

SHIPPING DEPUTY MINISTRY REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS “MARITIME CYPRUS 2025” CONFERENCE

PRESS RELEASE – DAY 3
OCTOBER 2025

Maritime Cyprus 2025 Conference concludes with forward-looking dialogue on safety, sustainability and the path toward climate resilience

The third and final day of the Conference brings together international experts to explore the next phase of shipping's transformation.



CYPRUS, Wednesday, October 08, 2025: The Maritime Cyprus 2025 Conference entered its third and final day today, concluding three days of dynamic discussion under the central theme “Unlocking the Future of Shipping.” Building on the momentum of previous sessions, the final day’s agenda focused on the future of maritime safety, the transition toward climate resilience, and the technologies and partnerships that will define the next decade of global shipping.

The day opened with an address by **H.E. Mr. Costas Kadis**, European Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans, who outlined the European Union’s commitment to supporting shipping’s green and digital transitions. He highlighted Cyprus’s leadership as a maritime services hub and its close alignment with the EU’s vision for sustainable ocean governance under the European Ocean Pact. Commissioner Kadis also announced a series of upcoming initiatives, including a European Maritime Industrial Strategy, an EU Port Strategy, and a Strategy for Coastal and Island Communities, each aimed at strengthening competitiveness, modernizing infrastructure, and accelerating investment in renewable fuels and technology.

A discussion led by **Dr. Phillip Belcher**, Marine Director at INTERTANKO, the panel “From Emissions to Adaptation: Is the Shipping Industry Ready for Climate Resilience?” brought together **Ms. Manuela Tomassini**, Head of Sustainability and Technical Assistance at the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA); **Mr. Jan Othman**, Vice President, Energy Systems at Wärtsilä; and **Mr. Gavin Allwright**, Secretary General at the International Windship Association, to discuss how the maritime sector can balance decarbonization goals with practical adaptation. Panelists emphasized the need for global consistency, technology-neutral regulation, and investment in seafarer training as the industry transitions to new fuels and propulsion systems. The discussion concluded that collaboration, flexibility and innovation

across all levels of the maritime community will be essential to ensuring shipping remains both sustainable and resilient in the face of environmental regulatory change.

In another session, **Mr. Sean Moloney**, CEO at Elaborate Communications, guided a conversation on “Safeguarding Shipowners in a Rapidly Changing Environment” brought together **Mr. Mark O’Neil**, President and CEO at Columbia Shipmanagement; **Mr. Dieter Rohdenburg**, CEO at InterMaritime Shipmanagement Ltd; **Mr. Jan Meyering**, Joint Managing Director at Marlow Navigation Co. Ltd.; and **Mr. Sebastian von Hardenberg**, CEO at Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement, to discuss how shipowners can navigate decarbonization, digitalization, and evolving geopolitical pressures. Panelists agreed that closer integration between owners and managers is vital as compliance, data and safety demands grow. They emphasized that the future of ship management will depend on partnership-based operating models, investment in people and adaptability to new technologies. The conversation also underscored the continuing importance of seafarer welfare, training and career development, with participants calling for the industry to present seafaring as a modern, attractive, and secure profession.

Experts convened for the session “Seas of Change: Technology’s Impact on Shipping and Seafarers,” led by **Ms. Despina Theodosiou**, Co-CEO at Tototheo Global, with participation from **Mr. Stephen Cotton**, General Secretary at the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF); **Ms. Fotini Ioannidou**, Director for Waterborne Transport at the European Commission; **Ms. Elpi Petraki**, President at WISTA International; and **Mr. Prabhat Jha**, Group Managing Director and CEO at MSC Shipmanagement Ltd. The discussion examined how digitalization and automation are reshaping seafarer welfare, training, and safety. Panelists agreed that technology must enhance – not replace – the human element, emphasizing the importance of standardized systems, global training frameworks and inclusive workforce development. They highlighted how innovation can improve operational efficiency and quality of life at sea, provided that stakeholders work together to ensure equitable access to technology, protect seafarers’ wellbeing, and attract a diverse next generation to the maritime profession.

Mr. Konstantinos Petropoulos, General Manager for Structured Finance and Shipping at Piraeus Bank, delivered a presentation titled “The Crystal Ball of Shipping: Trends, Risks, and Opportunities Ahead.” He reflected on the evolving landscape of shipping finance, highlighting how geopolitical fragmentation, regulatory tightening, and the green transition are reshaping the industry’s access to capital. While noting the growing role of Asian lenders and alternative financing models, he emphasized that Greek and Cypriot banks continue to expand their presence, recognizing shipping as a sector of strategic importance. Mr. Petropoulos underlined that the absence of a clear and unified pathway for the green transition creates uncertainty for both shipowners and financiers, but also presents opportunities for growth in sustainable investment. He concluded by stressing that adaptability, transparency, and responsible lending will be key to maintaining financial stability amid continued economic and geopolitical volatility.

The Conference’s final panel, “Funding Strategies for the Next Era of Shipping,” featured **Ms. Christina Margelou**, General Manager and Head of Shipping at Eurobank S.A.; **Mr. Atef Abou Merhi**, Managing Director at Pelagic Partners; **Dr. Loukas N. Barmparis**, President at Safe Bulk, Inc.; and **Mr. Aristides Pittas**, Chairman & CEO at Euroseas Ltd. and EuroDry Ltd., with moderation by **Mr. Alexandros Damianidis**, Partner, Assets & Structured Finance Group at Watson Farley & Williams. The discussion examined how shipowners, lenders, and fund managers are adapting their financing approaches amid tightening regulation, ESG expectations, and market volatility. Speakers agreed that liquidity remains available for well-structured projects but that smaller owners face mounting challenges in meeting compliance and transparency standards. They also pointed to the increasing role of sustainability-linked loans and alternative funding models, as well as the need for flexibility as asset prices, interest rates, and fuel-transition costs continue to shift. The session concluded that resilient partnerships between shipowners, banks and investors will be central to securing the capital required for the industry’s green and digital transformation.

As the Maritime Cyprus 2025 Conference drew to a close, participants reflected on three days of insightful debate, collaboration and knowledge sharing. With more than 1,000 delegates from across the global maritime community, this year’s Conference reaffirmed Cyprus’s position as a trusted voice and international center of excellence for shipping. Speakers and delegates alike emphasized that the

industry's future success will depend on collective action through collaborative innovation and a shared commitment to shaping a sustainable and resilient global maritime sector.

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