada, by means of a Memorandum of Understanding, agreed to deliver four regional capacity-building workshops around the world in order to train instructors in the preparation and delivery of training programmes for seafarers on ships operating in polar waters and the effective implementation of the Polar Code. Two workshops were delivered in 2019, in Canada (Sep) and Chile (Nov), and two further workshops planned for 2020 in the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation had to be postponed due to the pandemic and will be rescheduled for 2021, depending on COVID-19 developments.

IMO will also continue to actively cooperate with PAME and the Arctic Shipping Best Practice Information Forum to ensure relevant information on best practices is regularly disseminated to the international shipping community.

IMO's Technical Cooperation Division is closely involved in determining capacity-building activities with the aim to assist Member States in the implementation of the Polar Code and other IMO global instruments, including MARPOL and the reduction of pollution by ships.

IMO's active outreach to States with proximity to the Antarctic waters is expected to yield a synergy effect for the further development and advancement of safe ship operations in all polar waters.

Other initiatives and regulatory efforts at IMO which may not be designed to apply solely to the Arctic but which are expected to benefit safe shipping operations in the region, include IMO's global fight against climate change, in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goal 13, to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

In 2018, IMO adopted an initial strategy on the reduction of GHG emissions from ships, setting out a vision which confirms IMO's commitment to reducing GHG emissions from international shipping and to phasing them out as soon as possible. MEPC 75 (16-20 November 2020) approved draft new mandatory regulations to cut the carbon intensity of existing ships. The draft amendments to MARPOL would require ships to combine a technical and an operational approach to reduce their carbon intensity. This is in line with the ambition of the Initial IMO GHG Strategy, which aims to reduce carbon intensity of international shipping by 40% by 2030, compared to 2008. The draft amendments will be put forward for adoption at MEPC 76, to be held in the first half of 2021.

Furthermore, MEPC 75 adopted amendments to MARPOL Annex VI to significantly strengthen the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) "phase 3" requirements, with expected entry into force date of 1 April 2022. The amendments bring forward the entry into effect date of phase 3 to 2022, from 2025, for several ship types, including gas carriers, general cargo ships and LNG carriers. This means that new ships built from that date must be significantly more energy efficient than the baseline.

If applicable, please describe in no more than one page your state's or organization's contributions to other aspects of the Arctic Council and its goals not covered by the previous sections since the time of your most recent report, or in the previous two years.

As this is our first report to the Arctic Council, the previous sections have been comprehensive and complete for the purpose of IMO's role as observer to the Council (as of 7 May 2019).