

NEWSLETTER

#3 April 2025 - September 2025



Underwater Radiated Noise at the UN Ocean Conference 2025

On 11 June in Nice, IMO together with Costa Rica, France, South Africa, FAO and UNDP co-hosted a side event titled “Sustainable Shipping: Our Ocean, Our Obligation, Our Opportunity.” The session highlighted three priority areas for ocean protection: marine plastic litter from sea-based sources, invasive aquatic species through biofouling and ballast water, and underwater radiated noise (URN) from shipping.

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez opened the event and underlined the need for inclusive, science-based cooperation that turns commitments into measurable results.

The panel included Ms Mbalenhle Golding, Acting Chief Executive Officer of the South African Maritime Safety Authority, as a representative of South Africa, one of the Lead Pilot Countries. Ms Golding outlined the socioecological impacts of URN in South Africa and noted progress supported by capacity development under the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloNoise Partnership.

SUSTAINABLE SHIPPING:

OUR  OCEAN

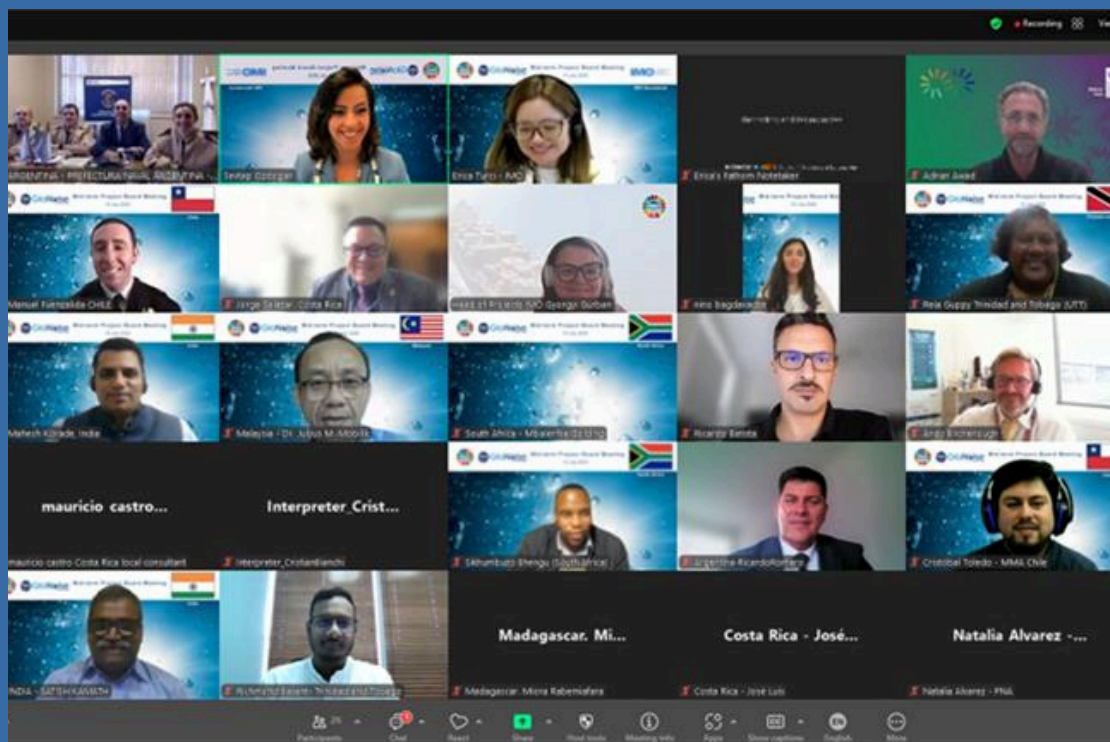
OUR  OBLIGATION

OUR  OPPORTUNITY

High Ambition Coalition for a Quiet Ocean

Building on the momentum from UN Ocean Conference 2025, the High Ambition Coalition for a Quiet Ocean was launched by thirty-seven countries, led by Panama and Canada, and includes Chile and Costa Rica. Founded on the principle of “For a Quiet Ocean,” the coalition brings together countries committed to reduce URN, being one of the commitments “Supporting capacity-building to assess and reduce ocean noise by sharing available tools and knowledge, including those tools currently being developed by the IMO’s GloNoise Partnership”. The launch marked a significant moment for international cooperation on a critical, yet often overlooked, pressure on marine ecosystems.

GloNoise Partnership: Extension to December 2026 endorsed in Mid-term Project Board meeting



On 15 July, the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloNoise Partnership held its Mid-term Project Board meeting, bringing together thirty-four representatives from nine beneficiary countries, UNDP and the IMO Secretariat to review progress, the work plan and the budget. The Board endorsed an extension of the initiative until December 2026 to sustain global efforts to reduce URN from ships.

Lead Pilot Countries (LPCs) presented national advances in stakeholder engagement, acoustic research, inter institutional coordination and awareness raising, reflecting steady capacity development across the Partnership.

The Board also provisionally approved the updated annual work plan and budget, along with a strong consensus on the importance of long-term sustainability of the project focused on capacity development.

“Este proyecto piloto [GloNoise] es una herramienta clave que permite traducir la cooperación internacional en acciones concretas, generando un punto de partida para formular políticas, establecer normativas y atraer financiamiento adicional.”

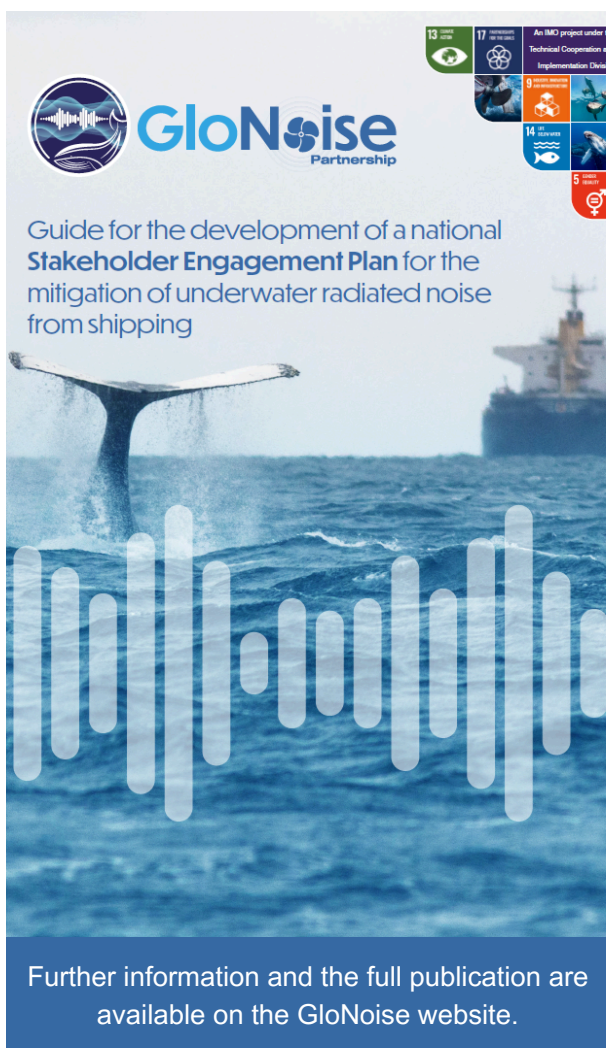
“This pilot project is a key instrument for transforming international cooperation into concrete action, laying the groundwork for policy development, regulatory frameworks and additional funding opportunities,” said Mr Leonardo Javier Filomatori, National Focal point in Argentina.

Global toolkit for URN risk assessment in development

Development of the URN Risk Assessment Toolkit under the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloNoise Partnership commenced in September 2025. The Toolkit will provide administrations and stakeholders with practical resources for baseline information gathering, risk and impact assessment, and planning for mitigation of underwater radiated noise from shipping.

The design is anchored in the Revised Guidelines for the Reduction of Underwater Noise from Commercial Shipping and supports ongoing awareness and capacity building under IMO activities. LPCs are expected to use and adapt the Toolkit during implementation, to share best practices with IMO to conduct their environmental risk and impact assessments and promote regional exchange. The project's extension to December 2026 provides time for training, testing and capacity development.

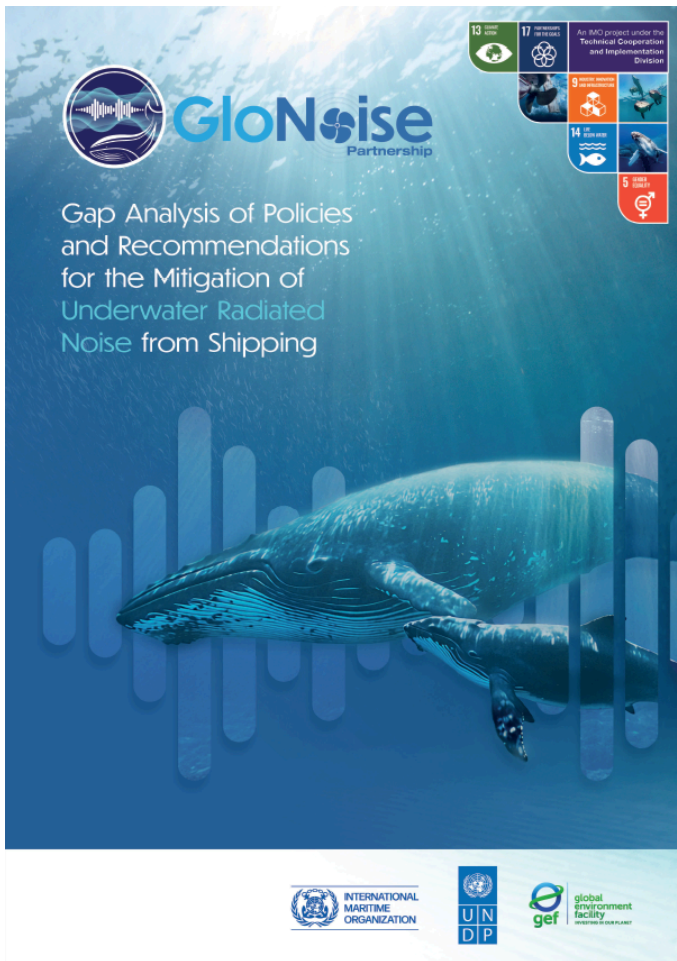
Stakeholder engagement guide published and national stakeholder engagement plans completed in the six Lead Pilot Countries



The GloNoise Partnership has released the *Guide for the development of a national stakeholder engagement plan for the mitigation of underwater radiated noise from shipping*. The publication offers a practical, step by step process that any Member State can use to design and implement a national plan as an early step toward measures to reduce URN from ships. The Guide aligns with the Revised IMO Guidelines for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from commercial shipping and reflects the Global Environment Facility Stakeholder Engagement Policy, promoting inclusive, transparent and results oriented approaches.

The stakeholder engagement plans have also been completed in the six LPCs of the project, providing a foundation for coordinated national action and knowledge sharing across administrations, ports, industry, research institutions and communities.

Practical tools in the Guide include a stakeholder identification questionnaire, profiling and tracking templates, and options to establish national task forces or thematic committees. A case example highlights how structured collaboration, such as Canada's ECHO Programme, has supported measurable noise reductions in key habitats.



Policy analysis and options to reduce URN

The GEF-UNDP-IMO GloNoise Partnership has now published the *Gap Analysis of Policies and Recommendations for the Mitigation of Underwater Radiated Noise from Shipping*. As previewed in Newsletter 2, the study examines how underwater radiated noise from ships is addressed across international, regional and national frameworks, and sets out practical policy options to support coherent action by administrations.

Read it on the GloNoise website: <https://glonoise.imo.org/documents/2521>

GloNoise welcomes new strategic partners

GloNoise Partnership has welcomed new strategic partners to strengthen collaboration on mitigating URN from shipping. Strategic partners contribute technical expertise, pilot experience and platforms for knowledge sharing across administrations, industry, academia and civil society.

These new partners will help scale awareness and capacity building, and support the application of the Revised IMO Guidelines on URN in real world settings.

Here are the current GloNoise strategic partners:



GloNoise Partnership Participates in LME 24 in Athens



The GloNoise Partnership, alongside the GloFouling Partnerships, proudly participated in the 24th Annual Consultative Meeting on Large Marine Ecosystems and Coastal Partners (#LME24), held from 14-16 May 2025 in Athens, Greece.

This year's theme, "Thirty Years of LME Collaboration: Advancing Policy Coherence and Integration," brought together a wide range of experts, including leaders in coastal management, marine science, and biodiversity conservation from national governments, as well as the private and public sectors. The event was a testament to a shared commitment to advancing ecosystem-based management (EBM) and strengthening ocean governance.

Key discussions at the meeting focused on several critical areas, including strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration to support SDG 14, mainstreaming the LME concept through integrated approaches like Source-to-Sea (S2S) and Sustainable Ocean Plans (SOPs), enhancing policy coherence, and sharing regional achievements and innovative tools for marine and coastal sustainability.

For the GloNoise Partnership, this marked its first time participating in an LME consultation meeting. During Session 7, focused on Science Generation, Uptake, and Communication, GloNoise Project Manager Sevtap Ozdogan delivered a presentation on the partnership's efforts. The presentation highlighted the project's work in mapping and translating scientific initiatives to raise awareness, develop URN baselines, and inform future policymaking.

This inaugural presence at LME 24 served as a foundation for future collaboration and policy alignment. The insights gained from the discussions will be instrumental in informing the partnership's ongoing efforts to raise awareness, develop URN baselines, and contribute to global ocean governance. This engagement reinforces the GloNoise Partnership's commitment to strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration and advancing sustainable marine management.

IMO Technical Cooperation Committee 75 Focuses on URN within Broader Dialogue



From June 2–6, 2025, the 75th session of the IMO Technical Cooperation Committee (TC 75) was held in London, bringing together Member States, partners, and international experts to strengthen cooperation across the key areas of Safety, Environment, Security, and Facilitation. As part of this high-level dialogue, the GloNoise Partnership was honoured to participate in the Thematic Exchange Day on June 5, 2025. The Partnership highlighted its support for global efforts by helping Member States establish URN baselines, providing tools and knowledge to integrate URN into mitigation efforts, and partnering across sectors to promote ocean sound as a core sustainability metric.

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IMO INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

**THEMATIC EXCHANGE DAY:
FROM INSIGHTS TO
IMPACTFUL ACTION**

Join us for an in-depth exploration of how IMO's Projects and Programmes can effectively support Member States.

Thursday 5 June 2025, Time: 8.30 AM to 5.30 PM
at IMO Headquarters, London.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DAY

- Gain insights into technical cooperation needs and gaps across four core themes: **Safety, Environment, Security and Facilitation**.
- Engage in dialogue around real-world successes and challenges in the implementation of technical cooperation initiatives.
- Connect and exchange ideas through dynamic sessions, exhibits, and interactive discussions in an informal setting.
- Explore the interactive exhibition space to learn about initiatives shaping the future of maritime development, innovation, and sustainability.

LUNCH AND COCKTAIL RECEPTION WILL BE HOSTED BY THE IMO SECRETARIAT

**THURSDAY 5 JUNE
8:30 AM - 5:30 PM**

IMO Technical Cooperation Committee 75 Focuses on URN within Broader Dialogue (continued)

During the event, South Africa, a Lead Pilot Country in the GloNoise Partnership, played a leading role by presenting the outcomes of its recent workshop on URN awareness and stakeholder engagement. The submission, co-sponsored by Chile, Costa Rica, France, Georgia, Iran, Madagascar, Malaysia, Namibia, Peru, and Türkiye, was documented as TC 75/4/3 and received strong support from a diverse group of Member States. The presentation highlighted South Africa's crucial role and was presented under the agenda item on resource mobilization and partnerships.

The Thematic Exchange Day served to strengthen the call to action for the international community, urging support for URN policy development and research in developing countries, the integration of URN mitigation into broader maritime sustainability initiatives, and the expansion of the GloNoise Project to more pilot countries in the Global South.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia co-finances GloNoise Partnership and NextWave Seafarers



IMO has signed an agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for co-financing of the GEF-UNDP-IMO GloNoise Partnership and for support to the NextWave Seafarers project.

The agreement was signed on 30th July 2025 by Dr Jose Matheickal, Director of IMO's Technical Cooperation and Implementation Division, and Eng Kamal Al Junaidi, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to IMO.

This contribution will strengthen collective efforts to address URN from shipping, including the development of technical and knowledge sharing tools under the GloNoise Partnership. It will also support activities that build skills and opportunities for seafarers through NextWave Seafarers.

MEPC 83 signals growing global commitment to mitigate URN

The 83rd session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 83), held from April 7–11, 2025, saw significant progress in addressing URN and its environmental impact. Discussions during the session highlighted a growing global commitment to mitigating URN.

There was strong support for the Experience Building Phase (EBP) and the Correspondence Group, with appreciation expressed to all contributors. Lead Member States of the project shared their achievements and encouraged the expansion of the initiative to other states.

Further highlights from the discussions included:

- Scientific contributions and technical insights on balancing URN reduction with energy efficiency.
- International and regional studies that project URN trends.
- Innovative real-time tools that can assist with both URN reduction and energy efficiency.
- Concerns were raised about URN's impacts on marine biodiversity in sensitive ecosystems like the Arctic and Black Sea, stressing the cumulative effects of different pollution types and supporting ecosystem-based approaches.

Looking ahead, all relevant papers will be submitted to the SDC sub-committee and the URN correspondence group for further consideration. The IMO will also organize a second URN Workshop in November 2025, which will focus on the link between energy efficiency and URN. Global collaboration remains essential for a sustainable maritime future.

Workshop on URN held in Argentina



Following the regular coordination meetings on URN in Argentina, a workshop took place on June 25, 2025. It included 30 representatives from various governmental, academic, and private sector organizations and was structured around two round-table discussions: the Hydroacoustic Research Group and the Ship Design Group.

The Hydroacoustic Research Group focused on priority work lines, agreeing to conduct studies in the Bahía Blanca and Puerto Madryn areas. They also proposed incorporating new strategic areas like the San Matías Gulf, which has sensitive marine ecosystems and intense nautical activity. A key objective is to create an underwater noise map by integrating acoustic propagation models with maritime traffic data from the institutional Coast Guard System.

The Ship Design Group brought together academic, professional, and business leaders from organizations like the National Technological University (UTN), the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), Navios, Rousseaux SRL, and the Tandanor shipyard. The discussion covered topics such as propeller cavitation, propulsion efficiency, soundproofing machinery spaces, and optimizing hull design. Academic contributions were highlighted, with institutions offering access to their testing laboratories, experience channels, cavitation tunnels, and specialized calculation tools.

The workshop concluded with a commitment from the technical teams to continue working together to achieve the set goals for more sustainable navigation that respects the marine environment. Sevtap Ozdogan, the project coordinator from the IMO, participated virtually, thanking attendees and reiterating the IMO's commitment to providing technical support.

Workshop on URN in Costa Rica

Costa Rica held a National Workshop on Awareness and Stakeholder Participation for the Reduction of URN. Hosted by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport in San José on May 2, 2025, the event brought together representatives from government agencies, port authorities, universities, fisheries, and NGOs.

As one of six beneficiary countries in the GloNoise Partnership, Costa Rica's strategic location bordering two Large Marine Ecosystems - the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Central American Coastal LME - positions it to be a regional leader in URN mitigation.



Highlights from the Workshop:

- A national task force should be updated to coordinate URN mitigation, with scientific leadership from academia.
- Acoustic data from national initiatives like ONDAS should be analyzed through collaborative frameworks with academic and government institutions.
- All national waters are ecologically significant, suggesting a holistic national approach is essential, with special consideration for Cocos Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Existing tools like HearMyShip and initiatives like Innocena can be leveraged to boost public engagement and inform real-time action.
- Marine governance can be strengthened through platforms such as the National Marine Commission, enabling coordinated, multisectoral implementation.
- Targeted training for seafarers, fishers, and industry actors will be essential to drive inclusive change.

Costa Rica is not only shaping its national agenda but is also well-positioned to act as a regional data hub and policy leader, fostering collaboration with neighbouring countries like Panama, Colombia, and Ecuador.

GloNoise Partnership featured in ECOSOC Report



The GloNoise Partnership is continuing to gain international recognition and has been featured in the 2025 ECOSOC Partnership Forum Impact Report under SDG 14: Life Below Water. This follows its earlier feature in the UN DESA Partnership Snapshot in February, reinforcing the growing global awareness of Underwater Radiated Noise (URN) as a critical issue for ocean health.

As highlighted in the report by Lt. Commander Manuel Fuenzalida of the Chilean Navy, "GloNoise has been a powerful and impactful tool to raise awareness for the critical issue of underwater radiated noise at national, regional, and global levels..."

With Chile as a pilot country, the partnership is actively turning knowledge into action through national workshops, cross-sector collaboration, and direct contributions to ongoing IMO discussions on URN mitigation.

For more information, you can explore the ECOSOC Impact Report here: https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-04/IMPACT%20REPORT%20-%202025%20ECOSOC%20Partnership%20Forum._1.pdf

South Africa at UNOC3: Advancing Global Action on URN



South Africa participated in the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in Nice, France, from June 9–13, 2025. During the conference, South Africa, as a lead pilot country of the GloNoise Partnership, was involved in various engagements and technical side events focused on addressing emerging ocean threats, particularly URN.

On June 10, the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) contributed to a technical session titled "Confronting Underwater Radiated Noise (URN) for Healthier Oceans." In this session, South Africa shared information about its national baseline assessment, the deployment of hydrophones, and efforts to conduct the first National Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on URN. The country also highlighted its research partnerships and its twinning relationship with Madagascar.

On June 11, the acting CEO of SAMSA, Ms. Mbalenhle Golding, spoke at an IMO-led official side event "Sustainable Shipping: Our Ocean, Our Obligation, Our Opportunity." Her address drew attention to URN as a critical issue for coastal nations.

A key announcement is that the draft URN Regulations were officially published for public comment under the National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act.

South Africa's participation in UNOC3 contributed to the recognition of URN as a strategic issue for developing countries and highlighted the IMO GloNoise Partnership Project as a model for integrated science-policy-action frameworks.

New URN Commitment in Chile

Chile has reaffirmed its commitment to the reduction URN from commercial shipping. The Government of Chile, through its Maritime Authority (DIRECTEMAR), made the announcement at the 10th Our Ocean Conference in Busan, Korea.

This commitment, made as a Lead Pilot Country in the GEF-UNDP-GloNoise Partnership, aims to address the adverse impacts of URN on marine life.

More information can be found at:

<https://wordpress.ouroceanconference.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/OOC-2025-List-of-Commitments-1.pdf>

Chilean seminar explores research and management of URN and its effects on marine systems



A technical-advanced seminar titled "URN and its Effects on Marine Systems: Research and Management" was held on April 28-29 at the University of Concepción in Concepción, Chile. The seminar was organized by the Department of Oceanography at the University of Concepción, the Center for Oceanography and Coastal Systems, and the National Oceanographic Committee's Working Group on Aquatic Environment Pollution.

The main goal of the seminar was to analyse the effects of anthropogenic noise on marine systems and to discuss strategies for its research, applicable legislation, and management strategies to avoid its effects on the marine environment. The seminar aimed to explore potential solutions and the effects of underwater noise on marine life.

More information can be found in the YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pf3gLbAPArQ>

National Workshop on URN in Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago hosted a national workshop in Port of Spain on April 29, 2025 that brought together more than sixty participants, with women representing over half of those in attendance. The workshop featured experts from various organizations, including the IMO and NOAA, who shared insights on the impact of URN on marine life, its relationship to ship energy efficiency, and mitigation strategies based on the IMO Revised Guidelines.

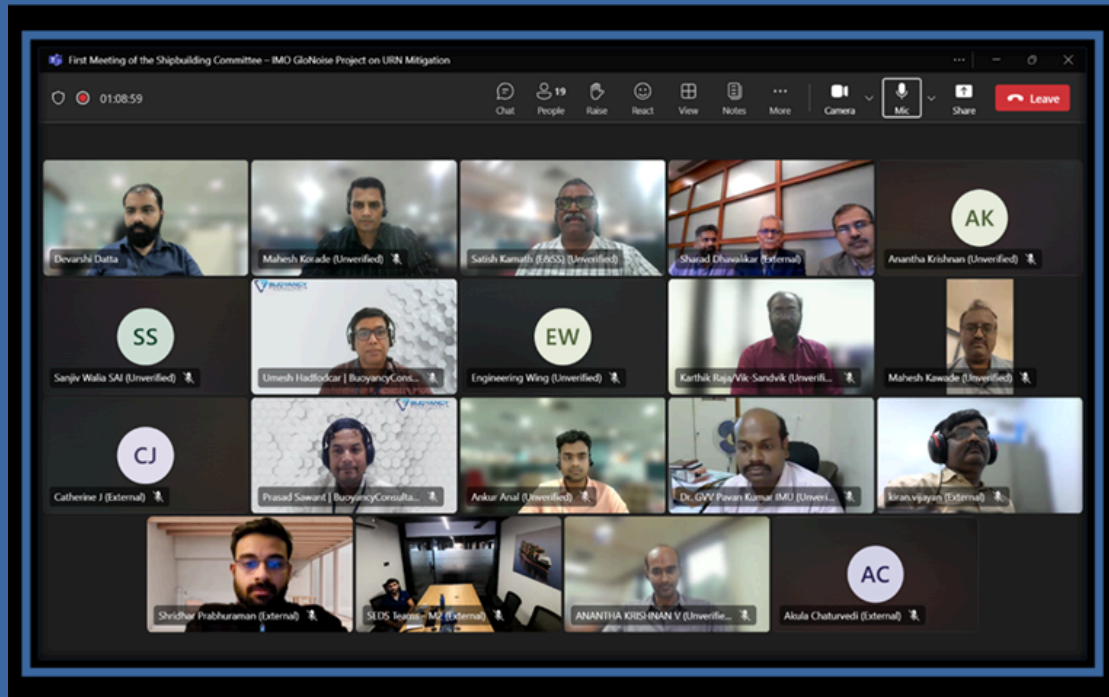


Key Highlights and Next Steps:

- The workshop emphasized the importance of understanding regional soundscapes and promoting science-driven marine planning.
- As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), Trinidad and Tobago's unique two-island context offers an opportunity to demonstrate how URN mitigation can be tailored to both industrial maritime activities and ecologically sensitive areas.
- The need for baseline research, including marine soundscape studies and impact assessments on reef fishes and cetaceans, was underlined.
- The establishment of a National Task Force with cross-sectoral participation for coordination and follow-up was identified as a crucial next step.

Future actions include developing baseline studies, drafting policy options, and supporting capacity-building through training and community awareness.

GloNoise Committees Formed in India



India has moved forward with its participation in the GloNoise Partnership by completing the stakeholder engagement plan and established its Research and Shipbuilding Committees under the plan. This step sets the stage for a focused approach to underwater radiated noise (URN) mitigation.

First Shipbuilding Committee Meeting

On 25 July 2025, the newly formed Shipbuilding Committee held its inaugural meeting with 18 participants. The committee includes a diverse group of stakeholders from the Directorate General of Shipping, the Indian Register of Shipping, shipyards and academic institutions, and will focus on collecting and documenting best practices in ship design, retrofitting and operational measures to reduce URN emissions. These findings will be submitted to IMO.

The meeting featured a technical presentation by the Indian Register of Shipping on the IMO Revised Guidelines 2023, highlighting approaches to URN reduction through design, maintenance and operational controls. Discussions also emphasised the need to adopt naval methodologies for noise prediction in merchant shipping where feasible.

Next Steps

Members are tasked with reviewing the 2023 guidelines and documenting relevant case studies and projects, with a view to submitting material as a contribution to the IMO Experience Building Phase. A national seminar on URN in shipbuilding is tentatively scheduled for Q1 2026. The goal is to present consolidated findings to IMO before April 2026 at MEPC 84.

GEF - UNDP - IMO GloNoise Partnership

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