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Shipping will need to do more to meet GHG targets

The American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) has published the latest trends and projections on carbon reduction strategies for shipping as the industry looks to meet decarbonisation ambitions.

Setting the Course to Low Carbon Shipping examines new fuels, technologies and operational measures and matches that with forecasts for the world's key trade lanes to envision what shipping may look like in 2030 and 2050.

The second of two 'Outlook' documents – the first was published in June 2019 – it applies what ABS currently knows about existing and future fuels to project which energy source could be best suited for each trade lane and what that may mean for the design of the vessels working them.

"Maritime's decarbonisation challenge can be regarded as a complex riddle with three elements: vessel energy efficient technologies, operational optimization and low and zero carbon or carbon neutral fuels," said Christopher J Wiernicki, ABS chairman, president and CEO.

"All elements have a role to play, but we have identified that the rate of shipping's transition to lower carbon fuels will have the single biggest

impact on its global carbon footprint; more than any predictable shifts in commodity demand, enhancements to operating practices, vessel routings, or ship designs. The models in our research suggest our industry will meet the targets for the reduction in carbon intensity by 2050, but it might miss the target for the total GHG emitted annually. In short, there is a gap between the industry's present course, and its stated ambition."

The Outlook's approach was supported by Maersk. Palle B Laursen, Maersk chief technical officer, said: "In Maersk, we have for more than a decade been industry leaders in CO2 efficiency, and we have set ourselves the bold target of becoming carbon neutral by 2050. To bring this ambition to life, we need to bring the first commercially viable carbon neutral vessel into operation by 2030 already, which can only happen if we work together across the industry and supply chain, which is why the research from ABS on decarbonisation pathways and what shipping may look like in the future is well timed. The study is thorough and comprehensive, and links the task



An artist's impression of a next generation, low carbon tanker.

ahead with practical steps of implementation."

ABS collaborated with Maritime Strategies International (MSI) to create a global scenario for the future CO2 emissions from shipping, which takes into account the future variation of fuels used in vessels, as well as the decarbonisation of different industrial sectors on which shipping depends.

Research in the Outlook suggests that, on the current trajectory, petroleum-based fuels will still have considerable market share by 2050, which has significant implications for meeting the emissions challenge.

Setting the Course to Low Carbon Shipping can be downloaded from www2.eagle.org

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