



**FACILITATION OF THE ENTRY INTO FORCE AND HARMONIZED  
INTERPRETATION OF THE 2010 HNS PROTOCOL**

**Note by the IMO and IOPC Funds Secretariats**

**SUMMARY**

*Executive summary:* This document reports on the status of work carried out on the 2010 HNS Protocol and the efforts of both the IMO and IOPC Funds Secretariats to promote further ratifications and entry into force of the 2010 HNS Protocol since LEG 112. In particular, the document refers to the assistance provided by the Secretariats to States considering ratification of, or accession to, the 2010 HNS Protocol, and also provides information on the planned future work to be carried out by the Secretariats with regard to the setting up of the HNS Fund and the first session of the HNS Fund Assembly.

*Strategic direction, 7  
if applicable:*

*Output:* 7.12

*Action to be taken:* Paragraph 19

*Related documents:* LEG 106/3, LEG 106/3/2, LEG 106/16; LEG 107/3; resolution A.1123(30); LEG 109/3; LEG 110/3; LEG 111/3, LEG 111/INF.4; LEG 112/3 and HNS.2/Circ.15

**Introduction**

1 At its 106th session, the Legal Committee recalled that, with the entry into force of the Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks on 14 April 2015, the 2010 HNS Convention was the remaining gap in the global framework of liability and compensation conventions.

2 The 2010 HNS Convention will enter into force 18 months after the date on which it is ratified by at least 12 States, including 4 States each with not less than 2 million units of gross tonnage, and having received during the preceding calendar year a total quantity of at least 40 million tonnes of cargo that would be contributing to the general account.

3 There are currently eight Contracting States to the Protocol, namely Canada, Denmark, Estonia, France, Norway, Slovakia, South Africa and Türkiye. With the present eight Contracting States, five of which have each more than two million units of gross tonnage, the 2010 HNS Protocol needs only four more States to ratify or accede to it plus the required contributing cargo; thus the Convention is significantly close to entering into force.

4 The eight Contracting States received, in 2024, a total of 22,153,250 tonnes of cargo contributing to the general account. In the first half of 2025, all eight Contracting States submitted data on contributing cargo received in 2024 in accordance with article 20(5) of the HNS Protocol (HNS.2/Circ.15).

5 Once the conditions for entry into force of the 2010 HNS Protocol are fulfilled, the Secretary-General of IMO will, in accordance with article 43 of the 2010 HNS Convention, convene the first Assembly meeting of the HNS Fund. Meanwhile, the IMO and the IOPC Funds Secretariats continue to work in close cooperation to assist Member States to become parties to the 2010 HNS Convention and to develop any preparatory items required for the first Assembly of the HNS Fund.

### **Promotion and developments regarding the entry into force of the Protocol**

6 Promotion and developments regarding the entry into force of the Protocol since 2010 are described in document LEG 111/3, paragraphs 5 to 12. Further developments are reflected in document LEG 112/3, paragraphs 7 to 13, in particular concerning the HNS Workshop which was jointly hosted by the IMO and IOPC Funds Secretariats in May 2024, with the focus on HNS cargo reporting and its related practical aspects, and the importance of the HNS Convention for the protection of victims, which is particularly important not only now but also in light of a greener future where there will be an increase in the transportation of alternative fuels and, therefore, potential risks to coastal States.

7 Government authorities and other interested stakeholders have continued to contact both the IMO and IOPC Funds Secretariats to obtain clarification on certain aspects of the Convention, for assistance, or to seek further information on HNS matters in general. Observing that requests from Member States and industry for assistance and information had become more regular and complex than in previous years, it was important that a specific programme of assistance on HNS matters be organized. With the existing HNS training content that the IMO and IOPC Funds Secretariats have available, it is possible to offer regional workshops for Member States that are key to promoting the Convention. There are also several tools available to assist States with implementation. This support will help to ensure that all Member States apply identical processes when obtaining the HNS reports from their industry and that they submit them correctly to the future HNS Fund Secretariat.

8 Recently, for the benefit of Black Sea littoral countries, the Maritime Transport Agency of Georgia offered to host an IMO Sub-regional Workshop on the IMO Civil Liability and Compensation Regime in Batumi, Georgia (6 to 11 October 2025), under IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP). The workshop covered the CLC/Fund regime, the 2010 HNS Convention, the 2001 Bunkers Convention, the 1976/1996 LLMC, the 2007 Nairobi Wreck Removal Convention, the 1989 Salvage Convention and the 1974/2002 Athens Convention. The emphasis was put on the implementation and enforcement of the full liability and compensation regime, including the reporting requirements under the 2010 HNS Convention. The workshop was delivered by a team composed of officers from the IMO and IOPC Funds Secretariats and the International Group of Protection and Indemnity Associations (P & I Clubs). Maritime stakeholders from Georgia, Moldova, Türkiye and Ukraine attended the workshop.

9 Likewise, the Maritime Transport and Logistics Sector of Egypt, in cooperation with IMO, hosted a Regional Workshop in Alexandria, Egypt (7 to 11 December) to strengthen the capacity of maritime stakeholders from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Yemen to enforce the IMO liability and compensation regime including the 2010 HNS Convention. Presentations were delivered by a team from the IMO Legal and External Relations Division, IOPC Funds and the P & I Clubs,

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alongside contributions from representatives of maritime administrations and legal experts in the Middle East and North Africa region highlighting their domestic law-making and implementation processes. These exchanges highlighted national experiences and challenges in aligning with the relevant IMO treaties, including the HNS Convention.

10 In respect of the application of the 2010 HNS Convention to substances that are hazardous when carried in bulk (MHB substances), the IMO Secretariat continues to carry out further work to update the list of substances, as referred to in Circular Letter No.3144, to take into account a number of amendments relating to the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes Code (IMSBC Code).

11 During the IMO Assembly, at its thirty-fourth session in November 2025, the delegations of Belgium, Finland, Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Sweden provided information about their intention towards the ratification of the 2010 HNS Protocol in a coordinated manner at LEG 113 to ensure a level playing field. The Assembly supported the ongoing efforts by Member States and the Secretariat to bring the 2010 HNS Protocol into force at the earliest possible opportunity.

### **Developments from the IOPC Funds Secretariat since LEG 112**

12 In accordance with resolution 1 of the International Conference on the Revision of the HNS Convention, which adopted the 2010 HNS Protocol, and based on its work plan, the IOPC Funds Secretariat has continued to progress the tasks necessary to set up the HNS Fund and to make preparations for the first session of the HNS Fund Assembly. These activities will accelerate once the conditions for entry into force of the Convention are met to ensure that the new intergovernmental organization that will be created to administer the HNS Fund will be fully operational from the beginning.

13 An important function of the IOPC Funds Secretariat is to maintain the website [www.hnsconvention.org](http://www.hnsconvention.org), which is a useful tool for accessing resources related to the 2010 HNS Convention and progress towards entry into force. Since the last meeting of the Legal Committee, information on recent HNS incidents has been added, and a new hot topics section has been implemented.

14 The HNS website also provides access to the HNS Finder tool, an online database that allows users to search the list of all HNS as defined by the 2010 HNS Convention. The HNS Finder facilitates HNS reporting by Contracting States and contributors. The database is updated annually. The most recent update of the list will be published on the HNS website well in advance of the 31 May deadline set out in article 45(6) of the 2010 HNS Convention for Contracting States to meet their obligations to report the amounts of contributing cargo received in their jurisdictions in 2025.

15 An important component of the IOPC Funds' work plan to prepare for the entry into force of the 2010 HNS Convention is the development of an online reporting system that can accommodate the different reporting options set out in the 2010 HNS Convention. Following a discovery exercise completed in 2024, the IOPC Funds Secretariat contracted a software company to develop the system. Work was completed in September 2025. The IOPC Funds Secretariat has been presenting and testing the online reporting platform with Contracting States and contributors, to improve it and to allow users to become familiar with the system before the Convention enters into force.

16 The IOPC Funds Secretariat has also been coordinating the development of an HNS Convention Claims Manual with participation from the IMO Secretariat, the Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution (CEDRE),

the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the P & I Clubs and ITOPF Limited (ITOPF). The text of a draft manual is close to being finalized and will be presented for adoption to the HNS Fund Assembly.

17 During 2025, the IOPC Funds Secretariat continued to take opportunities to promote the entry into force of the 2010 HNS Convention, to engage with interested States and other key stakeholders, and to share information with industry representatives through participation in conferences and the delivery of training and outreach activities. These included webinars and other activities organized in close cooperation with the Legal Affairs and External Relations Division and the Technical Cooperation and Implementation Division of IMO.

18 As entry into force of the Convention draws nearer, the IOPC Funds will continue to work closely with the IMO Secretariat, Member States, contributors and maritime stakeholders to ensure its successful implementation. In this regard, the IOPC Funds Secretariat remains available to assist States, considering ratifying or acceding to the 2010 HNS Convention.

#### **Action requested of the Committee**

19 The Committee is invited to take note of the information contained in this document and comment, as it may deem appropriate.

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