

COUNCIL
110th session
Agenda item 18(e)

C 110/18(e)
26 June 2013
Original: ENGLISH

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

(e) World Maritime Day

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

Executive summary: In the context of the theme of World Maritime Day in 2013, Sustainable Development: IMO's Contribution Beyond Rio+20, the Secretary-General has activated an internal consultation process with industry partners and organizations in order to develop a meaningful concept of the Sustainable Maritime Transportation System with a view to presenting it at a Symposium to be held in conjunction with the traditional celebration of World Maritime Day on 26 September 2013

Strategic direction: 1.3

High-level action: 1.3.2

Planned output: 1.3.2.1

Action to be taken: Paragraph 13

Related document: C 108/D

Introduction

1 The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) which was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012, recognized that Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should be established by the General Assembly taking due account of the three dimensions of sustainability: economic, social and environmental.

2 The Council, at its 108th session, endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal and adopted: "Sustainable Development: IMO's Contribution Beyond Rio+20" as the theme for World Maritime Day 2013, affording IMO and its Members the opportunity to direct efforts on giving true meaning and impetus to the commitments made at the Rio+20 Conference.

Intergovernmental process within the United Nations

3 One of the main outcomes of Rio+20 were the agreement by Member States to launch a process to develop a set of SDGs. Rio+20 did not elaborate specific goals but stated that the SDGs should be limited in number, aspirational and easy to communicate. The goals should address in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and be coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015.

4 A 30-member Open Working Group (OWG) of the General Assembly was established in January 2013* and has been tasked with preparing a proposal on the SDGs and commenced its work in March 2013.

5 The Rio+20 outcome document "The Future We Want" states that, at the outset, the OWG will decide on its methods of work, including developing modalities to ensure the full involvement of relevant stakeholders and expertise from civil society, the scientific community and the United Nations system in its work, in order to provide a diversity of perspectives and experience.

6 The Rio+20 outcome document "The Future We Want" requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to ensure the necessary input and support to the OWG from the United Nations system, including by establishing an inter-agency technical support team. The IMO Secretariat, therefore, participates as one of over 40 United Nations entities in the United Nations System Technical Support Team and contributes information to the intergovernmental process, when requested by the OWG.

7 Currently, substantive discussions in the OWG on issues related to oceans and transport are not foreseen until late 2013, at the earliest.

Internal process established by the Secretary-General

8 On return from Rio+20 in June 2012, the Secretary-General established an internal mechanism to coordinate activities to follow up the Conference. Initially, the Secretary-General explored if and how the Organization could contribute towards the development of the UN-wide Sustainable Development Goals as agreed in the outcome document "The Future We Want".

9 However, taking into account the developments as set out above in paragraphs 4 to 6, the Secretary-General found that the United Nations intergovernmental process with OWG should be represented and IMO Committees should not be involved in this work to avoid a risk of duplication of efforts with the OWG. Nevertheless, apart from the above process and bearing in mind that the theme of this year's World Maritime Day is "**Sustainable Development: IMO's contribution beyond Rio+20**", the Secretary-General found it pertinent to use the opportunity of this year's World Maritime Day celebration to bring to the attention of the wider society the role that the Maritime Transportation System plays in sustainable development.

10 On this basis, the Secretary-General has activated his internal mechanism of consultation with industry partners and organizations to develop a vision for a Sustainable Maritime Transportation System. The vision is intended to be released in conjunction with the annual celebration of World Maritime Day in September.

* Decision 67/555 (A/67/L.48/Rev.1) of the United Nations General Assembly.

11 Although the consultation process has not been finalized, the vision of Sustainable Maritime Transportation System will be presented to cover maritime transport in general, not only shipping and the management of vessels, but also the design and building of ships, the planning, construction and improvement of the relevant maritime shoreside infrastructure, maritime education and training, service and equipment providers, and the wider society, including consumers.

12 In order to discuss the sustainability of Maritime Transportation System and the importance of the shipping industry and the role of IMO in the sustainable development the Secretary-General is intending to hold a World Maritime Day event to present a vision for a Sustainable Maritime Transportation System as an outcome of the consultation process on World Maritime Day on 26 September 2013. IMO Member States and observers will be invited to this event to participate in the discussion on how a sustainable maritime transportation system could be realized.

Action requested of the Council

13 The Council is invited to note the information provided in this document.
