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**CAPACITY-BUILDING: STRENGTHENING THE IMPACT OF WOMEN
IN THE MARITIME SECTOR**

**Information on the activities under the IMO-WISTA partnership
to promote diversity in the maritime sector**

Note by the Secretariat and WISTA International

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document provides information on the activities under the IMO-WISTA partnership on technical cooperation

Strategic direction, if applicable: 1 and Other work

Output: 1.6 and OW 21

Action to be taken: Paragraph 13

Related documents: TC 70/3, TC 70/5; TC 69/10, TC 69/10/1, TC 69/10/2; A 31/13/1 and resolution A.1147(31)

Introduction

1 The Women's International Shipping and Trading Association (WISTA International) is an international organization whose mission is to attract and support women at the management level, in the maritime, trading and logistics sectors. It promotes gender diversity and inclusion as key factors in providing a sustainable future for the shipping industry on a global scale. WISTA International's efforts support the overarching principles in the Strategic Plan of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), especially the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

2 The Committee will recall that WISTA International was granted consultative status with IMO in 2018. Consultative status gives WISTA International the opportunity to formally contribute to the discussion to promote diversity, inclusion and women's empowerment within IMO. Since then, WISTA International has played an important role in helping IMO further its reach to women in the maritime industry by contributing to the discussions for increasing capacity in the maritime industry, a critical component of which is promoting women in the industry, both shoreside and shipboard, and also showcasing the varied technical skills and leadership that women bring to the industry.

3 In January 2020, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was concluded between IMO and WISTA International on promoting greater diversity and inclusion through enhanced cooperation activities in the maritime field. These activities will lay the groundwork for further discussion on how a diverse workforce will be essential for a sustainable future. An update on the main initiatives already under way is detailed in the following paragraphs.

IMO-WISTA International study to collect and analyse data on the number of women employed in the maritime sector

4 Closing the gender gap will not be possible without first addressing the data gap. In response to this, IMO and WISTA International, within the framework of the aforementioned MoU, have embarked on a study to establish a benchmark or baseline to record the number of women working in the maritime sector. This was also one of the conclusions from the report of the Third WMU International Conference: Empowering Women in the Maritime Community held in Malmö, Sweden, in 2019 (document TC 69/10/2 refers).

5 In the study, measures have been taken to minimize duplication of data entries from the same entity. The survey will be circulated to Member States, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations and industry, and will cover the following categories of maritime fields. Consequently, the maritime industry, for the purposes of this survey, will be defined as follows:

- charterers;
- fisheries;
- financial services (banks and financial institutions);
- government/regulatory/law enforcement;
- seafarers;
- service providers (all types including class societies, manning agencies, law and insurance, inspections and audits, technical services, logistics and transport, bunkering, casualty response and investigation, salvage and wreck removal, etc.);
- shipbrokers;
- shipowners;
- ship managers;
- maritime education and training (MET) institutions;
- maritime technology, including ship design, shipbuilding, naval architecture, engineering, digital technologies, underwater technologies;
- offshore workers;
- port operations/port logistics; and
- persons employed by maritime associations/organizations.

- 6 The Committee will recall that the objectives of the survey include to:
- .1 obtain baseline data on the number of women in maritime and oceans fields across all sectors and the positions they occupy, as per the defined categories; and
 - .2 identify ways to increase the visibility of women working in the maritime sector, by offering the survey participants the opportunity to share their views, choosing answers from a preselected number of options.

Establishment of a Speakers' Bureau

7 With a view to making panels more diverse in the maritime sector, the second collaborative project under the MoU is the establishment of a Speakers' Bureau (database) of female experts, covering a wide range of maritime subjects, available for speaking engagements at panels, conferences, training courses, etc.

Sharing of best practices in support of resolution A.1147(31)

8 In support of resolution A.1147(31) on *Preserving the Legacy of the World Maritime Theme for 2019 and achieving a Barrier-Free Working Environment for Women in the Maritime Sector*, IMO and WISTA International have joined efforts to continuously identify and overcome existing constraints in all aspects of the maritime sector, in particular, recruitment, training, capacity-building, technical cooperation and leadership. With this in mind, another key part of the MoU is to strengthen cooperation and share best practices between the seven IMO-established regional women in maritime associations (WIMAs) and the 51 national WISTA associations (NWAs).

9 Last year, driven by the 2019 IMO World Maritime theme "Empowering Women in the Maritime Community", WISTA International supported some 12 capacity-building activities primarily delivered through IMO's Women in Maritime programme (document TC 70/8 refers). This in-kind support, mainly through the provision of free-of-fee experts, has proved vital in helping raise awareness of the importance of gender equality, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and has encouraged more conversation for gender equality in the maritime space.

Strategic partnerships

10 WISTA International is a strategic partner to the GEF-UNDP-IMO major project on Building Partnerships to Assist Developing Countries Minimize the Impacts from Aquatic Biofouling, also known as "GloFouling Partnerships". It is envisaged that this partnership will help bring female experts, including marine scientists, to biofouling conferences and other project activities, and that gender perspectives are included throughout the project. Thus, creating women-specific initiatives that can be implemented at the regional and national level, with a view to contributing to the overall promotion of gender equality and creating a constituency for changing the mainstream.

The power of visibility

11 To achieve a more diverse workforce, it is essential that women are visible. Although the maritime industry is seeing a shift in diversity and is beginning to put gender on the agenda, the absence of images showing women working as captains, chief engineers, seafarers and other maritime professions remains an issue. Moreover, the media have a great potential to promote the advancement of women and the equality of women and men by portraying women and men in a non-stereotypical, diverse and balanced manner.

12 To address this, on 8 March 2020, in celebration of International Women's Day, IMO's Women in Maritime programme, with support from WISTA International, launched a photo search initiative to build its bank of images of women in maritime. Through a virtual wall, participants were invited to submit photos under the hashtag #MaritimeWomenPhotoShare (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/imo-un/albums/72157713420624662>). It is envisaged that seeing a wide range of images of a diverse workforce, and specifically women at work in the maritime sector, will help redress the balance and showcase the wide range of opportunities there are for women throughout the maritime world. This will be key in inspiring young women to embark upon a maritime career by showing that there is a place for them in the maritime sector.

Action requested of the Committee

13 The Committee is invited to:

- .1 note the information provided in this document on the activities undertaken by IMO and WISTA International and make such comments and recommendations as it deems appropriate;
- .2 support the IMO-WISTA International study to collect and analyse data on the number of women employed in the maritime sector and request all Member States to complete the survey;
- .3 support IMO and WISTA International in the delivery of activities and social media campaigns to promote implementation of resolution A.1147(31); and
- .4 recall the request made to Member States and observer organizations to voluntarily provide the Organization with information about any work, studies or initiatives they have undertaken or plan to undertake to assess the participation of women in maritime related professions in their respective jurisdictions, in addition to women's access to MET institutions, as contained in document A 31/13/1.