

Feedback on the roadmap regarding the strategy for long-term EU greenhouse gas emissions reduction

The European shipowners are fully committed to adopting by spring 2023 the comprehensive IMO Strategy which has been also supported by the EU Commission. This strategy, often referred to as 'the Paris Agreement for Shipping' includes short-term, mid-term and long-term measures, with implementation schedules at the IMO. Work regarding the development of short-term measures is already on-going and European shipowners will participate in the discussions and aim to positively contribute to the development of measures at upcoming MEPC (October 2018), as has been the case in the past.

Following adoption of this initial strategy on GHG in spring 2018, the international shipping industry is now moving into an on-going low carbon transition trajectory which should be compatible with the modus operandi of different types of ships and trade and ensure minimum use of energy per transport work performed. The international shipping industry is committed to contributing to an informed policy discussion at IMO, relating to the 40% carbon intensity reduction target for 2030, compared to 2008.

Viable and sustainable measures ought to be agreed upon at the international level. Diverting regional measures risk stopping progress on the much-needed global framework, leading to carbon leakage and modal shifts. While EU actions and initiatives can facilitate the progress in the IMO, they can also focus on the coordinated and effective implementation of the agreements reached at the international level.

In this context, the shipping industry would welcome a holistic approach for the implementation of the IMO measures within the EU, meaning that shipping itself, and its CO₂ emission, is to be seen as part of a whole logistic chain. Hence it is very important that Europe creates and supports possibilities to take the lead in innovation and R&D relevant for shipping and the broader European maritime cluster. EU funding is much needed to support relevant research.

At the moment shipping is fossil fuel captive. Zero emissions is something which the shipping industry believes is achievable¹ in the long run, but only provided that governments acknowledge the enormity of this challenge and take active steps to help facilitate the developments of new propulsion technologies for vessels in all sectors and the massive investment in bunkering infrastructure that will be required if zero CO₂ fuels are eventually to be made available to the shipping industry on a worldwide basis.

The EU Commission expressed² its intention to make the EU the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. Innovation was considered as the main motor for economic change in the EU.

This is a moment where the EU Commission can choose to play a strong supportive role when it comes to helping its industries to stay competitive on global markets and be a frontrunner in applying global regulations, especially when it comes to CO₂ emission reductions. In the view of the European shipowners, funding, R&D and innovation will play a strategically important role for the EU to stay a competitive place for business (for the shipping industry, but also for scientist, engineers, yards and others) and for further sustainable economic growth.

¹ ICS, Marisec publications 2018, reducing CO₂ emissions to Zero: the 'Paris Agreement for Shipping'

² Lisbon Strategy