



SEMAPHORE

Newsletter of the Maritime Law

Association of Australia and New Zealand



Definitive “Green Corridor” Action Awaited

Maritime sector stakeholders on both sides of the Tasman Sea and further afield will be awaiting definitive direction from the Australian and New Zealand Governments, following their respective signings to the [Clydebank Declaration](#).

The two countries joined 20 others at COP26 in signing the Declaration, which supports “the establishment of green shipping corridors – zero-emission maritime routes – between two (or more) ports”.

Signatories have pledged to:

- facilitate the establishment of partnerships, with participation from ports, operators and others along the value chain, to accelerate the decarbonisation of the shipping sector and its fuel supply through green shipping corridor projects
- identify and explore actions to address barriers to the formation of green corridors – this could cover, for example, regulatory frameworks, incentives, information sharing or infrastructure
- consider the inclusion of provisions for green corridors in the development or review of national action plans
- work to ensure that wider consideration is taken for environmental impacts and sustainability when pursuing green shipping corridors

On his side of the Tasman, Te Manatū Waka Ministry of Transport environment, emissions and adaptation manager Ewan Delany told Semaphore his agency and Maritime New Zealand had embarked on the process.

“One of the first steps ... is to identify key trading partners and other signatories interested in establishing green shipping corridors,” he says.



Te Manatū Waka Ministry of Transport environment, emissions and adaptation manager Ewan Delany

Mr Delany says supporting the initiative aligns with New Zealand’s “high-ambition agenda on climate change matters” and the existing Cabinet mandate for International Maritime Organization (IMO) negotiations.

Other reasons highlighted for becoming a signatory from a New Zealand context included:

- pursuing green shipping lanes will complement existing work at the IMO to reduce emissions from shipping
- it provides a frame through which the zero carbon transport links to Pacific states could be addressed
- decarbonising maritime transport is closely linked to maintaining supply chain resilience

- moving to carbon-neutral is increasingly part of New Zealand's export brand, in how the country's goods are produced and transported

"The Clydebank Declaration also complements the maritime initiatives included in the Emissions Reduction Plan consultation document."

While no specific timeframes have been set to introduce green shipping lanes, Mr Delany says the initiative will complement his country's Emissions Reduction Plan consultation document, which aims to work towards net zero-carbon shipping on key trade routes by 2035.

"At this stage we expect the advantages of using zero carbon pathways to drive change in line with technological availability.

"There are no legally-binding obligations from joining the Clydebank Declaration. Rather it would allow New Zealand to work bilaterally with our trade partners toward establishing 'green' shipping lanes that are specific to our circumstances."

He notes that the IMO is also progressing work on market-based measures, "meaning that some form of carbon pricing for shipping is likely in the future".

"Given New Zealand's distance from markets, we could be disadvantaged by the costs of these measures in the future. Establishing green shipping corridors now will help increase the resilience of our supply chain.

"Pacific resilience is also New Zealand-dependant. There is also an opportunity for us to work with the Pacific on green shipping lanes to mitigate the costs of any future carbon pricing impacts."

March 2022

Will Shipping get in Line with Global Climate Goals?

McElroys senior associate Stacey Fraser penned this [article](#) in December in which she observed that the Clydebank Declaration was "ambitious, but it needs to be".

"What is less clear is whether IMO will match that ambition," wrote Ms Fraser.

"If it does not, it needs to get out of the way and ensure that international regulations do not impede the level of action required to bring shipping into line with global climate goals."

