

5th MEETING OF THE IHO COUNCIL
IHO C-5
VTC, 19-21 October 2021

Proposal submitted for consideration of Council-5

Submitted by:	IHO Secretary-General, supported by Canada and Japan
Executive Summary:	The intention of this proposal is to outline the establishment of an IHO strategy and resolution for the use of gender-inclusive language.
Related Documents:	<p>A. PRO 1.10 Proposal to Establish an IHO Strategy and Resolution for Gender-Inclusive Language: https://iho.int/uploads/user/About%20IHO/Assembly/Assembly2/A2PRO/eng/A2_2020_PRO1-10_EN_Gender_CaJp_v1.pdf</p> <p>B. ACL 27/2020 Approval of the Second Tranche of Proposals Originally for Consideration by the 2nd Session of the IHO Assembly. https://iho.int/uploads/user/About%20IHO/Assembly/Assembly2/ACL2019/ACL27_2020_EN_v1.pdf</p> <p>C. UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 – Gender Equality (https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/)</p> <p>D. UN Gender-inclusive Language. (English: https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/; Français: https://www.un.org/fr/gender-inclusive-language/)</p> <p>E. Decisions of the 2nd Session of the IHO Assembly: https://iho.int/uploads/user/About%20IHO/Assembly/Assembly2/A-2_DECISIONS_EN.pdf</p>
Related Projects:	None

Introduction / Background

1. For the 2nd Session of the IHO Assembly (A-2), Canada and Japan submitted a proposal to “Establish an IHO Strategy and Resolution for Gender-Inclusive Language” (Ref A). This proposal received near-unanimous support from Member States (MS) and was approved as indicated in ACL 27/2020 (Ref B).
2. The basic premise of this proposal was to ensure that the IHO, starting with its official working languages English and French, promotes and supports UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equity (Ref C). This can be done, in part, by following the UN Guidelines on Gender-inclusive Language (Ref D).
3. Based on the approval of this proposal, Decision 7 of the 2nd Assembly (Ref E) tasked the Secretary-General to:
 - i. “To conduct a comprehensive review of the IHO Basic Documents and Resolutions, adopting the UN Guidelines on Gender-inclusive Language, and to provide draft revisions of IHO Publications M-1 and M-3 for the consideration of the Assembly at the next ordinary session (A-3)”.
 - ii. “To monitor the IHO’s progress towards the implementation of the UN Guidelines on Gender-inclusive Language to all IHO documentation and communications and report to the Assembly at the next ordinary session (A-3)”.

Analysis/Discussion

4. It was recommended in the initial proposal that the updating of the gender references in IHO documents, to the greatest extent possible, take place in conjunction with other edits and revisions, as proposed by committees, sub-committees, working groups, and other organs of the IHO.

5. Notwithstanding the above recommendation, at first a comprehensive review of the IHO Basic Documents (M-1) and Resolutions (M-3), must be completed in order to assess the current state IHO documentation and to establish the starting point from which the progress towards mitigating these situations may be measured.

6. For each detected instance of less-inclusive language included in M-1 and M-3, a new wording, using the guidelines described in the UN Guidelines on Gender-inclusive Language, will be proposed.

7. The results of items 5 and 6 will be reported by the Secretary-General to A-3. Subsequently, the progression of this process will be monitored by the Secretary-General and reported to the Council.

8. To institutionalize the use of gender-inclusive language as an element of gender-equity, an IHO Resolution will also be developed and proposed to A-3. The Resolution will state clearly the IHO's commitment to gender equity. Based on this principle the use of gender-inclusive language becomes a priority in all its future documentation and communication. Any document or communication issued or updated after the 2nd Meeting of the IHO Assembly should follow the UN gender-inclusive guidelines as far as practical but take relevant orientation on language subject matters on the applying official guidelines of the British Academy and the French Academy.

Conclusions

9. As the IHO enters into its second century, it is time for the Organization to set a path to ensure that gender equity is promoted and supported. The wise adoption of gender-inclusive language practices for IHO documents and written communication for both IHO working languages English and French is a small, but important step in that direction.

Recommendations

10. In order for the Secretary-General to complete the task assigned by A-3, it is recommended that:

i. Those of UN Guidelines on gender-neutrality that seems applicable to the IHO are selected and presented as driving principles to the Member States for adoption as a first step.

ii. A comprehensive review and report of IHO Basic Documents (M-1) and Resolution (M-3) vis-à-vis gender-inclusive language be undertaken.

iii. Alternative wording is proposed for each detected instance of less-inclusive language in M-1 and M-3 in keeping with the UN Guidelines on Gender-inclusive Language.

iv. The Secretary-General to prepare a report on the use of gender-inclusive language in IHO documentation and written communication to be reviewed by C-6 and submitted to A-3.

v. The Secretary-General to prepare a draft IHO Resolution on the use of gender-inclusive language to be reviewed by C-6 and proposed to A-3.

Justification and Impacts

11. It was noted in the PRO-10 that the administrative burden on the IHO Secretariat to update all existing documentation only to address gender-specific issues would be burdensome. For this reason the approach of only applying the guidelines for new or updated documentation induced by other modifications, was adopted.

12. However, the permanent application of those recommendations proposed will still require significant effort. In recognition of this, Canada, with its experience working in a bilingual milieu, has offered to assist the Secretary-General by undertaking the basic tasks of the document review and the re-wording proposals, as well as drafting the new IHO Proposal on gender-inclusive language. Other MS interested in assisting with these efforts are invited to contact the Secretary-General.

Action Required of Council

The Council is invited to:

- a. Endorse the Recommendations of this proposal.
- b. Note the call for additional resources to assist.
- c. Provide any other feedback.