

## The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sustainable Maritime Industry Conference – SMIC2025 Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – 3-4 September 2025

### Public Relations and Outreach.

#### Task 1.3.1

Promote the IHO through publicity and public relations initiatives.

#### High level summary

- The conference served as an exceptional platform for distinguished decision-makers, including ministers, ambassadors, and leading figures from the maritime sector worldwide, to advance the dialogue on sustainability and innovation within maritime industries.
- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia emphasized its commitment to regional leadership, expressing a forward-looking vision for its role as a global logistics hub. This included a focus on sustainable port development and the stewardship of the marine environment, all directed toward fostering a resilient and prosperous regional blue economy.
- The strategic importance of the IHO S-100 standard was underscored for its capacity to support the integration of digitalization, automation and cybersecurity in the maritime domain. S-100 was presented not only as a provider of static data but as a comprehensive, dynamic framework that enables interoperability, incorporating depth and time dimensions, and facilitates real-time positioning—thus offering essential contextual information for safe and efficient navigation.

#### Details:

At the invitation of the Transport General Authority (TGA) in Saudi Arabia, the IHO Secretariat, represented by Director Luigi Sinapi, attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sustainable Maritime Industry Conference (SMIC2025) under the theme “*Sailing Toward a Sustainable Future*”, held at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Jeddah on 3–4 September 2025. The event welcomed delegates from 60 countries, 15 Ministers, Ambassadors accredited to the Kingdom, and representatives from major international and inter-governmental organizations including the IMO, IHO, IALA, among others. The conference also featured an extensive exhibition showcasing government agencies, academic institutions, and the maritime industry.



SMIC2025 – Opening & Ministerial Session

The Conference commenced with remarks from H.E. Eng. Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser, Minister of Transport and Logistics Services and Chairman of the Board, Transport General Authority (TGA). In his address, he underscored the significance of convening esteemed leaders and visionaries from across the globe to collectively advance the adoption of innovative maritime technologies, enhance professional capabilities, reinforce international leadership within the sector, and promote fruitful collaboration among maritime stakeholders worldwide.

The conference's agenda emphasized the adoption of advanced maritime technologies, the development of expertise and skills within the sector, and the strengthening of the maritime industry's global leadership. It also served as a vital forum for fostering international cooperation. These themes were explored throughout the event—from the Opening Ceremony and Ministerial Session to the Leadership Perspectives panel on the maritime sector's sustainable future, as well as four Thematic Panels focusing on: Theme 1 - *Energy Efficiency in Shipping and emission reduction strategies*; Theme 2 - *Maritime Insurance and Finance*; Theme 3 - *Maritime Digitalization, Automation, and Cybersecurity*; and Theme 4 - *Seafarers' roles in steering toward a sustainable future*. Additionally, various workshops provided further opportunities for in-depth discussion and collaboration.

On 4 September, IHO Director Sinapi participated as a keynote speaker and panelist in Thematic Panel 3, which was dedicated to Maritime Digitalization, Automation, and Cybersecurity. The Panel provided a detailed exposition of the IHO's institutional objectives and the operational significance of its technical standards, particularly S-100, in the context of digital transformation within the maritime domain. The IHO Director emphasized that S-100 is fundamental in establishing a comprehensive maritime digital ecosystem, enabling the seamless exchange of authenticated data among vessels, ports, coastal states, and international organizations in real time. This facilitates the integration of automation, smart shipping, and enhanced maritime safety. However, he cautioned that such advancements are contingent upon robust and resilient digital infrastructure, noting that effective digitalization is critically dependent on the systematic incorporation of cybersecurity protocols to address emergent cyber threats.



SMIC2025 – Theme 3 - Maritime Digitalization, Automation, and Cybersecurity

Key discussion points in Thematic Panel 3 included:

- Deployment strategies and immediate challenges associated with implementing S-100 in Saudi Arabia and the broader ROPME region;
- Alignment of emerging navigation and communication technologies with S-100 to advance maritime safety, operational efficiency, and environmental sustainability;

- The role of smart ports and their impact on transparency, efficiency, and supply chain resilience, specifically within the ROPME region;
- Technical and operational considerations in scaling digital navigation and communications solutions;
- The utility of digital tools in empowering seafarers to adopt sustainable operational practices;
- Alignment of digitalization initiatives with IMO 2030 and 2050 environmental objectives;
- The integration of artificial intelligence and digital twin technologies with the S-100 standard to support decarbonization and meet regulatory targets;
- The contribution of S-100 to environmental protection and sustainable development in the ROPME region;
- Saudi Arabia's leadership in pioneering technological advancements for the future of the shipping industry.

On the afternoon of 4<sup>th</sup> September, at the invitation of the President of Saudi Ports Authority – Mawani, IHO Director had a working meeting with the President of Mawani - Dr. Suliman Khalid AlMazroua and his staff, to discuss of the role of smart ports and their impact on transparency, efficiency, and supply chain resilience, and the contribution of the IHO S-100 standard to environmental protection and sustainable development specifically within the ROPME region.

Thematic Panel 4 concentrated on the evolving roles of seafarers and the critical importance of women's leadership in driving maritime innovation and sustainability. Discussions underscored the imperative to expand female participation across maritime professions, promote women to leadership roles, and instigate a cultural transformation within the industry to accelerate progress toward gender parity.

The Conference's concluding session synthesized the core themes:

- Advancing sustainability;
- Strengthening multi-lateral collaboration;
- Promoting the digitalization and automation of green ports;
- Accelerating adoption of renewable energy solutions to mitigate environmental impact; and,
- Increasing investment in specialized training and certification programs to expedite industry decarbonization.