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Circular Letter No.5122
4 February 2026

To: All IMO Members
Parties to the MARPOL Convention which are not Members of IMO

Subject: **Establishment of the fifth round of the Sustainable Maritime Transport Training Programme to support the implementation of the IMO Strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships (GHG-SMART)**

1 The 2023 IMO GHG Strategy recognizes the need for supportive actions and capacity-building for developing countries, in particular least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS). The Sustainable Maritime Transport Training Programme (GHG-SMART) is a dedicated programme for SIDS and LDCs that provides capacity-building support to assess the impacts of the measures of the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy and to identify and implement national actions related to maritime decarbonization.

2 The GHG-SMART programme is implemented with financial support from the Government of the Republic of Korea and is comprised of needs-based tailored annual training cycles on relevant regulatory, policy, technological and financial aspects of maritime decarbonization for SIDS and LDCs. The GHG-SMART programme represents an innovative way of delivering IMO's training activities through a continued long-term programme. Each year a cohort of selected participants from SIDS and LDCs are enrolled in the GHG-SMART annual training programme which offers the opportunity to participate in online training, in-person practical training, study visits in the Republic of Korea as well as trainee-driven action plans.

3 Furthermore, to enable advanced learning and development opportunities for SIDS and LDCs in maritime decarbonization beyond the annual training cycles, the programme comprises the GHG-SMART Recognition Scheme in collaboration with the World Maritime University (WMU). The GHG-SMART Recognition Scheme awards full scholarships for a 14-month MSc. in Maritime Energy Management at WMU in Malmö, Sweden, to the top-performing trainees of each cohort. The scholarships cover the full costs of studying at WMU, typically the university fees, accommodation at the university residence, a monthly living allowance and an outbound air ticket to the recipient's home country after graduation.

4 Following the successful outcome of the 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 training cycles, the next round of the GHG-SMART Training Programme will be held in 2026, and will focus on online and practical training as well as exercises and case studies on important topics, including, but not limited to:

- IMO regulatory frameworks on reduction of GHG emissions from shipping.
- Developing national action plans for GHG emissions reduction in line with the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy.

- Developing road maps for marine fuel transition, ship technology transition and port development transition in line with the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy.
- Raising climate finance for maritime decarbonization projects for SIDS and LDCs.

The GHG-SMART programme supports capacity-development to enable the identification of maritime decarbonization needs and opportunities specific to SIDS and LDCs. Based on a comprehensive training needs assessment and stakeholder consultation, the programme involves the long-term engagement of trainees based on the principles of Continuous Professional Development (CPD). As part of the CPD nature of GHG-SMART, each participant will develop a Trainee Structured Training Plan (TSTP) which will include all activities that the trainee will undertake for their long-term development and will inform the transition and development plans in terms of GHG emissions reduction of their respective States. Furthermore, participation in the GHG-SMART provides access to a professional alumni network of maritime professionals representing SIDS and LDCs.

Invitation to submit nominations

5 IMO Member States that are LDCs or SIDS in line with the official United Nations list of [LDCs](#) and [SIDS](#) are invited to submit a nomination of two (2) participants selected to take part in the 2025 GHG-SMART Training Programme, with at least one nominee being a woman, in line with paragraph (9) below.

6 The nominated participants are expected to be government officials working in the maritime or environmental sector, have a good understanding of maritime issues, including but not limited to GHG issues, and preferably intend to become engaged in maritime energy and decarbonization policy development/implementation in their country.

7 As the GHG-SMART Training Programme covers a range of regulatory, policy, technological and financial training, it is encouraged to nominate the two participants from different backgrounds, preferably but not limited to a combination of one technical/legal/operational official and one policy/managerial official, to enable complementary skills per participating Member State.

8 It is also encouraged to nominate those who are currently representing or expected to represent their country in IMO GHG related meetings, and as such nominated also for IMO support to their participation through the Voluntary Multi-Donor Trust Fund to attend these IMO GHG meetings in line with [Circular Letter No.5094](#).

9 In alignment with IMO's commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), and in order to promote gender balance and inclusivity within IMO technical cooperation efforts, nominating Member States are required to nominate at least one nominee who is a woman. In cases where two men are nominated by a Member State for the GHG-SMART programme, only one nominee will be selected for funding support.

10 The programme is conducted solely in English. The nominated participants must be proficient in the English language and able to demonstrate their proficiency in English for the effective participation in the programme activities. The GHG-SMART training material may be made available in the French language.

11 Participants are subject to the Code of Conduct for Delegates, Observers and Other Participants at IMO Meetings, Events and Activities to Prevent Harassment including Sexual Harassment ([Circular Letter No.4908](#)).

12 For the 2026 round of GHG-SMART, participation from those SIDS and LDCs that have not taken part in previous years (2002-2025) GHG-SMART Training Programme will be selected on priority. LDCs and SIDS who have participated in the GHG-SMART programme so far are listed in annex 1 to this circular letter.

Process of nomination

13 Nominations must be submitted by the nominating Member State through their respective nominating authority. Applications received directly from candidates will not be accepted.

14 Nominations should be submitted by completing the **nomination form** attached in annex 2 of this circular letter.

15 The nomination form should be completed and signed by each nominee and the nominating authority, then submitted **by email** and addressed to:

Ms. Sonakshi Mishra
GHG-SMART Manager
Technical Cooperation and Implementation Division, IMO
ghg-smart@imo.org

with copy to:

Mr. Giuseppe Maxia
Principal Administrative Assistant
Technical Cooperation and Implementation Division, IMO
gmaxia@imo.org

The closing date for this call for nominations of participants is **Friday, 6 March 2026**. Member States and Associate Members are invited to submit their nominations as soon as possible.

ANNEX 1

IMO Member States (SIDS and LDCs) participating in the GHG-SMART Programme

| MEMBER STATE | PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS | YEAR |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Angola | Ministry of Culture, Tourism and the Environment | 2022 |
| Antigua and Barbuda | Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping | 2023 |
| Bahamas | Royal Bahamas Defense Force, Training Department | 2024 |
| Bangladesh | Mercantile Marine Office, Bangladesh Navy, Department of Shipping | 2022 and 2025 |
| Belize | Belize Port Authority, International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize (IMMARBE) | 2025 |
| Benin | Merchant Navy Directorate | 2022 |
| Comoros | National Agency for Maritime Affairs | 2022 |
| Cook Islands | Ministry of Transport | 2024 |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | Directorate of Maritime Affairs and Waterways | 2025 |
| Dominica | Ministry of Tourism, International Transport, and Maritime Initiatives and Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Blue and Green Economy | 2022 |
| Dominican Republic | National Port Authority | 2025 |
| Ethiopia | Ethiopian Maritime Authority | 2023 |
| Fiji | Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji and Ministry of Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport | 2024 |
| Gambia (the) | Gambia Maritime Administration | 2024 |
| Grenada | Grenada Port Authority | 2024 |
| Guinea-Bissau | Ministry of Transports, Telecommunications and Digital Economy and Organization for the Defense and Development of Wetlands | 2025 |
| Guyana | Maritime Administration Department | 2023 |
| Jamaica | Maritime Authority of Jamaica | 2022 |
| Madagascar | Port, Maritime and River Agency and Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy | 2022 and 2025 |
| Malawi | Ministry of Transport and Public Works | 2023 |
| Maldives | Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation | 2022 |
| Mauritania | Nouakchott Autonomous Port | 2025 |
| Mauritius | Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries | 2025 |
| Mozambique | Maputo Port Development Company | 2024 |
| Nauru | Nauru Maritime and Port Authority | 2024 |
| Nepal | Nepal Shipping Office | 2025 |
| Palau | Bureau of Marine Transportation | 2024 |
| Papua New Guinea | Department of Transport | 2024 |
| St. Kitts & Nevis | St. Kitts & Nevis Defense Force Coast Guard | 2023 |
| Saint Lucia | Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority | 2024 |
| St. Vincent and the Grenadines | Department of Maritime Administration | 2022 |
| Samoa | Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure | 2024 |
| Senegal | National Agency for Maritime Affairs | 2024 |
| Seychelles | Ministry of Transport and Seychelles Port Authority | 2025 |
| Sierra Leone | Sierra Leone Maritime Administration | 2023 |
| Solomon Islands | Solomon Islands Maritime Authority | 2022 |
| Somalia | Somali Maritime Administration | 2023 |

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|-----------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Suriname | Ministry of Spacial Planning and Environment and Maritime Authority Suriname | 2025 |
| Timor-Leste | National Directorate of Maritime Transport | 2024 |
| Togo | Ministry of Maritime Economy, Fisheries and Coastal Protection | 2023 |
| Tonga | Marine and Ports Division, Ministry of Infrastructure | 2023 |
| Trinidad and Tobago | Ministry of Works and Transport and Maritime Technologies Cooperation Centre Caribbean | 2022 |
| Uganda | Ministry of Works and Transport | 2023 |
| United Republic of Tanzania (the) | Ministry of Transport, Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation, Zanzibar Maritime Authority | 2022 and 2025 |
| Vanuatu | Maritime Technologies Cooperation Centre – Pacific, Vanuatu Maritime Safety Authority (VMSA) | 2022 and 2025 |
| Yemen | Maritime Affairs Authority | 2023 |
| Zambia | Department of Maritime and Inland Waterways, Ministry of Transport and Logistics | 2023 |

ANNEX 2

Nomination form for GHG-SMART Training Programme

This nomination form should be completed and signed by a senior official of the nominating authority and each nominee. The completed and signed nomination form should be submitted by email to the addresses listed in Circular Letter No.5122, no later than **Friday, 6 March 2026**.

| NOMINATING AUTHORITY/OFFICIAL | | | |
|---|----------|-----------------------------|---------|
| Nominated by (State): | | | |
| Organization: | | | |
| Name of Responsible Official: | | | |
| Designation of Responsible Official: | | | |
| Address | Mailing: | | |
| | Email: | | |
| Telephone | Office: | | |
| | Mobile: | | |
| Comments by the nominating authority on relevance of training for the organizational functions and selection of the two nominees: | | | |
| Official stamp | | Printed Name: Signed | |
| NOMINEE 1 | | | |
| Title: | | | Gender: |
| First Name: | | | |
| Last Name (Family Name): | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|---------|--|
| Nationality: | | | |
| Educational Background/Degree: | | | |
| Organization: | | | |
| Exact Title/Designation: | | | |
| Email Address: | | | |
| Telephone Number (Mobile): | | | |
| <p>Brief description of roles and responsibilities: <i>(If any current or future responsibilities related to maritime GHG emissions reduction, please highlight)</i></p> | | | |
| Signature of Nominee 1: | | | |
| NOMINEE 2 | | | |
| Title: | | Gender: | |
| First Name: | | | |
| Last Name (Family Name): | | | |
| Nationality: | | | |
| Educational Background/Degree: | | | |
| Organization: | | | |
| Exact Title/Designation: | | | |
| Email Address: | | | |
| Telephone Number (Mobile): | | | |
| <p>Brief description of roles and responsibilities: <i>(If any current or future responsibilities related to maritime GHG emissions reduction, please highlight)</i></p> | | | |
| Signature of Nominee 2: | | | |