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**IMO resolutions: the general course is correct, the ambitions not yet
VDR on the latest IMO climate policy decisions / short-term measures of the MEPC: Insufficient ability to plan ahead for shipping companies / German shipping sector open to discussing market-based measures and stricter IMO climate targets**

This week, the member states of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) took another step towards implementing the IMO's 2018 climate-protection targets for ocean-going ships worldwide. The IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) has adopted concrete targets for the 2023-2026 period to reduce CO2 emissions in the short term. In addition, the states agreed on a timetable for discussing market-based measures to further curb carbon emissions of shipping. The industry-proposed research and development fund for new fuels has been postponed to the next meeting of the MEPC, which is scheduled for November.

Regarding the agreed near-term measures, the German Shipowners' Association (VDR) welcomed the fact that the IMO member states were able to agree on the very next steps. "However, we would very much have liked to have a better ability to make plans on a more long-term basis," said VDR President Alfred Hartmann. "We need clear international rules as an industry, as we want to invest in ships that are even more climate-friendly. But, to do so, we need to know which conditions will apply for them also beyond 2026. Given the long service lives of ships, that's practically the day after tomorrow."

In a related matter, the VDR President emphasised that Germany's shipping sector would continue to join forces with the Member States of the European Union, the United States and other countries in calling for more ambitious and global climate-protection rules to be put in place for international shipping. "It is particularly good that the EU has been energetically engaged at the IMO," he said. "But we are disappointed that these more ambitious ideas have not yet found majority support in London."

The VDR President also welcomed the fact that the IMO member states have put the issue of market-based measures on the agenda, though he also added a note of caution, saying: "The general course being taken by the IMO is correct, and it has also so far been within the timetable decided in 2018. But the level of ambition and the pace with which the majority of the member state have been proceeding to date still leave much to be desired." In any case, he continued, the German shipping sector is prepared to discuss issues related to carbon pricing, such as a globally applicable fuel levy. Hartmann: "As the German maritime sector, we are also open to discussions on making the IMO's climate-protection targets even stricter, for example, by requiring shipping to be climate-neutral by as early as 2050."



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The VDR President was disappointed that a decision on the international research and development fund was once again postponed. “Our industry’s proposal has been on the table in IMO for almost two years now, and it addresses the crucial factor in efforts to decarbonise the industry: We need a revolution in propulsion and fuels,” he said. “It is incomprehensible to me that our offer has now been put on the back burner yet again.”

In December 2019, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), together with other industry associations, had presented the proposal that shipping use its own funds to establish a research and development fund to put the industry on track globally to achieve the sector’s climate targets and to transform it into a carbon-free mode of transport as quickly as possible. The roughly USD 5 billion fund would be financed by a fuel levy on shipping companies around the world over a period of 10 years.

About the German Shipowners’ Association

The German Shipowners’ Association (*Verband Deutscher Reeder, VDR*) is responsible for representing the common business and social policy interests of German shipping companies at federal and state government level as well as in relation to European and international bodies. Founded in 1907, the VDR merged with the Association of German Coastal Shipowners in 1994. With a membership of around 200, the VDR represents the majority of Germany’s merchant fleet. For more details, visit www.reederverband.de.

Press photographs by Alfred Hartmann: <https://www.reederverband.de/en/press/press-images.html>

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