1st Cooperation Forum under the Co-operative Mechanism in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore
27 – 28 May 2008
Agenda item 5

CF 1/5/3
27 May 2008

SHIPPING AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE STRAITS OF MALACCA AND SINGAPORE "FUTURE PERSPECTIVE"

Submitted by Malaysia

Abstract

1.   International shipping looks set to continue growing despite the expected downturn in the global economy. The increase in international shipping frequency and other trends in global shipping such as the use of larger container vessels, increased air emission from vessels, and the coming into force of IMO regulations on ballast water, anti-fouling and air pollution pose a new set of challenges in navigation and environmental protection in restricted waterways such as the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. The impact of these trends on the Straits is unclear for now. For example, while the number of vessels continues to increase, the capacity of the Straits to assimilate them remains to be determined. The status of the marine environment in the Straits would also need to be examined in relation to the pollutants mentioned above and actions developed to address the potential increase in pollution levels as a result of increased shipping. On the other hand while the future issues may need further examination, steps to improve safety of navigation in the Straits through the implementation of co-operative mechanism would at least ensure that the possibility of shipping incidents in the Straits is reduced and pollution from accidents is minimised. These measures may be sufficient in the short to medium term but a longer term perspective of shipping and navigation in the Straits is needed to address the gamut of issues mentioned earlier. Where action is concerned this could involve sustaining current efforts to ensure safety of navigation while the littoral States and users study the other impact of shipping in the Straits.

Action requested of the Committee

2.   The Committee is invited to take note of the information provided and decide as it may deem appropriate.