

IOPC Funds

Providing Financial Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage since 1978



Mr. Gaute Sivertsen
Director, IOPC Funds

Who are we?

We are two intergovernmental organisations (the 1992 Fund and the Supplementary Fund) which provide compensation for oil pollution damage that occurs in Member States as a result of spills of persistent oil from tankers. Established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and based on two international Conventions (the 1992 Civil Liability and Fund Conventions), the international liability and compensation regime provides a two-tier system under which the shipowner/insurer pays the first tier of compensation, and the oil industry, via the IOPC Funds, pays the second tier up to a maximum of SDR 203 million (USD 249.5 million). An additional layer of compensation is available to those Member States who have opted to also accede to the Supplementary Fund Protocol, which provides up to SDR 750 million (USD 922 million).

Why are we needed?

This system of shared liability has worked well for over 45 years and, having been involved in over 150 incidents, the IOPC Funds has paid some £766 million in compensation. Safer shipping has meant fewer spills in recent years, but with over 2,000 million tonnes of crude oil transported by sea each year and some 8,000 tankers operating, the risk of an incident remains. In fact, the 1992 Fund is currently dealing with 13 incidents impacting 10 of its 121 Member States. Fortunately, no incidents have yet occurred involving the Supplementary Fund. However, 33 States have opted to ensure they have the maximum protection by joining that Fund also, with Mauritius joining as recently as April this year.

Current incidents

This past year we have been called into action to support those impacted by the Princess Empress incident in the Philippines. The ship, which sank in rough seas in February 2023 whilst carrying 800,000 litres of fuel oil as cargo, caused significant pollution damage in Oriental Mindoro and other areas. Working in close cooperation with the Shipowner's P&I Club, the insurer of the vessel, and the Government, we have had to find innovative ways to ensure claimants, who in many cases live in remote locations, without traditional banking services, are aware of their options and able to both make a claim and receive payments of compensation. At the April 2024 sessions of the governing bodies, I was also authorised to pay compensation in respect of an incident which occurred in February this year in Trinidad & Tobago. Following the confirmation that the relevant Conventions were indeed applicable to this incident, I personally visited the impacted areas and met with senior officials in the State. Whilst there are some unusual circumstances surrounding this incident that still need to be investigated, it serves as a stark reminder that the existence of an international body to provide compensation to those affected, covering the cost of clean-up operations and protecting the environment, is still very much required.

About my role at the IOPC Funds

My involvement with the IOPC Funds goes back much further than my election as Director in 2021, having represented Norway at the Legal Committee of IMO as well as the meetings of the



Photo credit: Getty images

The Prestige incident, 2002.



Photo credit: General Marine Surveyors

The Nakhodka incident, 1997.

IOPC Funds' governing bodies for 30 years, with 10 of those as Chair of the 1992 Fund Assembly. I have always had great respect for the work of the organisation and have valued very highly the role it plays in the international maritime community. Personally, as a dedicated diver I'm passionate about the oceans and the marine environment. As the Director of the IOPC Funds, I do believe I have the opportunity to make a difference in some way, given that we provide funds for the clean up of oil spills, contributing to the restoration of the marine environment in the event of such incidents. Clean and healthy oceans are every diver's dream and certainly provide me with motivation to ensure the IOPC Funds continues to deliver its mission each year. As I originally stated when presenting my candidacy for the role, as Director I consider my key responsibilities to be: to serve the Member States and those impacted by oil pollution incidents; to protect the Funds' interests; and to ensure that the organisation is prepared to adapt to changing needs. I have held these underlying principles in mind throughout my first two years in office and, together with my dedicated colleagues in the Secretariat, we have worked with Member State representatives, the Audit Body and key stakeholders to find ways to provide an efficient service to all key stakeholders, to seek solutions to specific issues and introduce improvements wherever possible.

Meetings of the governing bodies

Meetings of the IOPC Funds' governing bodies usually take place twice per year and are held at the headquarters of IMO in London, which also houses the IOPC Funds' offices. The Assemblies of each Fund have a variety of functions, such as the appointment of the Director, adoption of the budget, approval of the accounts, agreement on policy issues and establishment of subsidiary bodies. The 1992 Fund Executive Committee takes decisions and instructs the Director on matters relating to claims for compensation. Specific areas of focus at the most recent meetings in November 2023 and April 2024, were new and ongoing incidents; the failure of States to comply with obligations under the Conventions in respect of the submission of oil reports and payment of contributions; the potential impact of international sanctions on the international liability and compensation regime and the entry into force of the 2010 HNS Convention.

What other services does the Secretariat provide?

The Secretariat of the IOPC Funds undertakes a range of activities aimed at, strengthening the IOPC Funds' relationships with Member States and other international, intergovernmental or

non-governmental organisations. We provide a variety of training and support activities, which are organised as both in-person and online events, and attend a number of international workshops, conferences and exhibitions. In addition, we are always happy to share knowledge, promote awareness of the international liability and compensation regime and support a number of educational institutions each year by giving lectures to university students to enhance their understanding of the relevant Conventions.

The IOPC Funds and the WMU

The IOPC Funds and the World Maritime University have a long-standing relationship which we greatly value. Since 2022, I have had the pleasure of continuing the practice of previous IOPC Funds' Directors to deliver an annual full-day lecture, in person at the University in Malmö. The dedication and interest of the WMU students are always impressive and over the years it has been a pleasure for the IOPC Funds to cross paths with a number of WMU alumni pursuing their maritime careers at IMO and elsewhere. It was an honour to be invited to join the WMU Board of Governors in 2023 where I hope to be able to make a meaningful contribution to the work of the University and am confident it will further strengthen the cooperation between the IOPC Funds and the WMU.



The Director is joined by students of the WMU following his delivery of a guest lecture on 16 February 2024.

Recent Environmental Topics at the IMO



Yusuke Kawai
Junior Professional Officer
Climate Action and Clean Air Section
Marine Environment Division
IMO



The author is behind the IMO Secretary-General

Introduction

In this article, I will focus on important environmental topics discussed at the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Before delving into the main body, I would like to introduce my background.

I am currently serving as a Junior Professional Officer in the Climate Action and Clean Air Section of the Marine Environment Division at IMO. With over a decade of professional experience at Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (ClassNK) and the Japan Ship Technology Research Association, including serving as one of the coordinators of the Correspondence Group on Marine Fuel Lifecycle GHG Analysis, I joined IMO last year.

Environmental topics at IMO

At IMO, the Marine Environmental Protection Committee (MEPC) plays a pivotal role in discussing environmental issues.

While MEPC covers a wide range of issues, I will primarily focus on discussions related to climate change, in particular concerning energy efficiency of ships and life cycle assessment (LCA) for marine fuels in relation to my duties at IMO. These topics have been among the hot topics in recent sessions. Additionally, discussions at MEPC revolve around air pollution, marine plastic litter, ballast water management, and more.

- Tackling climate change -

At MEPC 80 in July 2023, IMO adopted the 2023 IMO Strategy on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships (2023 IMO GHG Strategy). The 2023 IMO GHG Strategy sets the levels of ambition, including:

- 1) to reduce carbon intensity of international shipping (to reduce CO₂ emissions per transport work), as an average across international shipping, by at least 40% by 2030, compared to 2008;
- 2) uptake of zero or near-zero GHG emission technologies, fuels and/

or energy sources to represent at least 5%, striving for 10%, of the energy used by international shipping by 2030; and

- 3) to peak GHG emissions from international shipping as soon as possible and to reach net-zero GHG emissions by or around, i.e. close to, 2050, taking into account different national circumstances.

IMO is actively engaging in discussions on GHG reduction measures to effectively implement the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy.

- Energy efficiency of ships -

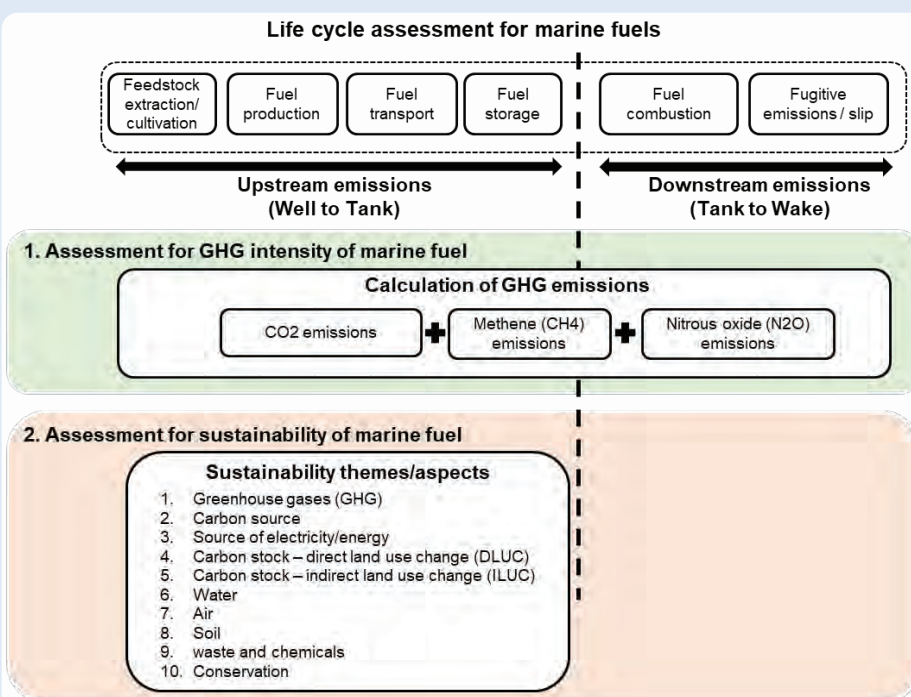
In 2011, IMO adopted the first global mandatory measures to improve ship energy efficiency, namely the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) and Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP). Furthermore, as part of IMO's commitment under the Initial IMO Strategy on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships, additional mandatory measures were adopted in 2021 focusing on improving the energy efficiency of existing ships. These measures, known as short-term GHG reduction measures, include the Energy Efficiency Existing Ship Index (EEXI) and Carbon Intensity Indicator (CII).

MEPC is tasked with reviewing the effectiveness of the implementation of the short-term GHG reduction measures by 1 January 2026.

- Life Cycle Assessment for marine fuel -

In the promotion of alternative fuels, there is a recognition of the need for comprehensive assessment, including both onboard (also known as tank-to-wake) and onshore (also known as well-to-tank) emissions in a life cycle assessment (LCA).

In 2023, IMO adopted the Guidelines on life cycle GHG intensity of marine fuels (LCA Guidelines), providing guidance on life cycle GHG intensity assessment for marine fuels. The illustration provides an overview of LCA for marine fuels. However, developing the LCA framework within IMO requires addressing various challenges, including methodological refinement, sustainability, and verification and certification. MEPC continues its ongoing deliberations to address these challenging tasks.



Conclusion

In conclusion, IMO is tackling highly challenging issues, and its importance will continue to grow in the transitioning times ahead, I am dedicated to contributing my utmost effort to drive progress forward.

Digitalization and Smart Port Development in Indonesia



Nugroho Dwi Priyohadi
(Indonesia, 2005)



Green Port and Smart Port Award, 2023, Indonesia
(Photo credit: New Priok Container Terminal Archive)

Hello Sasakawa fellows, this short article will inform you about the latest issues in Indonesia in the context of the development of smart ports including digitalization and green port development.

As it is known, Indonesia is an archipelagic country that has 3,227 ports (some of them local and non commercial ports, some of them commercial ports) located on islands in various corners of the region to ensure connectivity between islands by sea. These thousands of ports are not only for national shipping, 40 percent of them are international trade routes. The connectivity that occurs is useful for improving the national economy in a sustainable manner. There are some problems, that the logistics system in Indonesia is faced with the problem of high logistics costs, namely 24% of GDP, with a logistic performance index (LPI) value of 3.15 on a scale of 1-5 (2018). Therefore, the port sector as one of the logistics nodes continues to make improvements, one of which is by implementing digitalization. The digitalization implementation process has begun at each port and nationally with Inaportnet, Simlala, Simpadu and the National Logistics Ecosystem (NLE).

Currently, the development of port connectivity and digitalization in Indonesia is on the right track, partly due to digitalization carried out by the government.

As a continuation, the government wants to increase efficiency by building smart ports, including the digitalization process for systems and green port development. Currently, there are 14 large ports that have been digitally integrated, thereby minimizing corrupt practices

at ports and also improving efficiency of port operation. In total there are 112 ports under Pelindo (state owned company) and 37 under various other institutions. The Indonesian government has committed to building not only a Green but also a Smart Port aiming for completion soon. In 2023-2024, it is hoped that 149 ports will be digitalized. Minister of Transportation, Budi Karya Sumadi, said that according to the President's direction, ports must be not only efficient and competitive but also consider environmental sustainability.

Sucofindo Greenport (SICS) as a government partner, has also carried out an assessment in terms of achievements towards green and smart ports. Green and smart port criteria for management aspects, technical aspects (ports, occupational health and safety, environment and energy) and digitalization aspects are assessed annually and awards are given to those selected.

It is hoped that in 2024 and beyond, the development of smart port digitalization and green port development will be increasingly advanced in order to achieve efficiency targets, increasingly better logistics performance, and increasingly cheaper and competitive logistics costs.





World Maritime University Arab Alumni Association (WMU-AAA)



Ahmed Mohamed Ismail
Mohamed Ismail
(Egypt, 2023)

In a momentous occasion uniting maritime leaders, Professor Maximo Q. Mejia, Jr., President of the World Maritime University (WMU), embarked on his first visit to the Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport (AASTMT) in Egypt. The significance of this visit reverberated as it coincided with the inauguration of the World Maritime University - Arab Alumni Association (WMU-AAA) and its first Annual General Assembly (AGA).

The beginning of WMU-AAA was marked in Malmo, Sweden, where two esteemed Arab Professors, Professor Khanssa Lagdami and Professor Aref Fakhry, sided by Arab MSc and PhD students from Class of 2023, laid its foundation and elected Capt. Eslam El Badri (2023) to be the first President of the association. This historic occasion symbolized a collective commitment to fostering collaboration and excellence within the Arab maritime community.

Welcoming Dr. Mejia to AASTMT was a privilege, as I moderated the event. In my remarks, I emphasized the profound impact of WMU alumni collaboration and expressed gratitude to Professor Ismail Abdelghafar, President of AASTMT, for his generous support in hosting the Association's inauguration and its AGA.

Professor Abdelghafar reflected the sentiments, highlighting the pivotal role of WMU-AAA in bolstering the maritime industry across the Arab nations. His words underscored AASTMT's unwavering commitment to encouraging initiatives that drive progress and innovation within its maritime sector.

Dr. Mejia, in his speech, expressed his delight in participating in the inaugural AGA of the WMU-AAA. He emphasized the indispensable role of alumni associations in propelling

advancements in the maritime field globally, underscoring their significance in fostering knowledge exchange and industry-wide collaboration.

The main section of the event garnered significant attention, especially with the participation of esteemed senior WMU Arab alumni from various Arabian countries. Dr. Capt. Amr Monir Ibrahim (Egypt, 2013), a distinguished Sasakawa Fellow, led a thought-provoking discussion on how WMU-AAA could leverage its collective expertise to advance the maritime industry regionally and internationally.

Dr. Amr lauded the commendable efforts of The Nippon Foundation in supporting maritime education in Arab countries, notably through funding numerous alumni at WMU. Those alumni, many of whom are emerging leaders in the maritime field, stand as a testament to the power of collaborative initiatives in driving positive change.

As the inaugural AGA drew to a close, it was evident that WMU-AAA had set sail on a journey fueled by collaboration, innovation, and shared purpose. With unwavering support from esteemed leaders, such as Dr. Mejia and Professor Abdelghafar, WMU-AAA is poised to make enduring contributions to the maritime industry regionally and globally.



Handing over the Honor Trophy of the WMU - AAA to the WMU President Mejia.

Dedication: The Legacy of Dr. Hans Ludwig Beth



Dr. Shuo Ma
Professor of WMU
(1995-2023)

Photo credit: World Maritime University

Before my retirement from WMU recently, I took a final look at the old office files. My review pace slowed amidst the binders marked “Visiting Professors”. These binders contain documentation for each visiting professor I had coordinated with. One name caught my attention: Dr Hans Ludwig Beth, a visiting professor who had dedicated two decades to teaching at WMU. Dr Beth was from Hamburg and had served as the director of HHM for ten years at the Port of Hamburg where he played a pivotal role in transforming Hamburg into a world’s leading container port and a gateway to the European market. Prior to his tenure in Hamburg, Dr Beth spent 14 years as the director of the Institute for Shipping Economics and Logistics (ISL) in Bremen. Notably, he was not only a globally renowned port executive but also a scholarly author with several books on maritime economics and logistics to his name. As I revisited the correspondence letters, faxes and email exchanges with Dr Beth, memories came back to me.



Beyond his regular lectures every year, Dr Beth consistently sought ways to do more for WMU. Communication records revealed his significant efforts and unwavering support for WMU’s field study programmes, and particularly the Professional Development Courses (PDCs). In the early 2000s, WMU embarked on expanding its PDCs to generate much-needed revenue for the University. Evidently, our PDCs would gain greater appeal if high-level industry experts, like Dr Beth, could be included for the delivery. However, I was uncertain whether he would be willing to participate, especially under the condition that, while all expenses would be covered, any profits would go solely to WMU. His response was almost immediate, affirming his participation without the slightest hesitation or stipulation. Over the subsequent years, we jointly conducted five PDCs across various countries.

An internal memo in the file brought a smile to my face. It was about a suggestion to improve the visiting professor’s accommodation at WMU’s residence. The story started with an interesting conversation involving Dr Beth, a new visiting professor and myself. The newcomer, who came to teach at WMU for the first time, lodged, like Dr Beth, in a visiting professor’s flat at the University’s residence. One day at WMU,

we sat together at the cafeteria during the coffee break. The new visiting professor spoke to me complaining about the room amenities and querying, disapprovingly, why WMU did not even provide shampoo in the rooms. Before I could reply and offer apologies, Dr Beth interjected, suggesting that such items could be readily obtained at nearby convenient stores. “Must I buy shampoo myself?” the new professor asked. “Otherwise you have soap in the room” said Dr Beth. “But I have never used soap to wash my hair!” responded the new professor. “You can give it a try,” Dr Beth suggested, and ended the conversation. Though an insignificant incident, I still recall it vividly after so many years. It demonstrates Dr Beth’s deep-seated affection for WMU and his inclination to defend the University ... even in the face of its perceived “shortcomings”.

One of WMU’s most distinctive and laudable features is its visiting faculty scheme. WMU was conceived and built based on a fundamental idea of transferring maritime knowledge from advanced shipping nations to the countries lacking such expertise, ultimately contributing to the global objective of “Safer Ships and Cleaner Oceans”. Such an idea has been effectively realised, thanks not only to the endorsement of the international maritime community at large but also to the concrete support of the shipping industry in general and the generous contributions of the maritime professionals in established maritime nations in particular.

The primary assistance WMU receives from shipping organizations comes in the form of practical training or field studies. The most valuable input from maritime professionals to WMU is in the area of the University’s extensive visiting faculty programme which boasts over a hundred maritime experts at any given time. Typically, these experts provide their teaching services pro bono, while the University offers them the most economical travel options and accommodations at WMU’s residence facilities. The success of WMU is, to a large extent, attributable to the generosity of these remarkable individuals.

Dr Hans Ludwig Beth stands as an exemplary representative of WMU visiting professors. In 2017, he was honoured as Honorary Fellow of WMU in recognition of his twenty years of service. Unfortunately, due to health reasons, he was unable to attend the ceremony. Dr Beth passed away in 2019, but his legacy lives on.

to Hanoi >



Nguyen Hai NAM
(Vietnam, 2002)



Dr. Sasakawa generously made time to connect with WMU alumni in Vietnam. This meeting was convened in the auditorium of the Hotel du Parc Hanoi, Vietnam, on the afternoon of March 20, 2024.

At the beginning of the meeting, attendees were shown a brief video that recounted memories of the WMU Vietnam alumni's activities over the past 20 years. The footage showcased a significant chapter in WMU's global outreach unfolded with the establishment of its presence in Vietnam. Recognizing the strategic importance of Southeast Asia's maritime landscape and the growth potential within the region, WMU extended its footprint to Vietnam, laying the foundation for a dynamic network of alumni poised to contribute to the development of the global maritime field. As we conveyed our joy and gratitude at the opportunity to meet Dr. Sasakawa in person, each alumnus took a moment to introduce ourselves with our current professional pursuits. In his speech, Dr. Sasakawa expressed the happiness with an opportunity to meet numerous WMU Vietnam alumni, recognizing alumni's significant contributions to the social economic development, particularly within the maritime sector. Furthermore, Dr. Sasakawa shared insights into the ongoing journey of establishing and strengthening the relationship between Vietnam and Japan, while also offering commentary on the promising future of enhancing bilateral ties across various domains. To answer the questions from a fellow, "why are you wearing red socks?", Chairman Sasakawa expressed his personal struggles with social interactions, such as feeling

anxious when approached by shop assistants or dining alone. As a result, his wife has been the primary decision-maker in their household for 53 years. He believes that a harmonious household can be achieved by following one's wife's instructions without argument and genuinely saying "yes" from the heart. He concluded by discussing his upcoming participation in a ceremony with the Minister of Education and Training to enhance education for children with disabilities and ethnic minorities, emphasizing his commitment to this cause despite the challenges of the journey. (For his full speech, please visit the following link <https://www.wmujapan.net/events/speech/-03.html>)

At the meeting, a donation from WMU Vietnam was conveyed through Dr. Sasakawa as a gesture of solidarity, aiming to share in the sorrow and losses experienced by the victims' families affected by the January 2024 earthquake in Japan.

Throughout the dinner, Mr. Kudo's face was adorned with a timeless smile, reflecting his unwavering joy in meeting the WMU Vietnam alumni. The dinner table transformed into a lively hub of storytelling, where alumni not only cherished past experiences but also shared our passions and current career pursuits.



to Dhaka >



Mohammad Mosharraf
(Bangladesh, 2012)



It was indeed an immense pleasure and a proud privilege for me to meet with Dr. Sasakawa at Dhaka on June 6, 2024. Knowing from our fellow Mr. Mohidul Islam (Bangladesh, 2008), Additional Secretary, His Excellency, Dr. Yohei Sasakawa had been visiting Dhaka to witness Rohingya refugees who are sheltered at Vasahanchar by the Government of Bangladesh. H.E. Dr. Sasakawa serves as Japan's Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar. Despite his very busy schedule in Dhaka, we were very fortunate to meet with him on April 6 for a few hours in the evening. We attentively listen to his speech on his work in Bangladesh. We are very grateful to Dr. Sasakawa

addressing the "Rohingya refugees", which is a very critical issue for us. He praised the Bangladesh Government for providing support to the Rohingya refugees on the island and said it's a step toward returning them to Myanmar. Initially, it was a tough job to organize for the different organization worldwide.

We are also very grateful to Dr. Sasakawa for his wonderful work and dedication to eliminate leprosy in Bangladesh as he urges "The Last Mile - on the road to eliminate leprosy".

Presently I am working with a project "Matarbari port development project" in Cox's bazar district which is initiated by Japanese Govt. and their financial assistance by JICA. We hope the project will be completed within 2029. Also WMU Sasakawa fellow Mr. Mahbub Morshed (2008), Mr. Ashraf Karim Chowdhury (2010) are working in this project. Wishing Dr. Yohei Sasakawa be in good health, devoted with human-rights work and a Goodwill Ambassador to all of us.

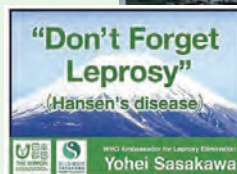


Dr. Sasakawa raised hopes for a new life through animal husbandry.

Don't Forget the Leprosy Banner Unfurled Atop Africa's Highest Mountain

Chairman Sasakawa, the World Health Organization Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro in February 12, 2024 following his climb of Mt. Fuji in August 2022 and unfurled a banner reading "Don't Forget Leprosy." This act followed a joint statement issued on January 31 by the Chairman and WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, urging an end to prejudice and discrimination against people affected by leprosy. Chairman Sasakawa also offered a prayer for the victims of the January 1 earthquake in Japan's Noto Peninsula from the summit.

Despite leprosy being curable, the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed drug distribution and the discovery of new cases, with many unreported cases believed to exist in Africa. Chairman Sasakawa's banner on Africa's highest mountain aimed to raise awareness about this issue. Accompanied by two experienced physicians, Chairman Sasakawa, aged 85 and with a pacemaker,



made the ascent in six days. He may be the first person over 80 with a disability to achieve this, potentially setting a Guinness World Record.

Chairman Sasakawa expressed hope that his achievement would inspire greater global involvement in eliminating leprosy. He climbed via the challenging Marangu Route, which has a success rate of about 50% according to local tour companies.

News from WMU

In February, WMU was pleased to welcome ...



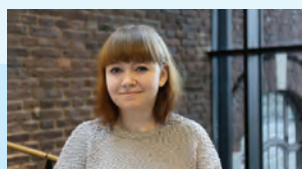
Anete Logina
(Latvia, 2009)

Anete Logina on 19 February as our new Manager and Legal Officer, Office of the President.

Anete joined WMU from the Maritime Administration of Latvia, where she has served as a lawyer since 2004. Anete has worked extensively on developing and implementing maritime related national law. She also has represented her country - Latvia - at various committees, working groups and correspondence groups of the International Maritime Organization and European Union institutions. She has constantly engaged in academic endeavours (lecturing, supervising and assessing research papers etc.) at various universities in her home country and abroad.

Anete is a graduate of the Police Academy of Latvia from where she holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Law (2005) and a Master's degree in Law (2008). She is also a graduate of WMU from where she holds MSc in Maritime Affairs (2009, under a Sasakawa Fellowship) and a PhD in Maritime Affairs (2016, under a fellowship from INTERTANKO).

"I am excited to return to my alma mater once again. Although this time I am coming back in a different role, I am doing it with the same, always present sense of belonging and gratitude," said Anete.



Madeleine Lerup

Madeleine Lerup on 1 February as our new Assistant University Registrar (Student Services). Madeleine takes over after Lyndell Lundahl, who retired after over 30 years of service to WMU.

Madeleine was born and raised in Malmö but has spent most of her professional life abroad. Before joining WMU, Madeleine served as a Seconded National Expert at the European External Action Service in Brussels, where she contributed to the European Union's efforts in fighting and building resilience against disinformation and information manipulation. Prior to that, she worked for the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Swedish embassies in Moscow, Kyiv and Vienna. Madeleine also has previous experience in academia; she served as a Programme Coordinator and Academic Advisor at Lund University for three years.

"I am excited about all the possibilities of my new role, and I am happy to bring my international experience back to my hometown," said Madeleine.

Both Anete and Madeleine look forward to contributing their diverse experiences to the University, and to making their own contributions to WMU's commitment to excellence.

Editor's note

I am pleased to bring you the 87th issue of the Friends of WMU, Japan Newsletter. As you may already know, in Japan, the calendar includes the zodiac signs, and this year is the Year of the Dragon. The 'Dragon' symbolizes a powerful, ascending force, signifying growth, and development. I look forward to hearing

about the achievements of members of Friends of WMU, Japan carried by the sea and wind to our office this fiscal year.

Wooden sake cup for the New Year celebration.
(Yuzuruha Shrine: Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture)



Dr. Koji Murai
Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology



This newsletter is published under a grant from The Nippon Foundation to promote communication among the Sasakawa Fellows of WMU (World Maritime University) and edited by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation in cooperation with Dr. Koji Murai Ms. Yasko Suzuki, Mr. Shun Masui, Mr. Eisuke Kudo and Ms. Sue Jackson.

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