SESSION 2

5th United Nations Ocean Forum

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the sustainable use of export-oriented ocean economy sectors– fisheries, seafood processing, coastal tourism, shipping, and related multi-modal transport

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Maritime Transport: Shipping and Ports

- Maritime transport is an integral part of the ocean economy, generating revenue, creating jobs, and driving social growth.
  - It represents a significant share of global ocean economy exports (goods and services), including maritime freight transport services ($386 billion) and ships and port equipment ($340 billion).
- It is also an enabler of many other ocean economy sectors, such as fisheries, tourism, and trade.
  - Over 80% of global trade is carried by sea, making ports and shipping essential to the global economy. In 2023, global maritime trade reached 12.3 billion tons, marking a 2.4% increase from the previous year.
- But the sector is also vulnerable to climate impacts. Recent disruptions have highlighted the impact of maritime transport vulnerabilities on trade and global supply chains.
  - Trade in ton-miles grew by 4.2% (longer routes), increasing freight costs, sailing speeds, port congestions, and emissions.

Decarbonization of Maritime Transport

- Maritime transport is also a major contributor to global GHG emissions. International shipping contributes to 3% (is projected to grow 10% by 2050 due to growing trade volumes and fuel consumption, if no action is taken).
- The **International Maritime Organization (IMO) has adopted a revised GHG strategy** (2023), committing the global shipping industry to achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2050, with interim targets for 2030 (20%-30% reduction) and 2040 (70%-80% reduction).
- Key challenges include fuel availability, costs, technology, technical maturation levels, safety, bunkering infrastructure requirements and onboard storage, as well as engine design and crew skills.

Decarbonization of maritime transport sector and addressing climate change impacts: the need for a comprehensive approach

1. **Lack of critical data** (e.g., ports or other shipping activities), **hinders effective carbon assessments and mitigation efforts**. Supporting a comprehensive data systems is vital to enable targeted and impactful climate mitigation strategies.
2. **Decarbonizing shipping is critical**, **but costly**. Decarbonization of the sector will require between $8-28 billion annually, with infrastructure costs up to $90 billion by 2050. A comprehensive approach, including operational measures, fleet innovation, port infrastructure, and international collaboration, is necessary to achieve a just and equitable transition. Aligning these efforts with national strategies and priorities is vital to support each country's transition and decarbonization strategies, addressing specific economic, environmental and social contexts. **A coordinated approach—integrating global IMO policies with national maritime transport decarbonization strategies—will unlock a more effective and efficient transition**.
3. Ports are critical for global trade, access to the ocean economy and disaster response and recovery, but at considerable **risk of climate impacts**, with implications for supply chains and the sustainable development prospects of SIDS and other vulnerable nations. In light of infrastructure lifespans, growing hazards and costs of inaction, **climate-adaptation of ports is a matter of strategic economic importance and increasing urgency**. **Multifaceted approaches are needed** to facilitate and accelerate climate-proofing of these critical infrastructures, including supportive policy and legal frameworks, capacity building, and major scaling up of affordable climate finance for developing countries.

NDCs and maritime transport: a gap to fill

While **98% of NDCs** reference the transport sector, only **33%** set specific emission reduction targets.

Upcoming **NDC submissions** must explicitly integrate maritime transport—shipping and ports—as part of sustainable and resilient solutions. **A stronger NDC framework will drive greener, more resilient maritime transport, shipping, port and logistics, including in the face of growing disruptions.**

Key Areas for Inclusion:

- ✓ **Explicit emission reduction targets** for the maritime transport sector
- ✓ **Low-carbon, green vessels** for domestic and short-sea shipping
- ✓ **Renewable energy (RE) and energy-efficiency in ports** operations and facilities, shipping services, storage, and distribution, green/clean technologies
- ✓ **Port adaptation & resilience** to climate change impacts
- ✓ **Enhanced data collection & monitoring** for data-driven and informed decision-making

Conclusion: The need for integrated maritime transport, shipping and ports strategies in NDCs

Ensuring the sustainability and resilience of maritime transport is vital for a sustainable and resilient ocean economy and trade. Without urgent and adequate action, climate risks will continue to escalate and impact maritime transport, shipping and ports, threatening economic stability, food security, global supply chains, and disaster response and recovery.

- As we prepare for the 2025 NDC submissions, integrating comprehensive strategies for maritime transport (shipping and ports) is crucial. This present a pivotal opportunity to enhance sustainability and resilience within ocean-based sectors, including shipping and ports, significantly contributing to the goals of the Paris Agreement.

- NDCs can drive sustainability and resilience-building in maritime transport, scaling up access to finance, ensuring shipping and ports emission reductions, supporting climate-adaptation of ports which is a matter of strategic economic importance and increasing urgency, as well as the critical importance of data collection and monitoring.

UNCTAD stands ready to support developing countries, SIDS and LDCs, in achieving these goals through data collection and monitoring, research and analysis, policy support, technical cooperation, capacity-building initiatives, and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Thank you

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