



Representing the Global Shipping Industry

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PRESS RELEASE

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ICS Highlights Ocean Governance Issues at Important United Nations Meeting

In New York today (7 April), the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) represented global shipowners at an important United Nations meeting, having been invited to speak as a panellist as part of the UN Inter Consultative Process on the Law of Sea.

The opportunity was taken by ICS to highlight the extent to which shipping is very effectively regulated by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) in order to deliver the United Nations' sustainable development goals.

With respect to environmental sustainability, ICS explained how shipping is the only industrial sector already to have a mandatory global regime in place, adopted by IMO, to regulate and reduce its CO₂ emissions. A recent IMO study determined that total CO₂ emissions from international shipping reduced by over 10% between 2007 and 2012. ICS also gave an overview of the global regulations adopted at IMO to reduce sulphur emissions from shipping and to limit the movement of invasive species in ships' ballast water, and how the shipping industry was investing hundreds of billions of dollars to order to ensure compliance.

With respect to social sustainability, ICS explained that shipping is also unique in having the comprehensive framework of global regulations governing seafarers' employment and working conditions provided by the ILO Maritime Labour Convention, which is now being enforced worldwide, as well as an ILO international minimum wage for seafarers.

However, ICS noted that the collective cost to the shipping industry of implementing new environmental regulations, which was already starting to be felt, was estimated to be in excess of US\$ 500 billion over the next 10 years, something which had not been fully taken into account when the rules were adopted. Government regulators therefore needed to give equal priority to each of the three pillars of sustainable development, including the economic, which was especially important in view of shipping's role in continuing the spread of global prosperity.

Speaking in New York, ICS Director of Policy and External Relations, Simon Bennett remarked:

“Unless the shipping industry is commercially viable it will not be able to deliver the investments in environmental and social improvements that are sought by regulators on behalf of society at large.”

ICS therefore suggested that the conduct by IMO of full and proper cost benefit analysis of all new future regulatory proposals would help to ensure the delivery of sustainable development, consistent with the goals agreed by the United Nations.

At the New York meeting, ICS also commented on the recent decision by the UN, in January 2015, to recommend that UNCLOS should be expanded to include a new legally binding instrument on the conservation of marine life in areas beyond national jurisdiction, which could include tools such as 'High Seas' Marine Protected Areas.

ICS Director of Policy and External Relations, Simon Bennett remarked:

“ICS sees benefit in the designation of High Seas protected areas, to address issues such as unregulated fishing, but it should be borne in mind that under the authority of UNCLOS, shipping is already comprehensively regulated by IMO. While the shipping industry recognises that the regulation of other ocean activities, especially on the high seas, may not be so well developed, we do think great care should be taken with regard to the current balance that exists between the rights and obligations of states in their flag, coastal and port state roles. In the context of regulating international shipping, the current balance has worked very well, as demonstrated by the sustained increase in the efficiency of shipping and the dramatic reduction in the number of shipping and pollution incidents.”

Further information about how the shipping industry is addressing the United Nations' sustainable development goals can be found at:

www.ics-shipping.org/docs/default-source/resources/policy-tools/sustainable-development-imo-world-maritime-day-2013.pdf?sfvrsn=18

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