

# International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL)

The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, was adopted by the International Conference on Marine Pollution convened by IMO from 8 October to 2 November 1973. Protocol I (Provisions concerning Reports on Incidents involving Harmful Substances) and Protocol II (Arbitration) were adopted at the same Conference. This Convention was subsequently modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto, which was adopted by the International Conference on Tanker Safety and Pollution Prevention (TSPP Conference) convened by IMO from 6 to 17 February 1978. The Convention, as modified by the 1978 Protocol, is known as the "International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto", or, in short form, "MARPOL 73/78". Regulations covering the various sources of ship-generated pollution are contained in the five Annexes of the Convention. The Convention has also been modified by the Protocol of 1997, whereby a sixth Annex was added.

The Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), since its inception in 1974, has reviewed various provisions of the MARPOL Convention that have been found to require clarification or have given rise to difficulties in implementation. In order to resolve such ambiguities and difficulties in a uniform manner, the MEPC agreed that it was desirable to develop unified interpretations. In certain cases, the MEPC recognized that there was a need to amend existing regulations or to introduce new regulations with the aim of reducing even further operational and accidental pollution from ships. These activities by the MEPC have resulted in a number of unified interpretations and amendments to the Convention.

The purpose of this publication is to provide an easy reference to the up-to-date provisions and unified interpretations of the articles, protocols and Annexes of the MARPOL Convention, including the incorporation of all of the amendments that have been adopted by the MEPC and have entered into force, up to and including the 2005 amendments (as adopted by resolution MEPC.132(53)). It should be noted, however, that the Secretariat has no intention of changing the authentic texts editorially or otherwise. For legal purposes, the authentic texts of the provisions of the MARPOL Convention should always be consulted.

In addition, amendments to Annex I and to Annex IV adopted on 24 March 2006 by resolutions MEPC.141(54) and MEPC.143(54), respectively, have been included in the Additional Information section. The date for tacit acceptance of these amendments is 1 February 2007, and if they are accepted on that date they will enter into force on 1 August 2007. As of the date of publication of this edition, the criteria for entry into force of these amendments have not been met. It was felt, however, that the amendments might enter into force before the next revision of the present consolidated edition. Therefore, the text of resolution MEPC.141(54) is reproduced as item 6 of the Additional Information section and that of resolution MEPC.143(54) is item 8 of the same section. For consistency in providing information, guidelines which are not made mandatory by the applicable Annex, and which are contained in another IMO publication, are omitted from the 2006 Consolidated Edition.