



ICC Press Release

Inuit and Small Island States Collaborate with their Many Strong Voices at the IMO

Friday, December 16, 2022 – London UK - This week under its provisional consultative status at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) partnered with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to call for increased ambition to address climate impacts from shipping.

Through relaunching the [Many Strong Voices](#) project, ICC and SIDS stressed the importance of revising the IMO Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction targets to align with the Paris Agreement 1.5-degree goals and addressing black carbon emissions.

‘This week ICC supported a proposal from SIDS to strengthen the IMO’s ambition in cutting climate warming emissions from shipping’, said Lisa Koperqualuk, President, ICC Canada. ‘The disappearance of Arctic sea ice is a critical issue for us. Sea ice is integral to Inuit culture, transportation, harvesting, and economy. Without it, and with it thinning, our way of life is disrupted in a profound way.’

ICC and SIDS also implored IMO member states to regulate black carbon emissions from shipping. Black carbon results from the incomplete combustion of marine fossil fuels like Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) in vessel engines and is emitted from the exhaust stack of a ship. Black Carbon significantly contributes to local warming, landing on surfaces like snow and ice, absorbing sunlight and reducing ice and snow cover.

‘Tonga strongly reiterates the alignment of all International Shipping Policy with a no-more-than 1.5 pathway. This means adopting the highest ambitions and taking earliest possible actions, all the while ensuring an equitable transition’, said John Kautoke, Tonga IMO delegation. ‘Specifically, we need to see 100% reductions in GHG emissions on a well to wake (WtW) basis, an intermediate target in 2040 of 80% reductions which sends strong signals to the sector, and to begin phasing out GHG emissions as soon as possible, and not only by 2030. Fundamentally, 1.5 aligned policies will be the minimum we must do to ensure all countries and communities survive the climate crisis. Our collaboration with the Inuit Circumpolar Council has sought to merge our collective voices as Indigenous climate most vulnerable communities, who are disproportionately impacted by the impacts of climate change, and the damaging effects of black carbon impacting the Arctic.’

Both ICC and SIDS were united in calling for an equitable transition, that includes engagement of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Knowledge, as part of the IMO strategy. ‘Global forums such as the IMO must support a just and equitable transition for the most vulnerable, including Indigenous Peoples’ communities such as in my Inuit homeland,’ said President Koperqualuk. ‘Indigenous Knowledge must be considered and included when assessing impacts, whether from climate change on communities or economic effects from measures to decarbonize the shipping sector. Indigenous Knowledge can bring an important and needed approach to developing lasting solutions.’

The Many Strong Voices initiative promotes the well-being, security, and sustainability of coastal communities in the Arctic and SIDS, by bringing these regions together to call for action on climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to tell their stories to the world. Inuit share many of the same challenges with the Indigenous Peoples and other citizens of SIDS. These include a dependence on the global shipping fleet for re-supply, economic development, and transportation. Shipping is critical infrastructure and ensuring that it is sustainable is a shared concern.

Contact:

Tukumminnguaq Olsen
ICC (Greenland and Chairs office)
tukumminnguaq@inuit.org

Melodie Lavallée
ICC (Canada)
mlavallee@inuitcircumpolar.com

Eilene Adams
ICC (Alaska)
eilene@iccalaska.org

Founded in 1977 by the late Eben Hopson of Sr. of Utqiagvik (formerly Barrow), Alaska, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) has flourished and grown into a major international non-governmental organization representing approximately 180,000 Inuit of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka (Russia). ICC works to promote Inuit rights, safeguard the Arctic environment, and protect and promote the Inuit way of life.