REPORT

THIRD PACIFIC REGIONAL ENERGY & TRANSPORT MINISTERS’ MEETING

SIDE-EVENT:
The High Ambition Coalition for Shipping Emissions Reduction

April 27 2017, Fa’onelua Convention Centre, Nukuʻalofa, Tonga

Pacific Leadership Post-Paris
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SUMMARY

The Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF), together with the Republic of Marshall Islands and the Republic of Fiji Islands, organised a Side Event on the High Ambition Coalition for Shipping Emissions Reduction along the margins of the Third Pacific Regional Energy & Transport Ministers’ Meeting organised by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in Nuku’alofa, Tonga. The theme of this year’s meeting was Affordable, Reliable and Sustainable Energy and Transport Services for All.

Moderated by Mr. Albon Ishoda, the Deputy Chief of Mission of the Republic of Marshall Islands Embassy in Suva, Fiji, the objective of the Side Event was to ensure that Pacific Island Transport Ministers and officials had an increased understanding of the science behind the need to reduce maritime shipping emissions in order to successfully attain the 1.5 degrees target set in the Paris Agreement. They were also informed of the work of the High Ambition Coalition within the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and how the Pacific would fit into the overall Roadmap set out by the IMO and the need for a unified Pacific voice.

Addressing these were various well-accredited speakers who are renowned for their work in the field of decarbonising the transport sector. The Program for the Side Event, which includes biographies of all the speakers, is available online as Annex 1 to this report.
It was evident from the lead up meetings that the High Ambition Coalition for Shipping (HAC4S) would receive more regional support.

The Republic of Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands had submitted a paper to the forthcoming MEPC meeting of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) calling on shipping to show high ambition in tackling emissions, in line with Pacific Leaders’ call for no more than 1.5 degrees warming.

The Republic of Marshall Islands also received great support from the Pacific countries on its regional Maritime Sustainable Transport Center (MSTC) and this is the promise of a new area for maritime shipping in the Pacific.

The paper is one of five submissions to the IMO co-sponsored by a number of Pacific countries – Republic of Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Kiribati and Tuvalu – with European and other countries under the banner of the High Ambition Coalition for Shipping.

These Pacific island countries have supported a PIDF Position Paper prepared by Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands, as part of a High Ambition Coalition for Shipping.

The Pacific Position Paper noted that numerous declarations by Pacific Leaders have called for the need to curb global warming and keep within a 1.5 degree Celsius guardrail if the existential threat posed by climate change on their countries is to be combated.

This issue has long been a priority for the PIDF and together with the High Ambition Coalition, it will continue to advocate for urgent action to achieve the 1.5 degree target mentioned in the 2015 Suva Declaration.
PRESENTATION BY CORNIE HUIZENGA, SECRETARY GENERAL, SLOCAT PARTNERSHIP

Topic: The Paris Process on Mobility and Climate (PPMC), Transport in the UN-FCCC (NDCs and SDGs) and International Shipping.

The Secretary General informed the assembled Transport Ministers and officials that “we have come to Tonga to thank the Pacific for your leadership and your inspiration. At Paris you told us that 2 degrees was not enough and the world listened to you then. Now is the time to expand the High Ambition Coalition to address the urgent need to decarbonise transport”.

A copy of Mr. Huizenga’s presentation is available online as Annex 2 to this Report.
PRESENTATION BY BENOIT ADAM AND NICOLAS UDREA, LEADS FOR BELGIUM AND FRANCE IN IMO

Topic: The IMO work plan for reducing shipping emissions; the “High Ambition” Coalition for shipping approach; and the benefits of partnership between Pacific, European countries and the growing consortium of IMO members, including industry working to a common goal.

The presentation that followed was by Mr. Nicolas Udrea and Mr. Benoit Adam, both Lead Negotiators for their respective countries at the IMO.

Their presentation covered those details of the IMO which make it the right institution to address emissions from the global shipping sector.

They also explained the processes which take place at IMO, the journey of the High Ambition Coalition for Shipping and the birth of the Europe-Pacific Partnership on this issue and finally the need to agree on an initial ambition strategy.

A copy of their presentation is available online as Annex 3 to this Report.
Presentation by Tristan Smith, Head of University College London Energy Institute’s Shipping Efficiency and Emission Research Program

Topic: The latest science of shipping emissions and climate change, the options available to the industry and the challenges now faced.

Dr Tristan Smith from University College London (UCL) is one of the world’s leading scientists on this issue. During his presentation, he said, “The science is clear - without immediate and rapid decarbonisation of this major and growing source of GHG, 1.5 degree stabilization goal of the Paris Agreement cannot be aimed for, let alone achieved.” UCL is one of several leading global research centres offering support to the Micronesia Sustainable Transport Center.

A copy of Dr. Smith’s presentation is available online as Annex 4 to this report.
OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE

The Transport Ministers, in Item 9 of the Official Communique from SPC “Acknowledged the commitment of the region to demonstrate leadership in the fight against climate change, as stated in the Majuro Declaration on Climate Leadership” and in item 23, “Acknowledged global efforts to reduce GHG emissions and urged all stakeholders to take appropriate action to progress low-carbon maritime transport in the Pacific Islands region to actively participate in international negotiation”.

A copy of the Official Communique is available online as Annex 5 to this Report.