

Accelerating Inclusive Green Shipping in Africa

IMO–GMN II / MTCC Africa Regional Workshop – Summary

Walvis Bay, Namibia | 11–12 November 2025



1. Background and Purpose

The IMO–EU Global MTCC Network (GMN) Phase II Regional Workshop for Africa, convened by MTCC Africa in Walvis Bay, Namibia, marked a significant milestone in advancing Africa’s maritime decarbonisation agenda. Held under the theme **“Accelerating Inclusive Green Shipping in Africa: Energy Efficiency, Innovation, and Finance for a Low-Carbon Maritime Future,”** the workshop brought together maritime administrations, port authorities, regional and continental institutions, international organisations, development partners, academia, and the private sector.

The GMNII Namibia Regional Workshop focused on the following GMN II objectives:

- a) **Uptake of Energy-Efficient Technologies:** Promote the adoption of energy-efficient and low carbon technologies in ports and on ships, with a case study on Namibia.
- b) **Capacity Building:** Strengthen the capacities of maritime and port authorities, shipping industries, and government representatives for the implementation of energy efficiency measures aligned with the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy.
- c) **Public-Private Partnerships:** Facilitate partnerships that encourage investment and uptake of energy-efficient technologies including access to climate finance and sustainable development funding.
- d) **Gender Inclusivity:** Advance the inclusion of women in the maritime sector, particularly in leadership and technical roles related to energy efficiency and climate action.

The workshop served as a regional platform to translate the IMO 2023 Strategy on the Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships into practical, Africa-specific actions—focusing on implementation readiness, technology uptake, climate finance, and inclusive capacity development.

Namibia, as host and GMN II pilot country, provided a strong contextual setting, showcasing its emerging role as a hub for green ports, digitalisation, and green hydrogen development.

2. Participation and Approach

A total of 81 participants from 31 African countries attended, representing maritime administrations, ports, ministries of transport and energy, development banks, regional organisations, and industry. Participation reflected meaningful progress on gender inclusivity, with 42% women and 58% men, aligned with IMO commitments under SDG 5 (Gender Equality).

The programme combined:

- High-level policy dialogue;
- Technical and finance panels;
- Participatory breakout discussions; and
- A site visit to Namibia's port and green hydrogen facilities in Walvis Bay.

This structure ensured both strategic alignment and practical, implementation-oriented outcomes.

3. Key Results and Messages

3.1. From Policy to Implementation

Participants affirmed that Africa is moving beyond conceptual discussions toward practical pilots and delivery pathways. However, progress remains uneven, with most countries still at early stages of policy formulation and project readiness.

Key findings include:

- **74% of countries** remain in preparatory stages of National Action Plans (NAPs) for maritime GHG reduction.
- **Limited access to finance** was identified as the single most critical barrier to port and fleet decarbonisation.
- Digitalisation and data systems are essential enablers for compliance, transparency, and access to climate finance.

3.2. Launch of the GMN II Namibia Pilot Project (DIGIPORTS)

The workshop formally launched the GMN II Namibia Pilot Project (DIGIPORTS)—a three-year collaboration between MTCC Africa, NAMPORT, the Government of Namibia, and the IMO.

The pilot will:

- Deploy digital tools to improve port operational efficiency;
- Enable emissions monitoring and data-driven decision-making; and
- Serve as a replicable model for other African ports.

3.3. Finance: Closing the Project Readiness Gap

The finance session highlighted a consistent message from development banks and governments: finance is available, but bankable projects are not.

Key conclusions:

- The primary gap lies in upstream project preparation, not capital alone.
- Blended finance, concessional loans, guarantees, and grants are essential for first-of-a-kind maritime projects.
- Regulatory certainty and stable fiscal regimes are the strongest de-risking tools for private investment.

Participants strongly supported the establishment of a Project Preparation Facility (PPF) hosted by MTCC Africa to support feasibility studies, policy anchoring, and investor-ready project design.

3.4. Technology and Infrastructure

Discussions confirmed that:

- Portside energy efficiency and digitalisation offer immediate emissions reductions toward 2030 targets.
- Zero- and near-zero emission fuels (e.g. green ammonia, methanol) will be indispensable for meeting 2040 ambitions.
- Ports must prepare early for alternative fuel handling, safety frameworks, and infrastructure compatibility.

The Namibia site visit validated the **“Green Port Hub”** concept—linking ports, energy production, logistics, and skills development.

3.5. People, Skills, and Gender Inclusion

A major risk identified was the human-capital gap:

- **64% of countries** reported no active programmes for green maritime skills or job creation.
- Scholarships, modernised training centres, and simulator-based learning were prioritised over abstract policy frameworks.

Gender discussions reinforced that inclusion is not symbolic but technical, requiring:

- Care-inclusive budgeting;
- Accessible, multilingual training content; and
- Systematic integration of women into technical pilots, financing, and leadership roles.

4. Cross-Cutting Interventions

The workshop settled on five overarching conclusions:

1. **Implementation is now the priority** – Africa understands the targets; delivery mechanisms must follow.
2. **Project preparation unlocks finance** – feasibility studies and policy certainty are decisive.
3. **Ports are the pivot point** – digitalisation and energy efficiency deliver near-term gains and enable future fuels.
4. **Skills determine success** – infrastructure without trained people will fail.
5. **Inclusivity strengthens outcomes** – gender-responsive and people-centred approaches improve resilience and uptake.

5. Agreed Next Steps

Short Term (2026)

- Operationalise the DIGIPORTS Namibia pilot.
- Support rapid development of National Action Plans (NAPs) for maritime GHG reduction.
- Explore initiation of the MTCC Africa Project Preparation Facility (PPF).
- Launch targeted scholarships and training-of-trainers programmes.

Medium Term (2026–2027)

- Replicate pilot projects in additional African ports.
- Establish the **Regional Industry Alliance (RIA)** to formalise public–private cooperation.
- Deploy digital emissions monitoring systems aligned with IMO frameworks.

Long Term (Beyond 2027)

- Scale alternative fuel readiness and green port infrastructure.
- Integrate maritime decarbonisation into national development and climate finance strategies.
- Build sustainable regional training hubs for green maritime skills.

6. Conclusion

This workshop demonstrated that Africa's maritime decarbonisation transition is no longer theoretical but needs to be practical. With targeted technical assistance, structured project preparation, and inclusive partnerships, the region is positioned to move from pilots to scale, supporting the IMO 2030, 2040, and 2050 climate ambitions while ensuring a just and equitable transition.

MTCC Africa, under the Global MTCC Network Phase II, will continue to act as a regional catalyst, bridging policy, technology, finance, and people to accelerate inclusive green shipping across the continent.