THE PATNA INITIATIVE
The Professional African Technical Network Advisory Initiative

A REPORT ON

Advancing Africa's Maritime Sector to Net-Zero: Capacity-Building Workshop on Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships



3-DAY REGIONAL DECARBONISATION WORKSHOP
4 – 6 AUGUST 2025 - DAKAR, SENEGAL

ANAM MOESNA African Union OMAOC/MOWCA UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION UCL THE BARTLETT ENERGY INSTITUTE AAMA ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN MARITIME ADMINISTRATIONS AFRICAN SHIP OWNERS ASSOCIATION IMO

Advancing Africa's Maritime Sector to Net-Zero: Capacity-Building Workshop on Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships

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Disclaimer

This document and its contents have been prepared to document the proceedings and outcomes of the Dakar Workshop on Measures for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships. The views expressed in this report reflect the discussions and contributions of participants and do not necessarily represent the official positions of the

Government of Senegal, the International Maritime Organisation, or partner organisations.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information presented, the organisers and authors accept no responsibility for any errors, omissions, or interpretations contained herein. This report is intended for information, capacity-building, and knowledge-sharing purposes only and should not be considered as providing legal or policy advice.

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About The Professional African Technical Network Advisory (PATNA) Initiative

The PATNA Initiative is a non-profit network of African marine and blue-economy specialists. Formed to amplify Africa's voice in global maritime decarbonization, PATNA leverages evidence-based research to promote policies that balance economic growth with environmental protection. Our initiative brings together academics, technical experts, government professionals, and private-sector cohorts to ensure that African perspectives are represented in international maritime policy and climate action.

Executive Summary

The Dakar Workshop on Measures for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships, held from 4–6 August 2025, brought together more than 100 participants from 25 African IMO Member States, regional maritime organisations, international partners, and private sector stakeholders.

Over three days, the workshop advanced Africa's collective understanding of the IMO 2023 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Strategy, identified continental priorities, and adopted a series of resolutions to guide Africa's engagement at upcoming IMO negotiations, particularly MEPC 84 in October 2025.

Day 1 focused on setting the stage for Africa's maritime decarbonization. Presentations highlighted the urgency of ratifying MARPOL Annex VI, the opportunities and risks of the IMO Net Zero Framework, the critical role of maritime administrations, and the private sector's leadership through the African Shipowners Association. Panel discussions emphasized the need for unified African action and stronger representation in IMO processes.

Day 2 explored the financing and socio-economic dimensions of shipping decarbonization. Panels examined principles guiding the use of funds from the IMO GHG Strategy, the impacts of decarbonization on food security and trade, and the role of capacity building. Presentations on negotiation skills, port digitalization, and equitable access to the Green Climate Fund reinforced the need for evidence-based advocacy. Two interactive Mentimeter sessions and stakeholder surveys captured participants' views, revealing strong hopes for unity and development, but also deep concerns about injustice, inequity, and infrastructure gaps. Most respondents (72%) judged African ports as unprepared for clean vessels, with 50% prioritizing port infrastructure support as the top negotiation demand.

Day 3 was dedicated to reviewing the workshop proceedings and adopting resolutions. Chaired by Dr. Harry Conway, discussions focused on unity and coordination, data-driven advocacy, capacity building, funding, and implementation. Delegates adopted 15 resolutions, including urgent calls for the ratification of MARPOL Annex VI, strengthening African representation at the IMO, defining a Just and Equitable Transition (JET), leveraging the Green Climate Fund, aligning policies with the AfCFTA, prioritising food security analysis, and accelerating port digitalisation.

Key Outcomes of the Dakar Workshop:

- Ratification of MARPOL Annex VI is recognised as urgent for Africa's engagement with the IMO Net Zero Framework.
- Finance, infrastructure, capacity building, and regional coordination are identified as the four pillars of Africa's maritime decarbonization strategy.
- Agreement to pursue a common African definition of JET for submission to MEPC 84.

- Commitment to strengthening negotiation skills, ensuring fair participation of shipowners and private sector actors, and integrating data-driven advocacy.
- Recognition that, without urgent investment in infrastructure, Africa risks exclusion from future global shipping networks.

The Dakar Workshop demonstrated Africa's determination to transform dialogue into action. The resolutions provide a roadmap for immediate, medium-term, and long-term steps, ensuring Africa's maritime sector can actively participate in and benefit from the global transition to low- and zero-carbon shipping.

Introduction

The following report captures the outcome of a 3-day workshop on GHG Emissions Reduction from Ships held in Dakar, Senegal on 4 – 6 August 2025. It brought together countries from Western and Central Africa.

Today, more than 90% of global trade is carried out by sea, representing nearly 10 billion tonnes per year. Maritime transport is a pillar of international trade and a strategic lever for economic development, particularly in Africa. However, shipping is also at the heart of discussions on sustainability and carbon reduction. The maritime sector accounts for no more than 3% of total global GHG emissions.

In response to this situation, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the United Nations specialised agency responsible for ensuring the safety, security, and efficiency of maritime transport and preventing pollution from ships, has established the IMO Strategy 2023 for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships (IMO 2023 GHG Strategy).

In this context, it is increasingly important to raise awareness and strengthen understanding of the reduction of GHG emissions from maritime transport, to enable African countries to anticipate measures and seize opportunities. It is within this framework that an awareness and training workshop on proposed measures for the reduction of GHGs from ships was organised by the Government of Senegal in collaboration with the Maritime Organisation of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) and The PATNA Initiative, with the support of the Association of African Maritime Administrations (AAMA), AMAG, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), and MOESNA.

The event brought together high-level representatives from African maritime organisations, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), and technical partners, all united by the urgent need to address greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from ships.

1. Day 1 – 4 August 2025

1.1 Participating countries

The Dakar Workshop was attended physically and virtually by key maritime representatives from 25 African IMO member states spanning MOWCA (Maritime Organisation of West and Central Africa), MOESNA (Maritime Organisation of Eastern and Southern Africa), land linked nations, and more.

The participating countries include Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Chad, Congo, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, and Togo.

1.2 Opening Session

The first day of the Dakar workshop began with a series of opening speeches that set the stage for critical discussions on maritime decarbonization. The session emphasised the workshop's multilingual approach, with interpretation available in **English, French, Portuguese, and**

Arabic. This underscored the commitment to ensuring all participants, regardless of language barriers, could fully engage in the discussions. Inclusivity was further highlighted as a cornerstone for effective continental collaboration.

1.3 Keynote Addresses

Mr. Bécaye Diop (Director General, ANAM, Senegal)
Mr. Diop welcomed attendees by stressing the critical role of maritime transport in global and African trade, noting that over 90% of the world's trade is conducted via shipping. However, he also pointed out that the sector contributes approximately 3% of global GHG emissions, making decarbonization imperative. He framed the transition not as a burden but as an opportunity for Africa to modernise its maritime infrastructure, enhance competitiveness, and secure sustainable development. His call to action aligned with the IMO's revised 2023 strategy, which aims for net-zero emissions by 2050.

Dr. Dola Oluteye (PATNA Initiative)
Dr. Oluteye delivered a compelling speech on the risks and opportunities of the IMO's Net Zero Framework. She emphasised the need for "language justice," noting that over 60% of African IMO member states are non-Anglophone, yet key negotiations often lack translation support. She also highlighted the PATNA Initiative's role in equipping African nations with research-based strategies to advocate for equitable policies.

Ms. Eugénie Vandoorne (IMO)
Representing the IMO, Ms. Vandoorne outlined the organisation's ambitious targets, including a 20% reduction in shipping emissions by 2030 and 70–80% by 2040. She stressed that the participation of African nations is vital to ensure a fair and inclusive transition. She praised Senegal's leadership in hosting the workshop and reiterated the IMO's commitment to supporting capacity-building efforts across the continent.

1.4 Regional Perspectives: MOESNA and MOWCA

Mr. Kassim Mpaata (MOESNA)
Mr. Mpaata emphasised the need for African unity in IMO negotiations, proposing five guiding principles: equity, access to finance and technology, avoidance of disproportionate impacts, inclusive policy design, and regional cooperation. He highlighted the challenges faced by landlocked states and urged accelerated efforts to bridge technological gaps.

Dr. Paul Adalikwu (MOWCA)
Dr. Adalikwu called for African-led solutions, arguing that historical polluters should bear the costs of mitigation. He advocated for increased funding for maritime research and education to ensure the continent is not left behind in the energy transition.

1.5 Senegalese Minister's Address

Delivered by **Dr. Mamadou Goudiaby**, the Minister's speech outlined Senegal's national commitments, including a 5–7% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030, and highlighted the country's strategic efforts to integrate sustainable practices into maritime policies. The Minister officially declared the workshop open, expressing confidence that the outcomes would strengthen Africa's position in global climate discussions.

1.6 Mr. Maguèye Gueye (ANAM) – Workshop Framework

Mr. Gueye presented the origins of the workshop, noting that the initiative began in February 2024 at an IMO meeting where francophone African states identified gaps in procedural understanding. The workshop's four-part agenda was designed to:

1. Raise awareness of IMO's GHG reduction measures and their implications for Africa.
2. Develop strategies for a just and equitable energy transition.
3. Assess impacts of decarbonization on African economies and food security.
4. Train negotiators to effectively represent Africa's interests at IMO meetings.

He stressed the urgency of preparing for the October 2025 IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) session, where critical amendments to MARPOL Annex VI will be debated.

1.7 Summary of Presentations – Day 1

1.7.1 Presentation 1: The Importance of Ratifying MARPOL Annex VI

Presenter: *Eugénie Vandoorne*, Marine Environment Division, International Maritime Organisation (IMO)

Overview:
MARPOL Annex VI, adopted in 2005 under the 1997 Protocol, is the primary international framework for controlling air pollution from ships. The presentation stressed the critical importance of ratifying and implementing these regulations, particularly for African nations currently underrepresented in global maritime environmental governance.

Current Status of Ratification:

- 108 countries representing 98.5% of global shipping tonnage have ratified MARPOL Annex VI.
- Only 17 African nations have done so.
- Limited adoption creates gaps in environmental protection and disadvantages African maritime industries in a changing global market.

Key Benefits of Ratification:

- **Environmental & Public Health Protection:** Directly addresses harmful emissions (NO_x, SO_x, particulate matter) that cause respiratory illnesses in port cities and environmental degradation such as acid rain.
- **Economic & Competitive Advantages:** Modernizes ports to international standards, enhancing competitiveness and attracting global shipping lines.
- **Alignment with Climate Goals:** Supports IMO's 2023 GHG Strategy and enables participation in emerging carbon markets and access to climate finance.

Implementation Support:
IMO assistance is available through:

- Technical Cooperation Programmes (ITCP)

- GHG TC Trust Fund for developing nations
- Capacity-building initiatives linked to the Mombasa Roadmap (February 2025)

Conclusion & Call to Action:
With the October 2025 MEPC meeting approaching, African nations have an opportunity to strengthen maritime governance by ratifying MARPOL Annex VI.

1.7.2 Presentation 2: The Importance of Reducing GHG Emissions in Africa's Maritime Sector

Presenter: *Dr. Harry Conway*, Alternate Permanent Representative of Liberia to IMO & Chair of IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC)

Overview:
Dr. Conway highlighted Africa's unique vulnerabilities and opportunities in the face of climate change, urging an intentional and strategic approach to maritime decarbonization.

Global Context & Targets:

- IMO 2023 GHG Strategy targets:
  - Net-zero emissions by 2050
  - 20–30% reduction by 2030
  - 70–80% reduction by 2040
- Targets align with the Paris Agreement.
- MEPC 83 (April 2025) approved the **Net Zero Framework** introducing:
  - **Global Fuel Standard** – annual GHG intensity reductions (well-to-wake approach).
  - **Economic Measures** – penalties for exceeding GHFI thresholds; incentives for zero-emission adoption.

Why Africa Must Act:

- **Trade Dependence:** 90% of Africa's trade is seaborne (vs. 80% globally).
- **Climate Vulnerability:** 70% of the most climate-vulnerable countries are in Africa.
- **Equity Principle:** IMO 2023 Strategy offers a platform for advocating just transitions for LDCs and SIDS.

Opportunities for Africa:

- Leverage renewable energy and critical minerals for green fuel production.
- Modernize ports and create jobs through reskilling.
- Form strategic public-private partnerships.

Conway's 5Cs Roadmap:

1. **Cooperation** – strengthen regional/global partnerships.
2. **Capacity Building** – invest in infrastructure and skills.
3. **Compliance** – adopt IMO regulations proactively.
4. **Climate Finance** – access funding for the transition.

5. **Community Engagement** – ensure policies protect vulnerable populations.

1.7.3 Presentation 3: African Shipowners Association Perspective

Presenter: *Mrs. Funmi Folorunsho*, Secretary General, African Shipowners Association (ASA)

Overview:
ASA emphasized the vital role of the private sector—especially shipowners—in driving innovation, technology adoption, and alternative fuel production.

Key Points:

- **Call for Collaboration:** "You need us. You better work with us."
- **Ownership of Implementation:** Governments cannot drive production alone; private sector must lead alternative fuel scaling and fleet modernization.
- **Urgency & Accountability:** Avoid complacency; align policies with operational realities.

1.7.4 Presentation 4: The Critical Role of Maritime Administrations in Shipping Decarbonization

Presenter: *Mr. John Omingo*, Chair, African Association of Maritime Administrations (AAMA)

Overview:
Maritime administrations are the "hands of IMO," responsible for enforcing conventions, bridging gaps between stakeholders, and fostering regional cooperation.

Key Points:

- **Enforcement:** Implement SOLAS and MARPOL regulations through certification and compliance monitoring.
- **Advocacy:** Encourage green incentives (tax breaks, port fee reforms).
- **Coordination:** Facilitate regional harmonization through ARMA and MTCC Africa.
- **Opportunities:** Utilize abundant renewables to lead in green shipping innovation.
- **Barriers:** Fragmented port regulations, underfunded R&D, resistance to policy change.

Call to Action:
Proactive regulatory leadership, robust stakeholder coordination, and climate finance mobilization are essential for Africa's just transition.

1.8 Panel 1: Africa's Role in Adopting IMO's Net Zero Framework

Key Discussion Points

1. **Challenges in MARPOL Annex VI Ratification**

- *Mr. Kasim Patta* highlighted that Africa's low ratification rate (only 17 of 54 countries) stems from limited awareness of the economic and environmental **costs of inaction**.
- Sensitization efforts must translate complex legal frameworks into tangible benefits (e.g., trade advantages, avoided penalties) to motivate policymakers.

2. **Engaging with the IMO Net Zero Framework**
   - *Dr. Harry Conway* outlined the framework's two core components:
     - **Global Fuel Standard** – mandates annual GHG intensity reductions.
     - **Economic Measures** – penalizes non-compliance while rewarding zero-emission adopters.
   - Emphasized that African nations must:
     - Submit proposals to IMO by strict deadlines (e.g., 6-week cutoff for October's MEPC session).
     - Actively participate in meetings, even without formal proposals, to influence guidelines.
3. **Africa's Strategic Actions**
   - *Dr. Paul Adalikwu* proposed a **5-point plan**:
     - Develop national strategies aligned with the Net Zero Fund's goals.
     - Build expertise via initiatives like PATNA to understand fund mechanics.
     - Participate in IMO processes despite bureaucratic delays.
     - Secure funding by creating bankable projects.
     - Monitor compliance with robust reporting systems.
4. **Institutional Coordination**
   - *Mr. John Domingo* urged maritime administrations to:
     - Convene academia, industry, and regulators **before** IMO meetings to create unified positions.
     - Strengthen regional alliances (e.g., AU maritime bodies) to amplify Africa's voice.
   - *Ms. Eugénie Vandoorne* (IMO) added:
     - Use IMO's multi-donor trust fund to support participation.
     - Submit **joint African proposals** to streamline impact.
5. **Private Sector's Role**

- *Mrs. Fummi Folorunsho* (ASA) stressed:
  - Shipowners must lead innovation in alternative fuels and technologies.
  - Governments should incentivize private sector investment through tax breaks and port fee reforms.

Call to Action:

Immediate Steps:

- Ratify MARPOL Annex VI to avoid economic penalties.
- Submit proposals for October's MEPC session (deadline: 25 August 2025).

Long-Term Strategies:

- Formulate national decarbonization roadmaps.
- Leverage Africa's renewable energy potential for green fuel production.

1.9 Summary of Closing Session – Uniting Africa's Maritime Decarbonization Efforts

Key Takeaways:

- **Unified Action Framework:**
  - All stakeholders—governments, regional bodies, private sector, and academia—must collaborate.
  - Policymakers set direction, industry implements, academia provides research.
- **Structural Improvements Needed:**
  - Strengthen regional coordination through MOWCA/MOESNA.
  - Reform IMO delegation structures to include:
    - Industry experts (especially shipowners)
    - Technical specialists
    - Diaspora professionals
  - Establish permanent maritime secretariats for continuity.
- **Implementation Pathway:**
  - **Immediate priority:** Prepare submissions for October 2025 IMO meeting.
  - Develop bankable green shipping projects to attract investment.
  - Create national decarbonization plans aligned with the IMO framework.
- **Mindset Shift Required:**
  - Move beyond talk to concrete action.

- Embrace private sector leadership in innovation.
- View compliance as an economic opportunity, not a burden.

Call to Action Statement:

"Africa's maritime future depends on transforming today's dialogue into tomorrow's implementation. By combining our strengths—regional solidarity, private sector dynamism, and global partnerships—we can build a decarbonized shipping sector that drives sustainable development across the continent."

2. Day 2 – 5 August 2025

2.1 Panel 1: Principles Guiding Funds Resulting from the GHG Strategy to Decarbonise Shipping

Key Themes:
The panel examined the social, economic, and political dimensions of maritime decarbonization in Africa, with a strong focus on fair access to the IMO Net Zero Fund, addressing capacity gaps, and aligning the use of funds with national priorities.

Core Arguments & Recommendations:

1. **Justice & Inclusion in the IMO Fund**
   - Funds should prioritise **frontline communities** (port workers, coastal populations).
   - Governance must include **African representation** to ensure transparency and fairness.
2. **Political & Financial Challenges**
   - Maritime decarbonization often competes with health, education, and other urgent national priorities.
   - Complex fund access processes and perceptions of high compliance costs deter African states.
   - Recommendation: Simplify processes and demonstrate the economic benefits (e.g., job creation, industrialisation).
3. **Capacity Building**
   - Urgent need for **port state control training** and technical upskilling.
   - Sensitization of policymakers on the role of maritime decarbonization in economic transformation.
4. **Innovative Financing**
   - Collaborate with the **African Union Bank**, the private sector, and catalytic funds (e.g., GCF) to de-risk investments.

- Explore green bonds, pollution-based port fees, and joint regional financing facilities.

5. **Private Sector & Harmonisation**
   - Engage shipping companies and financial institutions to align with IMO goals.
   - Advocate for low-interest, long-term financing for retrofits and infrastructure upgrades.

Actionable Steps:

- Ensure ministerial presence at the **October IMO meeting** to negotiate fund governance.
- Harmonise African positions on fund access through regional bodies (e.g., OMAOC).
- Implement pilot projects (training, green port infrastructure) to demonstrate fund's impact.

Quote:

"Decarbonization must deliver dignity — not just emissions cuts. Africa's voice in the IMO fund is non-negotiable."

2.2 Panel 3: Discussing Impacts of the GHG Emissions Reduction Strategy (Food Security and Other Impacts)

Key Themes:

1. **Just & Equitable Transition Framework**
   - Originated from Pacific states a decade ago.
   - Principles: procedural fairness, equitable mitigation, climate impact responsiveness, protection of seafarers' livelihoods.
   - Africa embedded these principles in **IMO's Net Zero Framework Regulation 41**, covering food security and technology transfer.

2. **Potential Impacts on Africa:**
   - **Positive:** Enhanced climate resilience, access to green finance, modernised port infrastructure.
   - **Negative:** Higher logistics costs threatening food security, GDP contraction in vulnerable economies, and skills gaps in the maritime workforce.

3. **Sector-Specific Concerns:**
   - **Seafarers:** Health risks from new fuels (e.g., ammonia), lack of standardised training. *(Lydia Ferrad, ITF)*
   - **Ports:** Need renewable energy integration with wider grids. *(Jonah Mumsya, MOESNA)*

- **Private Sector:** Profitability shocks; call for African GHG benchmarks given the 3% global shipping emissions share. *(Capt. Ladi Olubowale)*

4. **Policy & Measurement Gaps:**
   - Need for country-level impact modelling.
   - Integration of MARPOL Annex VI measures with national trade/agriculture policies.
   - Defined "just transition" metrics to guide fund allocation.

Calls to Action for IMO (October 2025):

- Collaborate with regional bodies to expand food security assessments with SIDS/LDCs.
- Fund capacity building through MTCC Africa.
- Require African government equity in green energy projects to ensure technology transfer.

Final Insight:
Africa must shift from **reactive** to **agenda-setting** in global maritime governance, leveraging its small emissions share and access to funding to drive localised solutions.

2.3 Presentation 1: UNFCCC African Negotiators Training

Presenter: *Lamine Samake*

Focus Areas:

- Strengthen negotiation skills for climate policy forums.
- Equip delegates with collaborative and competitive negotiation strategies.
- Promote **data-driven advocacy** for stronger policy outcomes.

Recommendations:

- Invest in research and evidence systems.
- Harmonise African positions across negotiation blocs.
- Engage non-state actors (NGOs, academia, private sector) to strengthen advocacy.

Quote:

"If we want to go fast, we go alone; if we want to go far, we go together."

2.4 Presentation 2: Port Digitalisation and Climate Negotiations

Presenter: *Philippe Bocaux*

Key Points:

- **Data Deficit:** Without accurate shipping/port emissions data, Africa lacks leverage in negotiations.
- **IMO 2024 Mandate:** Requires real-time emissions monitoring and cold ironing.
- **Case Study – Lomé Port:** Digitalisation reduced clearance times from 23 days to 48 hours.

Urgent Actions:

- Prioritise political will for digital transformation.
- Leverage data achievements for negotiation strength.

Quote:

"If we don't digitalise, we won't exist in the negotiation room."

2.5 Presentation 3: Case Study of Seychelles – Harmonising Policy and Empowering Delegates

Presenter: *Hon. Clifford Andre, Seychelles Parliamentarian & Head of OACPS Delegation*

Context & Challenges:

1. **Small Island Vulnerabilities** – As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), Seychelles faces limited capacity to implement IMO regulations (e.g., MARPOL Annex VI). Its strategic location on key shipping routes exposes it to pollution risks despite contributing minimally to global emissions.
2. **Representation Gaps** – African delegations to IMO often lack technical experts and industry voices, unlike developed countries that bring specialised teams. Fragmented African positions at IMO weaken negotiation power.

Key Arguments:

1. **Unified African Voice** – Pre-IMO collaborations, like this workshop, are essential to align continental positions. PATNA's evidence-based policy work supports speaking with "one voice".
2. **Equitable Transition** – Africa exports raw materials but imports refined products at high cost, while bearing decarbonisation burdens. International support is needed for SIDS to meet compliance obligations.
3. **Seychelles' Commitment** – Seychelles pledged to ratify MARPOL Annex VI and offered itself as a case study for sustainable shipping solutions.

Call to Action:

- Ratify pending maritime conventions and include private sector and diaspora experts in IMO delegations.
- Provide technical and financial support to SIDS for compliance.

2.6 Presentation 4: Equitable Maritime Decarbonization and the Role of the Green Climate Fund (GCF)

Presenter: *Dr. Euan Low*

Key Themes:

Dr. Low emphasised the need for Africa to integrate maritime decarbonisation into broader climate and economic strategies. The session highlighted the following:

1. **Challenges & Global Shifts** – The IMO Net Zero Framework could stifle African industrialisation if not aligned with local needs. The EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) imposes carbon costs on imports from 2026, disadvantaging African exports without low-carbon certification. Ongoing trade wars and conflicts demand resilient, integrated African value chains.

2. **Africa's Opportunity** – Abundant green energy and critical minerals position Africa as a key enabler of global decarbonisation, but capital and expertise are required. Integrated energy systems should link maritime transport with land, aviation and industrial sectors to achieve economies of scale.

3. **GCF's Role** – The Green Climate Fund has committed **$16 billion globally**, with **40% (~$6.4 billion) earmarked for Africa**, leveraging $61 billion in co-financing. GCF offers grants (e.g., $4 million per country) to build policy frameworks, capacity and readiness for maritime decarbonisation and to de-risk investments in green ports, fuels and supply chains.

Call to Action:

- Use GCF readiness funds to build maritime decarbonisation awareness and technical capacity.
- Develop **data-driven certification** for exports to avoid CBAM penalties.
- Foster regional collaboration through AfCFTA synergies and integrated value chains.

2.7 Presentation 5: Bureau Veritas Presentation on Maritime Decarbonisation

Presenter: *Representative of Bureau Veritas (BV)*

Key Themes:

BV, a global leader in maritime classification and certification, outlined its role in supporting Africa's decarbonisation by ensuring regulatory compliance, verification and safety.

1. **Africa's Fleet Profile** – BV oversees **532 vessels** under African flags (average age **14 years**, average tonnage **7,200 GT**). Most vessels fall under IMO's Chapter 5 decarbonisation rules (applying to ships over 5,000 GT).

2. **Three Core Activities:**

   – **Statutory Certification** – Implement short-term measures like the Energy Efficiency Existing Ship Index (EEXI) and Carbon Intensity Indicator (CII); support retrofits (e.g., Engine Power Limitation) to meet efficiency targets.

  - **Verification Services** – Audit emissions data under EU regulations (ETS, FuelEU Maritime) to ensure accurate reporting for carbon pricing; address challenges such as data reliability and SME capacity gaps.
  - **Classification & Safety** – Develop safety rules for alternative fuels (ammonia, hydrogen, methanol) and new technologies; ensure vessels meet safety standards while adopting decarbonisation solutions.
3. **African Focus & Future Support** – BV's on-the-ground expertise in sub-Saharan Africa aids compliance with evolving IMO/EU rules, including for stationary units like fuel barges facing unexpected CII obligations. BV will assist African administrations in implementing mid-term measures (e.g., carbon pricing, fuel standards) and provide modelling tools to assess fleet decarbonisation pathways.

Quote:

"Decarbonization isn't just about rules — it's about practical solutions. Our role is to bridge compliance with operational reality."

3. Day 3: 6 August 2025

August 6, 2025

3.1 Proceedings – Chaired by Dr. Harry Conway

Dr. Conway opened the session by underlining Africa's negotiation challenges despite having **44 IMO Member States**—the second-largest bloc globally. He noted that **fragmented representation** and **insufficient technical preparation** weaken Africa's collective voice in IMO processes.

He stressed that the upcoming IMO session is **only one step** in a long process. Attention must also focus on **post-adoption implementation** of the IMO 2023 GHG Strategy.

Action Required:

- Submit concrete proposals (e.g., on capacity building, technology access) by **25 September 2024**.
- Leverage the **African Maritime Ambassadors Group** for real-time negotiation support.

3.2 Key Discussion Themes

3.2.1 Unity & Coordination

- **Problem:** Divergent national interests (oil producers vs. island states) and lack of African Union (AU) representation at IMO.
- **Solution:**
  - Establish an **AU-backed African Maritime Technical Committee** (proposed by Togo).
  - Model the EU's approach: "**One voice, two votes**" (national + AU representation).

3.2.2 Data-Driven Advocacy

- **Ghana's Success Story:** Localized data on fertilizer dependency was used to rally African and Asian support for including **agricultural inputs** in IMO's food security terms.
- **Call to Action:** Create a **centralized African maritime data hub** in partnership with PATNA.

3.2.3 Capacity Building

- Integrate **maritime studies** into national curricula (Ghana's proposal).
- Train negotiators to "**think on their feet**" to improve IMO readiness (Kenya's emphasis).

3.2.4 Funding & Implementation

- Tap into the **Trans-Seated GHG Fund** via African Development Bank for green port projects.
- Mobilize the **African Shipowners Association (ASA)** to align industry strategies with policy goals.

3.3 Urgent Steps for October 2024

- Draft a **joint African submission** addressing:
  - Just & Equitable Transition for SIDS/LDCs.
  - MARPOL ratification with flexibility provisions for African states.

3.4 Workshop Approach & Methodology

Under Dr. Conway's leadership, participants **revised the report collaboratively**, enabling presenters to highlight specific resolutions directed to IMO.

- **Interactive Revision:** Presenters and participants refined text in real time, with verification from the report writer.
- **Structured Outcomes:** Each presentation was followed by a concrete resolution.
- **Action-Oriented Focus:** Emphasis was on **document preparation for IMO submissions** rather than general discussion.

3.5 Detailed Workshop Resolutions

1. MARPOL Annex VI Ratification

African member states of the IMO who are yet to ratify MARPOL Annex VI are encouraged to consider ratifying and domesticating the instrument. In this regard, they are encouraged to identify priority areas that will facilitate the expedited ratification. Accordingly, IMO should highlight key benefits of MARPOL Annex VI to member states and develop a simplified roadmap to assist members with administrative burdens and limited resources for implementation

2. Active Participation in GHG Discussions

African member states at the IMO are encouraged to actively participate in the GHG discussions in the spirit of compromise, consensus, cooperation, collaboration, and commitment to ensure regulatory clarity.

3. Role of Shipowners in Decarbonization

African member states should acknowledge the critical role of ship owners, especially the African Shipowners Association, in the decarbonization negotiations at the IMO. They are also encouraged to engage the ship owners, including creating the necessary awareness on the ongoing GHG discussions at the IMO. Accordingly, member states should ensure that the ship owners and other relevant private sector stakeholders are included in delegations to IMO meetings.

4. Strengthening African Representation at IMO

African member states are encouraged to consider working closely with the IMO, through the administrations, and actively participate in meetings of the IMO. Also, regional organisations like MOWCA, MOESNA, and AAMA are encouraged to collaborate and cooperate regionally and continentally to strengthen Africa's representation at the IMO.

5. Urgency of MARPOL Annex VI in Light of Net Zero Framework

African member states should note that the IMO Net Zero Framework is going to be a new chapter 5 in the MARPOL Annex VI. Accordingly, the ratification of MARPOL Annex VI has become even more urgent.

6. Inclusion of SIDS and LDCs in GHG Strategy Implementation

In line with the IMO 2023 GHG strategy, African developing countries, in particular, the SIDs and LDCs, should be considered at every level of the discussions and when implementation is being done. The application process to access the potential IMO GHG Net-Zero fund should be simplified to allow timely and accelerated implementation of remedial actions to be taken.

7. Leveraging the Green Climate Fund (GCF)

African member states are encouraged to engage the national focal persons to access GCF funds to finance awareness activities relating to GHG reduction in shipping and the development of their national action plan. In this regard, member states are advised to;

Use GCF readiness funds to build maritime decarbonization awareness, domestic, regional, institutional, technical and financial capacity.

Develop data-driven certification for exports (avoiding CBAM penalties).

Foster regional collaboration (e.g., African Continental Free Trade Agreement synergies).

Take note of the cost burdens that the fragmentation of GHG emissions reduction policies may have on member states and proactively create new and integrated value chains that are attractive for investment opportunities.

8. Aligning Decarbonization with AfCFTA

African member states are encouraged to ensure that vessels under their flags meet IMO regulations. Also, member states are encouraged to consider how their policies on maritime decarbonization align with AfCFTA to boost intra-African trade resilience.

9. Defining "Just and Equitable Transition" (JET)

African member states to consider developing the definition or conceptualisation of JET guided by the existing instruments and scholarly approach, considering specific conditions of countries, including their respective level of socio-economic development.

The proposed definition of JET should be based on the principle of ensuring that no country on the African continent is left behind. In this regard, the issue of climate justice should be considered.

In this regard, African member states should jointly prepare a proposal on the agreed-upon definition or concept of JET for submission to MEPC 84.

10. Analysing Impacts on Food Security and Other Sectors

African member states are encouraged to work along with other IMO member states to prioritise the analysis and impact of GHG reduction measures, on food security.

Further, other disproportionate negative impacts on issues such as including but not limited to, energy security, trade, seafarers, maritime knowledge economy, and to devise measures to mitigate the impact.

African member states are encouraged to conduct additional studies through their research institutions and universities.

11. Strengthening Negotiation Skills

African member states should continue to deploy the art of international negotiations to get the best deal for Africa.

12. Port Digitalisation

African member states are encouraged to take into consideration the digitalisation of their ports and maritime operations, including the deployment of a maritime single window.

Further, African member states are encouraged to modernise their maritime and port infrastructure, to accommodate shipping decarbonization.

In addition, African member states are encouraged to consider the criticality of shipping and port data to maritime decarbonization. Accordingly, data gathering, organisation, access, and analysis should be prioritised

General Resolutions from the 2-day workshop:

13. Coordination among maritime operations

African member states are encouraged to cooperate and collaborate at the national level in a coordinated fashion on issues of shipping decarbonization, including on green shipping corridors. In this regard, fragmentation of policy implementation should be avoided.

14. Capacity building

National action plan: African member states are encouraged to consider building a requisite capacity for shipping decarbonization, including the development of a national action plan, training of the maritime workforce, empowering research institutions and universities, access

to technology, and knowledge sharing. In this respect, the use of MTCC Africa and the creation of green jobs should be taken into consideration.

Further, African member states are encouraged to ensure attendance at IMO meetings. In this regard, to ensure active participation, the right experts should be present during meetings at the IMO. In this regard, as of support to African member states, this meeting requests member states to make use of the expertise of the PATNA initiative to support African delegations attending IMO meetings

15. Investments

African member states are encouraged to establish a framework that will seek to attract and deploy appropriately priced investment capital suitable for Africa's decarbonisation. In this regard, help should be sought from institutions like the African Development Bank

3.6 Integration of Mentimeter Responses

With Dr. Conway's approval, Mr. Fitzroy Meyer-Petgrave summarized audience responses gathered during the workshop. These were visualized as graphs in the final report and used to support plenary discussions.

3.7 Closing Remarks – ANAM Director-General

The DG highlighted the historic significance of the workshop:

"This decarbonization workshop came at the right time. I trust each of you will be an ambassador for its outcomes in your countries."

Call to Unity:

"Africans must unite under one ideal—to speak with one voice here and in London [at IMO]. This is a fight for humanity through the maritime sector."

4. Mentimeter Interactive Polls and Findings

The Dakar workshop integrated structured data-gathering through pre-event and in-session surveys. These surveys captured African stakeholders' priorities, perceptions, and definitions related to maritime decarbonization and the Just & Equitable Transition (JET) framework. They included:

- **Maritime Decarbonization Survey Analysis: African Perspectives** (25 participating countries)
- **Survey of African States on Just and Equitable Transition for Africa** (25 participating countries)
- **Mentimeter Interactive Polling** conducted during plenary discussions

4.1 Mentimeter on The Impact of IMO's Maritime Decarbonization Strategy on African Member States

Participation:
Representatives from 25 IMO Member States, including coastal, island, and land linked countries, spanning both MOWCA and MOESNA regions.

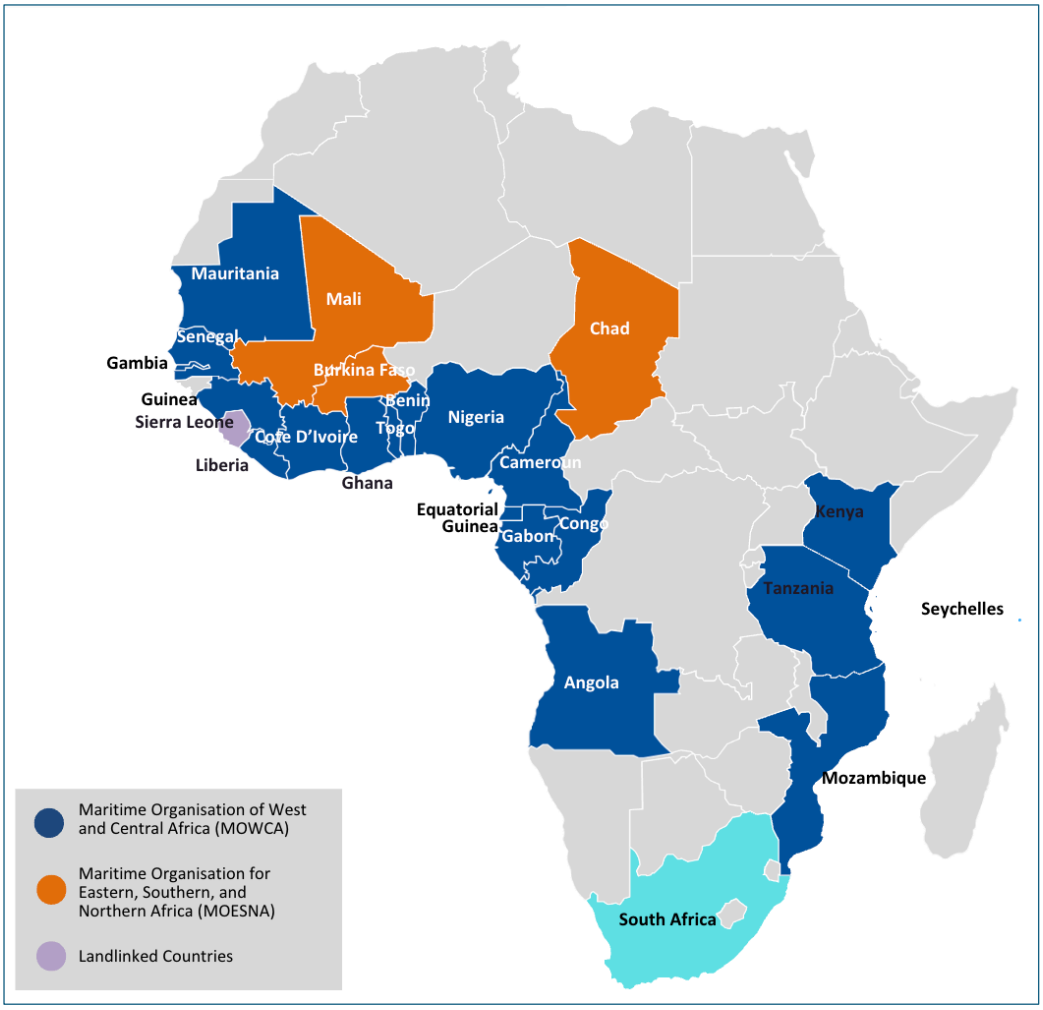


Figure 1: African IMO Member State Stakeholder Survey Participants

Key Findings:

- **Dual Risk Priority:** Rising food/fuel costs and infrastructure gaps each received 15 responses, making them the top risks to African economies.

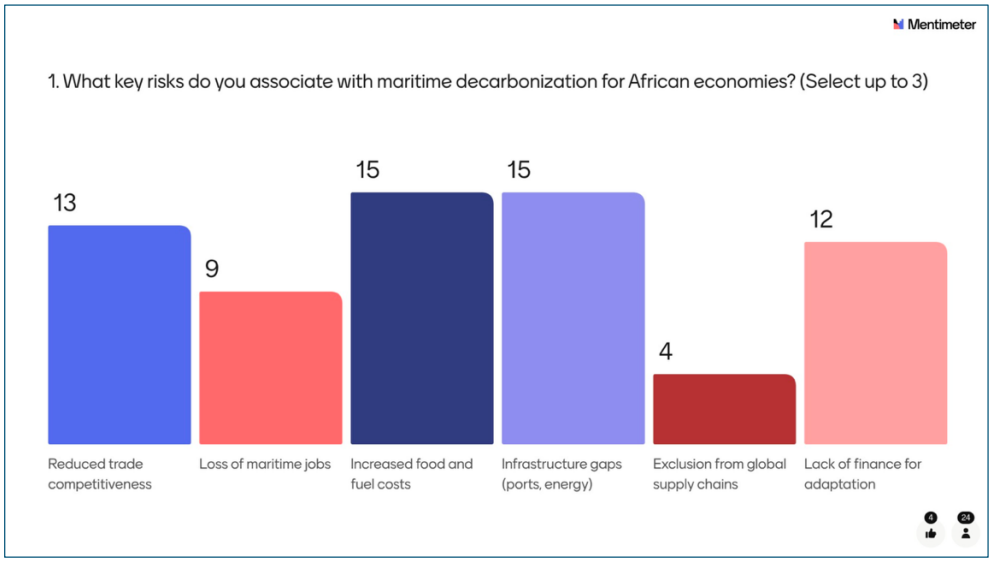


Figure 2: Top Key Risks of Maritime Decarbonization for African Economies (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

- **Vulnerability Hierarchy:** Local shipping operators are most at risk, followed by small island states, maritime workers, and informal traders/food vendors.

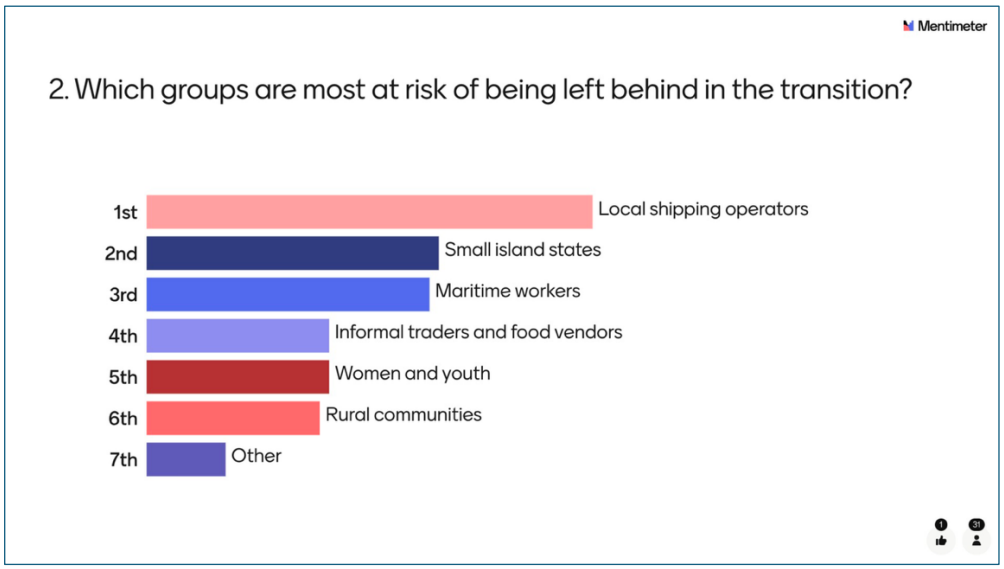


Figure 3: Top-Ranked Groups Most at Risk of Being Left Behind (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

- **Hope vs. Fear:**
  - *Hopes:* Opportunities, unity, development, capacity building, innovation.

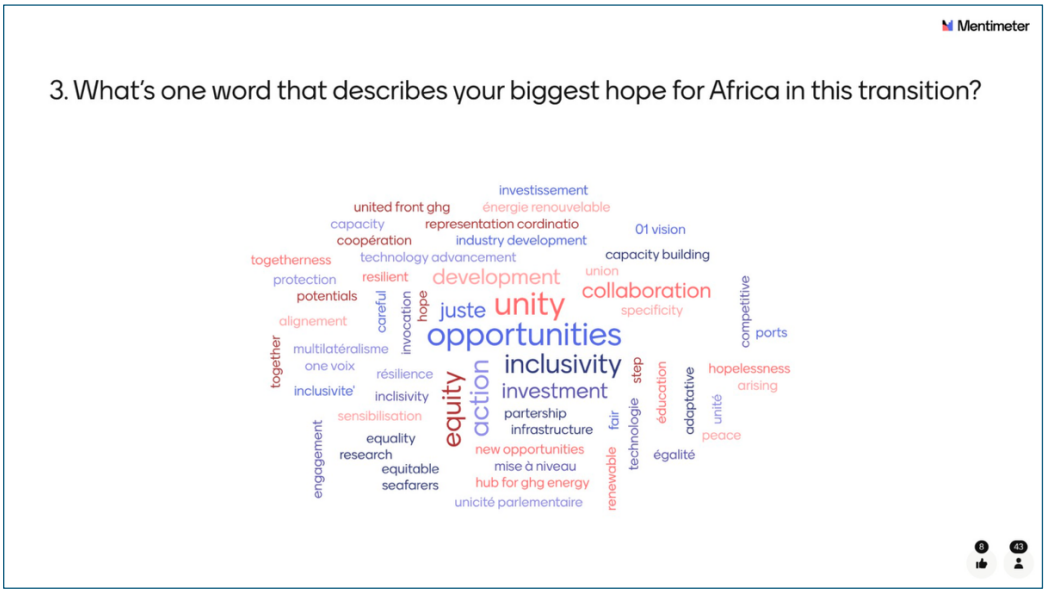


Figure 4: A Word Cloud of Biggest Hopes for Africa in Maritime Transition (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

– *Fears:* Injustice, inequity, exclusion, underdevelopment, lack of capacity.



Figure 5: A Word Cloud of Biggest Concerns for Africa in Maritime Transition (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

- **Infrastructure Readiness:** 72% of respondents believe African ports are **not prepared** for clean vessel operations.

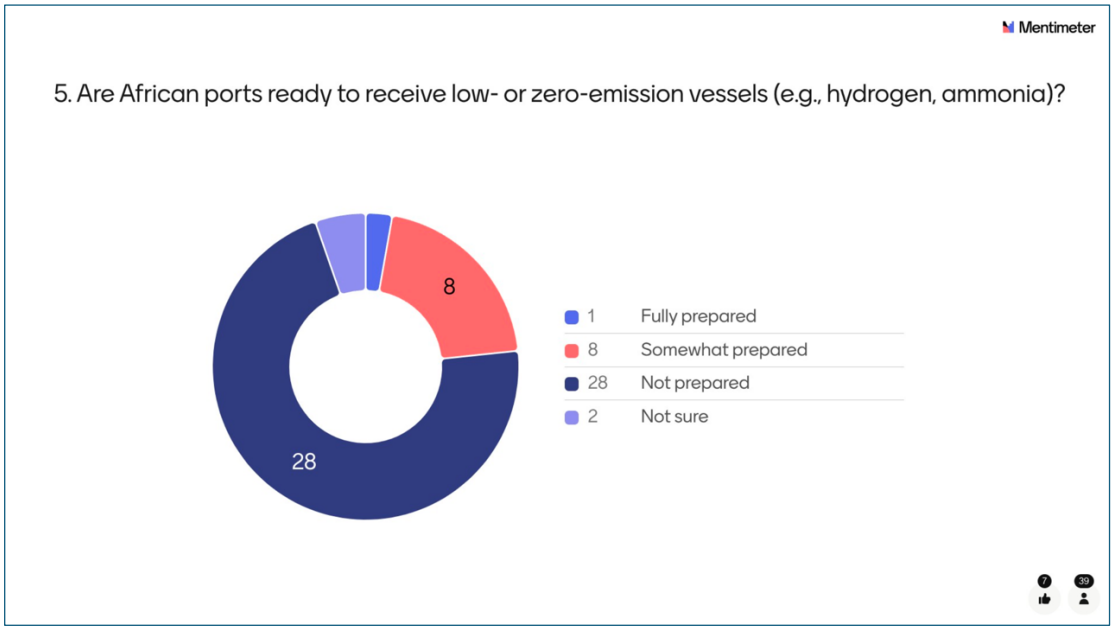


Figure 6: A Stakeholders' Perspective of African Port Readiness for Clean Vessels (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

- **Negotiation Priorities:** 50% of respondents ranked **port infrastructure and technology support** as the top IMO negotiating priority.

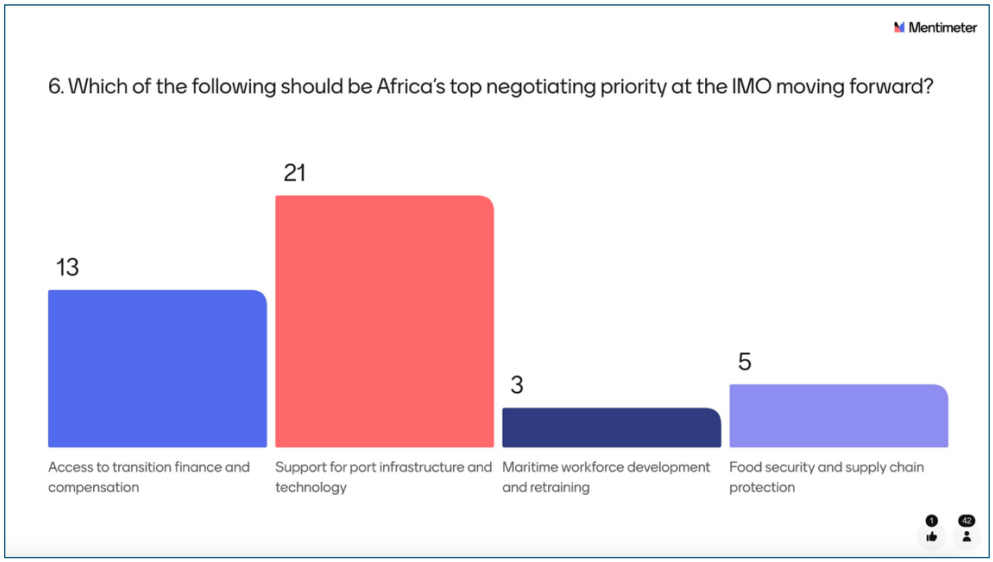


Figure 7: Bar Chart Showing Africa's Top IMO Negotiating Priorities (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

4.2 Mentimeter on Just and Equitable Transition (JET) for African Member States

Participation:
Over 40 stakeholders from 25 African countries, including MOWCA, MOESNA, and landlocked states.

Key Findings:

- **Defining JET:** African stakeholders emphasise fairness, inclusivity, and justice as the foundation of a just transition, alongside equity, development, engagement, and sharing.

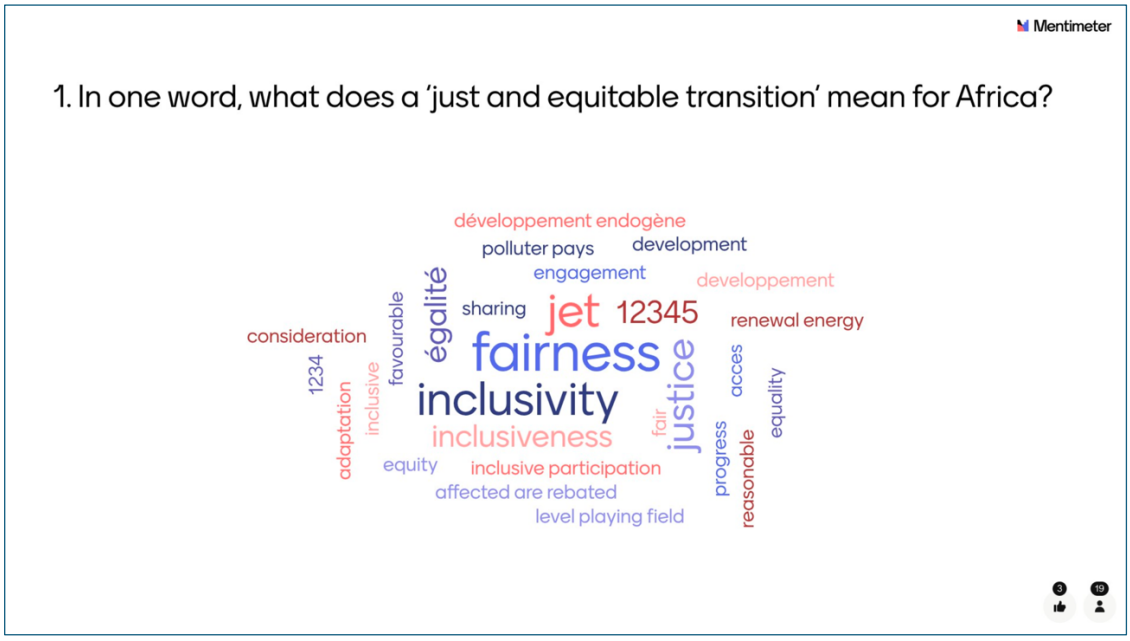


Figure 8: Key Concepts for Africa's Just and Equitable Maritime Transition (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

- **Barriers to JET:**

  1. Lack of financial resources for green investments (11 responses).
  2. Policy misalignment and weak regional coordination (8 responses).

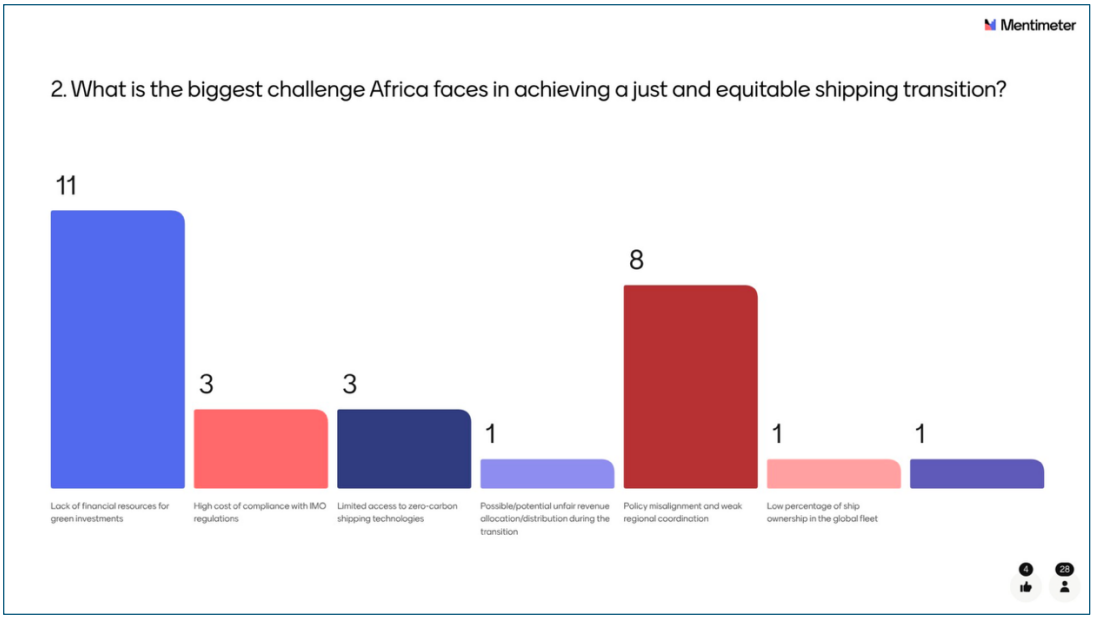


Figure 9: Primary Barriers to Africa's Maritime Decarbonization (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

- **Confidence in IMO Representation:** Low confidence score of **2.1 out of 5** in fair representation of African interests in IMO's GHG Strategy.

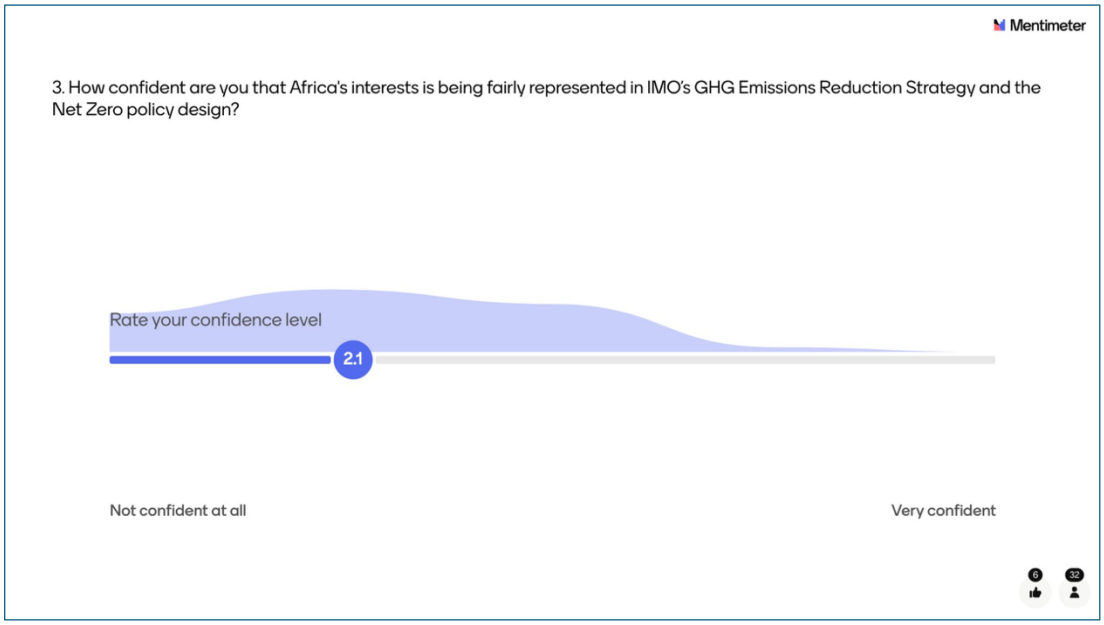


Figure 10: African Confidence in IMO's GHG Strategy Representation (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

- **Policy Priorities:** Capacity building, equity, technology transfer, fair revenue distribution, and access to climate funds dominate the policy agenda.

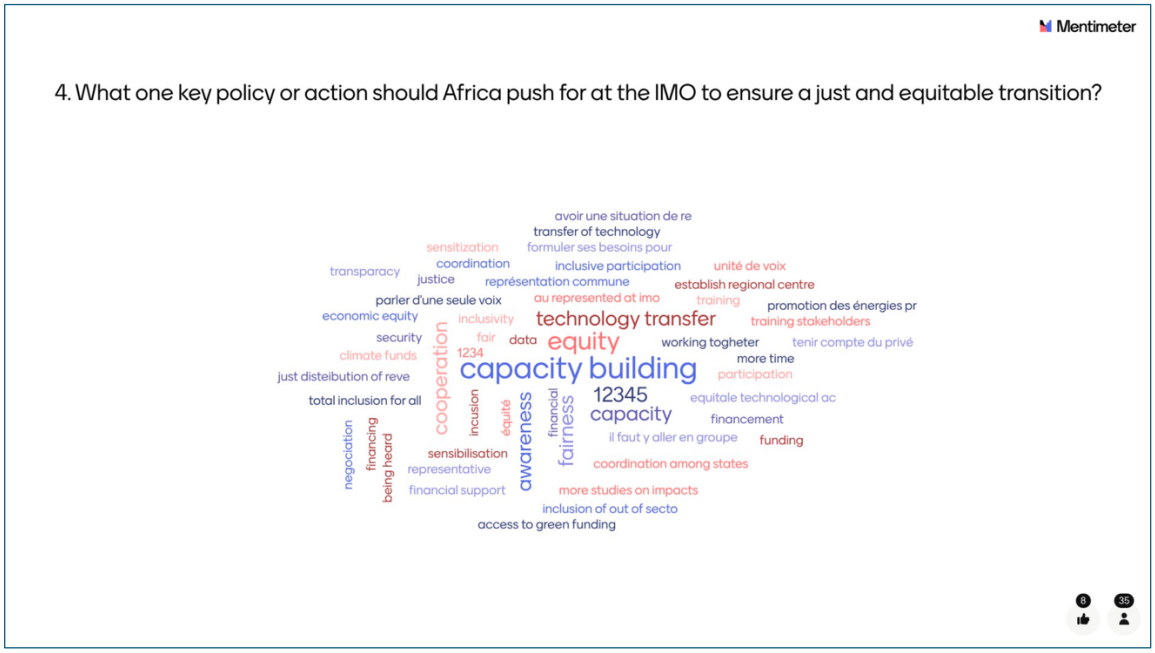


Figure 11: Key Policy or Action for the IMO (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

- **Ranked Priorities:**

1. Strengthening regional coordination for a unified African position at IMO.
2. Ensuring fair revenue distribution from shipping decarbonization.
3. Investing in green maritime infrastructure and zero-emission fuel production.

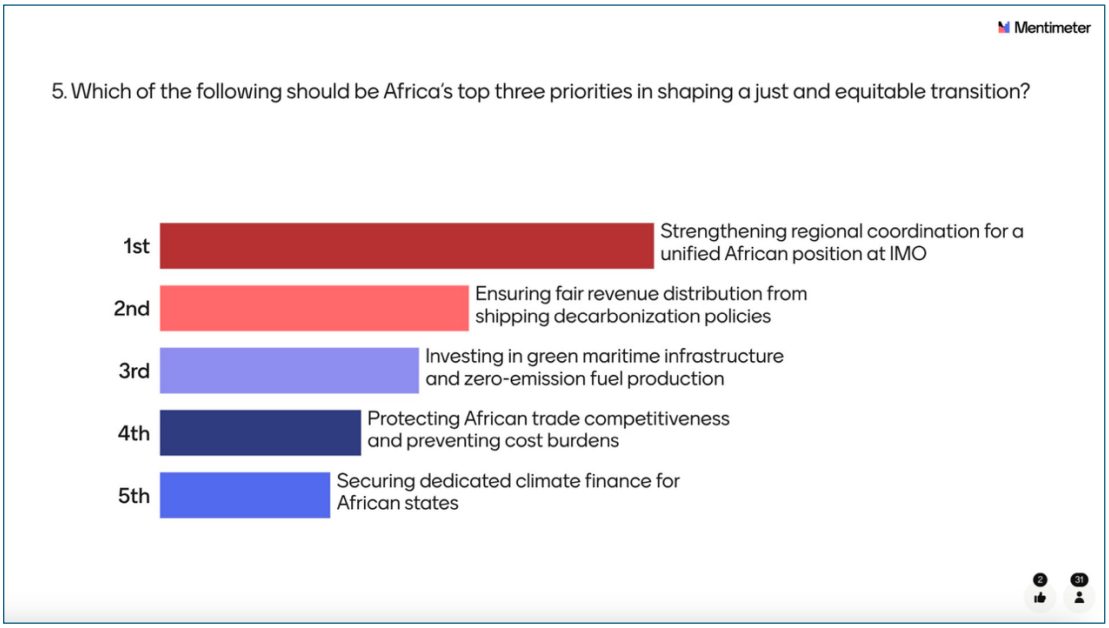


Figure 12: Africa's Ranked Priorities for Maritime Decarbonization (Dakar Workshop, 2025)

4.4 Synthesis of Survey Insights

Across all survey instruments, clear patterns emerged:

- **Finance & Infrastructure** are the most urgent enablers because without dedicated climate finance and port readiness, Africa risks marginalisation.
- **Procedural Justice** is as critical as technical readiness with stakeholders concerned about unjust transition processes more including technical barriers.
- **Regional Unity** is a strategic advantage and coordinated positions may amplify Africa's influence in IMO negotiations.
- **Capacity Building** is non-negotiable, from port state control training to policy analysis skills, investment in people is essential to implementation.

5. Key Themes and Insights

The three-day workshop and integrated surveys revealed recurring, cross-cutting themes essential to framing Africa's maritime decarbonization pathway under the IMO 2023 GHG Strategy. These themes align with both immediate negotiation priorities and long-term capacity needs.

5.1 Finance and Investment Needs

Observations:

- Lack of dedicated climate finance is consistently ranked as the biggest barrier to a just and equitable transition.

- High compliance costs for IMO regulations risk excluding smaller African operators from global trade.
- Port and fleet modernization requires large-scale investment, with current funding streams insufficient to meet demand.

Implications:
Without substantial investment, particularly in **green port infrastructure** and **alternative fuel readiness**, Africa's maritime sector risks isolation from emerging low- and zero-carbon shipping networks.

Opportunities:

- Secure dedicated IMO fund allocations for African states.
- Leverage African Development Bank (AfDB), Green Climate Fund (GCF), and private sector financing for infrastructure upgrades.
- Explore innovative financing mechanisms, including green bonds, concessional loans, and regional maritime investment facilities.

5.2 Capacity Building and Technology Transfer

Observations:

- Skills gaps exist across all levels — from negotiators to port engineers and seafarers.
- Technology access remains uneven, with limited African participation in zero-carbon shipping R&D.
- Capacity building was a top policy priority in both JET and decarbonization surveys.

Implications:
Without targeted skills development and technology transfer, African states will remain dependent on external expertise and lose competitive advantage in maritime trade.

Opportunities:

- Expand maritime studies into national curricula.
- Establish IMO-supported training hubs in Africa.
- Formalize technology-sharing agreements with developed country partners and industry.

5.3 Regional Coordination and Unified Advocacy

Observations:

- Divergent national interests (oil producers vs. island states) hinder unified African positions at IMO.
- Surveys ranked **regional coordination** as Africa's highest strategic priority.
- Calls for an **AU-backed African Maritime Technical Committee** were echoed repeatedly.

Implications:
Fragmented positions weaken Africa's bargaining power, limiting its influence over IMO decision-making and fund allocation processes.

Opportunities:

- Develop "one voice" strategies modelled on the EU approach.
- Institutionalize continental maritime coordination mechanisms under the African Union.
- Engage regional economic communities to harmonize positions before IMO sessions.

5.4 Infrastructure Readiness and Modernization

Observations:

- 72% of surveyed stakeholders believe African ports are not prepared for clean vessel operations.
- Infrastructure deficits include fuel storage, handling equipment, safety systems, and digitalization capacity.
- Digitalization was recognized as both an emissions reduction enabler and a negotiation asset.

Implications:
Unprepared ports risk being bypassed in future shipping routes, with negative impacts on trade integration and national economies.

Opportunities:

- Prioritize port upgrades in climate finance proposals.
- Implement maritime single windows and port community systems for efficiency and transparency.
- Align infrastructure investments with the IMO's decarbonization compliance requirements.

5.5 Procedural Justice and Inclusive Governance

Observations:

- Justice, fairness, and equity were the most frequently cited terms in survey responses.
- Stakeholders expressed greater fear of an unjust transition than of technical challenges.
- Low confidence (2.1/5) in African representation at IMO underscores governance gaps.

Implications:
If Africa's transition is perceived as imposed rather than negotiated, support for implementation may erode domestically and regionally.

Opportunities:

- Embed procedural fairness in all IMO submissions and negotiation strategies.

- Ensure inclusive participation in delegation composition including private sector, academia, and civil society.
- Advocate for transparent and equitable governance of IMO funds.

6. Conclusion

The Dakar Workshop on Measures for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships (4–6 August 2025) brought together over 100 delegates from 25 African IMO Member States, regional maritime bodies, international partners, and private sector stakeholders.

Over three days, participants examined the implications of the IMO 2023 GHG Strategy for Africa, shared national and regional perspectives, and developed coordinated recommendations to ensure a **just and equitable transition** for the continent's maritime sector.

Key Outcomes:

- **Consensus on Priorities:** Finance, infrastructure, capacity building, regional coordination, and procedural justice emerged as the core pillars for Africa's decarbonization strategy.
- **Unified Advocacy:** Strong calls for an AU-backed African Maritime Technical Committee and joint African submissions to IMO.
- **Evidence-Based Negotiations:** Agreement to establish a centralized African maritime data hub to support policy advocacy.
- **Inclusive Governance:** Commitment to multilingual, multi-stakeholder participation in IMO negotiations.
- **Action Orientation:** Resolutions and recommendations directly linked to upcoming IMO sessions, particularly MEPC 84 in October

Next Steps:

1. **Immediate:** Submit agreed African positions to IMO ahead of MEPC 84 deadlines.
2. **Medium-Term:** Mobilize financing and partnerships for infrastructure upgrades, capacity building, and technology transfer.
3. **Long-Term:** Implement national maritime decarbonization roadmaps aligned with Africa's development and trade goals.

"This workshop has set the foundation for Africa's maritime future. The challenge now is to transform our commitments into measurable action."

7. Annexes

7.1 Annex 1 – Workshop Agenda

The comprehensive agenda for the "Workshop on Measures for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships" held in Dakar, Senegal, from 4-6 August 2025, is available for review in both English and French. These documents detail the daily sessions, keynote addresses, panel discussions, and interactive segments that guided the workshop's productive discourse.

- Workshop Agenda (English and French)

7.2 Annex 2 – List of Registered Delegates

A comprehensive list of participants, representing various countries and organizations, who attended the workshop either physically or virtually. This list highlights the diverse and broad engagement from African IMO member states, regional maritime bodies, international partners, and private sector stakeholders.

- Registered Delegates

7.3 Annex 3 – Speeches and Presentations

This annex provides access to the full speeches and presentations delivered during the workshop. These materials were instrumental in shaping the discussions and resolutions, offering insights from key stakeholders on maritime decarbonization, policy frameworks, economic impacts, and the role of various actors in achieving a just and equitable transition.

- Presentation Slides
- Opening Speeches

7.4 Annex 4 – Reports on Mentimeter

The interactive Mentimeter polls conducted throughout the workshop captured real-time insights and perspectives from the participants. This annex includes links to the detailed reports of these polls, which informed plenary discussions and highlighted key concerns, hopes, and priorities related to Africa's maritime decarbonization journey.

- Report on Just and Equitable Transition in Maritime Decarbonisation
- Report The Impacts of IMO's Ship Decarbonisation Strategy on African Member States

7.5 Annex 5 – References and Supporting Documents

This section provides access to crucial reference materials and supporting documents that underpinned the discussions and resolutions of the workshop. These include key international conventions and relevant policy papers pertinent to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships.

- Revised MARPOL Annex VI Document
- IMO GHG Strategy 2023