



# Leadership Insights

Insights from the global leadership community

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## Leading the global fleet

LISCR CEO Alfonso Castellero discusses incoming talent, potential tariffs and the evolving decarbonisation landscape





# Flying the flag

Alfonso Castellero, CEO of the Liberian International Ship & Corporate Registry (LISCR), the world's largest ship registry, speaks to *ICS Leadership Insights* about the developing role of flag state registries and how this is being influenced by everything from geopolitical shifts to decarbonisation.

**Q As the world's largest flag, the Liberian International Ship & Corporate Registry (LISCR) is at the forefront of global fleet trends. In your view, is the industry adapting quickly enough to meet the net zero by 2050 goal?**

**A** The industry is making progress when it comes to decarbonisation but it's clear that greater clarity from the International Maritime Organization (IMO) would reassure shipowners and help speed up the process of adapting to meet decarbonisation goals.

There have been examples previously where shipowners have begun investing in technologies only to find out these won't be deemed compliant in the future, so avoiding this through greater clarity can help speed up the transition.

While there's a big focus on the 2050 goal of net-zero GHG emissions, it's crucial that flag registries and industry organisations agree on and implement robust IMO mid-term measures that provides shipowners with meaningful incentives to foster innovation and investment in new technologies as well as accelerate the uptake of zero and near-zero GHG emissions fuels. This is the only way GHG emissions from international shipping stand a chance of reaching the indicative reduction targets in 2030 and 2040, and eventually the net-zero GHG emissions goal by 2050.

**Q And how are these changes affecting the role of shipping registries?**

**A** At LISCR we believe in collaboration with quality stakeholders to resolve the decarbonisation challenge for shipping. Since 2016 we have been involved in more than 40 innovative ship design joint industry projects (JIPs) in partnership with shipyards, class societies, shipowners and other relevant stakeholders resulting in Approval-in-Principle for innovative ship designs, new technologies and alternative fuels using a risk-based approach.

Earlier this year we took our JIP concept to the next level by establishing the Innovation & Energy Transition Team that, in addition to accelerating our involvement in JIPs, are providing a number of added value services to our shipowner clients. These services help provide certainty for shipowners in their decision making process for investments in innovative solutions, new technologies and alternative fuels.

Another important aspect of our work at LISCR is to be the voice of shipowners to ensure their experiences are heard at the IMO and properly considered when developing new regulations for international shipping. This includes the IMO regulatory framework supporting our industry's transition to net-zero GHG emissions by 2050.



## There's an argument for strengthening the role of flag carriers in determining alternative solutions for mid-term goals

**Q What does the industry need to do to ensure it has the talent required to achieve a net zero future?**

**A** We absolutely need the broadest possible talent pool to address the challenges of the future.

One thing to acknowledge is that newer generations entering the workforce tend to have different desires and expectations when it comes to the world of work. Many young people are concerned they won't enjoy sufficient agency and want the opportunity to act as entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, the maritime industry can be quite rigid and bureaucratic, which is perhaps understandable to an extent given the physical and at times dangerous nature of the work. We need to ensure the correct balance is found in order to meet the expectations of new entrants to the workforce.

We should look at where we can introduce virtual training, where appropriate, as this could mean reaching talented new employees who are unable to make multiple trips to a training centre.

Continued progress to make time spent at sea more attractive would also help. Whether that's through providing reliable internet connectivity for staying in touch with family back home, or simply creating positions that require less time spent away.

**Q How are geopolitical issues, the growth of the dark fleet and sanctions changing the nature of the role flag states play?**

Flags now have responsibilities that have not traditionally fallen within their remit. Due to sanctions and the dark fleet, we have been required to keep up with

the demand for information on cargo positioning, vessel spoofing, cargo values and so on. It is a whole different set of rules for Flag States.

To aid in this information sharing and collaboration is vital – and we work with other major open registries on an online database for other registries and IMO Member States to catalogue information on ships that might be engaging in sanction activities or doing things like 'flag hopping'.

When it comes to cases like geopolitical instability in the Red Sea, for example, we may be called upon to attempt diplomatic intervention if a vessel runs into trouble. But more commonly and more usefully, flags have an important role in obtaining and sharing information with vessels in order to help them avoid difficulties and reroute if necessary.

**Q Following recent elections, will a rise in protectionism and an introduction of tariffs pose challenges for flags?**

**A** Nothing would surprise me but we believe in freedom of commerce and standard global regulations.

One of the big general challenges for our industry is that there's a tendency to use restrictions and uni-lateral regulations that limit how people do business as opposed to competing on the quality of service.

There's a more general point here that understanding quality of service and gaining transparency across the entire ecosystem could improve outcomes. For example, the [Flag State Performance Table](#) provides useful information, but we could also extend that to look at Port State Control – what sort of training are officers being given and how is their performance evaluated?

Flag States face a lot of scrutiny but have a proven long track record of delivering results for businesses and consumers. Ultimately, too many restrictions won't deliver favourable outcomes. If we lost open registries, the most notable outcome would be consumers paying significantly more for basic goods. As such, we're hopeful common sense will prevail when it comes to protectionism and shifts in the regulatory landscape – the Liberian Registry will continue to demonstrate its commitment to maritime safety, environmental standards, and service excellence, [as it has done since 1948](#).

**Flag states face a lot of scrutiny but have a proven long track record of delivering results for businesses and consumers**

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This publication describes the various types of biofouling and the problems it can cause for ship operation and the marine environment. The second edition examines the use of anti-fouling systems to prevent the build-up of biofouling as well as the options available for ship cleaning. It also sets out current biofouling legislation and guidelines.

The book includes data sheets for a number of hull cleaning companies worldwide.

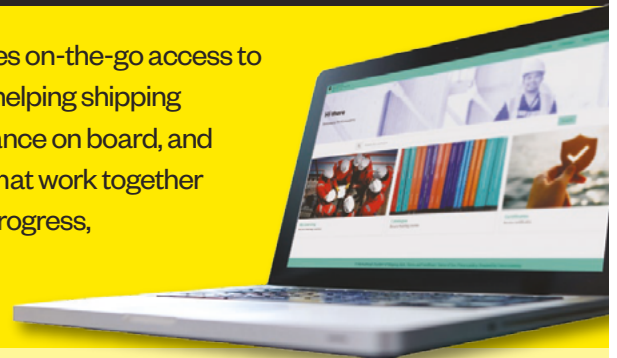


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# ICS Academy

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Black swan events like COVID-19 and the Ever Given running aground in the Suez Canal in 2021 brought supply chain resilience into the foreground. Credit: By NASA JSC ISS image library

# Are “antifragile” supply chains the future of resilience?

Global supply chains face a huge number of challenges from natural disasters and geopolitical tensions to pandemics and economic volatility. Can a resilience-based approach still offer supply chain strategists the tools they need?

Traditional supply chain strategies have largely focused on building resilience, aiming to maintain functionality and withstand disruptions. However, resilience is just one part of modern supply chain thinking. A more transformative concept, “antifragility”, is taking resilience a step further. It promotes not only withstanding shocks but also thriving and improving because of them.

## What is “antifragility”?

Antifragility has grown in popularity as the world has experienced increasingly volatile and uncertain economic times while simultaneously facing massive technological shifts and a rapidly changing climate. It describes systems that benefit from volatility, stress, and disorder.

Speaking to *ICS Leadership Insights*, Tony Lugg, Founder of supply chain technology

firm Project Argus, noted that turbulence has become a hallmark feature of the contemporary global supply chain following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unlike fragile systems, which break under stress, or resilient systems, which simply endure, antifragile systems are supposed to improve or even thrive when subjected to uncertainty and shock. They reduce reliance on single points of failure, and unlike resilient supply chains, which might focus on backups, antifragile ones are aimed to be created from networks that can quickly adapt and evolve.

## Applying “antifragility”

In the aftermath of COVID-19, Amazon and Walmart both took steps to implement antifragile networks. Both effectively leveraged their digital infrastructure to scale up e-commerce operations, while

manufacturers diversified their supply sources and automated parts of their production processes. These companies didn't just survive the pandemic—they emerged more robust and better prepared for future disruptions.

According to Paul Saunders, Head of Product Strategy and Chief Evangelist Cloud ERP for German multinational software company SAP, applying an antifragility strategy starts by decentralising operations and creating redundancy across suppliers and production sites.

Speaking to *ICS Leadership Insights*, he said that planning, analytics, and real-time metrics all play a key role in achieving anti-fragility. But, he added, one of the biggest capability gaps right now is the right mindset. "Antifragility requires flexibility and experimentation," he said. "If a company is one that loves its processes more than its outcomes, then this is not for them."

Tim Payne, Vice President Research and Gartner Fellow at Gartner, told *ICS Leadership Insights* that adopting an antifragile supply chain empowers companies to make better decisions on how they can change (agility) and how quickly (responsiveness) by having "better knowledge of the impact of uncertainty in resource performance on value output".

"It [a company utilising antifragile supply chains] gets this knowledge by balancing central and local decision making, using probabilistic planning approaches, experimentation on the supply chain (aka stress testing) using a digital model, and driving towards decision-centric planning (as opposed to process-centric planning) to leverage resource options effectively, amongst other things," he said.

Antifragility also thrives on information and learning from stressors. Modern supply chains can achieve this by utilising real-time data analytics, machine learning, and artificial intelligence to gain insights into patterns of disruption, customer demand fluctuations, and supply chain inefficiencies. Rather than simply reacting to disruptions, an antifragile supply chain uses data to predict potential issues, explore new opportunities, and continuously optimise processes.

Another key component, according to Lugg, is that supply chain partners should not be seen through an "us versus them" lens, but instead in a collaborative



## In the aftermath of COVID-19, Amazon and Walmart both took steps to implement antifragile networks

environment that encourages entrepreneurial thinking.

### Different points on a continuum

Zera Zheng, Global Head of Business Resilience Consulting at Maersk, does not believe that antifragility is replacing resilience. She told *ICS Leadership Insights*: "Resilience aims to manage vulnerabilities rather than eliminate all dependencies, which is impractical in the real world."

Unless a company controls every aspect of its operations, she noted, from raw materials to marketing and sales, it will inevitably rely on external parties. "These partners will vary in importance, making it impossible to distribute the workload equally. As a result, certain dependencies are unavoidable," Zheng explained.

She went on to say: "The goal of resilience is to build supply chains that balance acceptable costs with manageable risks. Unlike the concept of antifragility, which seeks to eliminate all fragility, resilience accepts that some areas may remain vulnerable, as long as they fall within an acceptable risk level and cost."

Underscoring the realities of profit-driven organisations, she pointed out that com-

panies are more focused on achieving the highest returns "rather than striving for complete independence in the marketplace."

Project Argus' Lugg agreed that an antifragile model is not always suitable due to liability concerns, leading management to adopt a purely conservative approach. "These situations often arise in heavily regulated sectors, such as pharmaceuticals," he said. "However, I would suggest that a hybrid model could be implemented if the necessary skills exist within the logistics team or if those skills can be outsourced to a 4PL service operating in this sphere."

Saunders concluded that he did not believe this was an "either/or" scenario. He said: "There are always situations where resilience will be preferred - this may be due to cost/benefit, overall risk, the need for stability, etc."

But, he added, the world we live in is not deterministic - the "inputs always change so the outputs change, too".

"From a shipping perspective you can think of how the great explorers were antifragile," Saunders said. "They were comfortable with sailing into the unknown, they repurposed resources as needed, they had multiple paths available in case one became blocked."

"A resilient explorer doesn't make the history books. An antifragile one gets countries named after them." [he reminds readers.](#)



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# New International Chamber of Shipping Secretary General announced

At a special meeting of the board, held on-line, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) have unanimously appointed Thomas A. Kazakos as its next Secretary General. Kazakos will replace Guy Platten who will be stepping down in June 2025. Kazakos has been the Director General of the Cyprus Shipping Chamber, the representative National-Member Association of Cyprus at ICS, since 1995.

Emanuele Grimaldi, Chairman of the International Chamber of Shipping said: "After a thorough search and interview process my board is delighted to confirm the appointment of Thomas Kazakos to this important position for our industry. The coming decade will be pivotal for our industry, and it was important that we got the right person to lead ICS. Thomas brings a wealth of experience of the ICS community and the entire shipping industry. He is the ideal candidate to build on the great work that Guy has delivered over the past six plus years.

"Through Guy's leadership ICS has been at the forefront of developments in our industry, be that decarbonisation, energy transition, safety or seafarer welfare. I am grateful to him for his professionalism both in leading ICS and for the continuity plan that he has put in place to ensure that ICS continues to lead our industry in the decades to come. Guy will leave ICS in a robust state, both in the way it leads the agenda on so many issues, and in having sound finances."

The recruitment process was undertaken by the international search firm Odgers Berndtson with members of the ICS board from across the world involved in the interview process.

Thomas Kazakos said: "I am very proud to have been selected to become the next



**The coming years will be ones of significant change for our industry and members, and it is vital that we have a strong and resilient organisation to ably represent their views**

Secretary General of ICS taking over from Guy next June. In my role with the Cyprus Shipping Chamber, I have seen first-hand and have contributed to the vital work that ICS undertakes. The coming years will be ones of significant change for our industry and members, and it is vital that we have a strong and resilient organisation to ably represent their views. The IMO's decarbonisation agenda is obviously front and centre for our industry and I know ICS is working closely with the IMO, governments and other stakeholders, to develop a credible system to support the transition. But there is so much more to do and I am

excited to be given this opportunity to lead the amazing team at ICS and to work with our members as we address the many challenges that our industry encounters."

Guy Platten concluded: "The last six plus years have undoubtedly been the most rewarding of my career and it has been a privilege to have been Secretary General. I am so proud in the way that the ICS team has stepped up to the many challenges thrown at us and the way that our industry has changed from one that too often just responded, to an industry that seeks to shape its future. During my time as Secretary General, I have been supported by two wonderful chairmen, Emanuele Grimaldi and Esben Poulsson, along with an engaged and dedicated board and their associations. We have been able to strengthen the team at ICS and I am immensely proud of what they have achieved and what we will achieve before I finally step down next June at our AGM and Conference in Athens. I know that Thomas will have a great team around him when he takes over the reins and I wish him and them [fair winds and following seas](#)"

Kazakos studied at the University of Leicester in the United Kingdom obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Law (LL.B) and a Master's Degree in European and International Trade Law (LL.M). Kazakos began his professional career at the Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation prior to joining the Cyprus Shipping Chamber. Internationally Kazakos has represented Cyprus on the board of ICS and the European Community Shipowners' Association (ECSA) in addition to being an Administrative Board member of the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA).

Kazakos is married with four children.



# ICS in Action

A round-up of ICS news and activities over the last month

## High-profile ICS Summit kicks off Hong Kong Maritime Week with a bang

The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), in collaboration with the Transport and Logistics Bureau of the Government of Hong Kong SAR, the Hong Kong Shipowners Association and the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board, hosted a Global Trade Summit on 18 November in Hong Kong.

Nearly 300 delegates from 28 countries convened, including Ministers and senior policymakers from 12 nations, the European Commission and international organisations, with CEOs of companies from the maritime value chain.

With global focus on trade the Summit addressed the challenges facing maritime trade including growing political tensions, the proliferation of protectionism and the increasingly unpredictable and disruptive global landscape.

Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Arsenio Dominguez, provided a keynote address and reiterated the importance of collaboration and global regulations.

"It is only by working and engaging with each other that we can find solutions to the risks and disruptions that arise...I emphasise here the need for cohesive global regulations. Shipping is inherently international and unilateral and regional rules can undermine the regulatory framework agreed [upon at IMO](#)"

## International Chamber of Shipping releases statement on the plight of the crew of the Galaxy Leader

Tuesday 19 November marked the one-year anniversary of the seizure of the crew of the Galaxy Leader. Mr Guy Platten, Secretary General of the International Chamber of Shipping, stated:

"It seems incredible that a year has passed, and the crew of the Galaxy Leader are still

being held hostage. Innocent seafarers and families who have had their lives irrevocably changed by geopolitical forces wholly out of their control.

The seafarers, some of whom have been at sea for nearly two years, have been held against their will only limited contact with their families, friends, and loved ones. This is unconscionable and must not be allowed to endure. We are thinking of the seafarers and all of those affected at this time, and we continue to call for humanity to prevail and their [immediate release](#)."

## BIMCO and the International Chamber of Shipping issue guide to help maritime industry reduce underwater noise

BIMCO and the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) have developed a new guide which aims to help the shipping industry understand and reduce underwater radiated noise from ships and help the industry implement the underwater noise guidelines from the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

The attention on underwater radiated noise from ships has significantly increased over the last few years and the demand for action has risen due to its negative effects on marine creatures and the environment.

The practical "Underwater Radiated Noise Guide" from BIMCO and ICS explores the sources of underwater noise and its far-reaching impact on marine life. It also explains the content of the IMO guidelines and how to set up a noise management plan and looks at the scope of regional regulations and [voluntary measures](#).

On the 21st-22nd January 2025, ICS's Technical Director Chris Waddington will be joining the Royal Institution of Naval Architects' technical conference on [Managing OIL and Associated Challenges](#) at the International Maritime Organization's HQ in London.

**ICS is the principal international trade association for merchant shipowners and operators, representing all sectors and trades and over 80% of the world merchant fleet.**

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