



## **World Maritime Theme 2020**

### **Sustainable shipping for a Sustainable Planet Message by IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim**

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all of us, with unprecedented impacts on our lives, our economies and our societies. At IMO we have observed and attempted to address the impacts on the shipping industry and especially seafarers. In these challenging times, the ability of shipping services and seafarers to deliver essential goods, including medical supplies, food and fuel is central to responding to, and overcoming this crisis.

The pandemic has shown that shipping, the most reliable, efficient and cost-effective method of international transportation that carries more than 80% of global trade, remains the leading facilitator of the global economy. Therefore, shipping and maritime will be at the heart of the economic recovery and future sustainable growth far into the future, both at sea and ashore, supporting an inclusive and resilient economy to underpin the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

“Sustainable shipping for a sustainable planet”, our theme for 2020 couldn’t be more relevant now and for years to come.

In the post-COVID world, much focus will be directed at the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by all UN Member States in 2015.

These goals are as relevant as ever, and shipping is essential for sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda will only be realized with a sustainable transport sector supporting world trade and facilitating the global economy.

But shipping also needs to secure its own sustainability. Shipping activities must be balanced with Safety of Life at Sea and the long-term health and diversity of the oceans. A

major part of IMO's role is to ensure that shipping continues to make its contribution to the global economy without upsetting nature's delicate balance.

Supported by IMO's regulatory framework, shipping is engaged on a journey of transformation towards this sustainable future.

IMO's actions are:

- enhance maritime safety and digital shipping;
- ensure and enhance the professionalism, competence and workplace environment of the world's seafarers;
- decarbonization of international shipping and reduction of sulphur in ships' fuel oil;
- protect the polar regions and reduce marine litter;
- facilitation of maritime traffic in collaboration with port industry;
- technical cooperation and capacity building of developing countries;
- enhance gender equality in the maritime community and;
- maintain a robust response system to meet threats to safety and security at sea, and protect the marine environment

All form the foundation for shipping's part in securing a sustainable future for all of us. We must now look to see what more should be done to achieve these goals.

At the start of 2020, alongside our UN sister entities, we marked the beginning of a decade of action and delivery for the SDGs. In choosing "Sustainable Shipping for a Sustainable Planet" as this year's World Maritime Theme, we focus global attention on how IMO, the Organization's Member States, civil society and the shipping industry are working together to ensure that shipping continues and strengthens its contribution towards sustainable growth.

As the global pandemic has turned all our lives upside down, I have been encouraged by the unprecedented level of cooperation and collaboration in the maritime world. I have spoken many times of our "voyage together", encompassing Member States, NGOs and multiple maritime stakeholders. Though this year, the spirit of those words has been more important than ever. We need to capitalize on this willingness to work together as we move forward, supporting shipping, seafarers and the maritime sector to fulfil their responsibilities.

Thank you.

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