

Shipping is critical for the global economy. Without it, international trade and the import/export of food and other essential goods would not be possible. However, the shipping industry has significant impacts on the climate and biodiversity. It is now more important than ever to embrace sustainable shipping solutions.

Sustainable shipping solutions can help prevent or reduce many environmental and social impacts of shipping, such as marine mammal strikes, noise disturbance, and pollution of the air and water. These solutions can also protect marine resources that Indigenous peoples and local communities have stewarded over many generations. Efforts to prevent or mitigate these impacts can be accelerated by working with industry to scale standards through voluntary adoption and corporate leadership, as well as through regulatory and legislative reform and innovative blue financial solutions.

To accelerate adoption of sustainable policy solutions in the shipping sector and drive transformational change, we aim to influence three key sectors of the industry: shipping companies, financial institutions, and policy makers. WWF believes that actionable, science-driven change across the industry is necessary to achieve a nature-positive future for the oceans, from the industry leaders to the policy followers.

Company Engagement

WWF works with shipping companies to promote sustainable shipping policies that move the industry along the mitigation hierarchy. This includes protecting local and regional wildlife, reducing water and air pollution, and implementing innovative technologies. Our corporate partners also advocate for ambitious policy changes within industry associations or in key industry forums such as the International Maritime Organization.

Policy Reform

WWF participates in important international maritime policy forums, such as the International Maritime Organization and the Arctic Council. WWF is focused on advancing ambitious policy positions in the areas of decarbonization, biodiversity, water/air pollution, and wildlife protection. This is achieved through collaborative efforts with forward-thinking Member States, other environmental NGOs, and corporate partners involved in thought leadership. By working together, WWF aims to advance policies more effectively.

Blue Finance

WWF collaborates with financial institutions to integrate environmental and social criteria into lending, investment, and insurance policies and processes. Connecting access to capital and insurance costs to effective management of environmental risks and impacts will encourage the shipping industry as a whole to address its environmental impacts in order to maintain financial competitiveness in the market.

Seascape Solutions

WWF-US' priority focus is on the Arctic seascape to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change and the increasing effects of shipping in the region. The decreasing levels of sea ice in the region have led to a rise in shipping traffic, which further emphasizes the need for policies to mitigate impacts on local wildlife and Indigenous peoples who depend on the land and water to support their way of life.

The Eastern Pacific seascape is a secondary regional focus for shipping work. The region is a globally important center for tourism and biodiversity, including key migratory corridors and the Galapagos archipelago. WWF aims to implement vessel traffic management measures, such as Blue Corridors, to mitigate ship impacts on marine mammals, including ship strikes and underwater noise pollution. WWF will also work on implementing new measures to reduce the impacts of shipping on the Galapagos Archipelago from water and air pollution.

