

Open Letter in support of adopting a Shipping Levy at the International Maritime Organisation

Dear Fellow Member States of the International Maritime Organisation,

Shipping is the backbone of the global economy, enabling international trade and driving prosperity and growth for all nations. To secure the sector's long-term sustainability, we must accelerate its transition to clean energy. Climate change is amongst the defining challenges of our time, requiring urgent action across all sectors—including international shipping, which accounts for nearly 3% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has made significant strides towards decarbonizing shipping. We commend its 2023 Strategy to achieve net-zero emissions by around 2050, and to do so through a just and equitable transition. Now, it is imperative that the IMO adopts measures to realize this goal.

We strongly believe that a global shipping levy is the most effective mechanism to drive this transition. More than 50 countries, representing over 66% of the global fleet, now support the proposal. A universal levy on all the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions from ships will provide a strong economic incentive for clean energy adoption, ensuring alignment with the highest ambitions of the 2023 Strategy while keeping costs as low as possible and guaranteeing a level playing field.

Impact assessments confirm that while all decarbonization measures carry costs, a levy is the most cost-effective solution. Crucially, it would generate much-needed revenue to fund research, development, and deployment of clean fuels and technologies and contribute to climate action in developing countries, ensuring that no nation is left behind.

As we look ahead to the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4), COP30 and other international fora, we urge all IMO member states at MEPC 83 in April 2025 to take decisive action. By adopting a global shipping levy, the maritime sector can lead the way in sector-wide transformations away from fossil fuels. A transition that is just, equitable, and leaves no one behind is within reach. We believe this levy is a critical step toward a more sustainable and resilient future.

Signed by:

H.E. Biman Prasad, Deputy Prime Minister, Fiji

H.E. Agnès Pannier-Runacher, Minister of Ecological Transition, France

H.E. Ali Mohamed, Special Climate Envoy of the President, Kenya

H.E. Hilton Kendall, Minister of Transportation, Communication and IT, Republic of the Marshall Islands

H.E. Antony Derjacques, Minister for Transport, Seychelles

H.E. Óscar Puente, Minister for Transport and Sustainable Mobility, Spain