



## **AFRICAN MARITIME LEADERS MEET IN MOMBASA TO SHAPE GREEN SHIPPING FUTURE**

*By Michelle Wanga*

Leaders of the Association of African Maritime Administrations (AAMA) held high-level discussions on the maritime green transition and the Net Zero Framework (NZF) from 9–11 February 2025 in Mombasa, Kenya. The meeting followed the adoption of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Revised Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Strategy in 2023, which calls for the global shipping sector to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by around 2050, with key checkpoints in 2030 and 2040.

About 70 African maritime leaders from 27 countries, alongside representatives from the African Union, gathered in Mombasa to deepen their technical understanding of the NZF and its potential implications for Africa. The aim was to help shape a unified African position ahead of the framework's expected adoption by IMO in October 2026. The meeting was officially launched by Kenya's Special Envoy for Climate Change, Ali Mohamed, and chaired by CPA Omae Nyarandi, Director General of the Kenya Maritime Authority and Chairman of AAMA.

"We are here to turn technical complexity into African leverage. Our discussion will ensure that Africa's participation in global maritime governance is organized, anticipatory, and coherent," said Nyarandi.

"Our responsibility is to ensure that Africa's contribution to these decisions is informed, aligned, and consequential."

Addressing the delegates, Mohamed emphasized the importance of shipping to the continent's economy.

"Shipping is the backbone of African trade. Over 90% of our external trade moves by sea. Any changes to global shipping rules will have direct operational, economic, and regulatory implications for our ports and administrations," he said.

He noted that Africa is among the regions most vulnerable to climate change impacts, highlighting the importance of discussions on the Net Zero Framework. However, he also pointed out that the transition to low-emission shipping systems presents several opportunities for the continent. While the transition to low-emission shipping could create opportunities such as modernized ports, green investment, new fuel industries, and technological development, delegates also raised concerns about high transition costs, limited capacity, and possible disadvantages for African ports in global trade routes.

Mohamed emphasized that Africa's strength in the NZF negotiations lies in shared understanding, technical preparedness, coordinated action, and constructive engagement within the multilateral system, while safeguarding the continent's interests.

During the meeting, African maritime leaders reaffirmed AAMA as the executing continental body for maritime matters in Africa, responsible for coordinating technical maritime administration cooperation and representing Africa in global maritime policy processes.

Delegates also proposed the endorsement of a common African position on the Net Zero Framework that protects the continent from disproportionate negative impacts while promoting equity and climate justice in the global transition. They further recommended that remedial and mitigation measures be incorporated within the IMO transition process to minimize adverse impacts on African economies and trade, while strengthening fairness and practical implementation.

The Net Zero Framework combines mandatory emissions reductions and carbon pricing for international shipping, marking the first global climate regulation aimed at achieving net-zero emissions from the shipping sector by 2050. While the framework represents a major transformation for global shipping, its implications for Africa are significant. The discussions mark an important step in ensuring Africa has a strong and unified voice in shaping the future of global maritime climate policy.