



Press release

Hong Kong Shipowners Association and Hong Kong maritime sector keen to promote decarbonisation and sustainability

On 16 April, 2025 (today), some 200 ship owners and industry experts and practitioners of the Hong Kong maritime sector gathered at a symposium convened by the Hong Kong Shipowners Association (HKSOA) to discuss the way forward to promote maritime decarbonisation and sustainability, in light of the deliberations of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Marine Environment Protection Committee 83rd session (MEPC 83) held last week (7–11 April) in London.

During the IMO's MEPC 83 session, a framework for mid-term greenhouse gas reduction measures was agreed for formal adoption in October this year (2025). The main measures include (i) a global fuel standard for large ocean-going ships, requiring the ships to reduce their annual greenhouse gas fuel intensity over time, and (ii) a global pricing mechanism, whereby ships exceeding the emissions thresholds must purchase remedial units to balance their deficit emissions, while ships using zero or near-zero greenhouse gas technologies will be eligible for financial incentives.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Richard Hext, Deputy Chairman of the HKSOA, welcomed the audience to this major event of the Hong Kong maritime sector. "The recent discussions at the IMO made great progress towards the adoption of green fuels but the road ahead is littered with potential pitfalls," he said. "At today's HKSOA symposium, shipowners and operators are able to hear first-hand from Hong Kong's team at the IMO talks, as well as professional advice from experts to help them make their own plans for decarbonisation. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our discussions today."

Under Secretary for Transport and Logistics Mr. Liu Chun San, JP, delivering the keynote speech, said "Hong Kong took a proactive approach and was the pioneering flag administration to support the IMO's Carbon Intensity Indicator (CII) green shipping policy last year. The "IMO Net-Zero Framework" approved by the IMO last week will undoubtedly have a substantial impact on the international shipping industry. While the green transformation of the industry might not be completely smooth sailing, Hong Kong stands ready to navigate alongside our maritime partners and pilot our industry towards greater prosperity through our development into a green maritime fuel bunkering and trading centre."

Mr. Liu's speech was followed by a presentation by Mr. Derek Mak, the representative of the Hong Kong Marine Department at MEPC 83, who provided an update of the MEPC deliberations; and experience sharing by Captain Lothair Lam, Chairman of Hong Kong Ming Wah Shipping, from a ship owner's perspective and Mr. Martin Cresswell, Technical Director of the HKSOA.

Commenting on MEPC 83's approval to circulate the mid-term greenhouse gas reduction measures, Mr. Derek Mak said, "MEPC 83 marked a significant milestone in the IMO's commitment to achieve the net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions target outlined in the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy. These measures will drive an energy transition towards zero and near-zero GHG emission technologies, fuels and other energy sources for a green and sustainable international shipping."

In view of the MEPC updates, Captain Lothair Lam, urged "all participants in the shipping industry chain to unite, actively research and develop energy-saving and carbon-reduction technologies to build a green, open, innovative, and mutually beneficial new shipping ecosystem together".

HKSOA Technical Director, Mr. Martin Cresswell, who was also in London last week for the discussions, reminded the audience that although the main achievement of MEPC 83 was a compromise agreement on the pricing of mid-term measures, progress was also made on the CII, Ballast Water Convention and bio-fouling issues but these would require more work at future MEPC meetings.

The Symposium also featured two expert sharing sessions, one by the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) and one by Climate Impact Corporation.

Mr. Shen Tao, ABS Director, Global Sustainability, said, "ABS is proud to support this important event. At a time of great change for the industry, we are committed to providing support for shipowners to help navigate the many challenges raised by a dynamic regulatory environment and rapid technological advance.

"There is a pressing need for the shipping industry to decarbonize quickly," said Mr. James leong, Co-Founder of Climate Impact Corporation. "As a global developer, investor and operator of large-scale renewable energy projects, we envisage various new energy solutions, including renewable hydrogen solutions, for the industry in the years ahead. Speed is the key!"

A panel discussion was led by Captain Nittin Handa, Regulatory Affairs Director of the HKSOA, with the participation of industry experts in ship management, vessel design and surveys, and green fuels bunkering: Mr. Sanjay Relan, General Manager of Pacific Basin Shipping (HK) Limited, Mr. Prakash Chandra, Director of Fleet Management Limited, Mr. Qin Aohan, Technical Manager of China Classification Society Overseas Technology Centre, and Mr. Vernon Tsang, Sale & Marketing Director of Chimbusco Pan Nation Petro-Chemical Co Ltd.

The Panel had a fruitful discussion on the topic of “Global Green Fuel Transition and Hong Kong Readiness”, bringing together industry leaders and sustainability experts to explore the challenges and opportunities in advancing green fuel technologies. The panellists shared their insights on overcoming barriers to decarbonisation in the shipping sector, Hong Kong's role as a future green maritime fuel hub, and the importance of international collaboration and emerging technologies. The discussion underscored Hong Kong's potential to lead regional efforts in the adoption of green fuels while aligning with global decarbonisation and sustainability standards.

During the event, Ms Nelly Akhmedzhanova of The Captain's Table gave a presentation on a “Sustainability Engagement Tracker” initiative, designed to assess the maritime industry's progress towards true sustainability.

In his concluding address for the Symposium, Mr. Tim Huxley, Chairman of Mandarin Shipping Ltd, reflected on the road ahead:

“Last week's meetings in London showed that there is still a long way to go before we reach agreement on how to achieve climate goals. What is clear is that there remains almost total unity in continuing to strive to reduce emissions. Hong Kong's maritime sector will continue to play a key role in this discourse and through a responsible approach to all stakeholders, continued innovation and maintaining a constructive dialogue with all parties involved, Hong Kong will help find the solution.”

As the event host, Ms. Sandy Chan, Managing Director of the Hong Kong Shipowners Association, said that the Symposium clearly demonstrated the readiness and determination of the Hong Kong maritime sector to go green, living up with the city's reputation as a leading international maritime centre.

The event, followed with a cocktail reception, was held in the Hong Kong Maritime Museum.

Notes for Editors

The Hong Kong Shipowners Association, incorporated in 1957, is a major industry association with about 200 corporate members, including ship owners, ship managers and marine service providers. Throughout the years, it has been a key driver in maritime decarbonization and a strong advocate for shipping initiatives to promote sustainability at all levels – local, national and international. As the “Voice of Asia” and the rotational Chairman of the Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA), in May 2024, the Association also hosted the ASA International Shipping Forum, during which over 300 key maritime personalities from different parts of Asia gathered in Hong Kong to pursue “Asia Shipping, Greener Together”.

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