THE PROFESSIONAL AFRICAN TECHNICAL NETWORK ADVISORY INITIATIVE

REPORT OF THE SECOND EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE

IMO MEPC/ES.2



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THE PROFESSIONAL AFRICAN TECHNICAL NETWORK ADVISORY INITIATIVE

REPORT OF THE SECOND EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE (MEPC/ES.2)

By

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This report reflects a shared commitment to leading an effective Afrocentric participation in global maritime climate negotiations by supporting evidence-base decisions and Africa's voice.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this Report are those of the authors and not the organizations they represent, or the views of the organizations involved in the study. This document and its contents have been prepared and are intended solely for use by members of the PATNA cohorts and related activities.

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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 inform 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. For more information, please visit www.thepatna.org.

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Executive Summary

The Second Extraordinary Session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC/ES.2) was convened to consider the adoption of the Net Zero Framework (NZF), previously approved by a majority vote in April 2025, aimed at reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions from Ships. The four-day session, held from 14 to 17 October 2025, was defined by sharp procedural contestation, regional divergence, and political division, culminating in the postponement of the NZF adoption. The meeting was contentious around the procedural acceptance criteria of the NZF adoption process and sought clarification on the cover resolution on the NZF. Key points of deliberations included:

1. Explicit Acceptance Procedure Vs Tacit Acceptance Procedure

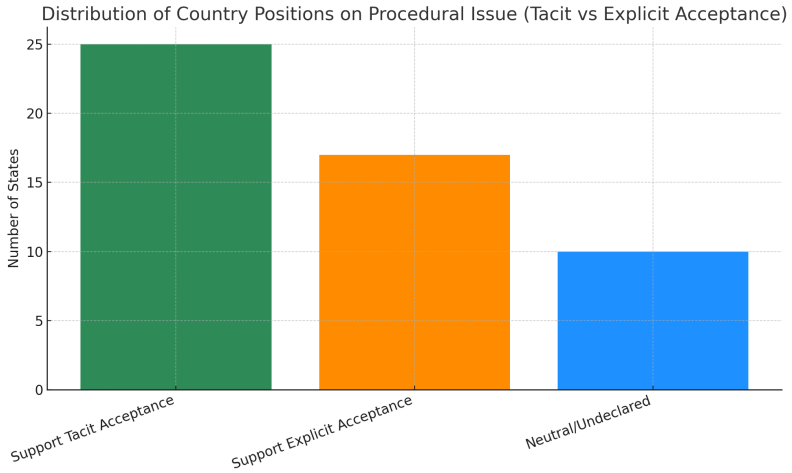


Figure 1: Distribution of Country Positions on Procedural Issue (Tacit vs Explicit Acceptance)

2. Establishment of a Sub-committee: The Committee agreed in principle to create a Sub-Committee on the Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships to support institutional capacity for implementation.
3. Cover Resolutions to the NZF: Discussions on the accompanying cover resolution focused on embedding references to the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy. Pacific SIDS and EU members proposed explicit references to Just and Equitable Transition (JET), the human element, and capacity building. Opposing views, mainly from the Gulf States, Russia, and China, cautioned against reaffirming a framework that had yet to be fully assessed. A compromise was ultimately reached by relocating the contentious language to preambular clauses, preserving ambition while maintaining procedural neutrality.
4. Governing Provisions of the IMO Net Zero Fund: Europe and the Pacific favoured practical continuity under MARPOL, whereas the Gulf and aligned states emphasized legality and sovereignty. African interventions focused on equitable participation and technology access over legal semantics.

The atmosphere and tone of the meeting was laced with acrimony and punctuated by theatric-styled interventions, making the meeting truly extraordinary. Two main countries led the opposing arguments in

the room, namely: The United States and The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, while others combined pushback interventions with failed attempts neutralize tensions as depicted in the attitude heatmap below:

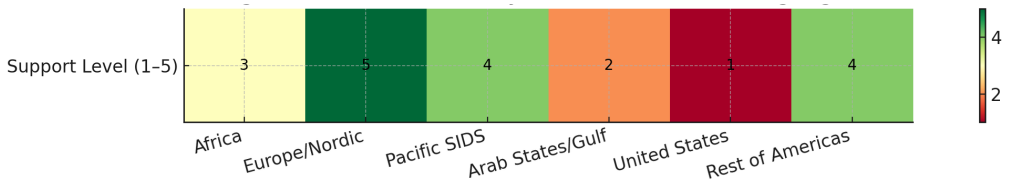


Figure 2: Regional Attitude Intensity (1 = Opposition, 5 = Strong Support)

By the close of deliberations on 17 October 2025, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting by one year, postponing the consideration for adopting the NZF.

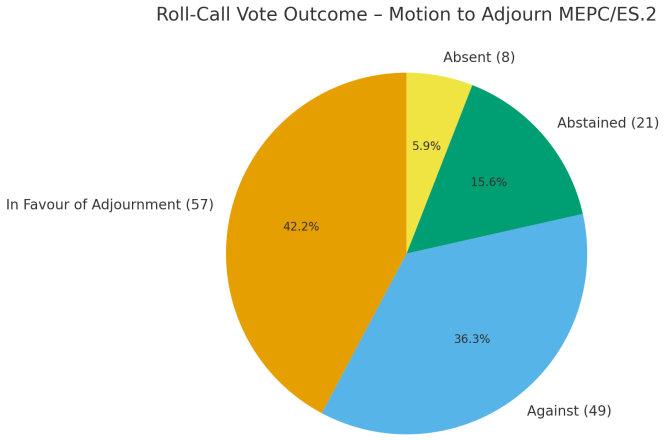


Figure 3: Roll-Call Vote Outcome – Motion to Adjourn MEPC/ES.2 Session by 1 Year

The Committee voted, by roll call, to adjourn the meeting for one year. The motion to adjourn passed with 57 votes in favour, 49 against, and 21 abstentions was made by The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in an extraordinary turn of events.

Table 1: Key Focus and Results/Decisions

OUTCOME AREA	RESULT / DECISION
1. REVISED MARPOL ANNEX VI (NZF ADOPTION)	• Discussion completed; adoption deferred.
2. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	• Agreement in principle to establish a permanent Sub-Committee on GHG Reduction.
3. PROCEDURAL MOTION TO ADJOURN MEPC/ES.2	Passed by a majority vote • 57 In Favour • 49 Against, • 21 Abstentions • 8 Absent
4. NEXT STEP	• Resume consideration of the revised Annex VI in a year

	• Proceed with the 20th session of the Intersessional Working Group (ISWG) as planned.

1. Procedural Divisions and Cover Resolution Negotiations

1.1. Debate on Tacit versus Explicit Acceptance Procedures

Sharp procedural debate on whether to adopt the NZF under tacit or explicit acceptance took a significant portion of time during the proceedings, without a clear resolution or agreement. Provisions within Article 16(2)(f) of the IMO's MARPOL convention sets two main procedures for adopting amendment measures, namely:

1. Explicit acceptance procedures
2. Tacit acceptance procedures

The general IMO practice has historically favoured the tacit acceptance procedure as this allows for a smooth progression of documents adopted to enter into force automatically after an initial period of 10 months unless countries object. During this extraordinary MEPC session, this tacit acceptance procedure was challenged.

Approximately 25 delegations, mainly from Europe, the Pacific, and Latin America, spoke in support of the tacit acceptance, citing historical precedent and the need for predictability to stimulate investment. They reminded the Committee that this system had successfully delivered every major safety and environmental standard in the Organisation's history, from double-hull tankers to the 2020 sulfur cap. Industry voices such as the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) supported them, warning that "uncertainty kills investment." Without predictable timelines, they said, shipowners would delay orders for new vessels and fuels.

Around 17 states, led by Saudi Arabia, the United States, Russia, China, and Iran, insisted on explicit acceptance, arguing that the NZF, involving a global fund with redistributive features, required consensus and sovereign ratification. Their rejection of the tacit acceptance was predicated on the economic significance and scale of the measures. "This is not a technical amendment," according to the Saudi delegate. "It creates a global fund that collects and redistributes money. That goes beyond MARPOL's mandate". Supporting this view, the U.S. delegation described the framework as "a de facto global carbon tax" that could worsen inflation and raise the price of food and energy worldwide. Their remarks that "we are building the ship while sailing it," drew mixed reactions with agreements and opposition creating a contentious environment never before experienced in the IMO.

In sum, supporters of the tacit procedure, comprising EU, Nordic, and Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), emphasized urgency and consistency with prior IMO practice, while contrary voices of largely oil-exporting and major developing economies, underscored sovereignty, impacts, cost, and legal clarity as critical components yet to be clarified in how the NZF will affect their economies. Ultimately, majority of the committee members preferred the tacit acceptance while acknowledging absence of unanimity.

Trends:

- For: Pacific Islands, EU/Nordic states, and Latin American allies seeking to anchor ambition and fairness together.
- Against: Russia, China, Gulf States, and others, emphasising procedural caution over symbolism.
- Supporters were mostly OECD and Pacific Island states, as well as environmental allies, prioritising market certainty and IMO credibility.
- Opponents were largely oil-exporting and emerging economies, prioritising sovereignty, cost control, and legal boundaries.

1.2. Consideration of the Draft Cover Resolution and References to the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy

Discussions on the accompanying cover resolution focused on embedding references to the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy. Pacific SIDS and EU members proposed explicit references to Just and Equitable Transition (JET), human elements, and capacity building. Opposing views principally from the Gulf States, Russia, and China, cautioned against reaffirming an unassessed framework. However, a compromise relocated the contentious language to preambular clauses, thus maintaining ambition while preserving procedural neutrality.

1.3. Key interventions

- Egypt requested a cost comparison between the ISWG and sub-committee models and suggested agreeing “in principle” now while referring financial details to the Council.
- Secretary-General confirmed that ISWG costs exclude translation and interpretation, making them cheaper but less inclusive.
- Marshall Islands reiterated the need for MEPC–MSC coordination in the ToR.
- The United Arab Emirates proposed referring the matter to a working group to refine details and possibly schedule the first session for 2027.
- Saudi Arabia supported this approach and requested that the Secretariat prepare an efficiency review of IMO operations. The Secretary-General responded that existing efficiency measures were already reported to the Council, and the organisation was “at capacity.”

1.4. Decision

The Committee expressed general agreement in principle to establish a Sub-Committee on the Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships. Financial and administrative implications will be further considered by Council. The Secretariat to prepare draft Terms of Reference and report back for decision at a future MEPC session.”

1.5. The Legal Basis and Governance of the IMO Net-Zero Fund under MARPOL Annex VI

The legal competence of MARPOL Annex VI to administer a financial mechanism was also considered with the UAE, Bahrain, and Venezuela, supported by several Gulf States, arguing that a separate legal instrument akin to the IOPC Fund Convention was required. In contrast, Denmark, the UK, Singapore, Brazil, and Norway held that integrating economic measures within MARPOL was both lawful and necessary. Africa's interventions highlighted equitable participation and technology access over legal semantics.

Supporting Countries (Estimated Count):

- About 20 delegations, including Denmark, the UK, Germany, Norway, Australia, Singapore, Brazil, and New Zealand, supported continuing under MARPOL, emphasising that "economic measures are now part of environmental regulation".

Opposing Countries (Estimated Count):

- Roughly 12 delegations, including the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Russia, Qatar, Kuwait, Iraq, China, Yemen, and Sierra Leone, urged either a separate legal instrument or stronger legal safeguards before adoption.

Trends:

- Europe and the Pacific favoured practical continuity.
- The Gulf and aligned states emphasised legality and sovereignty.
- Africa voiced mixed views, focusing on fair participation and capacity-building.

"Technical and economic measures can no longer be separated," said a Danish delegate, echoing several European statements. "Climate change doesn't wait for legal semantics".

1.6. Indicative Work Plan and Implementation Timelines

Operational readiness discussions revealed broad alignment. Singapore presented a 2026 pilot registry, India proposed a revenue distribution mechanism, and Nigeria advocated a food security impact assessment and technology transfer track. Mexico, Korea, and the UK supported early rule adoption by MEPC 85 (2026). The Chair reaffirmed that the indicative work plan was a non-binding guide to maintain momentum toward 2029.

Table 2: Outcomes and Country Positions

DELIBERATIONS / THEMES	SUPPORTING COUNTRIES	OPPOSING COUNTRIES	NOTES / REGIONAL TRENDS & OBSERVATIONS

1. TACIT VS EXPLICIT ACCEPTANCE	Denmark, United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Croatia, Lithuania, Cyprus, Estonia, Australia, Canada, Brazil, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Fiji (≈ 25)	Saudi Arabia, United States, Russian Federation, China, Iran, Pakistan, Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Venezuela, Yemen, Argentina, Iraq, Sierra Leone (≈ 17)	The majority favoured keeping tacit acceptance as the default IMO procedure, citing predictability and historical precedent. Opponents, led by Saudi Arabia and the U.S., framed the NZF as an economic instrument requiring explicit ratification. African and Asian developing states stayed largely neutral, calling for fairness and further study.
2. COVER RESOLUTION – 2023 IMO GHG STRATEGY & JUST AND EQUITABLE TRANSITION (JET)	Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Palau, Fiji, Seychelles, Barbados, Denmark, Germany, United Kingdom, Norway, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Spain, France (≈ 30)	Saudi Arabia, Russian Federation, China, Iran, Pakistan, Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Venezuela (≈ 10)	Pacific SIDS led the call to include references to the 2023 GHG Strategy and JET. The compromise moved key language to the preambular clauses. Supporters viewed this as anchoring ambition in fairness; opponents cautioned against reaffirming a strategy that had not yet been fully assessed for its impacts.
3. LEGAL AUTHORITY & FUND GOVERNANCE (MARPOL SCOPE)	Denmark, United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Australia, Singapore, Brazil, New Zealand, France, Mexico, United Kingdom (dual role in fund timelines) (≈ 20)	United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Russia, Qatar, Kuwait, Iraq, China, Yemen, Sierra Leone, Venezuela (≈ 12)	Supporters argued that MARPOL Annex VI can accommodate both market-based and technical elements within the same framework. Opponents cited overreach, drawing parallels to the IOPC Funds precedent and suggesting a separate legal convention. Africa's interventions emphasised capacity and equity over procedural authority.
4. WORK PLAN & IMPLEMENTATION (REGISTRY, FUND READINESS, GOVERNANCE TIMING)	Singapore, India, Republic of Korea, Mexico, United Kingdom, Nigeria, Barbados, Vanuatu, Fiji, Brazil, Solomon Islands, Denmark, Norway, Australia, Canada (≈ 22)	Saudi Arabia, United States, Russia, United Arab Emirates, Iran (≈ 5)	There is a broad consensus that preparatory work must begin early to meet the 2029 disbursement goal. Singapore proposed 2026 Registry pilots; the UK/Mexico urged governing provisions by MEPC 85; the RoK pushed for SU/RU rules and periodic price reviews; and Nigeria tied its support to food security and technology transfer workstreams.

5. GENERAL SENTIMENT	Approx. 63 in favour, 16 against, 23 abstentions (from prior MEPC vote, reaffirmed by Chair)	—	Majority alignment for adoption under tacit acceptance, but no full consensus. The "explicit acceptance" bloc remained cohesive and influential on governance and legal safeguards. The tone stayed respectful, and solutions oriented.

1.7. Overall Assessment

- Supporters of tacit acceptance (~25 states) outweighed those of explicit acceptance (~17 states).
- Bloc Patterns:
    - Europe and Pacific SIDS, plus OECD allies, supported procedural and regulatory ambition.
    - Gulf States and the U.S./Russia/China supported Legal conservatism and cost caution.
    - Africa and Caribbean Developing States emphasise fairness, capacity, and sequencing.
- Emerging Compromise: Consensus forming around maintaining tacit procedure while accelerating governance safeguards (Fund rules by 2026, price review cycle, impact workstreams).
- Atmosphere: Tense, contentious, division, but with occasional light-hearted moments by the Chair.

No formal vote was taken, but the direction was that the majority supports progress under tacit acceptance, while the minority demands legal certainty before commitment.

2. Institutional Arrangements: Establishment of a Sub-Committee

As discussions transitioned from procedural contention to institutional design, tributes to the late Raila Odinga framed a cooperative atmosphere that slightly eased the debate. The focus shifted to the proposal (MEPC/ES.2/3/2) to establish a permanent Sub-Committee on the Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships, co-sponsored by Egypt, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Türkiye, and the UAE.

Over 45 delegations took the floor. Approximately 30 strongly supported establishment, including Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Namibia, France, Italy, Spain, and Sweden, stressing language justice and equity. Around 12 delegations, including the U.S., China, and Tuvalu, supported in principle but sought cost justification and clearer Terms of Reference (ToR). The Marshall Islands and others raised the need to ensure there was alignment with the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC).

Financial disclosures of committee meetings revealed cost estimations of £0.5 million per meeting, £7.8 million for annual translation, and £120,000 for an additional officer post. Translation services were

already stretched, and funding for developing countries would rely on voluntary multi-donor trust funds (VMDTF).

The Committee broadly agreed in principle to establish the Sub-Committee but deferred financial approval to the IMO Council. A working group would refine ToR and financial implications for the 2026–2027 biennium. Delegates agreed that such a body was critical for efficiency, multilingualism, and equitable participation.

Regional trends in this discussion demonstrated an Africa-led advocacy for inclusivity; Europe raising the fiscal prudence of this idea, and the Pacific SIDS expressing concerns over voluntary funding dependency. Consensus emerged for gradual establishment within existing resource constraints.

Table 3: Summary of Positions

POSITION	REPRESENTATIVE COUNTRIES	APPROX. COUNT	KEY RATIONALE
STRONGLY SUPPORTING	Egypt, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Turkey, UAE, Senegal, Namibia, France, Spain, Malta, Monaco, Mauritius, Sweden, Italy, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Brazil, Sierra Leone, Tunisia, Somalia, Mozambique, Libya, Madagascar, plus numerous African and Latin American delegations	≈ 30	Structural necessity for workload management and multilingual inclusivity
CAUTIOUS / CONDITIONAL	United Kingdom, China, Tuvalu, Marshall Islands, Cook Islands, Argentina, Seychelles, Palau, Canada, United States, Saudi Arabia	≈ 10-12	Seek cost review, efficiency proof, and clear ToR before approval
NEUTRAL / OBSERVING	Industry NGOs (ZESTA and others)	-	Warned against fragmentation and supported better coordination across committees

Total States Taking Floor: Approx. 45 member states and observers.
Overall ratio approx. 70 % supportive, 25 % conditional, 5 % neutral.

Table 4: Regional Trends and Observations

REGION / BLOC	GENERAL TREND	NOTES
AFRICA	Strongly supportive (≈ 15 delegations)	Link to capacity building and language equity (“language justice”).

EUROPE & NORDIC	Support with budgetary discipline	Favour ToR clarity and alignment with existing plans.
PACIFIC SIDS	Support with reservations	Stress funding predictability and a manageable meeting load.
ARAB STATES / GULF	Mixed support	Some co-sponsors; others (Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar) advocate efficiency review.
AMERICAS	Broadly supportive	Latin American States echoed the call for translation and equity.

2.1. Summary of the Day's Outcomes

- Broad agreement in principle on establishing a Sub-Committee on the Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships.
- Consensus that further analysis is needed on cost, frequency, and Secretariat capacity.
- Decision to request draft Terms of Reference and financial review for submission to Council (2026–2027 biennium).
- Likely next step: working group to refine ToR and recommend a timeline for the first session (2026 or 2027).
- Marked shift from legal and procedural conflict (Day 2) to institutional planning and inclusivity (Day 3)

3. Final Deliberations and Voting

The Working Group, chaired by Mr. Oftedal of Norway, presented a report (WP.4), highlighting issues the group worked through the night before to incorporate agreed text proposed by the UAE, Egypt, and ICS. The UAE's proposal introduced a declarative clause that the NZF was 'the only global mid-term measure for international shipping'. The report summarised the Group's work on the draft work plan for implementing the IMO Net-Zero Framework once it enters into force. It said that the Group had reviewed all submissions referred to it and incorporated:

- UAE's suggestions on long-term measures,
- Egypt's proposals on technology transfer, and
- Inputs from the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) on incentive and reward mechanisms.

Shortly after the report was presented, procedural tensions arose over informal consultations that occurred the previous day with the Secretary-General, leading to calls for clarity from Brazil, the U.S., and Russia.

Subsequently, Brazil requested dual votes to separate procedural and adoption issues, seconded by Denmark. However, interventions by the U.S. reverted to echoing transparency concerns, after which Saudi Arabia argued that there was need for unity over division with the former as their preference. Singapore then proposed deferring the vote to adopt in order to preserve the spirit of consensus. The UK and Tuvalu countered, urging timely decision. Despite procedural motions under Rule 31, the Chair restored order and guided deliberations. The Secretary-General admitted engaging in corridor diplomacy to facilitate consensus but apologized for unintended perceptions. He reaffirmed that all decisions rested with Member States, a statement seemed to have restored confidence.

During the final session deep concerns were raised over transparency, process, and the preservation of multilateral integrity. Several delegations expressed unease that some decisions appeared to be taking shape through informal or bilateral discussions outside plenary, warning that this practice risked undermining transparency and eroding confidence in the decision-making process. Despite this tension, members reaffirmed their commitment to constructive engagement and proposed a structured approach to voting — separating the question of procedural adoption (tacit versus explicit acceptance) from the substantive decision on the revised MARPOL Annex VI. The general sentiment reflected a desire to uphold due process and maintain trust, even amid growing fatigue and division.

Following clarifications from the Secretariat confirming that informal consultations had occurred solely to facilitate understanding, the atmosphere softened but divisions persisted. Some delegations stressed the need for additional time to consult nationally and avoid fragmenting, while others insisted that the session's purpose was to take decisions and that further delays would undermine the IMO's credibility. This tension exposed the delicate balance between unity and action and whether to prioritise consensus or to demonstrate institutional resolve through timely decision-making.

Table 5: Order of Discussions by Country

SPEAKER	KEY MESSAGE
NORWAY (WORKING GROUP CHAIR)	Presented report WP.4; incorporated UAE, Egypt, and ICS proposals; added clarification that the work plan is indicative.
BRAZIL	Criticised informal decision-making; proposed two independent votes; later clarified remarks and urged proceeding to vote.
UNITED STATES	Supported transparency; called for a record of "off-record" talks; later motioned to suspend the meeting.
KENYA	Requested correction to the Working Group attendance list.
SAUDI ARABIA	Called for unity; later moved procedural motion to vote on deferring adoption; reiterated preference for unity.
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)	Supported Brazil's motion to move forward.

SECRETARY-GENERAL	Confirmed informal talks had occurred; apologised and reaffirmed members' authority.
RUSSIA	Expressed strong disappointment at the previous day's informal processes.
SINGAPORE	Proposed deferring the adoption vote to protect unity.
UNITED KINGDOM	Thanked the Chair and Secretary-General; stated that the IMO must make decisions and supported proceeding to vote.
DENMARK	Raised a point of order about the inconsistent handling of motions.
IMO LEGAL ADVISOR	Clarified rules under Rule 31 for handling procedural motions.
SPAIN	Supported temporary suspension to clarify the process.
TUVALU	Urged addressing Brazil's original motion first; warned that delay is not neutral.
LIBERIA	Supported deferment for the sake of unity and consensus.
CHAIR	Sought to restore order; proposed finishing WP.4 and then turning to WP.3 after a short break.

As procedural motions multiplied, confusion arose over the sequencing of votes and interpretation of the Committee's rules. Several members urged adherence to the order of procedure, with some supporting a brief suspension to restore clarity. Ultimately, the Chair intervened to restore structure, proposing that the Committee complete its review of the Working Group report before considering any motions. The exchanges reflected both the complexity of the issues at stake and the Committee's determination to reconcile procedural legitimacy with collective progress toward final adoption of the Net-Zero Framework.

4. Atmosphere, Procedural Reset, and Motion to Adjourn

The atmosphere during the session was tense yet controlled, marked by a blend of fatigue, determination, and procedural strain. Delegates differed sharply on how the decision-making process should unfold as the prior exchanges in the course of the session reflected frustration over procedure rather than substance, with some urging immediate action to maintain momentum and others calling for delay in the name of consensus. Throughout, the Chair maintained composure and guided discussions calmly, preventing the debate from descending into disorder.

When the meeting resumed after a brief recess, the Chair clarified the procedural confusion, reminding members of the correct agenda sequence and confirming that the Committee would now move to consider the Drafting Group report (WP.3). This reset allowed the session to proceed in a more structured manner, with clear guidance on how motions would be handled under the Rules of Procedure. The clarification was welcomed as a necessary step toward restoring order and legitimacy in the process.

Once the floor was reopened, a formal motion was introduced by Saudi Arabia to adjourn the Extraordinary Session for one year, justified as an opportunity to build unity through further consultation. The proposal triggered a split response: some delegations viewed postponement as a constructive path toward consensus, while others warned that such a delay would effectively stall the entire process. Following limited debate, permitted under procedural rules, positions remained evenly divided, with several members urging progress and others supporting adjournment to allow more time for study and reflection. The exchange captured the broader tension between procedural caution and the urgency to deliver tangible outcomes under the IMO's decarbonisation agenda.

5. Roll-Call Vote on the Motion to Adjourn

At the request of Saudi Arabia, a roll-call vote was conducted following a formal request under the Rules of Procedure. The Chair confirmed that 135 Member States were present and entitled to vote, with options to support adjournment for one year, oppose it, or abstain. After the vote was completed and verified, the Chair announced the results: 57 in favour, 49 against, and 21 abstentions. 8 countries were absent.

With this outcome, the motion to adjourn the Extraordinary Session for one year was formally adopted. The decision underscored the divisions within the Committee, not over climate ambition itself, but over how and when such ambition should be operationalised. The result effectively postponed further deliberations on the Revised MARPOL Annex VI and the IMO Net-Zero Framework, signalling the need for extended consultations and confidence-building among Member States before the process could resume to take a decision.

6. Summary of Outcomes

- Legal: Revised MARPOL Annex VI (2025) – was *not* adopted
- Institutional: Agreement in principle to establish a permanent Sub-Committee on GHG Reduction.
- Policy: Inclusion of JET, human element, and capacity-building references.
- Procedural: Referrals to Council for translation and budget provisions.
- Attendees: 135 Member States with credentials
- Political: Contentious and divided multilateralism; The United States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia utilized procedural means to delay the meeting that ultimately resulted in the adjournment of the final meeting which won by a majority vote of 57 to a motion to adjourn the session by 1 year. There were 21 abstentions, 49 voted not to adjourn and 8 countries were absent.

7. Key Results and Decisions

Table 6: Key Results and Decisions

ITEM	RESULT / DECISION
AGENDA ITEM: FINAL CONSIDERATION OF REVISED MARPOL ANNEX VI (NET-ZERO FRAMEWORK)	Discussion completed; adoption deferred.
PROCEDURAL MOTION: ADJOURN MEPC/ES.2 FOR ONE YEAR	Passed by a majority vote of 57 49 Against 21 Abstentions 8 Absent
TOTAL MEMBERS PRESENT & ENTITLED TO VOTE	135
VALID VOTES CAST	127 (94 % participation)
NEXT STEP	Resume consideration of the revised Annex VI and the associated cover resolution. Proceed with the 20th session of the Intersessional Working Group as planned.

8. MEPC ES/2 Session Analytical Summary

- **Inclusivity and Multilingualism**

The debates revealed systemic language inequities. Francophone and Lusophone African states reiterated exclusion risks. The Sub-Committee proposal was a direct corrective to these barriers, institutionalizing translation and equitable access.

- **Legal and Institutional Evolution**

MEPC/ES.2 represented the legal mainstreaming of economic instruments within MARPOL. The session validated the IMO's authority to manage financial and technical measures simultaneously, setting precedent for future carbon-based instruments.

- **Political Dynamics**

The Global North–South divide persisted but was moderated through procedural compromise. SIDS and LDCs shaped normative discourse on fairness, while Gulf States emphasised sovereignty. Two main actors ultimately shifted the political landscape of the IMO discussions, namely: The United States and The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Africa's role was pivotal in mediating between ambition and equity, with many African countries reasoning with the motion to adjourn the meeting.

- **Finance and Capacity**

The sustainability of voluntary funds remains uncertain. The IMO's reliance on multi-donor contributions underscores structural funding imbalances. Delegates urged transparent disbursement to avoid exclusion of developing states.

- **Procedural Lessons**

Transparency lapses, particularly regarding informal consultations, exposed governance vulnerabilities. The procedural provisions offer loophole that inadvertently sets a procedural precedent for resolving impasses in ways that seem not to fracture the institution. However, the full implication of this process is yet to be known. Future sessions must balance efficiency with inclusivity.

- **Considerations ahead of Future Negotiations**
    - Countries should recognize the need to engage and find means to include silent voices during meetings on policy negotiations with a genuine interest in understanding their needs and seeking means to address them.
    - Every vote counts and as such countries should recognize their equality in environments regardless of their size.
    - Abstentions and absences favour no one, including those in the room, because every vote counts, so countries need to get national mandates before coming to meetings and incorporate attendance budgets for the next fiscal year. Other countries can also reach out to support countries distant from London.
    - Multilateralism is under threat and must be restored by returning to good politics that reach across the aisle well before organized meetings are held. Negotiations often happen outside of the environment like the IMO (well-articulated by the Brazilian delegate)

External publication on Day 2 outcome:

- US and Saudi lead move to sink IMO's Net-Zero Framework: https://splash247.com/us-and-saudi-lead-move-to-sink-imos-net-zero-framework/

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