



Letter to EU Climate Ministers. Copy to EU Transport Ministers and Commissioners Bulc and Cañete

Clean Shipping Coalition ASBL  
2<sup>ND</sup> Floor, 18 Square de Meeûs  
B-1050 Brussels

2nd June 2015

**Regarding: Greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for shipping at international and EU level**

Dear Minister responsible for climate change matters,

We write to you on behalf of environmental non-governmental organizations, including observers to the IMO, concerned at the failure of the international community to control greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping.

In mid-May, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) held the 68<sup>th</sup> session of its Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC). At that session, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) introduced a proposal and a passionate call for the adoption of a reduction target for GHG emissions from international shipping. This move was highly significant: RMI is extremely vulnerable to climate change, is a member of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), and is also home to the world's third largest shipping registry – a giant in IMO terms.

Given the IMO's poor record on climate change matters, this proposal represented a loud wakeup call to the international community but it only took the IMO 90 minutes to reject the matter, despite evidence that failure to cap a fast growing source of emissions such as international shipping will endanger the 2 degree target.

Regrettably the IMO's intransigence was to no small extent due to some European countries. While the EU claims to be the forerunner and leader by example in the international climate negotiations, the failure representatives from some of its key member states to deliver a robust endorsement of the RMI proposal at the start of the debate - there were some notable exceptions- set the stage, once again, for the IMO to evade its responsibilities on climate change.

This failure is all the more remarkable given that the EU is on record at the UNFCCC calling for the IMO to establish a target consistent with the 2 degree objective. The RMI, Vanuatu, Tuvalu and the Solomons all took the risk to come to London and reclaim their IMO seats from the pro-industry ship registries that usually occupy them, expecting and having been promised support from Europe.

This was a genuinely historic moment in the long 18-year battle since Kyoto to have the IMO properly address emissions from international shipping. But leading European states including Germany, the UK, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Finland evidently decided to digress from the agreed EU position clearly expressed by Latvia, France, Belgium, Poland and others, by implicitly favouring work on data collection with no indication as to when or how work to agree a global cap might merit attention. Their equivocal support was a signal for lukewarm responses from the US, Australia and Japan which turned into outright opposition from the BRICs and others.

Parties are submitting emission reduction pledges (INDCs) to the UNFCCC intended to keep global warming below 2 degrees. It is essential that Europe move to stress that the international sectors must also play their part and that, if the IMO will not act, then the UNFCCC will. International shipping accounts for around 3% of global CO2 emissions - on a par with emissions from Japan or Germany. Shipping emissions have increased by approximately 70% since the Kyoto baseline year 1990 and the IMO's Third GHG study (2014) forecasts a further increase of 50% to 250% by 2050. While the hope is that global emissions will peak or decline by 2020, none of the "business as usual" IMO scenarios which include expected fleet efficiency improvements, foresee a decline in shipping emissions before 2050. Shipping emissions must therefore be reduced through rigorous technical and operational measures complemented by market-based mechanisms under an ambitious reduction target. Such mechanisms may also offer an important source of new public climate finance.

We therefore urge you to pursue the following actions at UNFCCC and IMO level:

- Preserve and strengthen the EU language on international aviation and shipping emissions in the UNFCCC negotiation text for incorporation in the Paris Agreement at the end of this year;
- The IMO must agree a global emissions reduction target in 2016;
- Submit proposals for a global ship emissions cap for consideration at MEPC 69, the next session.
- Support Pacific Island States to continue their initiative to cap shipping emissions;
- Support additional finance through measures for shipping emissions reductions for mitigation and adaptation actions in the poorest and most vulnerable countries.

At EU level, member states should clarify that shipping emissions are fully included in the recently-agreed climate and energy package's 40% reduction commitment by 2030. International shipping is still the only transport sector and one of very few in the EU not contributing to EU emissions reductions. Since European maritime transport activities are expected to increase by 8% in 2020, 15% by 2030, and 39% by 2050, the EU should make clear that it intends to deliver shipping emissions reductions within its 2030 commitment by including international shipping in the Energy Union legislative proposals, either making the sector subject to the ETS from 2021 or, by way of derogation, permit shipping companies to instead make a voluntary contribution to a compensation fund or join a target-based compensation fund as set out in the Commission's 2013 communication on shipping.

We all trust you will pursue these recommendations for negotiations at UNFCCC, IMO and EU level.

Yours sincerely,

Clean Shipping Coalition  
Quercus  
Carbon Market Watch  
Oxfam  
NABU  
IFAW

International Cryosphere Climate Initiative

Pacific Environment  
Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition  
Surfrider Foundation Europe  
Marine Conservation Society  
Climate Action Network Europe