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IFSMA NEWSLETTER

The Shipmasters' International Voice



Wallenius Wilhelmson
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IFSMA

International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations (IFSMA)

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Readers are reminded that the opinions expressed in the IFSMA Newsletter are those of the various authors and providers of news and are not necessarily in accord with IFSMA policy.

Secretary General's Message

On behalf of IFSMA I hope that you are keeping well and, above all, staying safe.

Much of the maritime news at the moment is focussed on the continuous attacks on merchant ships in the conflict zones. It is reported that the sheer volume of ship attacks around the Strait of Hormuz has left the maritime security reporting centre (UKMTO) struggling to keep track, with most targeted vessels, no longer reporting incidents directly.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez continues to fight the cause of seafarer safety and freedom of navigation. Regarding the waters of the Strait of Hormuz he commented: '*Seafarers have continued to perish in these attacks and around 6,000 seafarers remain trapped since the beginning of the conflict*.'

There are still no signs that the attacks on ships will end.

In addition, during October, we have reported about the overall decline in global piracy-related incidents that are presently at the lowest level since 1992. In particular there has been a decline in reported incidents in the Gulf of Guinea and the Singapore Straits.

However, there has been an increase in the Somalia-related piracy activity where seafarers have been killed during rescue missions. The key message here is that all ships should take full precautions and implement the security related *Best Management Practices* (available from our website, on the front page) when approaching or proceeding through the high-risk areas.

We encourage you to stay informed about these and other developments affecting the maritime sector by visiting the IFSMA website and following our LinkedIn and Facebook channels, where we share our latest news, initiatives and updates.

In these challenging times, we extend our very best wishes to all our members, colleagues and seafarers around the world.

Stay safe and safe sailing.

Andy Cook, Secretary General

The IMO Digest

Appearing below is a summary of some of the news received with grateful thanks from the excellent IMO Media service in recent weeks.

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Francophone African States

Strengthening engagement in maritime decarbonisation

French-speaking African countries gathered to discuss a sustainable and inclusive maritime energy transition during a three-day sub-regional workshop held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 6 to 8 October.

Understanding of MARPOL Annex VI

Organized by IMO in collaboration with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the office of the IMO Regional Coordinator for West and Central Africa (Francophone), the workshop brought together 80 participants from eighteen countries to strengthen understanding of MARPOL Annex VI and ongoing IMO efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping.



The event provided a platform for participants to examine the challenges and opportunities of maritime decarbonisation, while enhancing their ability to engage in IMO discussions on regulatory measures and their implementation.

Towards a just transition

Discussions were guided by the Mombasa Roadmap for maritime decarbonisation and just transition in Africa, developed during a Regional Workshop of 6/7 February 2025* in Mombasa, Kenya. The framework identifies actions across three priority areas: sustainable shipping governance, shipping and port infrastructure development, and skills development and job creation.

Participants explored investment needs in port infrastructure, alternative fuel supply chains, human capital and institutional capacities. They also discussed the importance of active regional participation in developing IMO measures, preparing for future requirements and capturing emerging economic opportunities.

Enhancing regional cooperation

The workshop enabled countries to identify priority needs, exchange experiences and lessons learned, and consider practical actions to benefit from maritime decarbonization.

Participants emphasized that strengthened regional cooperation and collective action will be essential to delivering a successful and lasting maritime energy transition.

Comment

In the words of IMO Technical Officer Camille Bourgeon: '*What we will remember in particular from this workshop is the common determination expressed throughout these three days: the determination to ensure that the voice of French-speaking African States is heard in international discussions and that the maritime sector's energy transition is both ambitious and equitable, while also creating opportunities for the region*.'

Colonel-Major Julien Yao Kouassi, Director-General of Maritime Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, reflected: '*Participants indicated their willingness to continue pursuing the objectives of the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy through enhanced cooperation among French-speaking African States*.'

Broad representation

Participating countries included Algeria, Benin, Cameroon, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Morocco, Mauritius, Mauritania, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Senegal, Seychelles, Togo and Tunisia.

The African Union Commission was also represented. Delegates from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Académie Régionale des Sciences et Techniques de la Mer (ARSTM), and Women in Maritime of West and Central Africa (WIMOWCA) Côte d'Ivoire contributed perspectives on workforce, financing and regional cooperation challenges associated with a just transition.

* https://tinyurl.com/4chacyaa

Fifty years of REMPEC

Protecting the Mediterranean marine environment

Half a century of cooperation to protect the Mediterranean marine environment were marked on 6 October as the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) celebrated its fiftieth anniversary under the theme ***Our Mediterranean – Our Responsibility***

This commemorative event, alongside the Malta Maritime Summit, brought together countries

bordering the Mediterranean to reflect on five decades of cooperation and to look ahead to the challenges facing the region.

Founded to strengthen preparedness and response capabilities

Established in 1976 as the Regional Oil Combating Centre, REMPEC was created to strengthen the preparedness and response capabilities of Mediterranean coastal States. Its role has since evolved to address a broader range of marine pollution challenges, with an increasing focus on preventing pollution from ships.



Over the past five decades, REMPEC has helped twenty Mediterranean countries establish operational marine pollution contingency systems and provided round the clock day-in, day-out expert support through the Mediterranean Assistance Unit.

Additionally, it has trained more than 5,000 government officials and volunteers in pollution preparedness and response.

Contributing to regional efforts

REMPEC's work has also supported countries in strengthening legislation to prevent pollution from ships and contributed to regional efforts towards the transition to lower-carbon shipping.

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez joined the anniversary event, highlighting the importance of continued regional cooperation to protect one of the world's most important and shared marine environments.

Shared commitment

The Mediterranean connects communities, economies and ecosystems across its shores. Its protection depends on sustained cooperation, preparedness and a shared commitment to action.

As REMPEC looks to the next fifty years, its role remains as relevant as ever — helping Mediterranean countries prepare for emerging environmental challenges, strengthen pollution prevention and response, and work together to protect the sea for generations to come.

Video

Readers are invited to watch the 5:43 duration video: *50 years of protecting the Mediterranean marine environment* using the link here: https://tinyurl.com/mwb2w3aj

Port digitalization - Senegal

IMO reported on 9 October that it is supporting Senegal's efforts to digitalize port procedures with a needs assessment to guide the setup of a maritime single window (MSW) at the Port of Dakar.

Introducing the MSW

A maritime single window is a one-stop digital system that streamlines the exchange of information required for ships' arrival, stay and departure from ports.

By simplifying information exchange between ships and public authorities, an MSW can reduce duplication, improve coordination and cut the time and costs associated with port clearance procedures.

MSW use dating from 01.01.2024

Since 1 January 2024, all IMO Member States are required to establish, maintain and use MSWs in ports.



The needs assessment mission, conducted in Dakar from 5 to 9 October considered existing port processes and institutional frameworks to identify requirements for establishing the system.

Broad Senegalese representation

IMO consultants engaged Senegal's National Agency of Maritime Affairs (ANAM), the port administration, relevant ministries and public agencies, including customs, port health, border police and immigration

services. Consultations also involved private-sector stakeholders, including shipping lines, shipping agents and terminal operators.

Towards a roadmap for digital transformation

A comprehensive mission report outlining a roadmap to support the development of the MSW in the port of Dakar will identify key stakeholders and their roles, analyse institutional and operational needs, and include practical recommendations for the deployment of the MSW.

Supporting digital tools

The recommendations will be aligned with IMO principles and guidance, as well as the development of supporting digital tools.

IMO's ITCP

The needs assessment was delivered through IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP)* in close collaboration with the National Agency of Maritime Affairs of Senegal (ANAM)**.

* https://tinyurl.com/bdz3xpsn
**https://anam.gouv.sn/

Domestic ferry safety strengthened across the Caribbean

Domestic ferry safety was reinforced across the Caribbean region through an IMO-led regional workshop from 28-30 September organized with the Maritime Administration and relevant national authorities of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in Kingstown.

Strengthening regulatory frameworks through regional cooperation

Representatives from Caribbean States* participated in the workshop to enhance the safety of domestic ferry operations through stronger regulation, training and emergency preparedness. The event also facilitated the exchange of national experiences and best practices.

Participants examined national ferry safety frameworks, including legislation, fleet characteristics and passenger traffic, as well as the implementation of STCW provisions and requirements for the classification of domestic ferries. Discussions explored opportunities to further strengthen national regulatory systems using the IMO Model Legislation on Domestic Ferry Safety (resolution MSC.518(105)).

The workshop provided a platform for Caribbean countries to share lessons learned, identify practical solutions and promote regional cooperation in support of safer ferry operations.

Building skills for safer ferry operations

Mr Hyrone Johnson, Director of the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Maritime Administration, highlighted the importance of strengthening domestic ferry safety following recent ferry casualties in the region.

The need for effective training and emergency preparedness has also been underscored by recent ferry incidents involving MV *June Aster* and MV *Virgo Transport 8* in the Philippines and Indonesia in September 2026. These incidents reinforce the importance of well-trained personnel, effective safety procedures and robust emergency preparedness within the domestic ferry sector.

Sascha Pristrom, Head of Marine Technology and Goal-Based Standards at IMO, commented: '*Safe and reliable domestic ferry services are a lifeline for island communities across the Caribbean. Maritime education and training are essential to ensure that regulatory frameworks keep pace with technological innovation and the growing use of alternative fuels in shipping*.'

**Participating countries included Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenadines (host), Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago*.

Somalia

IMO supports stronger port security coordination

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) conducted a four-day Port Security and Inter-Agency Coordination Workshop in Bosaso, Puntland State of Somalia, from 14 to 17 September, under the European Union-funded Regional Programme for Maritime Security in the Red Sea Area.

This workshop brought together port, security and government authorities to strengthen port security through better coordination, information sharing and incident response.

A key outcome was the development of draft Terms of Reference and a roadmap for establishing a multi-agency Port Security Advisory Committee. Participants also strengthened their understanding of their roles and responsibilities in supporting port security and responding to security incidents.

ISPS Code and SOLAS requirements

Participants explored practical ways to apply the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code and related SOLAS requirements, with a focus on security planning and cooperation among the agencies involved in port security.

Discussions focused on how authorities, port operators and security agencies can work more effectively together to address common challenges, improve communication and strengthen security arrangements. Participants also identified practical measures to improve coordination and support international maritime security standards.

The workshop was opened and closed by Puntland Minister of Sea Transport, Ports and Marine Crime Intervention, HE Shakir Mohamed Guled.

The activity forms part of IMO's continuing technical assistance in the Red Sea region, supporting efforts to strengthen maritime security, improve the resilience of port infrastructure and promote international maritime security standards.

EU-funded

The EU-funded Regional Programme for Maritime Security in the Red Sea Area supports beneficiary countries in strengthening maritime security, port security and safety of navigation through technical assistance, training and institutional support.

Türkiye

Electric and hybrid ferries' potential

Türkiye's Sea of Marmara ferry network could cut greenhouse gas emissions by 63% by switching to a mix of hybrid and fully electric vessels, while avoiding nearly half a billion euros in health and environmental damage costs and supporting around 1,100 jobs a year, according to new research*.

Initiated by Türkiye's Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure and supported through IMO's GreenVoyage2050 programme, the study assessed 67 Ro-Ro and Ro-Pax ferries carrying vehicles and passengers across 26 ports. The network transports around 25 million passengers and seven million vehicles each year.

Significant potential to cut emissions

The 158-page study found that battery-electric and hybrid propulsion are technically feasible options across all Ro-Pax and Ro-Ro ferry operations assessed in the Sea of Marmara.

It identified an optimum scenario combining hybrid and fully electric vessels to balance emissions reductions and costs. Under this scenario, annual GHG emissions could fall by around 63% by 2050 compared with business-as-usual operations using diesel fuel.

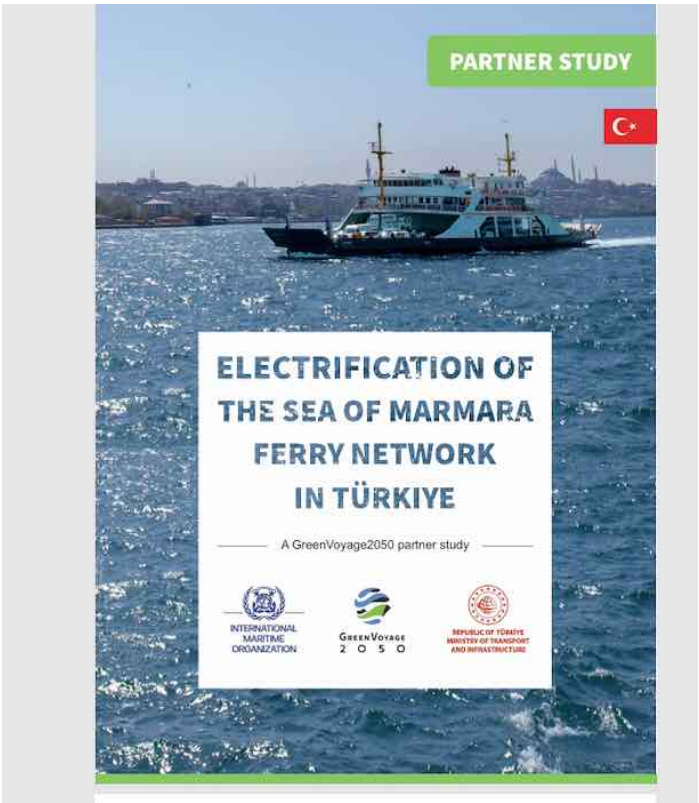
The transition would also reduce local air pollution and could avoid an estimated €492 million in cumulative health and environmental damage costs.

Going further, converting the entire fleet to fully electric operations could cut GHG emissions by 84% by 2050. This could rise to as much as 95% if Türkiye's electricity grid decarbonises in line with its 2053 net-zero target.

The study identified no major technical barriers to electrification. The main challenges to large-scale deployment are charging infrastructure, upfront investment, coordinated energy planning and the domestic regulatory framework.

Building on Türkiye's shipbuilding strength

Ferry electrification would build on Türkiye's established shipbuilding expertise, boosting clean technology industries in the country and reducing reliance on imported marine fuels.



Under the optimum hybrid-electric scenario, the required investment could support an average of around 1,100 jobs a year through to 2050. Vessel construction and retrofit jobs are expected to be concentrated in Turkish shipyards.

Moving towards implementation

To turn these findings into action, the study recommends a coordinated approach involving government, municipalities, ports, ferry operators and the energy sector.

Priority actions include:

- Expanding shoreside charging infrastructure and high-voltage grid connections at ports, supported by long-term port concessions that include charging infrastructure.
- Securing a low-carbon electricity supply at ports, including by allowing ports to generate, use and sell locally produced low-carbon electricity.
- Introducing targeted financial incentives, mobilizing blended finance, and using emissions-based port fees to encourage cleaner vessels.
- Integrating electrification into transport and energy planning.
- Embedding environmental criteria into public ferry procurement.
- Supporting detailed feasibility studies and pilot projects that can demonstrate commercial viability before wider deployment.

Türkiye's Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure is now looking to advance a first pilot electrification project in the Sea of Marmara to demonstrate the technical, environmental and commercial benefits identified in the study.

About GreenVoyage2050

The GreenVoyage2050 Programme supports developing countries in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from shipping, in line with the IMO Strategy on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships**. Through technical assistance, capacity building, policy support and pilot projects, the programme helps countries identify practical pathways towards maritime decarbonization while fostering innovation, investment and international collaboration.

The programme is technology- and fuel-neutral, responding to pilot project proposals submitted by countries through annual open calls for expression of interest to participate in the Programme.

EU-members' support

GreenVoyage2050 is funded by the Governments of Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway.

* https://tinyurl.com/yhfjesay
** https://tinyurl.com/y73rty6r

Alternative fuels and new technologies

Strengthening seafarers' competence

Maritime experts shared their views and experiences on the evolving competence and training needs for seafarers as the maritime sector transitions to new fuels and technologies, at an event held in Lisbon from 14 to 18 September.

The event brought together representatives from maritime administrations, industry, maritime education and training institutions, international organizations and academia. It was organized by IMO and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA https://www.emsa.europa.eu/), with support from the World Maritime University (WMU https://www.wmu.se/).

Discussions addressed competence and training requirements associated with the use of alternative fuels and emerging technologies, including ammonia, methanol, hydrogen, batteries and onboard carbon capture systems. Participants examined how training and competence frameworks can develop alongside technological and operational developments.

This event highlighted efforts underway at IMO to support the transition, including the ongoing comprehensive review of the 1978 International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW Convention)* and Code and work on development of training provisions for seafarers serving on ships using alternative fuels and new technologies.

Emphasis on continued cooperation

The importance of continued cooperation between regulators, industry and maritime education and training institutions was emphasized to ensure training frameworks keep pace with technological and operational developments.

Technical visits organized by EMSA complemented the programme, giving participants insight into practical applications of emerging technologies and innovative training tools. The visits included to a battery-powered vessel, its e-Lab and virtual reality training facilities, as well as the European Maritime Awareness Centre (EMAC, located at EMSA, Lisbon).

IMO's ITCP

Delivered under the IMO Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP), the event reinforced the importance of international cooperation and dialogue to support seafarers and maritime training institutions as the industry adopts new fuels and technologies.

For more

For more information on IMO's work on preparing seafarers for the energy transition, readers are invited to use the link here: https://tinyurl.com/3v9vk68u

* https://tinyurl.com/3kjxpu6v

Ammonia

Exploring its use as marine fuel.

International experts have shared their insight on the use of ammonia as marine fuel during an IMO technical seminar at IMO HQ in London on 17 September.

The seminar was organized by IMO's Future Fuels and Technology Project (FFT Project)[1] and brought together around 800 participants from IMO Member States, IGOs, NGOs, industry and academia, both in person and online. Professor Lynn Loo, Chief Executive Officer of the Global Centre for Maritime Decarbonization, moderated the event.

Participants exchanged technical information and experiences on the potential use of ammonia as a marine fuel, including developments in production, bunkering and infrastructure, technology developments, notably on ammonia-fuelled engines and control of emissions, as well as safety and environmental considerations.

Comment

Opening the seminar, David Osborn, Director of the IMO Marine Environment Division, highlighted the importance of technical knowledge in supporting discussions on alternative fuels. He reflected: '*Sound policy must nevertheless rest on sound evidence. The decisions this Organization takes on alternative fuels depend on a clear and shared understanding of what*

the technology can do today, where the difficulties lie, and what remains unresolved.'

IMO's Future Fuels and Technology Project (FFT Project) is a partnership between the Government of the Republic of Korea and IMO, aiming to support GHG emissions reduction from international shipping by promoting the uptake of future fuels and technology.

The seminar was the fifth technical seminar organized under the project, following previous editions covering onboard carbon capture and storage (OCCS)[2], energy transition of shipping (Hong Kong Maritime week), biofuels[3] and methane-based[4] fuels.

Resources and further information:

- To see a technical seminar on the use of ammonia as marine fuel (video recording and presentations available) readers are invited to use the link here: https://tinyurl.com/yf8xmj7p
- For a technical seminar series: Future Fuels and Technology website, the link is here: https://tinyurl.com/yc5nmk6y

1 https://futurefuels.imo.org/
2 https://tinyurl.com/b8xk523v
3 https://tinyurl.com/mr2yxppj
4 https://tinyurl.com/kmmft23s

Advancing maritime digitalization

West and Central Africa

Digitalization of ports across nine West and Central African countries was boosted through a regional workshop held in Accra, Ghana, from 19 to 23 October.

An international partnership

This event was organized by IMO, the Africa Transport Policy Program (SSATP), and the World Bank, in partnership with the Ghana Maritime Authority.

Key aims

Key aims of the event included:

- Promoting the adoption of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business[1], which sets out how shipping and port data are structured and shared electronically to streamline communication.
- Scaling up the implementation of Maritime Single Windows (MSWs) and Port Community Systems (PCSs), which are integrated digital platforms that streamline vessel and cargo clearance, reduce bureaucratic delays, and will help to strengthen Africa's competitiveness in global maritime trade.

A central principle of the workshop was that MSW systems are not standalone digital solutions but core elements of a broader, regionally harmonized trade facilitation ecosystem.

MSW systems are mandatory under IMO's Facilitation (FAL) Convention[2].

Promoting regional collaboration

The workshop convened regional and international institutions committed to translating policy into action, including the Port Management Association of West and Central Africa (PMAWCA), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the African Harbour Masters' Committee (AHMC), and the African Alliance for Electronic Commerce (AAEC).

Broad representation: nine States

The workshop was structured around both knowledge sharing and practical capacity building, with 55 participants, including 15 women, from maritime administrations, port authorities, and customs authorities in Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Sierra Leone.

Sessions highlighted the strategic benefits of MSW implementation and the need to align with the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business, with sharing of lessons and good practices from regional IMO needs assessment missions, including analyses of ship and cargo clearance systems, key challenges, and recommendations for effective MSW deployment.

Participating Member States presented their port systems, fostering peer learning on progress, challenges, and opportunities.

Supporting a regional trade facilitation ecosystem

The workshop explored potential synergies between Port Community Systems and MSWs to further enhance port efficiency and trade facilitation. Deepening participants' understanding of the FAL Convention, strengthening coordination among port stakeholders, and clarifying the financing and policy requirements for MSW implementation, the workshop helped equip countries with the practical knowledge needed to accelerate MSW deployment.

In addition the workshop drew on the IAPH–World Bank study: *Port Community Systems: Lessons from Global Experience*[3].

Anchoring the Workshop within SSATP's Strategic Agenda

This workshop was the third in a series of regional events, building on a first workshop, held in Abidjan[4] in December 2025, and a second, delivered in Dar es Salaam[5] in April 2026.

This reflects the expanding scale and momentum of the continental effort to advance maritime

digitalization. The initiative aligns with SSATP's Fourth Development Plan (DP4)[6], which prioritizes digitalization of transport and trade corridors across Africa. MSW systems are widely acknowledged as essential for reducing logistics costs, improving efficiency, and strengthening port competitiveness.

IMO's ITCP

The workshop was delivered through IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP)[7] in close collaboration with the World Bank, with resources from the Korea–World Bank Partnership Facility (KWPF) and the Ministry of Transport of Ghana. It built on SSATP's recent analytical work, Catching Up on Digital Port Infrastructure for Africa[8], which highlights that effective MSW implementation depends not only on digital tools but also on a solid legal framework, strong institutional leadership, and coordinated stakeholder engagement.

[1] https://tinyurl.com/yax5wym4
[2] https://tinyurl.com/mtxn2t6f
[3] https://tinyurl.com/wmxwu66w
[4] https://tinyurl.com/yvxuwjsd
[5] https://tinyurl.com/yvh3jebn
[6] https://tinyurl.com/yvh3jebn
[7] https://tinyurl.com/y2kxbu79
[8] https://tinyurl.com/4rznrxec

Maritime transport priorities

IMO strengthens cooperation with ASEAN

Towards the end of October the IMO updated the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)[1] on its technical cooperation activities and opportunities for regional collaboration to advance safer, greener and more inclusive maritime transport across Southeast Asia.

This presentation was delivered during the 51st meeting of the ASEAN Maritime Transport Working Group (MTWG), held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 20 and 21 October.

Eleven Member States

ASEAN, comprising eleven Member States—Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam—plays a vital role in global trade and sustainable growth, particularly in shipping, shipbuilding, logistics, and the maritime workforce. IMO participates in MTWG meetings as a Dialogue Partner, supporting regional maritime programmes and raising the profile of the sector.

During the meeting, IMO highlighted progress under IMO's Technical Cooperation Framework for the 2026–2027 biennium and identified areas of potential alignment with the ASEAN Transport Sectoral Plan (ATSP) 2026–2030.

An approach to technical cooperation

IMO outlined its approach to technical cooperation, emphasizing needs-driven assistance informed by Member States' requests, detailed needs analyses and findings from the IMO Member State Audit Scheme. The Organization also encouraged ASEAN maritime administrations to use the IMO Technical Cooperation Portal to submit requests for support, monitor ongoing activities and improve alignment between national priorities and IMO assistance.



The IMO delegation included Ms Jean Ver Pia, Head of the Asia and Pacific Section (APS) who attended online, Ms Johanna Diwa Acallar, Regional Coordinator for East Asia, Ms Astrid Dispert, Mr Jamie Jones, and Ms Nadine Bresemann from the GreenVoyage2050 Programme team who attended in person.

ASEAN Member States expressed appreciation for IMO's technical assistance and welcomed the appointment of Ms Acallar as the new Regional Coordinator, noting the positive developments in strengthening IMO's regional presence.

Facilitating, strengthening, supporting and promoting

IMO's Regional Presence Office for East Asia plays an important role in connecting the Organization's global priorities with regional and national needs. Its work includes facilitating technical cooperation, strengthening partnerships, supporting resource mobilization and promoting the exchange of knowledge and experience among Member States in the region.

IMO's Blue Solutions Project

IMO also officially launched its new Blue Solutions Project[2], which will support efforts to reduce emissions from ships, ports and hinterland transport in ASEAN, in cooperation with PEMSEA, advancing the transition towards greener maritime transport across the region.

GI-SEA

The Global Initiative for Southeast Asia (GI-SEA)[3], represented by Mr Tawirat Bates, also updated the

meeting on the progress of its activities to support the implementation of MOU on ASEAN Cooperation Mechanism for Joint Oil Spill Preparedness and Response and the Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan (ROSCP), including the results of the High-Level Spill Preparedness Capability Survey.

[1] https://asean.org/
[2] https://tinyurl.com/4bevw5bw
[3] https://gisea.org/

S E Asia

Supporting maritime decarbonisation

IMO launches Blue Solutions

IMO has launched Blue Solutions, a new project intended to support maritime decarbonisation in Southeast Asia.

The announcement was made at the 51st ASEAN Maritime Transport Working Group (MTWG) Meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

IMO will implement the project in collaboration with Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA) and six partner countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Focus on ports and their role in decarbonisation

A key feature of the project is its focus on ports, and their potential role in maritime decarbonisation, helping countries assess and demonstrate solutions such as port and vessel electrification, cleaner technologies and operational improvements. The project will also support the development of greenhouse gas emission baselines and national action plans, and strengthen capacity-building, partnerships and knowledge-sharing across the region.



The project is funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the Government of Germany, with an initially approved budget of €5.9 million for Phase 1, and is expected to run until January 2031.

The International Climate Initiative (IKI) commented: '*The transition to low-carbon shipping presents an important opportunity for Southeast Asia to strengthen its maritime competitiveness while contributing to global climate goals.*

'*Through Blue Solutions, we are pleased to support practical, country-driven action that can demonstrate scalable solutions and deliver tangible environmental and economic benefits across the region*.'

Welcoming the initiative, Aimee Gonzales, Executive Director of PEMSEA highlighted the importance of linking ports with wider transport and coastal development strategies by saying: '*Ports are critical nodes connecting maritime transport, energy systems, industry and surrounding communities.*

'*By combining IMO's expertise in maritime decarbonisation with PEMSEA's experience in integrated coastal management, including green port development, Blue Solutions provides an opportunity to support practical, locally driven solutions that deliver benefits both within ports and across the wider transport system*.'

Moving from ambition to implementation

The project aims to support ports in moving from ambition to implementation, and to help create conditions for innovation, investment and the deployment of practical low-emission solutions across Southeast Asia.

Welcoming the launch of Blue Solutions, Jose Matheickal, Director of IMO's Technical Cooperation and Implementation Division, added: '*Maritime decarbonisation requires strong partnerships. Through Blue Solutions, we are bringing together governments, ports, industry and development partners to identify practical solutions, build local capacity and create pathways for implementation. By working together, we can accelerate the transition to a more sustainable maritime future*.'

Blue Solutions will be implemented under IMO's wider GreenVoyage2050 Programme*, drawing on its technical expertise, partnerships and knowledge-sharing networks while complementing ongoing efforts to accelerate maritime decarbonisation in developing countries.

About the IMO Blue Solutions Project

The IMO Blue Solutions Project is supported by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the Federal Government of Germany. Within the Federal Government, the IKI is anchored in the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN). Selected individual projects are also the responsibility of the Federal Foreign Office (AA).

* https://greenvoyage2050.imo.org/

World Maritime Day Parallel Event, Busan, ROK

Maritime leaders push for stronger action on global shipping rules

World Maritime Day Parallel Event spotlights theme:

From Policy into Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence.

International delegates meeting in Busan, Republic of Korea from 26 to 27 October called for stronger national action and international cooperation to ensure global shipping regulations are effectively implemented.



Co-organized by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, the 2026 World Maritime Day Parallel Event brought together governments, international organizations, industry and academia to explore practical ways to put global maritime regulations into action.

Discussions focused on supporting countries amid rapid shifts facing the sector, such as digitalization, automation and energy transition, as well as the far-reaching impacts of geopolitical conflicts.

Opening the event, Vice Minister of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea, HE Mr Nam Jaeheon, urged greater international solidarity. He commented: '*These challenges must be addressed together. If we stand united around the IMO and work together to find solutions, I am confident we can build a brighter future*.'

Seafarers first, always

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez outlined regulatory milestones achieved in 2026, including:

- Adoption of the voluntary Code for maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS Code).
- Approval of the IMO Strategy on Maritime Digitalization, for consideration by the IMO Assembly.
- Progress on safety guidelines for ships using alternative fuels.

During 2026, IMO completed its first global audit cycle, which assessed how 168 Member States (94% of its membership) have implemented its maritime regulations. The findings help to identify common gaps and support more targeted technical assistance.



Secretary-General Dominguez recognised the essential role of people working at sea in implementing IMO regulations. He reflected: '*Always put people first, particularly seafarers. Behind every ship, every shipment and every maritime operation are people. Their safety, well-being and dignity must remain at the heart of everything we do*.'

Putting policy into practice at all levels

Panel discussions highlighted actions that could be taken by governments, international organizations, industry and academia.

These included:

- **Session 1 Government: High-Level Roundtable** – The role of governments in implementing IMO instruments and strengthening delivery at national level.
- **Session 2 International Organizations: IGO-NGO Dialogue** – International cooperation, technical support and partnerships for effective implementation.
- **Session 3 Industry: Shipping and Shipbuilding Summit** – Practical pathways for industry implementation of IMO regulations.
- **Session 4 Academia: Maritime Policy Symposium** – Capacity-building, talent development and knowledge partnerships for implementation.

During the high-level roundtable, ministers and senior officials from the Republic of Korea, Norway, Cyprus and India shared their national experiences and best practices in enforcement.

They stressed that adopting international regulations is only the first step. Strong national legislation, capable institutions, trained personnel, adequate infrastructure, targeted technical assistance and close cooperation with industry were also crucial.

Philippines to host 2027 event

The event concluded with the ceremonial handover (***illustrated here***) of the World Maritime Day Parallel Event flag to the Philippines, which will host the 2027 event.

See page 28 for the report by Captain Gwee-Bok LEE, President of Korea Shipmasters' Association.

A sinister seamark

By Michael Grey, Honorary IFSMA Member

For the last 82 years, those making a passage in and out of the River Thames have been aware of the weathered remnants of the Liberty ship Richard Montgomery. Until this month, just three rusted masts marked the resting place of this wreck; something of a conversation piece for those passing, on account of the explosive cargo rotting away in her holds. It was in 1944, with her military cargo bound for the D-Day landings, that the vessel went irretrievably aground on the banks of the estuary, subsequently breaking her back.

Since then, the Richard Montgomery has lived a long life as a source of maritime legend, regularly resurrected by feature writers and editors with blank spaces to fill, as something of a change to tales of the Titanic and the Bermuda Triangle. Although some of the military cargo was salved in the months after her grounding, some 1400 tonnes of high explosives was abandoned in the ship, where it still remains. The official accounts assure everyone that both safety and explosive stability have been regularly checked as the decades have ticked away, with an exclusion zone maintained around the wreck and that the public should not become too alarmed.

This, of course has not prevented exciting journalistic speculation about the cataclysmic events should, by some terrible circumstance, the cargo detonates. The more sensational projections in publications specialising in such outcomes suggest vast structural damage to towns on both banks of the estuary and huge tidal waves sweeping up towards London. It is a useful pot-boiler on a day when little else is happening and the regular correspondents are on vacation.

But is there perhaps more than a tall story in the remains of this short-lived ship? There is no argument about the cargo and its explosive potential, which has remained exceedingly dangerous, despite the passage of years. It is known, from the ordnance that is sometimes inadvertently recovered by aggregate dredgers and fishing craft, that these bombs and shells and other items retain every bit of their initial danger. Single bombs, detonated at sea by the explosive experts explode with a spectacular outcome. It is why explosive berths and anchorages are located miles from built up areas.

The wreck has retained its official hazard rating, while reassuring communiques suggest that if it is simply left alone, everyone will remain safe. For years after the war had ended, ships running up and down the estuary would stop their engines and coast past the location, lest the propeller excited vibrations set off something nasty. Over the years, the practice ceased.

The authorities, despite their efforts to reassure, have always been aware that such a quantity of explosives can detonate with terrifying results. There were enough people around in the early years who might have witnessed the awful results of attacks on explosive laden ships in the convoys. Also in 1944, although there were efforts to censor the true picture, the Port of Bombay was devastated, when 1417 tonnes of explosives in the lower holds of the Fort Stikine detonated, after her cargo of cotton bales caught fire. There was huge loss of life in the port and city and 12 other ships were either sunk or became CTLs. There were other disasters involving explosive-laden ships elsewhere, including one that did terrible damage to Naples. In peacetime, there is ample regulation to prevent such an incident happening in built-up areas and in all fairness, the wreck in the Thames is reasonably remote.

But the Richard Montgomery has been recently in the news because the authorities have decided, that rather than risk the corroded masts collapsing into the wreck, they would be removed. In a delicate operation now happily concluded, the appointed salvors Resolve Marine have taken away this familiar seamark. The masts will be henceforth exhibited in the excellent Medway Maritime Museum, hopefully with supporting explanations. The hazard, and the deteriorating wreck, (along with the potential for some imaginative journalism) of course remains, as does the monitored exclusion zone. The visible evidence of this old maritime mishap, and presumably the associated conversations, will be fading memories. Nothing to see here, move on!

Michael Grey is former editor of *Lloyd's List*

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(https://themaritimeadvocate.com)

From INMARSAT to IMSO:

Fifty years of history, transformation and international cooperation

On 12 October during its 30th Assembly the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO) commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the signing

of the 1976 Convention establishing the International Maritime Satellite Organization (INMARSAT), under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The event took place at IMO HQ.

Delegates were particularly honoured to welcome Olof Lundberg, the first Director General of INMARSAT, who addressed the Assembly as part of this special commemoration. His presence offered a unique opportunity to bring together the origins of the Organization and its role today, fifty years after the adoption of its founding Convention.

Over the past five decades, the Organization has undergone a remarkable transformation.



Representatives of IMSO's 112 Parties gathering, 12 October, at a time when the satellite communications sector is undergoing major transformation, with new technologies, emerging operators and rapidly evolving satellite constellations reshaping the industry.
Photo: IMSO ©

Originally established as an intergovernmental satellite operator, INMARSAT was restructured in 1999, with its commercial activities transferred to the private sector, while IMSO continued its intergovernmental mission of overseeing public-service obligations relating to maritime satellite safety communications.

IMSO and LRIT

As well as overseeing satellite communications under the GMDSS, in 2006 IMSO was also appointed by IMO as the Co-ordinator of the Long-Range Identification and Tracking of Ships (LRIT) system, with responsibilities to audit and review the performance of the international LRIT system.

On 7 October IMSO reported that it had successfully completed its 1,000th Long-Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) audit, marking a major milestone in its oversight of the global LRIT system.

This achievement reflects more than seventeen years' work to support the reliability, security and effective operation of LRIT system worldwide it underscores IMSO's continuing role in strengthening maritime safety and security through independent oversight of the LRIT system.

IMSO is headquartered in London and has 112 Member States.

For more information

To mark this anniversary IMSO has shared a commemorative video retracing the history of the Organization, its achievements and its evolution over the past fifty years.

IMSO's is the story of an international organization that has adapted to profound technological and institutional changes while preserving the fundamental purpose that inspired its creation: contributing to the safety of life at sea.

Readers are invited to use the link here to watch the 7.49 commemorative video:
https://tinyurl.com/3wxef6bv

or find it on the IMSO Background page with other information here: https://imso.org/about/#background

Honolulu's Aloha Tower at 100



The Aloha Tower, Honolulu, completed in 1926.

On 12 October the Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT) invited the local community to celebrate a century of Hawai'i's maritime history at the

Aloha Tower Centennial Celebration later in the week, on 15 and 16 October.

Opened on 11 September, 1926, at Pier 9 of Honolulu Harbor, Aloha Tower has served as an iconic landmark and welcoming beacon for Hawai'i.

Standing 184 feet tall across ten storeys, it reigned as the tallest structure in Hawai'i for four decades. With the word *ALOHA* etched on its exterior to greet arriving passenger ships during the historic 'Boat Days' era, the tower remains a vital symbol of hospitality, maritime heritage and connection for the islands.



Matson Line's Lurline *(1932-1963) and the Aloa Tower. The Matson Line's history is well-chronicled here:* https://tinyurl.com/4vskz6z7

During World War 2, the tower was painted in camouflage and served as a crucial military control center for Pacific convoys before returning to civilian life.

In addition to panoramic views of Honolulu Harbor and downtown Honolulu, visitors to the observation deck on the tower's tenth floor can see the extensive harbor activities that drive Hawai'i's critical supply chain.

Interior of the 10th floor now features an historic timeline exhibit of Aloha Tower and Honolulu Harbor. A separate exhibit of historic artifacts from the *Falls of Clyde** also will be on display.

Aloha Tower Rehabilitation

Aloha Tower has undergone a $8.5 million rehabilitation. The renovations and repairs, which were not structural in nature, included replacing the tower's elevator and fire suppression system, repairs to the HVAC system, repainting the tower's exterior, as well as upgrades to the observation deck that included new mast cable support for the lanai, replacement of rest-room fixtures and ADA accessibility modifications, installation of interpretive signage and new interior lighting fixtures. After the centennial celebrations, additional work will include replacing the tower's 84 windows, which will improve the weatherproofing of the tower, as well as replacing the mast at the top of the tower.

Harbor Special Revenue Funds were used for the majority of the improvements. In addition, approximately $1 million from the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transit's (HART) historic preservation fund was used for exterior repairs and painting. A $2 million federal grant through the Congressionally Directed Spending Program will be used for the next phase of improvements including renovations to the third to eighth floors.

Hawai'i Department of Transportation Director Ed Sniffen commented: '*Preserving and maintaining the historic Aloha Tower is an important part of ensuring the vitality of Honolulu's waterfront, which serves as the main supply chain for our entire state.*

'*Nearly 90% of all goods that Hawai'i residents and visitors consume pass through Honolulu Harbor, all under the watchful gaze of Aloha Tower. Our goal is for the public to come to Aloha Tower and visit the newly renovated observation deck, to gain an appreciation for Honolulu Harbor's extensive maritime operations that sustain our daily needs and keep our economy growing*.'

*F*alls of Clyde* was the last surviving iron-hulled, four-masted full-rigged ship, and the last surviving sail-driven oil tanker. She was designated a US National Historic Landmark in 1989, but deregistered in 2024 due to her condition. The ship was scuttled in 2025 off Oahu.

BIMCO and advisory films

Dry bulk safety

Facilitating trade is at the very heart of BIMCO's business, and since 1905 the organisation has helped its members keep world trade moving as it makes it its business to help its members with theirs.

BIMCO creates maritime contracts and clauses, explains and informs global regulation and provide practical business services, training, information and market insight.

Two films

As part of its membership services BIMCO has provided two films in its efforts to support seafarers. In this direction it advocates for fair treatment of seafarers and is committed to raising awareness of the difficulties they encounter.

The two films are available online using the link below,

Unseen at Sea

This is the latest BIMCO film in its campaign aimed at raising awareness of fair treatment and safety of the seafarers, who are responsible for the transport of nearly 12.5 billion tonnes of goods and essential commodities a year.

The film at 6:15 focuses on the risks faced by seafarers, from unjust imprisonment to attacks due to global conflict. Despite their crucial job seafarers' rights are too often overlooked.

Fair Seas

This film focuses on the life at sea, the dangers seafarers face and also on the adventure the job has to offer and the camaraderie among the crew on board the ships that keep world trade moving.

The films are available in different formats for social media, which can be access here in English, Chinese (simplified) and Spanish versions: https://tinyurl.com/4zsxsjj5

Dry bulk safety: scrap metal fires, fumigation and enclosed spaces

BIMCO's Dry Bulk Cargo Network discussed three persistent safety challenges at its latest meeting: fire risks from contaminated scrap metal cargoes, the shift of fumigation duties from specialists to ships' crews, and continuing fatalities in enclosed spaces.

Members of BIMCO highlighted the need for clearer cargo information, stronger charter party provisions, and practical measures to protect crews.

The topic is explored here: https://tinyurl.com/43s7pssx

La Manche* and the Southern North Sea

Multipurpose Maritime Operation (MMO) 2026

Review in Brussels

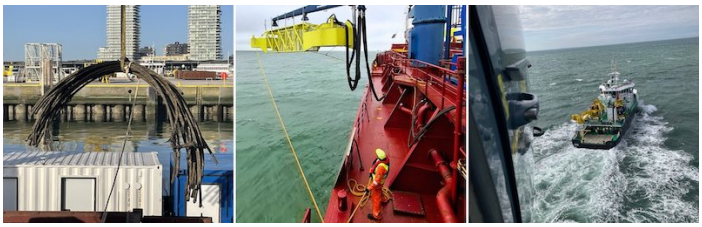
For four months, national authorities from Belgium, France and the Netherlands worked alongside EMSA, the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) in one of Europe's most heavily navigated sea areas.

On 16 October, partners met in Brussels to review the 2026 Multipurpose Maritime Operation (MMO) in La Manche and the Southern North Sea (MSNS) and to look ahead to future operations.

The MMO MSNS 2026 Review and Outlook Event was hosted by the Directorate-General Shipping of the Belgian Federal Public Service Mobility and Transport, in close cooperation with EMSA, and brought together representatives of the participating authorities, the European Commission, EFCA and Frontex, in Brussels and online.

Following a welcome address by Peter Claeyssens, Director-General of DG Shipping, EMSA Executive Director Maja Markovčić Kostelac presented the results of the operation and the outlook for future cooperation in the region. Eric Banel, France's Director General for Maritime Affairs, Fisheries and Aquaculture, shared the French perspective as a participating Member State, while Charlina Vitcheva, Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, and Olivier Onidi, Deputy Director-General for Migration and Home Affairs, spoke on behalf of the European Commission.

Running from 11 May to 11 September 2026, this was the third consecutive MMO in the region coordinated by EMSA, in close cooperation with EFCA and Frontex, and the first in this region for the Netherlands and Frontex. Together, the participating authorities and agencies worked across nine coast guard functions and more than 30 use cases.



Close to 70,000 different vessels were detected in the operational area, and the participating authorities shared 893 operational events through the MMO dashboard, with EMSA's European Maritime Awareness Centre acting as the MMO Coordination Centre.

EMSA's services provided

Throughout the operation, EMSA made its services available to the participating authorities:

- Integrated Maritime Services, providing a near real-time maritime picture to support the planning and coordination of activities at sea.
- CleanSeaNet, with 232 satellite images delivered over the French, Belgian and Dutch areas of responsibility to support pollution monitoring.
- Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS), with 125 flights from the Belgian coast totalling 444 flight hours, and a lightweight RPAS operating from EFCA's offshore patrol vessel.
- Underwater services, from wreck surveys and the recovery of a disused telecommunications cable off the Belgian coast to hull and harbour inspections with the Netherlands Coastguard.
- Training through the EMSA Academy, including on the Integrated Maritime Services and RPAS.

EFCA coordinated fisheries control activities through its FISHNET platform and regular coordination meetings with Member States under the Western Waters and North Sea Joint Deployment Plans, deploying its offshore patrol vessel Ocean Guardian and fixed-wing aircraft Blue Knight. Frontex supported maritime border surveillance under Joint Operation France 2026, deploying surface and aerial assets, including a Spanish offshore patrol vessel: its maritime assets conducted 22 surveillance missions and its surveillance aircraft 73 operational missions.

Testing procedures in realistic conditions

Alongside these continuous services, training and exercises gave partners the opportunity to test procedures together in realistic conditions. In June,

EMSA's stand-by oil spill response vessel *Interballast III* joined Belgian and Dutch vessels in the POLEX 2026 oil pollution response exercise off Zeebrugge, which tested cross-border response arrangements in a simulated oil pollution scenario.

In August, EMSA and France tested the CISE '*Vessel of Interest*' Operational Service for the exchange of information on sanctioned vessels. In September, SARex 2026, coordinated by MRCC Ostend, tested a multinational search and rescue response to a simulated maritime casualty involving 28 persons.

Training manikins or dummies represented persons in the water. The exercise also included a simulated medical evacuation by helicopter, following telemedical advice from Italy's Telemedical Maritime Assistance Service (CIRM).

Building on this year's experience, participants discussed priorities for future operations, including earlier engagement with national authorities in the planning phase, exercises covering a wider range of scenarios, and making assets available where they are most needed. The participating authorities have expressed their interest in a further operation in 2027.

EMSA thanks DG Shipping for hosting the review, and all the participating authorities, EFCA and Frontex – and in particular the crews, operators and coordination centre staff – for their commitment throughout the operation.

Participating authorities – Belgium: Agency for Maritime and Coastal Services (MDK); Belgian Navy; Agency for Agriculture and Fisheries; Scientific Service MUMM (Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences); Directorate-General Environment (FPS Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment); Directorate-General Shipping (FPS Mobility and Transport); Maritime and River Police. France: Secretariat General for the Sea (SGMer); Maritime Prefecture for La Manche and the North Sea; French Navy; Directorate General for Maritime Affairs, Fisheries and Aquaculture (DGAMPA). The Netherlands: Netherlands Coastguard; Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate (ILT). EU agencies: EMSA; EFCA; Frontex.

*English Channel

Illustrations per www.emsa.europa.eu

Piracy and armed robbery against ships

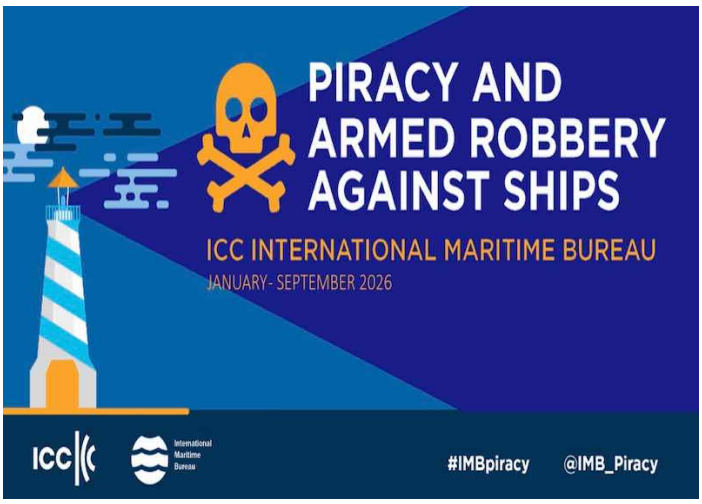
IMB latest report

January-September 2026

The ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) has reported the lowest level (51) of piracy and armed robbery incidents since 1992 in the first nine months of 2026.

However, a recent resurgence of Somali piracy incidents highlights the continued risks facing seafarers, with IMB urging vigilance, timely reporting and strict adherence to Best Management Practices (BMP).

The IMB Piracy Reporting Centre (PRC) reported 51 incidents for the period of January-September 2026, down from 116 in the same period last year, the lowest reported nine-month figures since 1992.



The report reveals that 36 vessels were boarded, eight hijacked, four fired upon and three attempted boardings. In 86% of incidents, perpetrators successfully gained access to the vessel while either at anchor or steaming with most boarding incidents occurring at night.

The threat of violence against crew remains a concern, with 105 crew directly affected, compared to 72 in the same period in 2025. Weapons were identified in 53% of reported incidents in the first nine months of 2026.

Somali piracy risks heighten

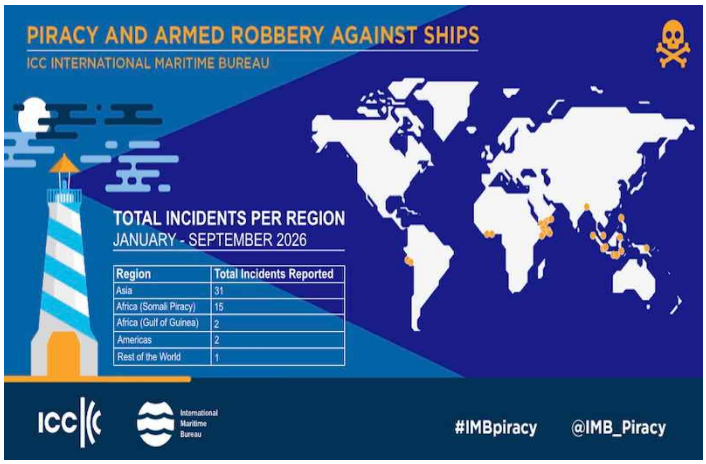
While overall piracy incidents remain at historic lows, IMB recorded a rise in Somali piracy activity from January to September 2026, with Somali pirates responsible for eight vessel hijackings and 94% of all crew taken hostage globally. Most hijacked vessels have been released with the crew reported safe.



IMB notes that vessels implementing the latest BMP have continued to successfully deter hijacking

attempts, even in cases where pirates have managed to board a vessel.

However, Puntland authorities reported in late September that five crew members were killed and five injured prior to the release of the Palau-flagged product tanker *Honour 25*, hijacked on 21 April 2026.



While these incidents highlight the continued capability of Somali pirates to target vessels in the region, they are not comparable in scale or reach to the deep-sea piracy operations that characterised the 2008-2013 Somali piracy era.

Declining incidents in the Gulf of Guinea and the Singapore Straits

Two incidents were reported from January to September 2026 in the Gulf of Guinea waters with none in the last quarter. The IMB commends the littoral states of the Gulf of Guinea for their continued efforts in ensuring incidents of piracy and armed robbery remain at these low levels.

Similarly, there has been a welcome reduction in reported incidents in the Singapore Straits, with 13 in the first nine months of 2026 compared to 73 during the same period in 2025.

Two crew were taken hostage and a further two were threatened and one was injured in 2026 in the Singapore Straits. In over 69% of incidents perpetrators were armed with either guns or knives and managed to successfully board all targeted vessels indicating the continued risk to shipping in these waters.

IMB commends the actions of the authorities which have contributed to the reduction in reported incidents in the Singapore Straits.

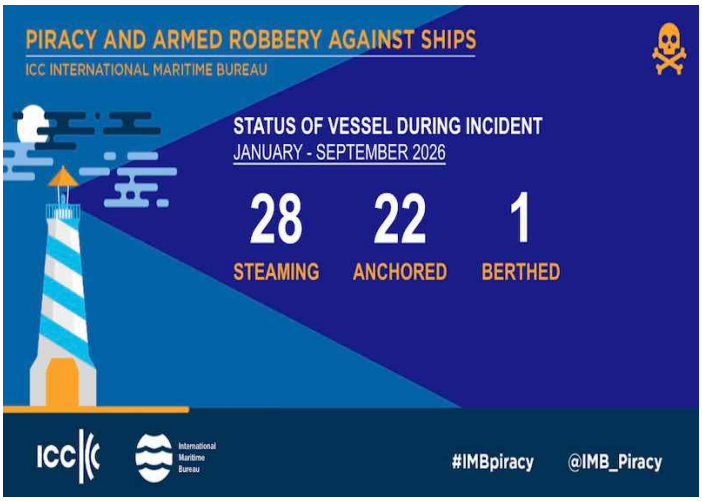
Indonesian Archipelago

Reduced levels of reported incidents in the Indonesian Archipelagic continues. Six incidents were reported in the first nine months of 2026 compared to nine during the same period in 2025. Weapons were reported in one incident in which one crew was also taken hostage.

Nine anchored vessels were boarded in the Philippines, with six incidents reported in Manila and three in Batangas, compared to no reported incidents in 2025. Two crew members were taken hostage during the incidents, while weapons were reported in five cases.

Comment

IMB Director Michael Howlett said: '*While incident levels are at their lowest in more than three decades, the recent uptick in Somali piracy activity is a reminder that the threat remains. Incidents this year have also shown that strict adherence to BMP recommendations remains one of the most effective ways to deter hijacking attempts and protect crews.*



'*Continued vigilance is essential to safeguarding seafarers and the vital trade routes on which the global economy depends. The drop in reported incidents in the Gulf of Guinea and Singapore Straits is encouraging and reflects the positive impact of sustained efforts by the authorities. It is important to maintain this momentum through continued vigilance and timely reporting of all incidents*.'

To request a copy

To request a copy of the January to June 2026 *Maritime Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships* report readers are invited to use the link here: https://icc-ccs.org/request-piracy-report/

About IMB Piracy Reporting Centre

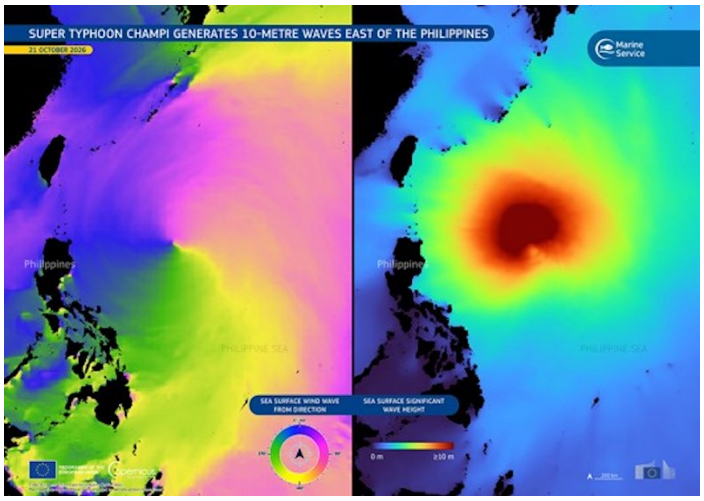
Since its founding in 1991, IMB's Piracy Reporting Centre serves as a crucial, 24-hour point of contact to report crimes of piracy and lend support to ships under threat. Quick reactions and a focus on coordinating with response agencies, sending out warning broadcasts and email alerts to ships have all helped bolster security on the high seas. The data gathered by the Centre also provides key insights on the nature and state of modern piracy.

IMB encourages all shipmasters and owners to report all actual, attempted and suspected global piracy and armed robbery incidents to the Piracy Reporting Centre as a vital first step to ensuring adequate resources are allocated by authorities to tackle maritime piracy.

East of the Philippines

Super Typhoon Champi generates 10-metre waves

On 21 October 2026, Super Typhoon Champi, known in the Philippines as Rosal, was moving west-northwest across the Philippine Sea, about 850 km east of northern Luzon, the largest island of the Philippines.



The storm had reached the equivalent of Category 5 on the Saffir-Simpson scale, the top category, with maximum sustained winds of 296 km/h. These were the strongest sustained winds recorded for any tropical cyclone worldwide in 2026.

Data visualisations, based on Copernicus Marine Service data for 21 October 2026, illustrate the storm's effect on ocean surface conditions. The image on the left shows the direction of wind-generated waves at the sea surface, which spiral around the storm's centre, following the anticlockwise circulation typical of tropical cyclones in the Northern Hemisphere.

Copernicus Marine Service provides ocean monitoring and forecasting data which help track extreme marine conditions, supporting maritime safety, storm impact assessment, and coastal preparedness.

Strengthening US presence in the High North

US Coast Guard Cutter *Munro* completes Arctic patrol

On 20 October it was announced from Alameda, California, that the crew of US Coast Guard Cutter *Munro* returned to their Base Alameda, homeport on Coast Guard Island on 9 October, following a 112-day Alaska patrol that covered more than 23,000 nautical miles across the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean.

To control, secure and defend

Operating under the Coast Guard Arctic District, *Munro* deployed to control, secure and defend the nation's northernmost maritime approaches, enforce living marine resource regulations and strengthen defence interoperability with joint and international partners in an increasingly contested region.

Operation Frontier Sentinel

During the patrol, *Munro* executed Operation Frontier Sentinel, monitoring three Chinese-flagged research vessels operating in and around the US Arctic maritime domain. *Munro*'s crew ensured the foreign vessels complied with international maritime law while asserting US sovereignty.

Close allied interoperability

Highlighting close allied interoperability, *Munro* conducted combined exercises with the Royal Canadian Navy. These engagements enhanced bilateral law enforcement cooperation, joint manoeuvring, and shared domain awareness among the Allied maritime services operating in polar waters.

Operation Tundra Merlin

Munro also integrated into strategic Western Hemisphere defense operations, supporting Operation Tundra Merlin. These operations brought *Munro* together with US Department of War and Canadian Armed Forces assets to test multi-domain homeland defense architecture, integrate command-and-control networks and validate joint force lethality and response readiness in northern maritime corridors.

Comment

In the words of Captain Adam J Disque, *Munro*'s CO: '*The Arctic is a demanding maritime environment that can test any crew and vessel. We were proud to sustain US presence in the region to safeguard our Arctic coastline and reinforce a rules-based order in the High North.*



'*We also strengthened our enduring partnership with Canadian counterparts, advancing shared domain awareness and coordination across the remote region. I am exceptionally proud of everything this crew accomplished in one of the world's most challenging maritime environments*.'

Living marine resources boardings

Munro served as the frontline guardian of the $6 billion Alaskan commercial fishery. Law enforcement teams conducted living marine resources boardings on commercial fishing vessels operating in the Bering Sea, ensuring compliance with federal safety regulations and fisheries laws to preserve vital fish stocks

About USCGC *Monro*

Commissioned in 2017, *Munro* is one of four 418-foot Legend-class national security cutters homeported in Alameda. The cutter is named in honour of Signalman 1st Class Douglas A Munro, the only member of the Coast Guard to receive the Medal of Honor for his heroism at Point Cruz, Guadalcanal, on 27 September 1942, where he gave his life rescuing nearly 500 Marines under enemy fire.

UK Parliament and the High North

On 22 October *Defence in the High North* was the title of a 59-page report by the UK's House of Commons (Lower House) Defence Committee.

The document may be downloaded using the link here: https://tinyurl.com/37vwsm3k

The Defence Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Ministry of Defence and its associated public bodies.



Allied interoperability.

From the document's summary we see: *In terms of the threat, in June 2026 the then Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer said "*…it is our intelligence assessment, and the assessment of other countries in NATO, that there could be an attack by Russia on NATO as soon as 2030".

The UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) is also developing its Atlantic Bastion strategy to counter these Russian threats through a transformation of the Royal Navy and is investing £1.3 billion up to 2030 in its Hybrid Navy concept – linking crewed and uncrewed vessels.

In conclusion the report states: The MOD has recognised that the gradual opening of the High North in recent years has made the defence and security of the region a high priority. Failure to deter Russia in the region, particularly from underwater threats, puts at particular risk sub-sea data cables and energy pipes in adjacent UK waters during peacetime.

Failure to counter Russia in the High North during hostilities would also threaten

the UK population and entire military and civilian critical national infrastructure, including the nuclear deterrent and Atlantic resupply routes from the US.

Illustrations per Public Affairs USCG Arctic District USCG ©

Casualty reporting in a fog of war

By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member

We can scarcely be surprised that increasingly confused noise emerges from the hostilities in the Gulf and Straits of Hormuz, with markedly diverse reports coming from the warring parties. Both the United States and Iranians claim to be completely in control of the waterway, with the former's blockade holding firm and the latter's attacks on passing shipping continuing unabated. The US suggests that oil tankers are moving through the contested waters in considerable numbers under their energetic protection, while the communiques from the Iranians emphasise their ability to attack any ship that fails to do their bidding.

There is, however, no argument that ships are being hit by mines, drones and missiles, with deaths and injuries reported, although it has been suggested that a majority of ships have now become reluctant to report attacks to the co-ordinating UKMTO.

The UK Maritime Trade Operations organisation, which had been regarded as a reliable source of information about the hostilities in the region, now finds itself less able to do this job, and has noted that something of a fog of war has descended. The once simple tool of AIS as a tracking aid has become particularly unreliable, with ships, depending on the advice they are given at any moment in time, switching it off and on.

Why would a ship under attack not report the fact? One can imagine that in such a confused situation there are more important things to do, such as looking after the lives of the crew and tackling fires or flooding. There may be very reasonable apprehension of another attack, which might justify radio silence. Or might it be that the reports from attacked ships are often relayed via naval forces, which are, for security reasons, not passing them on?

It has been suggested that the US forces are anxious (or politically pressurised) to demonstrate that transits through the straits are perfectly safe and substantial numbers are making the passage under their protection. It might be an unworthy suggestion, but might the preoccupations of the US Commander-in-Chief have switched from the regional hostilities, to

the flow of oil, insofar as this assists in his Mid-Term election chances. Some critical commentators have alleged that President Trump has lost interest in the whole Iranian adventure and is only concerned with extricating himself from this unrewarding task, whatever this might mean to the strategic waterway.

The statistics issued by the UKMTO present a rather less rosy picture of the numbers of ships moving, to those provided from the US commanders, who are clearly anxious to stress their ongoing protective efforts. An objective observer might ask whether accurate numbers of successful transits and casualties are in fact possible in the prevailing circumstances.

From the point of view of those aboard merchant ships, their loved ones and those operating these ships, it would be advantageous if a more trustworthy picture could be made available, if only to get a better assessment of the realities of risk.

What are the chances of being hit? Most merchant mariners do not go to sea to find themselves in a war zone, and such hazards have been multiplying both in the middle east and elsewhere. Do they really have choice (as provided in law) in the event their ship is directed to a place where there is a chance they will end up as targets? It might be that they will be given bonuses for braving such hazards, but how many, from countries where decently paying jobs are exceedingly rare, are forced to take risks that others, in happier situations, would not. It is worth noting that the Black Sea is increasingly not a location for the faint-hearted.

Others unwittingly find themselves aboard ships which have been sanctioned and run other sorts of risks, with more nations prepared to intervene to stop or even seize these vessels. And pretty well anybody, in a growing number of regions where conflict is close, will find that their instruments are subject to electronic spoofing and hacking, thus providing another source of doubt. One might say that this is a more “physical” symptom of the fog of war, which may not lift in a hurry.

This article was first published in *The Maritime Advocate Online* No 919 of 23 October 2026 and appears here by kind permission of the author and of the editor.

Michael Grey is former editor of *Lloyd’s List*.

TOKYO BAY: FOUR PORTS, ONE MARITIME SYSTEM

By Captain M Aufal Huda, MSc.

Master Mariner, Maritime & Shipping Operations, Crewing & Competence Development, Port & Nautical Operations, Shipping & Transport, Marine Transportation Engineering

When Everything Seems to Run on Time

Some ports stay in your memory because of their size. Others are remembered for the way they operate.

When I look back on my visits to Tokyo, Yokohama, Chiba and Kawasaki, what stands out most is the sense of order. Operations seemed to run on time, procedures appeared well organised, and the different activities around the port fitted together in a way that left a strong impression on me.

I also remember the pilots I encountered. They appeared to be senior professionals, with the kind of experience and composure that stood out during a vessel’s port call.

For a seafarer, these details matter. A port call involves much more than a ship reaching a berth. It depends on coordination between the bridge team, pilot, tug operators, mooring personnel, vessel traffic services, terminal planners and cargo-handling teams.

When the different parts work together, the result is not merely an efficient operation. It is a more predictable one.

That is what makes Tokyo Bay interesting to revisit today. Its ports have different commercial roles, but they operate within a maritime region where coordination, navigation and the management of a large number of vessels are essential.

1. The Importance of Being on Time

At sea, punctuality is rarely the responsibility of one person or one department.

A vessel's arrival can be affected by its passage plan, weather, traffic conditions, pilot availability, berth readiness and the operational schedule at the terminal. Even when the ship arrives at the planned time, delays can occur if another part of the system is not ready.

This is why the impression of punctuality I remember from Tokyo Bay is worth considering beyond the idea of simply working quickly.

Reliable operations are usually the result of preparation, communication and coordination across the entire port call.



The pilot needs to be available at the agreed boarding location. The bridge team must prepare for the pilot's arrival and exchange the information required for the manoeuvre. Tugs and other supporting services need to be coordinated, while the berth and terminal must be ready for the vessel's arrival.

Once alongside, another sequence begins: mooring completion, cargo operations, documentation, departure preparations and coordination with the next port call.

Each stage depends on people and procedures working together.

Japan's pilotage framework reflects the importance of local knowledge in busy waters. Compulsory pilotage applies to designated areas, including Tokyo Bay for qualifying large vessels, while the Yokohama–Kawasaki area has its own compulsory pilotage requirements. Licensed pilots provide specialist assistance for safe and efficient vessel movements.

The system does not guarantee that every ship will always be on time. Weather, traffic and operational circumstances can still disrupt a schedule. But it establishes a framework in which navigation and port movements can be managed through defined responsibilities and procedures.

From a seafarer's perspective, that distinction matters. Punctuality is not just about arriving on time. It is about how reliably the port system can respond when a vessel is ready to move.

2. The Pilots: Experience in a Complex Waterway

One of my personal memories of Tokyo Bay is that the pilots I encountered seemed relatively senior in age.

It was an observation rather than a formal assessment of the pilotage workforce, but it stayed with me. Their presence gave me the impression of professionals who had accumulated substantial experience navigating the waters they knew so well.

Pilotage is a specialist responsibility. A pilot must understand local traffic patterns, navigational constraints, port approaches, vessel-handling requirements and the practical consequences of decisions made during a manoeuvre.

For large merchant ships, entering or leaving a port is a coordinated process. The bridge team remains responsible for the vessel, while the pilot contributes local knowledge and navigational advice. Clear communication and a shared understanding of the intended manoeuvre are essential.

Tokyo Bay is particularly interesting because of its concentration of major ports, commercial shipping routes and coastal activity. Different types of vessels operate within the same broad maritime region, making careful traffic management and local knowledge important.

The impression I took from the pilots I met was not simply about their age. It was about the value of experience in a job where calm judgement, familiarity with local conditions and clear communication can make a meaningful difference.

Modern navigational technology is essential, but it does not replace professional judgement. Radar, electronic charts, AIS and other systems help build the traffic picture; experienced mariners must still interpret that information and make appropriate decisions.

For me, the pilots were part of what made Tokyo Bay feel organised. They represented the human expertise behind a maritime system that must function safely and predictably every day.

3. Tokyo: The Port Behind a Huge Metropolitan Economy

The Port of Tokyo serves one of the world's largest metropolitan economies. Its role is closely connected with the movement of consumer goods, industrial products and other cargoes supporting businesses and residents across the capital region.

In 2025, Tokyo Port handled approximately 4.86 million TEUs, an increase of 3.3% compared with 2024.

The figure highlights the scale of the logistics task behind the port. Cargo arriving by sea needs to move efficiently into a densely populated metropolitan area, where warehouses, distribution centres, transport operators and final customers all depend on reliable deliveries.

For a major urban port, efficiency cannot be measured only by crane productivity or vessel turnaround. The movement of cargo beyond the terminal gates is equally important.

A ship may finish cargo operations on schedule, but delays in road transport, warehouse access or onward distribution can still affect the total logistics chain.

Tokyo therefore illustrates a broader lesson about port performance: the port and the city around it must work as a connected system.

Its continuing container growth also shows that major urban gateways remain important even as supply chains evolve and logistics providers seek greater efficiency.

4. Yokohama: International Shipping and New Marine Fuels

Yokohama has a long-standing role as one of Japan's major international ports. Its container terminals and logistics facilities connect the Japanese economy with overseas markets, while its position within Tokyo Bay places it in a region with extensive maritime activity.

In 2025, Yokohama handled 3.18 million container units, up 3.5% from the previous year. It was the third consecutive year that its container movements exceeded three million units, and the volume was the highest in a decade. Domestic container movements also reached a record level.

These figures highlight the port's continuing role in both international shipping and domestic distribution.

Yet Yokohama is also responding to changes in the environmental requirements of the maritime industry.

On 6 February 2026, the port hosted Japan's first ship-to-ship methanol bunkering operation at an offshore anchorage. The operation included conventional methanol and a portion of domestically produced biomethanol.

This development illustrates how ports may increasingly function as providers of marine-energy services as well as cargo-handling facilities.

Alternative fuels require appropriate supply arrangements, technical compatibility, safety procedures, commercial availability and coordination between suppliers and vessels. Their environmental benefits also depend on how the fuel is produced and used across its lifecycle.

For a port, offering such services can become part of a wider effort to remain relevant to shipping lines as they examine ways to reduce emissions.

Yokohama's development demonstrates that a port can build on its traditional commercial role while adapting to a changing maritime energy landscape.

5. Chiba: The Industrial Strength of Tokyo Bay

Chiba provides a different perspective on the region's maritime economy.

While container terminals attract much of the public attention, Chiba is also an important industrial port handling large volumes of cargo associated with manufacturing, energy and other industrial activities.

In 2025, Chiba Port handled approximately 126.88 million tonnes of cargo, making it Japan's second-largest port by total cargo volume. The figure was down 1.9% from 2024, illustrating that even major industrial ports experience fluctuations in demand.

The composition of cargo matters when interpreting these statistics.

Industrial ports often handle raw materials, fuels and products that require different infrastructure from containerised consumer goods. These cargoes support industrial facilities and manufacturing activity in ways that cannot be measured adequately by TEUs alone.

Chiba’s position within Tokyo Bay also underlines the diversity of the region. Tokyo, Yokohama, Chiba and Kawasaki have overlapping connections, but their individual cargo bases and terminal requirements are not identical.

The region’s strength comes partly from this variety of functions.

For port planners and shipping professionals, the challenge is to ensure that infrastructure, transport links and operational arrangements match the needs of different cargoes and users.

6. Kawasaki: An Industrial Waterfront Moving Towards Decarbonisation

Kawasaki represents another important part of Tokyo Bay's wider port system.

Its waterfront is closely connected with industrial activity, including energy and manufacturing. As industrial regions face increasing pressure to reduce emissions, ports are also being asked to improve the environmental performance of their equipment and operations.

In September 2025, Kawasaki Port Container Terminal became one of the first terminals in Japan to receive certification under the national Carbon Neutral Port terminal-certification system. It achieved Level 4+ on a five-level scale, reflecting its progress in decarbonisation measures.

The certification system evaluates environmental initiatives at container terminals and is intended to encourage further progress towards lower-emission port operations.

This matters because the environmental footprint of a port is not determined by vessels alone. Cargo-handling equipment, terminal energy consumption, supporting infrastructure and industrial processes can also contribute to emissions.

Decarbonisation therefore requires coordination among port authorities, terminal operators, equipment providers and energy suppliers.

Kawasaki's example shows how a traditionally industrial waterfront can adapt to changing environmental expectations while continuing to serve cargo and industry.

7. Four Ports, One Regional System

Looking at Tokyo, Yokohama, Chiba and Kawasaki together reveals a maritime region with several complementary strengths.

Tokyo connects seaborne cargo with a large metropolitan consumer and distribution economy.

Yokohama combines international shipping connections with the development of new marine-fuel services.

Chiba supports large-scale industrial and bulk-cargo movements.

Kawasaki demonstrates how industrial port operations can incorporate decarbonisation initiatives.

These roles are different, but they share a reliance on reliable vessel movements, well-coordinated port services and effective connections with the wider economy.

Their geography also means that the region's ports cannot be viewed entirely in isolation. Commercial vessels, industrial cargoes, local shipping and other maritime activities operate within the same broad area.

For shipping lines, port users and cargo owners, the effectiveness of the overall system depends on whether the different facilities can perform their individual roles while maintaining safe and dependable connections.

This is where the impression of order and punctuality becomes important again. A successful port region requires more than good infrastructure at each terminal. It needs the systems and people that coordinate activity between vessels, pilots, terminals and the surrounding transport network.

A Final Reflection from the Bridge

When I think back to my visits to Tokyo Bay, I remember how orderly the port operations appeared and how important punctuality seemed to be. I also remember the pilots, who appeared to be seasoned professionals.

Those impressions do not tell the whole story of how the ports operate. But they provide a personal lens through which to understand the wider system.

Today's developments—from container growth in Tokyo to methanol bunkering in Yokohama and decarbonisation measures in Kawasaki—show that the region continues to evolve. Its future competitiveness will depend on balancing operational reliability with changing demands for efficiency, connectivity and environmental performance.

For me, the lesson is that the most impressive port is not necessarily the one with the largest cranes or the greatest throughput. It is the one where people, procedures, infrastructure and technology work together to make a complex operation appear almost effortless.

Perhaps that is what good port management looks like from the bridge: a demanding operation carried out so professionally that everything seems to run on time.

For fellow seafarers and maritime professionals, I would be interested to hear your perspective: what makes a port call feel truly well organised—the pilot's experience, the terminal's preparation, disciplined procedures, or the coordination of all three?

Sources and further reading

Tokyo Port — 2025 container statistics, Tokyo Metropolitan Government

Japan Pilotage Association — Compulsory pilotage areas and requirements

Tokyo Bay Pilots' Association — Pilotage duties and organisation

Yokohama Port — 2025 annual statistics

Japan MLIT — First ship-to-ship methanol bunkering operation at Yokohama, February 2026

Chiba Port — 2025 cargo statistics, Chiba Prefecture

Kawasaki Port Container Terminal — Carbon Neutral Port certification

Editorial note

This article was published on 28 October, 2026 as part of Ports Through a Seafarer's Eyes — Episode 04, and appears here by kind permission of the author, Captain M Aufal Huda, MSc.

Onboard Carbon Capture Systems Implementation Framework

New Class NK handbook

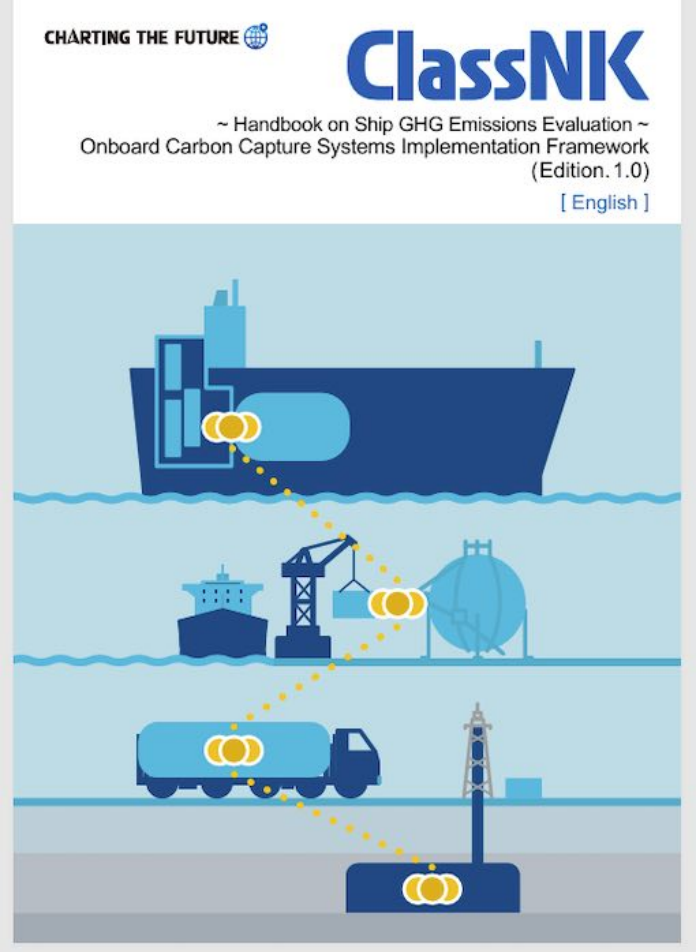
ClassNK has released a new handbook entitled *Onboard Carbon Capture Systems Implementation Framework* as part of its *Handbook on Ship GHG Emissions Evaluation* series.

The handbook provides practical guidance for shipowners, operators and other stakeholders considering the introduction of onboard carbon capture systems (OCCS). This is intended to help them understand the considerations involved across an entire OCCS project and to facilitate discussions among relevant parties and consideration of OCCS implementation.

Essential planning

Translating the use of OCCS into actual emissions reductions requires more than the onboard system itself. Routes must be secured for the unloading, transportation, storage, sequestration or utilisation of captured CO_2, together with mechanisms for quantifying and verifying emissions reductions. As these considerations span technology, infrastructure, regulation and emissions-reduction assessment, a project-wide perspective is essential.

Through the development of its *Guidelines for Onboard CO_2 Capture and Storage Systems*, ClassNK has worked to establish safety and technical requirements for such systems, while accumulating knowledge through demonstration projects and experience through various GHG certification services. Drawing on this knowledge and experience, the handbook has been prepared to help stakeholders considering the introduction of OCCS gain a project-wide understanding of the relevant considerations.



Key features

- In addition to providing an overview of onboard CO_2 capture and storage systems, the handbook covers port and transport infrastructure, approaches to CO_2 storage, fixation and utilization, regulatory developments at the IMO and EU, as well as MRV and CoC, helping readers understand how the emission reduction benefits of OCCS are assessed.
- By providing a comprehensive overview of the entire value chain from onboard CO_2 capture through to final treatment, the handbook helps readers understand the roles of relevant stakeholders and the infrastructure required.
- By outlining differences in assessment depending on the final treatment method for captured CO_2, the handbook enables readers to

specifically consider how emission reductions should be assessed for their own OCCS projects.

To obtain

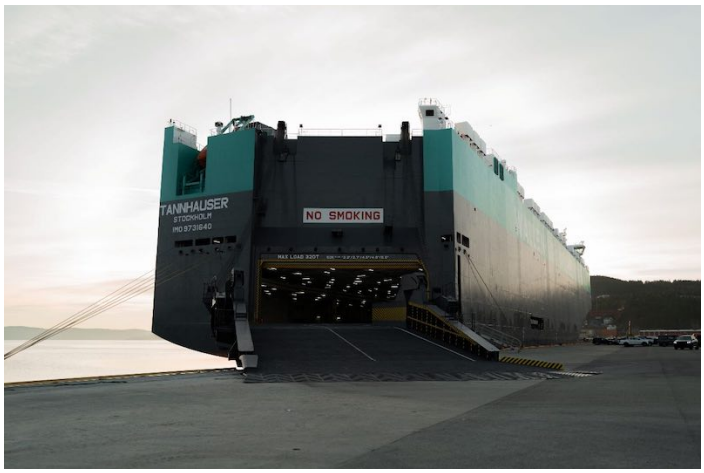
The handbook is available on the following page of ClassNK's website: https://tinyurl.com/ernd98c9

Wallenius Wilhelmsen

MacGregor to retrofit 35 vessels' electronics

MacGregor reported at the end of October that it had received an order of PLC (Programmable Logic Controller) retrofit projects for 35 Pure Car and Truck Carrier (PCTC) vessels for Wallenius Wilhelmsen.

This order was booked into MacGregor's third quarter 2026 order intake, and the upgrades will take place based on the vessels' sailing schedule and availability.



Securing this contract highlights MacGregor's deep technical expertise and strong relationship with Wallenius Wilhelmsen. Having originally supplied equipment during the vessels' initial design and newbuilding phases, MacGregor reinforces its standing as a reliable, long-term partner committed to supporting assets across their entire lifecycle – from delivery through operational life and end-of-service modernisations.

The scope of supply for the 35 vessels includes PLC upgrade of the ships' quarter ramps. In line with Wallenius Wilhelmsen's sustainability targets, the replaced PLCs will be stored onboard as spare parts for remaining Ro-Ro equipment onboard or other vessels with the same equipment.

Tom Forrester-Coles, Fleet Manager, Technical Marine Operations Management at Wallenius Wilhelmsen, commented: '*Facing a tight market and high customer expectations, Wallenius Wilhelmsen is focused on reducing operational disruptions while delivering high-end service and uncompromised reliability to our customers. By keeping our systems up to date and taking a standardised approach to obsolescence management across the fleet, we ensure our seafarers are equipped with dependable operational tools*.'

In 2025, MacGregor's sales totalled approximately € 830 million, and it employs about 2,000 people in 30 countries.

Boluda Shipping to acquire Samskip

To build Europe's leading short-sea network

Boluda Shipping and Samskip have signed an agreement under which Boluda Shipping will acquire Samskip.

It is understood that this acquisition will pave the way for Europe's most comprehensive short-sea shipping network, connecting Northern Europe with the Iberian Peninsula, the Canary Islands and West Africa.

By bringing together the strengths, expertise and best practices of both organizations, the integration aims to deliver more connections, greater capacity and more efficient, reliable services for customers.

Expected to close on 1 January 2027, the transaction will be subject to approval by the relevant authorities and fulfilment of the agreed closing conditions.

The agreement marks an important milestone for both companies, bringing together two family-owned businesses with long histories in transport and logistics, shared values and complementary strengths.

For both organizations, the agreement represents an opportunity to build on their existing capabilities, expand the connections available to customers and create a stronger platform for long-term growth.

Complementary strengths; a stronger network for customers and markets

Boluda and Samskip already have an established relationship through their joint services in Spain. This cooperation has helped the companies understand each other's businesses and identify opportunities to combine their strengths.

Boluda brings a long maritime heritage, a strong position in towage, an established container shipping business and extensive expertise in port logistics.

Samskip contributes its established position in Northern Europe, its multimodal expertise, its extensive customer relationships and its knowledge of the markets it serves.

Together, their capabilities will support more comprehensive and efficient end-to-end logistics services, offering customers greater connectivity and access to more markets. The combined network will connect maritime, rail and road transport, with terminals playing a key role in coordinating the movement of goods across the logistics chain.

Combining sea and rail transport with road services for the collection and delivery of goods can also help reduce CO_2 emissions compared with road-only transport.

32 vessels, 18 routes, 28 countries

Following completion, the combined network is expected to comprise of 32 vessels operating 18 routes and connecting markets in 28 countries.

Its 21 maritime terminals will link these corridors and bring maritime and land transport services closer to major centers of production and consumption. This network on land will be further strengthened by its 5 rail terminals and more than 500 company-owned trucks. The network is also expected to handle a total of 35,000 containers, representing annual logistics throughput of more than 750,000 TEU.



Building on the multimodal model that has been central to its development over the past decade, Boluda Shipping intends to invest in the combined network, strengthening capacity, expanding connections and laying the foundation for the next phase of growth for both companies and their customers.

Rotterdam and Northern Europe: Key to Future Growth

The acquisition builds on Boluda's expansion in Northern Europe, where the Group has maintained a strong presence for several years through Boluda Towage's harbour towage operations and Boluda Shipping's maritime transport and logistics activities. Opening of its new offices in Rotterdam last June further reinforced this commitment and highlighted the region's importance to the Group's international development.

For Samskip, with HQ in the Netherlands, Rotterdam is also a key hub for its operations.

The experience of both organizations in the region, along with their combined capabilities, will make Rotterdam a strategic location for the development and coordination of services across the combined network.

Bringing together expertise and experience

The opportunity created by the agreement extends beyond routes, vessels and infrastructure. Both companies bring experienced teams, established customer relationships and operational knowledge built over many years.

The purpose of the integration is to bring together the strengths and best practices of both organizations across operations, management systems and customer service, while identifying opportunities to develop the combined network and create further opportunities for customers and professionals.

Looking ahead

The agreement is subject to approval by the relevant authorities and fulfilment of the agreed closing conditions. Until the transaction closes, Samskip and Boluda will continue to operate independently and in accordance with the applicable requirements.

The transaction is expected to close on 1 January 2027. Until then, both companies will remain focused on their customers, service quality and teams, while preparing to combine their capabilities and develop a broader, more efficient and reliable network connecting Europe and West Africa.

Samskip's brand, Icelandic origins and established recognition in its markets will remain an important part of the story of the combined business. Ólafur Orri Ólafsson will stay on as CEO of Samskip and play a key role going forward, contributing his experience while supporting Samskip's teams throughout the integration under the new ownership.

Comment

Ignacio Boluda Ceballos, Executive Chairman of Boluda Shipping, commented:

'*We have a clear vision: to lead European short sea shipping and make our network a competitive advantage for the businesses that place their trust in us.*

'*Bringing Samskip's network and expertise together with our maritime and logistics capabilities gives us the scale and opportunities to take that ambition further. We see significant potential to strengthen connections across Europe and with West Africa, while continuing to focus on efficiency, reliability and service for our customers*.'

Ólafur Orri Ólafsson, CEO of Samskip, added: '*Samskip and Boluda are two family-owned companies with a long track record in transport, shared values and a long-term vision. That common ground gives us confidence in the opportunity ahead. By bringing our complementary strengths together, we can expand what we offer our customers while building on the expertise, commitment and service they rely on every day*.'

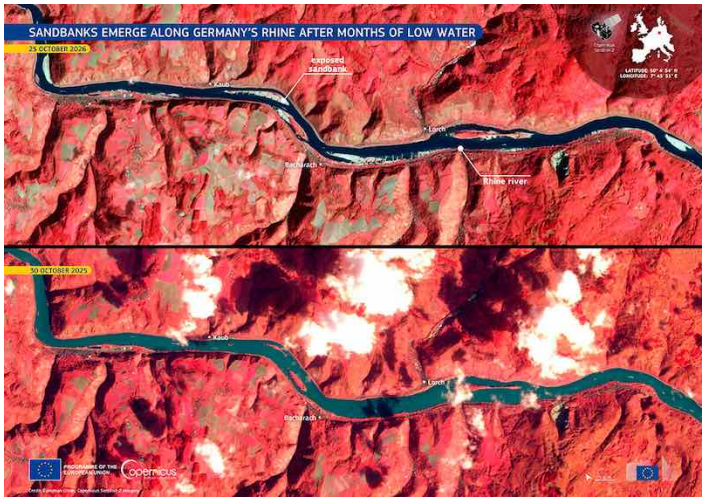
Germany's Rhine after months of low water

Sandbanks emerge

Throughout much of 2026, the River Rhine has been affected by unusually low water levels following a dry spring and a hot summer.

In late September, water levels, as measured by the gauge at Kaub, around 30 km south-east of Koblenz, fell to a record low.

Readings at Kaub* are a key reference for shipping on the river. On 26 October the gauge read 0.55 m. This figure is a reference value used for navigation rather than the actual depth of the river, but levels this low still limit the loading capacity of vessels.



Picture credit: European Union, Copernicus Sentinel-2 imagery. EU ©

These Copernicus Sentinel-2 false-colour images show the same stretch of the Rhine between Kaub and Bingen, Germany, on 25 October 2026 (top) and 30 October 2025 (bottom).

In both images, the river appears in dark blue-green tones, while the surrounding vegetation is highlighted in red. In the 2026 image, large areas of exposed sandbanks are visible near Kaub and along other sections of the river. In the 2025 image, these areas are covered by water.

Copernicus Sentinel-2 data support the monitoring of river extent and exposed riverbeds, providing information for drought assessment, water resource management, and inland navigation.

*For more see here: https://tinyurl.com/ynzkjzjw

The UKHO and S-100

An afloat demonstration

What happens when S-100 data and technology move from the test environment onto the bridge of a working vessel?

The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) has made a film of S-100 testing at sea aboard *Stena Vinga*, on the Portsmouth to St Helier, Jersey route.

Working with DFDS, the vessel's Stena Line crew and Teledyne Raymarine Commercial, the trial explores how emerging S-100 data and ECDIS functionality perform in an operational environment, and how information including high-resolution bathymetry, water levels and surface currents could support mariners on the bridge.

The video presents *Stena Vinga*'s Master, Johan Karlsson, Teledyne Raymarine Commercial's Director of Navigation Solutions, Andy Murray, and UKHO experts Tom Mellor and Ian Howse, as they discuss the potential benefits of S-100, the importance of mariner feedback and why real-world testing is essential to building confidence in the next generation of digital navigation.

This is the fourth in a series of live S-100 sea trials aboard *Stena Vinga*, helping the UKHO and its partners understand what works in practice, identify areas for further development and feed seagoing experience into the continuing development of S-100.

For more information

To learn more about UKHO's S-100 sea trials readers are invited to use the link here: www.admiralty.co.uk/s-100-sea-trials

Information about S-100 is available here: https://tinyurl.com/bdh5ab47

International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) S-100 Sea Trial Areas

In preparation for the operational implementation of S-100, several IHO Member States and Industry Stakeholders have undertaken sea trials and testbeds, labelled as ***IHO S-100 Sea Trial Areas***, to evaluate the effectiveness and operational readiness of the new standard. These trials allow mariners to experience S-100 products and services under real-world operating conditions, providing structured feedback that informs continued development and highlights achievements to date.

Results

Trials of the following have taken place:

- Torres Strait, Queensland, Australia (AHO).
- S-100 Across the Channel, ECDIS Trials, United Kingdom & France.
- CSMART Project, Carnival Corporation Ltd.
- Tory Channel Test Bed, Marlbourough Sounds, New Zealand (LINZ).

Reports of these trials are available using the link here: https://iho.int/en/iho-s-100-sea-trial-areas

Fatigue at sea:

Two extensive studies

Multi-Day Fatigue at Sea: A Two-State Biomathematical Model for Recreational Passage-Making

and

The Science of Fatigue at Sea:

A Biomathematical Model for Recreational Sailing

These papers bring together the published research, anchored on Dawson and Reid's fatigue and alcohol equivalence (*Nature*, 1997), together with the maritime and sleep literature, and build a planning model calibrated against it. Every source is listed in the references.

Multi-Day Fatigue at Sea: A Two-State Biomathematical Model for Recreational Passage-Making

By Piero Zucchelli and Natalie Smith

Abstract

Zucchelli and Smith described a biomathematical fatigue model for recreational passage-making — the Integrated Fatigue Model (IFM) — with output expressed as a blood-alcohol-concentration (BAC) equivalence anchored on Dawson and Reid (1997).

The IFM reproduces the dose-response using simpler linear extrapolations for multi-day fatigue accumulation and a simpler pre-departure accounting.

Zucchelli and Smith calibrated and validated the IFM primarily on passages of two days or less.

This paper extends the scientific treatment to multi-day offshore passage-making: transits of 48 hours and longer, non-rested departures, and short-handed watch-rotation choices.

The engine is rebuilt on the McCauley–Ramakrishnan unified model — a two-state framework with fast homeostatic S and slow allostatic L — and recalibrated against the Dawson–Reid 17 h / 24 h anchors so the BAC output is preserved.

Maritime tuning combines sea-state and fragmentation effects multiplicatively on the sleep time constant, yielding effective τ_s from 4.9 h (calm + deep at sea) to 25.5 h (storm + fragmented); the 4.2 h shore-laboratory baseline is not reachable at sea in the current calibration.

A combinatorial consequence — the circadian-burden-distribution property of crew-rotation cycles whose length is coprime with the crew size — formalises the effectiveness of the Swedish watch system.

Introduction

Zucchelli and Smith (2026) synthesised three decades of peer-reviewed evidence into the Integrated Fatigue Model (IFM), resting on the Dawson–Reid BAC equivalence (Dawson & Reid, 1997; Williamson & Feyer, 2000), the Folkard–Åkerstedt three-process framework (Folkard & Åkerstedt, 1987; Åkerstedt & Folkard, 1997), Bonnet fragmentation (Bonnet, 1987; Bonnet & Arand, 2003), Hystad–Eid sea-state coefficients (Hystad & Eid, 2016), and the Van Dongen cumulative-sleep-debt findings (Van Dongen et al., 2003).

The present paper extends the scientific treatment of the IFM — which uses simpler linear extrapolations for multi-day fatigue accumulation and a simpler pre-departure accounting — to the passages that recreational sailors most commonly plan when crossing the limits of short coastal work: legs of two days or more, departures that follow a period of irregular pre-passage sleep, and the choice of watch rotation on short-handed crews.

Within its primary validation horizon the IFM continues to describe the dose-response relationships accurately; the extension below addresses regimes that lie outside it.

The scope extension consists of three elements:

(i) The adoption of the two-state dynamical system of McCauley et al. (McCauley et al., 2009; McCauley et al., 2013) as the engine of the fatigue scale, preserving the BAC-equivalence output units of Zucchelli and Smith (2026) by recalibration against the Dawson–Reid anchors.

(ii) A two-factor maritime tuning of the sleep-recovery time constant, combining sea-state and fragmentation effects multiplicatively.

(iii) A combinatorial analysis of crew-rotation cycles that formalises, from first principles, the circadian-burden-distribution property on which the Swedish watch system's effectiveness depends.

The Science of Fatigue at Sea:

A Biomathematical Model for Recreational Sailing

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passage-making: transits of 48 hours and longer, non-rested departures, and short-handed watch-rotation choices.

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Zucchelli and Smith (2026) synthesised three decades of peer-reviewed evidence into the Integrated Fatigue Model (IFM), resting on the Dawson–Reid BAC equivalence (Dawson & Reid, 1997; Williamson & Feyer, 2000), the Folkard–Åkerstedt three-process framework (Folkard & Åkerstedt, 1987; Åkerstedt & Folkard, 1997), Bonnet fragmentation (Bonnet, 1987; Bonnet & Arand, 2003), Hystad–Eid sea-state coefficients (Hystad & Eid, 2016), and the Van Dongen cumulative-sleep-debt findings (Van Dongen et al., 2003).

The present paper extends the scientific treatment of the IFM — which uses simpler linear extrapolations for multi-day fatigue accumulation and a simpler pre-departure accounting — to the passages that recreational sailors most commonly plan when crossing the limits of short coastal work: legs of two days or more, departures that follow a period of irregular pre-passage sleep, and the choice of watch rotation on short-handed crews. Within its primary validation horizon the IFM continues to describe the dose-response relationships accurately; the extension below addresses regimes that lie outside it.

The scope extension consists of three elements:

(i) The adoption of the two-state dynamical system of McCauley et al. (McCauley et al., 2009; McCauley et al., 2013) as the engine of the fatigue scale, preserving the BAC-equivalence output units of Zucchelli and Smith (2026) by recalibration against the Dawson–Reid anchors.

(ii) A two-factor maritime tuning of the sleep-recovery time constant, combining sea-state and fragmentation effects multiplicatively.

(iii) A combinatorial analysis of crew-rotation cycles that formalises, from first principles, the circadian-burden-distribution property on which the Swedish watch system's effectiveness depends. Each element broadens a specific feature of the IFM treatment, as identified in §2.

To inspect the papers

To inspect reprints of the papers readers are invited to use the links here:

Zucchelli, P. & Smith, N. (2026). ***The Science of Fatigue at Sea: A Biomathematical Model for Recreational Sailing***.

Preprints.org. https://tinyurl.com/y6nh7xhw

Zucchelli, P. & Smith, N. (2026). ***Multi-Day Fatigue at Sea: A Two-State Biomathematical Model for Recreational Passage-Making***.

Preprints.org. https://tinyurl.com/5dw92n9z

About the authors

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https://galvanicworks.com/about-us/

Editorial note:

The two summaries and introductions published here appear by kind permission of the authors Piero Zucchelli and Natalie Smith, of Galvanic Works S.L. in Mallorca.

World Maritime Day 2026

Parallel Event, Busan, Republic of Korea

26–27 October 2026

By Captain Gwee-Bok Lee

President, Korea Shipmasters' Association (KSMA)

The 2026 World Maritime Day Parallel Event was held at the Busan Port International Exhibition & Convention Center (BPEX) on 26–27 October, jointly organized by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea. Under this year's theme, ***From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence***, the event focused on how IMO conventions can be effectively implemented through national legislation, enforcement and international cooperation.



Captain Gwee-Bok LEE is in the centre

On 26 October, I attended the Opening Ceremony from 1030–1145 together with Captain Wansik Eum, Vice President of the Korea Shipmasters' Association (KSMA).

The ceremony included a performance by the Busan Metropolitan Dance Company. We then joined the luncheon from 1200–1400 and, in the afternoon, attended Session 2, the IGO–NGO Dialogue (1545–1700), chaired by Mr Kitack Lim, Secretary-General Emeritus of IMO. Speakers from IMO, IALA, IHO and IMSO, together with representatives of ZESTAs and BEMA, discussed how international organizations and technical and industry partners can help

Member States implement IMO instruments consistently. In the evening we also attended the welcome dinner (1830–2030) at the Park Hyatt Busan, attended by the Minister of Oceans and Fisheries. This offered valuable opportunities to meet colleagues from the international maritime community.

As shipmasters, we were reminded that '*practice*' ultimately happens on board our ships. The IMO Secretary-General's message in the event brochure stressed that the global regulatory framework delivers its benefits only when it is effectively implemented and enforced at the national level, and drew attention to the safety of seafarers amid current geopolitical tensions. These are issues of direct concern to masters, and IFSMA's voice in such discussions is very important.

The event was followed by the 20th Korea Maritime Week held from 28–29 October. Busan will also host the Fourth United Nations Ocean Conference in June 2028, and the 2027 World Maritime Day Parallel Event will be held in Manila, the Philippines, on 18–19 October 2027.