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Circular Letter No.5160
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To: All IMO Member States

Subject: **Call for applications to the GreenVoyage2050 Accelerator: Technical assistance for pilot project feasibility studies to reduce GHG emissions from ships**

Overview: GreenVoyage2050 Programme

1 In 2023, MEPC 80 adopted the *IMO Strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships (Resolution MEPC.377(80))*, reaffirming IMO's commitment to reducing GHG emissions from international shipping. The 2023 IMO GHG Strategy includes levels of ambition such as achieving net-zero GHG emissions by or around, i.e. close to, 2050, and a commitment to ensuring the uptake of alternative zero or near-zero GHG emission technologies, fuels, and/or energy sources by 2030.

2 To support the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy, IMO is implementing [GreenVoyage2050](#), a technical cooperation programme that assists developing countries, including small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs), to reduce GHG emissions from shipping. Phase I of GreenVoyage2050 (2020-2023) supported partnering countries in developing policy frameworks and pilot projects to reduce GHG emissions from ships. Phase II of GreenVoyage2050 (2024-2030) continues and expands this support, leveraging substantial funding from its donors (currently Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Norway).

3 Through regular open calls, Member States are invited to express their interest in participating in the GreenVoyage2050 Accelerator and accessing technical assistance for pilot project feasibility studies to support the deployment of innovative zero- or near-zero GHG emission solutions onboard ships and in ports. Selected countries will be invited to join the programme as partner countries. The technical assistance is expected to commence in July 2026 and will be provided over approximately 18 months.

Pilot project feasibility studies to deploy zero- or near-zero GHG emissions solutions

4 Phase I of GreenVoyage2050 identified the absence of robust pilot project proposals as a significant barrier to investment in GHG reduction initiatives. The project preparation process is often extensive and requires substantial time and resources, particularly in developing countries. Recognizing this challenge, GreenVoyage2050 established the GreenVoyage2050 Accelerator to ensure that projects are de-risked and financeable, thereby enhancing their attractiveness to potential investors. By providing technical assistance and support, the GreenVoyage2050 Accelerator seeks to facilitate the development of a pipeline of projects capable of securing the necessary investment.

5 GreenVoyage2050 awards technical assistance for pilot project feasibility studies through an open and competitive process between 2024 and 2028, inviting interested and eligible stakeholders to apply. Given the existing funding limit, GreenVoyage2050 may not be able to fund all proposed projects.

6 From 2026 onwards, pilot project support will be awarded through yearly thematic calls, each focusing on a specific ship type or operational category. This approach enables more focused technical assistance, stronger collaboration among partner countries, and enhanced knowledge exchange.

7 This first thematic call will focus on ferries, including both Ro-Ro passenger (Ro-Pax) ferries and passenger-only ferries. While the feasibility study may examine a single ship in detail, the solution must be scalable to a fleet of at least five passenger ships to ensure broader replication and impact. Future themes will be announced separately.

8 The GreenVoyage2050 Accelerator will not provide direct cash contributions to any stakeholder and will not finance the implementation of the projects at this stage. Instead, it will support pilot project owners by providing tailor-made technical assistance valued at up to \$250,000 for each selected pilot project feasibility study. If the feasibility study yields positive results, it is expected that the pilot project owner will progress towards implementation. IMO will procure technical assistance in accordance with IMO's procurement and contracting manual and associated rules.

Assistance provided by GreenVoyage2050 towards the pilot project feasibility study

9 The technical assistance provided by GreenVoyage2050 for the pilot project feasibility studies is tailored to each country's specific needs and priorities. Throughout the feasibility study, GreenVoyage2050 will provide, inter alia:

- administrative and coordination support to streamline project management and implementation;
- technical guidance and advisory services, including access to lessons learned, methodologies and best practices;
- support for stakeholder dialogues to promote inclusive participation and ensure the necessary data collection;
- facilitation of engagement with financial institutions and development partners to explore funding opportunities for pilot project implementation;
- technical review of draft documentation and evaluation of the outcomes to align with the overall pilot project objectives; and
- coordination with other IMO initiatives and relevant international partners to avoid duplication and leverage synergies.

10 Furthermore, each project will have access to a mentor who will support the pilot project feasibility study and provide advice and feedback at appropriate times during the process. The aim is to provide an additional level of support and guidance rather than to monitor the pilot project's progress.

11 Please note that the assistance provided by GreenVoyage2050 does not include any form of direct cash or financial assistance. Partner countries are expected to contribute in-kind support to facilitate local coordination, stakeholder engagement, and related national activities. This includes, but is not limited to, costs associated with organizing local meetings or workshops, venue hire, catering, interpretation services, printing of materials or domestic travel.

Expectations from prospective partner countries

12 Prospective partner countries are expected to demonstrate a strong commitment to the successful development and future implementation of the pilot project. Specifically, prospective partner countries should:

- commit to completing the feasibility study within 18 months, ensuring the necessary political and technical support, institutional coordination, and national resources are in place;
- designate a national focal point and national coordinator to lead coordination efforts, liaise with the GreenVoyage2050 team, and drive engagement with national stakeholders;
- ensure timely and consistent communication with the GreenVoyage2050 team, including participation in regular coordination meetings and prompt responses to key requests;
- facilitate access to key national data and information required for the feasibility study, such as ship registry data, fleet profiles, port activity and emissions-related data;
- coordinate across all relevant ministries and agencies, and convene inclusive stakeholder consultations involving both public and private actors at technical and operational levels (e.g. port authorities, shipowners, energy providers, academia);
- contribute in-kind support to enable national activities (e.g. meeting venues, interpretation, printing, etc.);
- share experiences and lessons learned with other participating countries as part of GreenVoyage2050's broader knowledge exchange; and
- demonstrate a clear intention to implement the pilot project once finalized, including policies or investment frameworks.

Eligibility entities

13 This support is available only to Member States that are eligible to receive Official Development Assistance (ODA), as defined by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

14 The list of ODA-eligible countries and territories can be found [here](#).

15 Applications are invited from interested government entities (e.g. Ministries, Departments and agencies) and State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). Government entities may be at the national or subnational level (e.g. State Governments, local port authorities, etc.).

16 Private sector companies are not directly eligible. However, they may participate if the proposal is developed jointly with a government entity, in which case the government entity must act as the applicant.

17 Where a pilot project involves multiple countries, the submission should clearly identify all partnering countries. A single country must act as the primary partner for liaison and engagement with the GreenVoyage2050 team. All participating countries must be

ODA-eligible, and the designated lead country will be responsible for submitting the application. For funding purposes, the project will be counted as a single application, and no additional funding will be provided for multi-country proposals.

Eligible pilot projects

18 Pilot project feasibility study proposals must support the deployment of zero- or near-zero GHG-emission technologies, fuels, and/or energy sources. Proposed projects should be realistically implementable if the feasibility study demonstrates positive results.

19 Projects should focus on passenger ships that are state-owned or have significant state ownership. This focus reflects their role as public assets, where investment decisions are often more straightforward, political visibility is high, and successful projects can deliver clear benefits for communities. Passenger ships, including ferries and Ro-Pax vessels, are also particularly well-suited to zero or near-zero solutions due to their fixed routes, predictable schedules, and potential for fleet-wide replication.

20 The feasibility study may examine a single passenger ship in detail as a case study. However, the ship must belong to or be part of a fleet of at least five passenger ships, and the proposed solution must demonstrate clear potential for replication and scaling across the wider fleet. Mixed fleets (e.g. ships of different sizes, ages, or configurations within the same operator) may be considered, provided scaling is feasible. In addition, projects covering regional or corridor-based services operated by different entities may be eligible if supported by the government and designed to deliver replicable solutions across multiple vessels.

21 Examples of eligible pilot project feasibility studies include:

- installation of innovative energy-saving devices on board;
- application of operational efficiency measures;
- hybridization of ships through battery or electric power;
- development of infrastructure for the supply and bunkering of alternative marine fuels (linked to the ships covered by the study); and
- onboard technologies that enable ships to reduce emissions while in port.

22 Projects will not be eligible if they do not have the potential to reduce GHG emissions from ships. For example, initiatives focused solely on port-side measures (e.g. electrification of port cranes) are outside the scope of this call.

23 Pilot projects should introduce innovative aspects within the national or regional context and demonstrate advancements in technology, processes, or integrated systems that contribute to shipping decarbonization. Projects whose primary purpose is solely to meet existing mandatory compliance requirements, without demonstrating broader innovation or decarbonization value, will not be prioritized.

24 Examples of pilot projects previously supported through the GreenVoyage2050 Accelerator can be accessed here: <https://greenvoyage2050.imo.org/greenvoyage2050-accelerator/>

Call for expressions of interest in pilot project feasibility studies

25 Expressions of Interest (EOIs) are invited from Member States that meet the eligibility criteria outlined above. Member States should complete the questionnaire set out in the annex and submit it directly by email.

26 **EOIs must be submitted by official government entities** (e.g. Ministries, Departments, agencies). Submissions from non-government organizations, private sector actors or individuals will **not** be considered.

27 Completed EOIs, along with confirmation of governmental support (preferably from a high-ranking official), should be sent to greenvoyage2050@imo.org. Only applications submitted by official government entities will be considered.

28 The deadline for submission of EOIs is **29 May 2026**. Member States are encouraged to submit their applications as early as possible. Requests for further information or clarification may be directed to greenvoyage2050@imo.org.

29 EOIs should be sent by email to:

Ms. Astrid Dispert
GreenVoyage2050 Manager
Subdivision for Maritime Development
Technical Cooperation and Implementation Division, IMO
greenvoyage2050@imo.org

30 GreenVoyage2050 will acknowledge receipt of all eligible applications following the closure of the submission deadline.

Evaluation and selection of partner countries

31 The selection process will be conducted in three stages:

Stage 1: Review and assessment of all EOIs based on questionnaire responses, overall country commitment to reducing GHG emissions, and demonstrated engagement from national authorities and key stakeholders. GreenVoyage2050 will make every effort to ensure a balanced distribution of support across different geographic regions.

EOIs will be evaluated based on the information provided in the questionnaire, including but not limited to the following criteria:

- deliver significant GHG emissions reductions from ships;
- have a high Technology Readiness Level so that the technology can be readily initiated once the pilot study confirms feasibility;
- be technically sound in conception and presentation;
- commitment to provide in-kind resources to support the pilot;
- capacity to engage in effective (public-private) partnerships and convene key maritime stakeholders; and
- identification of how GreenVoyage2050 can provide targeted support aligned with national priorities.

Stage 2: Shortlisted countries will be contacted for further assessment and discussion of the proposed activities, deliverables and in-kind contributions.

Stage 3: Selected countries will be invited to join the GreenVoyage2050 Programme as partner countries. They will be requested to submit an official letter of commitment, preferably at the Ministerial level, confirming their support for the pilot project feasibility study and implementation process, as well as the provision of in-kind contributions. Countries will be confirmed as a partner country to the GreenVoyage2050 Programme upon receipt of this letter.

ANNEX
QUESTIONNAIRE

Call for applications to the GreenVoyage2050 Accelerator: Technical assistance for pilot project feasibility studies to reduce GHG emissions from ships

Completed questionnaires to be emailed to greenvoyage2050@imo.org

In replying to the questionnaire, please do not exceed the word limit specified for each section.

Section 1: Applicants' Information

Include the information below for all countries involved in the project.

- 1. Country name:**
- 2. Government/State-owned entity name:**
- 3. Official contact person:**
- 4. Position/title:**
- 5. Contact email:**
- 6. Contact phone number:**

Section 2: Fleet Information

- 7. Fleet size:**

[Number of ferries in the fleet covered by the proposed pilot project feasibility study.]

- 8. Fleet composition:**

[Brief description of the fleet, including vessel types (e.g. Ro-Pax ferries, passenger-only ferries), approximate vessel size/capacity, and age profile.]

- 9. Main routes and services:**

[Description of the routes or services operated by the fleet, including whether they are domestic, regional, fixed-route, or corridor-based services.]

- 10. Operational profile:**

[Summary of key operational characteristics, such as service frequency, schedule regularity, turnaround patterns, and seasonal variations, where relevant.]

- 11. Annual fuel consumption:**

[Estimated annual fuel consumption of the fleet.]

12. Annual passenger volumes:

[Estimated annual passenger volumes transported by the fleet.]

13. Ownership and operating structure:

[Description of the ownership and operating arrangements of the fleet, including the role of the government, State-Owned Enterprises, and any other operators involved.]

Section 3: Pilot Project Feasibility Study Overview and Description

14. Pilot project title:

15. Pilot owner: [Name of the entity that will be the owner of the pilot project.]

16. Name of co-partners (if submitted jointly):

17. Project location (City/Port):

18. Summary (max 300 words):

[Provide a brief overview of the pilot project, including any relevant background information, objectives, expected outcomes, and key activities.]

19. Overview of technical assistance expected through the GreenVoyage2050 Accelerator (max 300 words):

[Describe the technical assistance requested from GreenVoyage2050 and how the proposed feasibility study would help advance the pilot project towards implementation.]

Section 4: Pilot Project Feasibility Study Details

20. Alignment with national policies (max 150 words):

[Explain how the project aligns with existing national policies to reduce GHG emissions from ships.]

21. Innovative aspects (max 100 words):

[Highlight any innovative aspects of the pilot project, such as new technologies, processes, or integrated systems.]

22. GHG reduction potential (max 150 words):

[Describe how the pilot project is expected to deliver significant GHG reductions from ships.]

23. Pilot project implementation (max 100 words):

[Describe any plans for implementation of the pilot project if the feasibility study yields positive results. Please indicate how financing may be secured, including whether public funding, concessional finance, private investment, or blended finance may be pursued, and whether any discussions have already taken place with potential funders.]

24. Stakeholder engagement and community impact (max 100 words):

[List any relevant pilot project stakeholders (indicating both those confirmed and unconfirmed) and describe how you will engage with stakeholders and the anticipated impact on the local community.]

25. Diversity, equity, and inclusion (max 100 words):

[Describe any efforts made to ensure inclusivity and equity within the project.]

26. Scalability and replication potential (max 100 words):

[Discuss the potential for replication across the wider fleet and, where relevant, across similar services or operators.]

Applicants are encouraged to provide as much relevant information as possible in responding to the questionnaire. If certain data are not readily available at the time of submission, this should be clearly indicated and, where possible, accompanied by estimates or brief explanations. Applications will not be excluded solely based on incomplete data; however, the completer and more specific the information provided, the better GreenVoyage2050 will be able to assess the proposal.
