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Circular Letter No.4782
1 October 2023

To: Parties to the MARPOL Convention
IMO Member Governments that are not Parties to the MARPOL Convention
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Notification of the establishment of the date on which discharge requirements for the Red Sea Special Area and the Gulf of Aden Special Area under MARPOL Annex I shall take effect**

Notification of the establishment of the date on which discharge requirements for the Red Sea Special Area under MARPOL Annex V shall take effect

1 The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith, in accordance with the request of the eightieth session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (3 to 7 July 2023), the text of resolution MEPC.381(80) regarding the establishment of the date on which discharge requirements for the Red Sea Special Area and the Gulf of Aden Special Area under MARPOL Annex I shall take effect, and resolution MEPC.382(80) regarding the establishment of the date on which discharge requirements for the Red Sea Special Area under MARPOL Annex V shall take effect. The text of the above-mentioned MEPC resolutions is set out in annexes 1 and 2, respectively.

2 As agreed at MEPC 80, the discharge requirements for the Special Areas shall take effect starting from 1 January 2025, in accordance with the relevant regulations of MARPOL. Member Governments and Parties to the MARPOL Convention are invited to encourage the shipping industry to comply on a voluntary basis with the discharge requirements immediately for the two Special Areas.

ANNEX 1

**RESOLUTION MEPC.381(80)
(adopted on 7 July 2023)**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DATE ON WHICH
REGULATIONS 15.3, 15.5 AND 34.3 TO 34.5 OF MARPOL ANNEX I, IN RESPECT OF
THE RED SEA AND THE GULF OF ADEN SPECIAL AREAS, SHALL TAKE EFFECT**

THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE,

RECALLING Article 38(a) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (the Committee) conferred upon it by international conventions for the prevention and control of marine pollution from ships,

NOTING regulation 1.11.4 and 1.11.6 of Annex I of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto (MARPOL), defines the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden as Special Areas under the said Annex,

NOTING ALSO the definition of the Special Area under MARPOL Annex I, i.e. a sea area where for recognized technical reasons in relation to its oceanographical and ecological condition and to the particular character of its traffic the adoption of special mandatory methods for the prevention of sea pollution by oil is required,

NOTING FURTHER the information provided to the Committee, at its eightieth session, by Parties, including Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and the Sudan, the coastlines of which border the Red Sea Special Area, that adequate reception facilities are provided in all ports and terminals within the said Special Area, in accordance with the provisions of regulation 38.8 of MARPOL Annex I,

NOTING the information provided to the Committee, at its eightieth session, by Parties, including Djibouti and Somalia, the coastlines of which border the Gulf of Aden Special Area, that adequate reception facilities are provided in all ports and terminals within the said Special Area, in accordance with the provisions of regulation 38.8 of MARPOL Annex I

HAVING CONSIDERED the matter to establish the date, on which the discharge requirements of regulations 1.11.4 and 1.11.6 of MARPOL Annex I in respect of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Special Areas shall take effect,

1 DECIDES that the discharge requirements of regulations 15.3, 15.5 and 34.3 to 34.5 of MARPOL Annex I in respect to the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden Special Areas shall take effect on 1 January 2025, in accordance with the requirements set out in regulation 38.8.1 of MARPOL Annex I;

2 ENCOURAGES Member Governments, industry groups and other stakeholders to comply immediately on a voluntary basis with the Special Area requirements for the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden Special Areas;

3 REQUESTS the Secretary-General to notify, in conformity with regulation 38.8.1 of MARPOL Annex I, all Parties to MARPOL of the aforementioned decision by 31 December 2023;

4 ALSO REQUESTS the Secretary-General to notify all Members of the Organization of the aforementioned decision.

ANNEX 2

**RESOLUTION MEPC.382(80)
(adopted on 7 July 2023)**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DATE ON WHICH
REGULATION 6 OF MARPOL ANNEX V, IN RESPECT OF THE
RED SEA SPECIAL AREA, SHALL TAKE EFFECT**

THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE,

RECALLING Article 38(a) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (the Committee) conferred upon it by international conventions for the prevention and control of marine pollution from ships,

NOTING regulation 1.14.4 of Annex V of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto (MARPOL), defines the Red Sea area as a Special Area under the said Annex,

NOTING ALSO the definition of the Special Area under MARPOL Annex V, i.e. a sea area where for recognized technical reasons in relation to its oceanographical and ecological condition and to the particular character of its traffic the adoption of special mandatory methods for the prevention of pollution of the sea by garbage, is required,

NOTING FURTHER the information provided to the Committee, at its eightieth session, by Parties including Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and the Sudan, the coastlines of which border the Red Sea Special Area that adequate reception facilities are provided in all ports and terminals within the said Special Area, in accordance with the provisions of regulation 8.2 of MARPOL Annex V,

HAVING CONSIDERED the matter to establish the date on which the discharge requirements of regulation 6 of MARPOL Annex V in respect of the Red Sea Special Area shall take effect,

1 DECIDES that the discharge requirements of regulation 6 of MARPOL Annex V in respect to the Red Sea Special Area shall take effect on 1 January 2025, in accordance with the requirements set out in regulation 8.2 of MARPOL Annex V;

2 ENCOURAGES Member Governments, industry groups and other stakeholders to comply immediately on a voluntary basis with the Special Area requirements for the Red Sea Special Area;

3 REQUESTS the Secretary-General to notify, in conformity with regulation 8.2 of MARPOL Annex V, all Parties to MARPOL of the aforementioned decision by 31 December 2023;

4 ALSO REQUESTS the Secretary-General to notify all Members of the Organization of the aforementioned decision.