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International Windship Association
www.wind-ship.org

Dear Heads of State and Delegates attending UNFCCC COP28,

The time has come for all industrial sectors to fully grasp the challenges and opportunities of rapidly scaling up the global energy transition and fully delivering on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As UN Secretary-General António Guterres has stated, the SDGs are "woefully off-track halfway towards their 2030 deadline", adding that; "The SDGs aren't just a list of goals. They carry the hopes, dreams, rights and expectations of people everywhere."

For the international shipping industry, a transition to net zero emissions by 2050 requires a step change in the technology solutions and the type of energy sources used. As such, it is currently incorrectly considered to be a 'hard-to-abate' sector.

To meet these decarbonisation challenges in the maritime sector, we, the members of the International Windship Association, an association with over 150 members from across the shipping industry, call on the international community to support a significant scaling up of wind propulsion technology use to advance the decarbonisation of the global shipping fleet.

Wind energy is a clean, abundantly available, zero-emission energy source that is delivered to the point of use without the need for mining, refining, transportation, bunkering infrastructure, or on-board storage.

The use of technology solutions that can harness the power of the wind for use as an unlimited energy source can play a key role in supporting the energy step change in the international shipping industry. The use of wind energy by ships also supports the delivery of the 17 SDG goals, either directly or indirectly, and particularly in those least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDs) where the maritime sector is a fundamental part of the economy.

If wind propulsion technology was systematically rolled out across the fleet in this decade, the technology could save the maritime sector US$1-1.5 trillion in fuel costs by 2050. This would be enough to cover the majority of the cost attributed to decarbonisation while also generating hundreds of thousands of highly skilled jobs. It would also directly remove substantial emissions from an industry that's GHG emissions are equivalent to that of Germany or the entire continent of Latin America. Although wind was considered, until recent years, to be a propulsion method of the past, this energy source is having a resurgence as a 'windfall' opportunity for the present and future.

Currently, only a fraction of global tonnage is moved by ships that can use wind energy, which is almost every ship in the global fleet. There are 31 large ocean-going vessels with wind-assist technology systems installed equalling roughly 2 million deadweight tonnes. There are also 8 wind-ready ships in operation, 22 ships with wind propulsion technology installations pending, and 5 newbuild constructions underway. These ships, in addition to 20+ smaller sail cargo and small cruise vessels using wind represent more wind-powered ships than all large cargo ships currently operating on new low- and zero-emissions fuels in the global shipping fleet of 50,000+ vessels.

But this is not enough, the percentage of wind-ready ships needs to increase, and fast. And the need for wind-powered ships in LDCs and SIDs is urgent.

In support of the COP28 themes, Technology and Innovation, Inclusion, Frontline Communities and Finance, the International Windship Association believes that immediate and lasting impact can be delivered through the following three actions:

- **The funding of an 'SDG Delivery Fleet' of small and medium-sized wind-assist and primary wind ships** that supply very low emission and low-cost maritime transport solutions to regions at greatest risk of climate change impact. This fleet would effectively unplug SIDS and LDC's from fuel-dependent shipping. This would unlock fuel expenditure for use to deliver improvements to health and education provision and other SDGs. This 'SDG Delivery Fleet' would generate a virtuous circle - creating resilience, enhancing trade and serving as an adaptation tool - while at the same time delivering sustainable livelihoods, training and aspirational opportunities to coastal communities. It would help to 'put people at the heart of climate action'.

- **Create a level-playing field for direct, non-commoditised renewable energy sources,** such as wind propulsion, that harness energy without the need to convert or store that energy. Adopting this balanced 'energy-centric' approach in the areas of policy, regulation and finance would ensure that direct and highly valuable energy sources are not sidelined, undervalued and underfunded at a time when the scaling up of energy harvesting from renewable sources that can deliver today is vital, especially considering these renewable energy sources are already available, in abundance, globally at very low cost.

- **Back concrete actions to scale up technologies that harness renewable energy for ships.** In the case of technologies that enable the utilisation of wind energy by ships, this would involve a need for large-scale R&D subsidies, the removal of regulatory barriers and incentivising the building of new ships that are 'wind-ready' on delivery. The underwriting of funding for early installations to de-risk scaling is also necessary.

The International Windship Association applauds the revised 2023 IMO GHG Strategy from the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the UN body that regulates the international shipping industry, that requires a goal of net-zero by or around, i.e., close to, 2050. In the face of accelerating climate emergency, the IMO's interim goal of up to 30% reduction by 2030 is critical. By switching to wind energy, the maritime sector can move faster and more effectively towards net zero by 2050, moving the international shipping industry into a pioneering position in the fight to limit carbon emissions from industrial sectors.

Without the abatement of emissions from the shipping industry, we stand little chance of meeting the climate challenge of keeping global warming below 1.5°C. However, there is good news - the answer is blowin' in the wind.

Gavin Allwright
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International Windship Association (IWSA)
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About the International Windship Association (IWSA):

The International Windship Association (IWSA) facilitates and promotes wind propulsion solutions for commercial shipping worldwide and brings together all parties in the development of a wind ship sector to shape industry and government attitudes and policies. IWSA is a member driven, not-for-profit association made up of wind propulsion technology suppliers and ship development projects, shipping lines, shipbuilders, designers, naval architects, engineers, academics, NGO's, and Class with five main areas of activity:

Network – grouping like-minded organisations and individuals sharing ideas, skills, technical and market information for the development of commercial wind ships.
Promote – promoting the economic value of wind propulsion to the industry
Educate – acting as a central information hub for the wind propulsion sector, ship owners and operators, shipyards, ports, governments, equipment producers, the media, NGOs, and the wider public.
Incubate – securing funding streams, project collaboration, grant applications, research and the pooling of resources.
Facilitate – establishing common approaches/criteria for all stages of project development, support stakeholders, advise and lobby legislative bodies on policies, activities, funding and incentives required to retrofit existing ships and build new commercial wind ships.
As the only industry association for wind-assist and pure wind technology developers and institutions with a commercial interest in wind power, the IWSA has welcomed a huge rise in its membership in the past few years.