



MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

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PH READIES TO RATIFY ANTI-FOULING, BALLAST IN SHIP CONVENTIONS

Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Administrator Maximo Q Mejia Jr. PhD said the Philippines is currently preparing its best to accede or ratify two international marine environmental protection conventions - one dealing with anti-fouling systems (AFS) applied on ships, and the other - on the ship's ballast water management (BWM) to prevent the transfer of invasive marine species.

On 13 November 2014, in a consultative meeting by major stakeholders held at the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Central Office in Manila, Engr. Ramon C. Hernandez, MARINA Director for Shipyards Regulation Service (SRS) and focal point of the International Maritime Organization- Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (IMO-NORAD) Project explained that the AFS Convention prohibits the use of harmful organotin or tributyltin-oxide (TBT) components which are environmentally harmful in anti-fouling paints used on ships and establishes a mechanism to prevent the potential future use of other harmful substances in anti-fouling systems.

On the other hand, "the BWM Convention provides mechanisms for the control and management of ship's ballast and sediments where harmful aquatic organisms may be transferred, and where they may be transferred through ship ballasting operations", according to Hernandez.

Capt. Herminio P. Estaniel Jr., the MARINA Deputy Administrator for Regional Concerns welcomed the participants to the Consultation meeting and he emphasized the responsibility of the Philippines as a member of the global maritime community to accede and ratify to these two Conventions and through the help of the IMO-NORAD Project. Further, he stressed that this meeting with all stakeholders is relevant because this will give the Maritime Administration the pulse of the country's maritime community on the proposed ratification of the Conventions, information on existing practices, and other information that may eventually affect the implementation of the Conventions.

Atty. Brenda V. Pimentel, project lead consultant, introduced the IMO-NORAD Project aimed at assisting East Asian countries in ratifying and implementing IMO instruments for the protection of marine environment. Pimentel, who had a fruitful 10-year stint as IMO regional coordinator for technical cooperation for East Asia, and 24 years as MARINA officer, noted that it was in Circa 2000s that IMO highlighted the other sources of marine threats from shipping operations previously unheard of, through the adoption of the AFS and BWM conventions.

“Our country as a responsible member of the global maritime community stands firm to ratify the AFS and BWM conventions”. She was highly optimistic the meeting has given the Maritime Administration the pulse of the country’s maritime community on the proposed ratification, to include information on existing practices, and other data that may eventually effect the two conventions’ implementation, stressing that the stakeholders could have gained a better understanding of the conventions, foreseeing an all-out support from them.

Representatives to the MARINA conference on IMO-NORAD Project in mid last month, included overseas and domestic shipping sectors, shipbuilding, ship repair and fishing groups, association of paint manufacturers, MARINA, and other government partners.

Among those who actively participated in the conference were Short-Term Consultant Ms. Myrna E. Calag, National Consultant Ms. Dianna Factuar who presented the draft National Work Programme on the Ratification of AFS and BWM Conventions. (Mr. Emerson M. Lorenzo is also one of the National Consultants who was on leave during the conference) and marine environment protection specialist from the Classification Society Engr. Antonio Leosala who discussed the impact and requirements of AFS and BWM Convention.

The global community has long relied on shipping, accounting to 90 percent of the world’s trade to this means of transport. However, as time passed by, the shipping community continues to face challenges that include the construction of safe ships, safe operations, safe navigation, appropriate manning level and competencies. Now, anti-fouling and rightful ballasts must be in place, challenges that must be addressed on time, hence the Philippines must ratify the AFS and BWM conventions.



Participants to the MARINA conference on IMO-NORAD Project.

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The Maritime Industry Authority is an attached agency of the Department of Transportation and Communications tasked to accelerate the integrated development of the maritime industry in the country. It has been implementing reforms and programs to transform the country's domestic shipping industry to global competitiveness and the MARINA into a premiere maritime administration in Southeast Asia. For more information, visit marina.gov.ph.

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