ports & harbors

Providing thought leadership on the role of ports in a connected world

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N° 6



Leading the way

Recently re-elected as IAPH president, Jens Meier, CEO of Hamburg Port Authority, discusses the challenges facing the industry moving into 2026

iaph
international association of ports and harbors

New paradigm for ports
Central & South American focus

Sustainability Awards
A showcase for excellence

A vision for the future
Port of Brisbane's Vision 2060

Port Performance Program – Metrics Tracked

Benchmark container port and terminal performance with empirical data

S&P Global
Market Intelligence

Metrics Tracked

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- Call size and vessel size development
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Historical 2020–2025
- Port hours by call size
- Vessel waiting time and percent of calls waiting
- Arrival process time
- Port productivity (PMPH)
- (Same filter + coverage statement as above)

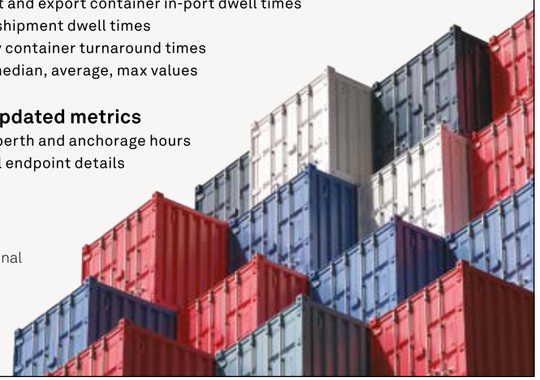
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- Based on standardized and comparable methodology

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MARTIN CLARK
Editor

Thriving in uncertainty

This issue of *P&H* was produced in the wake of the #IAPH 2025 World Ports Conference in Kobe, Japan, an event that brought together hundreds of industry professionals to discuss the key topics of the day, from finance and investment to geopolitical uncertainties.

As well as a report back on the conference itself (page 34), many of these issues are also discussed in our main interview with recently re-elected IAPH president, Jens Meier (page 4), chief executive of the Hamburg Port Authority.

In addition, there are insights from the latest edition of the Container Port Performance Index, published by the World Bank and S&P Global, which extends its industry coverage with a five-year trend analysis (page 10).

This provides a review of how ports have coped with successive global shocks across a multi-year timeframe. The fifth edition of the report arrives at a volatile moment, however, with supply chains strained once more, and ports facing up to both legacy challenges and fresh disruptions.

In conversation with Patrick Verhoeven, IAPH's managing director, Jens Meier addresses many of these issues and challenges, and asserts how the association can continue to help champion industry excellence even in the face of ongoing global uncertainties.

The theme of the Kobe conference, 'Reinvention and Prosperity in Turbulent Times,' spoke to the need for innovation, he notes, adopting new technologies and operational practices that ensure long-term sustainability while maintaining efficiency.

"The future of ports lies in their ability to reinvent themselves continually, balancing environmental responsibility with the agility needed to thrive in uncertain times," he explains in the interview.

The thriving World Ports Sustainability Program is an example of how IAPH demonstrates this leadership. On page 18, the IAPH Sustainability Awards 2025 report highlights some of the groundbreaking innovation, technology and industry-leading sustainability initiatives across the global ports sector.

These efforts also include the reintroduction of the IAPH Harbor Cafés, a strategic move to foster deeper dialogue and knowledge sharing across the port community.

The recent adjournment at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) of a decision on the Net Zero Framework is an example of the degree of uncertainty facing the ports and shipping sector as we head into 2026. Addressing this issue, on page 16, the IMO's head of climate action and clean air, Roel Hoenders, talks to *P&H* about the implications and what happens next.

We are also fortunate to have an article from Mario Cordero, the outgoing chief executive of the Port of Long Beach (page 15) on how the industry has already shown tremendous resilience during the year in the face of multiple challenges.

At times, this means consolidation and the adoption of a 'wait and see' approach, Mario opines: "Not wait and see as in give up and do nothing, but go about your business – build, maintain and operate your port or your link of the supply chain – while the leadership of the world's countries negotiate issues far beyond the control of port authorities."

Perhaps at such a time, more than any other, the role of the IAPH will be essential in shoring up ports, large and small, for the challenges ahead.

This includes the extensive resources on the IAPH website, which now features a product portal in which all tools and guidelines produced by the technical committees in recent years are consolidated and made available in a single place (iaphworldports.org/products). Next year, there are plans to extend the toolbox with new products on cybersecurity, climate resilience, port call optimisation, cargo standards and sustainable cruise operations.

Planning is also underway for the IAPH 2026 World Ports Conference, which will take place in London on 3-6 November, following an announcement made during London International Shipping Week, which is also highlighted in this issue (page 32). ■

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Mario Cordero is an international maritime industry leader, Long Beach resident and attorney, and chief executive officer of the Port of Long Beach, California, a key US gateway for trans-Pacific trade. He was named to the post by the Long Beach Board of Harbour Commissioners in 2017. ■



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IN CONVERSATION WITH JENS MEIER

Leading the way

After returning from the #IAPH2025 Kobe conference, recently re-elected IAPH President, Jens Meier, CEO of Hamburg Port Authority, talked to IAPH's managing director Patrick Verhoeven about how the association can continue to help champion industry excellence in the face of ongoing global uncertainties

MARTIN CLARK

Q Jens (J), how do you think #IAPH2025 reflected the current state of play in the global ports sector?
J: The Kobe conference, marking our 70th anniversary, was a significant milestone for the global ports sector. It highlighted how ports are embracing transformation, not just through sustainability but also in terms of their role in a rapidly changing global economy. The industry is focusing on building resilience by diversifying services, improving supply chain flexibility, and leveraging digitalisation to adapt to new challenges. Our theme, 'Reinvention and Prosperity in Turbulent Times,' speaks to the need for innovation — adopting new technologies and operational practices that ensure long-term sustainability while maintaining efficiency. The future of ports lies in their ability to reinvent themselves continually, balancing environmental responsibility with the agility needed to thrive in uncertain times.

Q: Patrick (P), what were your main thoughts on the conference?
P: We not only saw a strong attendance from our port membership, but also from a wider range of business and institutional stakeholders. This has been our goal since we internalised the organisation of the event in 2020. In Kobe we were also able to sign a number of significant partnership agreements, notably with the Asian Development Bank, the Global Centre for Maritime Decarbonisation and the Cruise Lines International Association. We aim to further transform the conference concept in that sense when we meet in London next year, creating a platform where our members can meet with their customers, suppliers, financial institutions and organisations that shape the policy context in which they operate.

Q: The Osaka World Expo took place at the same time as #IAPH2025. What innovations or technologies stood out to you in relation to the ports industry?
J: During my time in Kobe, I made it a top priority to visit the Osaka World Expo and explore the technologies shaping our shared future. I have always been deeply interested in innovation and its relevance to port development, so the Expo provided valuable insights. Together with Eugene Seroka, Vice President for North America at IAPH, I visited the Future Pavilion, where we explored solutions ranging from clean energy systems to artificial intelligence driven logistics.

Q: One of the main conference sponsors was Kawasaki, known for its focus on advanced technologies. How do you see companies like this shaping the future of smart, sustainable ports?
J: First, I would like to thank Kawasaki for its sponsorship and strong support of the Kobe conference. Companies like Kawasaki are pivotal in driving the transformation of ports into smart, sustainable hubs. What sets Kawasaki apart is their holistic approach to hydrogen as a clean energy source. They have co-developed a liquefied hydrogen carrier vessel, constructed a dedicated tank with jetty and truck loading facilities, and demonstrated how hydrogen can be safely transported and distributed across the entire value chain.



Moreover, Kawasaki has gone a step further by developing a hydrogen-powered turbine to generate electricity, which is already being used in a pilot project in Japan to supply a local neighbourhood with clean energy. This kind of pioneering spirit is exactly what we need to accelerate the energy transition in the maritime sector.

> The reintroduction of the IAPH Harbor Cafés is a strategic move to foster deeper dialogue and knowledge sharing within the port community

P: By sharing their expertise and showcasing these innovations at the World Ports Conference, Kawasaki and similar companies are helping ports evolve into energy hubs – capable of handling alternative fuels like hydrogen and ammonia safely and efficiently. Their contributions are vital to achieving global decarbonisation goals and ensuring a resilient, future-ready infrastructure for international trade. In Kobe, we also had a fruitful meeting of the Clean Energy Marine Hubs (CEM-HUBS) network which is now working on a global blueprint for the development of energy hubs.

Q: What are your priorities and hopes as you begin your new term as IAPH President?
J: Entering my second term as IAPH President, I remain committed to driving innovation, resilience, and sustainability within the global port sector. My motto, "Resilient by design – innovative by nature," captures the essence of my vision. Ports must be at the forefront of technological advancements while ensuring we remain adaptable in an ever-changing global environment. A key priority close to my heart is talent promotion, inspiring and supporting the next generation of port professionals. I also aim to ensure that IAPH continues to serve as a platform for collaboration, helping ports innovate and meet sustainability goals. By supporting the World Ports Sustainability Program and fostering global partnerships, I hope to leave a legacy where ports are seen not just as critical infrastructure but as leaders in sustainability and resilience.

Q: Can you tell us about the reintroduction of the IAPH Harbor Cafés?
J: The reintroduction of the IAPH Harbor Cafés is a strategic move to foster deeper dialogue and knowledge sharing within the port community. Originally launched during the pandemic, the Cafés offered an informal way for ports around the world to stay connected and exchange experiences when travel was impossible. This format proved extremely valuable, and we now want to build on it – creating spaces for open discussion on key topics such as sustainability, digitalisation, and resilience. In the future, we plan to strengthen this concept further by encouraging regional editions, supporting an even more dynamic and inclusive exchange across our global network.

Pictured: IAPH president Jens Meier and IAPH managing director Patrick Verhoeven pictured recently at the World Ports Conference in Kobe, Japan
Photo: Richard Langdon



> Next year, we plan to extend our IAPH toolbox
>
> **PATRICK VERHOEVEN,** MD, IAPH

Q: The IMO recently adjourned a decision on the Net Zero Framework (NZF). What are your thoughts on this delay?
J: The postponement of the IMO's decision on the NZF is, of course, a missed opportunity — but it should not discourage progress. At IAPH, we believe in working constructively with all partners, including the IMO, to keep momentum strong. Our role is to translate high-level ambitions into practical action. Through the World Ports Sustainability Program, we continue to drive practical, real-world solutions for decarbonisation, while advocating for harmonised international standards. Ports must remain at the forefront of climate action, and IAPH is committed to ensuring that we maintain progress toward a sustainable, low-carbon maritime future.

P: Despite the adjournment of the formal decision on the NZF, the IMO is committed to continuing the work to develop the necessary guidelines for successful implementation of the framework, if adopted next year. Fourteen sets of guidelines will need to be developed; on technical elements, the design of the reward mechanism, and the governance and structure of the IMO Net Zero Fund. It is essential for us to remain involved in that work and offer the expertise of the port sector. The IMO's planned economic measure remains an important tool for ports as it would assist in funding necessary investments in research and development to accelerate the energy transition of shipping as well as supporting the vital port infrastructure investments to guarantee the supply of those new fuels, particularly in developing countries.

Q: How do you see IAPH evolving to help ports navigate the uncertainties posed by current geopolitical tensions?
J: In times of geopolitical uncertainty, ports must become more adaptable and resilient. IAPH's role is to provide ports with the tools, guidelines, and collaborative networks needed to navigate these challenges. Our Risk and Resilience Guidelines (sustainableworldports.org/wp-content/uploads/IAPH-Risk-and-Resilience-Guidelines-for-Ports-BD.pdf), for example, help ports strengthen their governance structures and infrastructure to respond effectively to disruptions. Equally important, I see IAPH's mission in giving ports a unified voice, representing their needs and perspectives to policymakers and other key stakeholders. By sharing knowledge, promoting cooperation, and advocating for transparent policies, IAPH helps ports mitigate risks and remain reliable anchors in global trade, even in turbulent times.

P: The IAPH website now features a product portal in which all tools and guidelines produced by our technical committees in the past four years are consolidated into a single place (iaphworldports.org/products/). Products which are in the public domain can be accessed directly from that portal. Those products which are available exclusively for the membership are available on the member area of the website and can be purchased online by non-members. Next year, we are planning to extend our toolbox with new products on cybersecurity, climate resilience, port call optimisation, cargo standards and sustainable cruise operations.

Q: Despite lingering tensions, there are signs of hope now in the Middle East. Any thoughts on this region or implications for the ports sector?
J: Recent developments in the Middle East give us cautious optimism. After a period of significant tension, signs of stabilisation allow ports and supply chains in the region to breathe again. However, we have learned that uncertainty is a constant companion in global trade. It's therefore essential that we continue developing creative, flexible strategies to manage future disruptions — whether they occur in the Middle East or elsewhere. We encourage regional cooperation and knowledge exchange precisely for this reason: resilience is built through collaboration. If we can turn today's fragile stability into sustained partnership, the region's ports will play a crucial role in fostering both economic growth and dialogue across borders.

Q: What is your main takeaway message for *P&H* readers as we close 2025?
J: As we look to the future, it's clear that the maritime sector must lead the way in sustainability, innovation, and resilience. Ports are not just gateways for trade; they are catalysts for change. My vision for the next few years, as IAPH President, is to ensure that we continue to innovate, collaborate, and deliver on our collective commitment to a sustainable and resilient future. Together, we will navigate the challenges ahead and shape a prosperous, sustainable future for global trade. I would like to thank our members for their continued dedication to this vital mission. ■



PERSPECTIVE PORT OF BRISBANE: VISION 2060

A vision for the future of ports

When I first joined Port of Brisbane, I was struck by its legacy and untapped potential. Since the 1850s, the Port has evolved from a riverbank trading post to Australia's third largest multi-cargo port. Looking toward 2060, we face a future defined by complexity, opportunity and transformation.

Vision 2060 is our response: a living roadmap shaped by customer and stakeholder insights and rigorous research. It's a blueprint for how ports globally can evolve within a rapidly changing world.

Why was this vision needed? Because the challenges ahead are unlike any we've faced before. Australia's third largest state, Queensland's population is forecast to grow from 5.5 million to 8.3 million by 2060. Trade volumes will more than triple. Technology will redefine logistics, asset management and community engagement while geopolitical shifts will test the resilience of global supply chains.

In this context, long-term planning is not a luxury, it's a necessity. Structured around three strategic horizons, Vision 2060 is our commitment to prepare for what's next, to lead with purpose, and to collaborate across sectors and borders.

Driven by seamless connectivity

Connectivity is the foundation of trade. In the future we envision, Port of Brisbane will be seamlessly integrated into national and global logistics networks, linking with regional hubs, reducing congestion and enabling high-velocity container movement. Autonomous freight zones will operate with zero-emission vehicles, improving safety and productivity. By 2060, our deeper shipping channel caters for larger vessels of the future while long before then, our significantly upgraded Brisbane International Cruise Terminal will be advancing sustainable tourism in Queensland.

Digital systems will underpin every aspect of port operations, enabling real-time coordination and data collaboration, transforming ports into smart, secure ecosystems.

This vision is not unique to Brisbane. Ports around the world are grappling with the same imperatives. Horizon One offers a model for how ports can evolve into smart, connected ecosystems serving regional and global needs.

Powered by clean energy

The transition to clean energy is one of the defining challenges of our time. Horizon Two outlines our commitment to becoming a clean energy hub – generating, storing, and distributing renewable energy across the port. We must champion the shift from energy consumers to energy producers – not just for compliance but for climate leadership.

Pictured: Aerial view of Port of Brisbane as it is today (main image); and an illustration of the Port of Brisbane in 2060 (from Vision 2060) (inset image)
Photos: Port of Brisbane

At Port of Brisbane, we're already on this journey with significant rooftop solar and battery storage infrastructure, and plans for more. Our award-winning 'Green Button' technology – designed to optimise shipping movements through our channel and subsequently reduce emissions – has delivered exciting trial results, and we're progressing its development with key partner, DHI Seaport.

By 2060, expanded solar, battery storage, waste-to-energy and shore power infrastructure will collectively reduce emissions, ensure reliability and enhance resilience while the Port will also facilitate the shift to alternative fuels with common-user infrastructure supporting its safe handling and distribution.

Smart energy systems will optimise energy use, manage disruptions and reduce waste. These will integrate with digital systems, creating a dynamic energy ecosystem supporting both operational efficiency and environmental stewardship.

Globally, this horizon aligns with the International Maritime Organisation's decarbonisation strategy while reflecting a growing consensus that ports must become energy producers, not just consumers – supporting national grids, enabling green corridors and accelerating the shift to net-zero.

Designed for future generations

Ports must also be equitable, inclusive and resilient. Horizon Three focuses on the human and environmental dimensions of port development, ensuring growth is balanced with stewardship and shared value.

Infrastructure will be designed for adaptability and climate resilience, supported by predictive maintenance and smart asset management. Environmental stewardship will be embedded across operations, building on the extensive programme in place at the port today. Advanced monitoring systems will track water quality, habitat conditions and emissions in real time.

Continued investment in nature-based solutions will protect biodiversity and strengthen resilience. These will build on multi-million-dollar creek rehabilitation projects we've already delivered to reduce sediment pollution within regional waterways and our shipping channel.

Importantly, engaging with the local community will remain central. Digital platforms will provide transparency and accountability, while partnerships with local Traditional Owners will ensure cultural inclusivity and heritage preservation. Workforce development programs will equip people with the skills needed for a digital, automated future – creating opportunities for underrepresented groups and fostering innovation across the maritime sector.

This horizon offers a vision of what's possible when ports lead with purpose and invest in the future.

Where horizons meet

While Vision 2060 is grounded in a local context, its principles are universally applicable. Its strategic drivers – sustainability, capacity, digitalisation, adaptability and growth – are shaping ports everywhere.

Port of Brisbane invites international peers to join us in shaping a future where ports are not just gateways, but global exemplars of innovation, sustainability and shared prosperity. I encourage the international port community to consider how horizon-based planning can drive transformation in their own contexts.

The future is not a destination, it's a journey. Vision 2060 is our commitment to walk that path with courage, collaboration, and clarity. ■



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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FEATURE CPPI INDEX

Ports, performance and peril

Reading the new CPPI trendlines.
By **JAN HOFFMANN**, Global Lead, Maritime Transport and Ports, World Bank

In September 2025 the World Bank and S&P Global published the fifth edition of the Container Port Performance Index (CPPI), extending its scope with a five-year trend analysis. This provides a review of how ports have coped with successive global shocks, recovered, or lagged behind. The report arrives at a volatile moment: supply chains are strained once more, and ports must confront both legacy challenges and fresh disruptions.

What's new and different? The five-year lens

Previous CPPI editions compared individual port performance year by year, but this year's introduction of multi-year trend data allows ports – many of them IAPH members – to see year-on-year improvements. Readers can see which ports have improved, stagnated, or declined over the pandemic and post-pandemic era. The trend analysis helps distinguish structural gains, such as those from sustained investments or reform, from one-off gains or losses that are driven by external factors.

Global average performance has slipped between 2020 and 2024, under pressure from the Red Sea crisis, Panama Canal disruptions, and pandemic aftershocks. But the nuance lies in the variation: While many ports saw declines, others bucked the trend: The report highlights Dakar (Senegal), Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Mersin (Turkey), Port Said (Egypt) and Posorja (Ecuador) as examples of ports that seem to see sustained improvements, against an overall global downward trend.

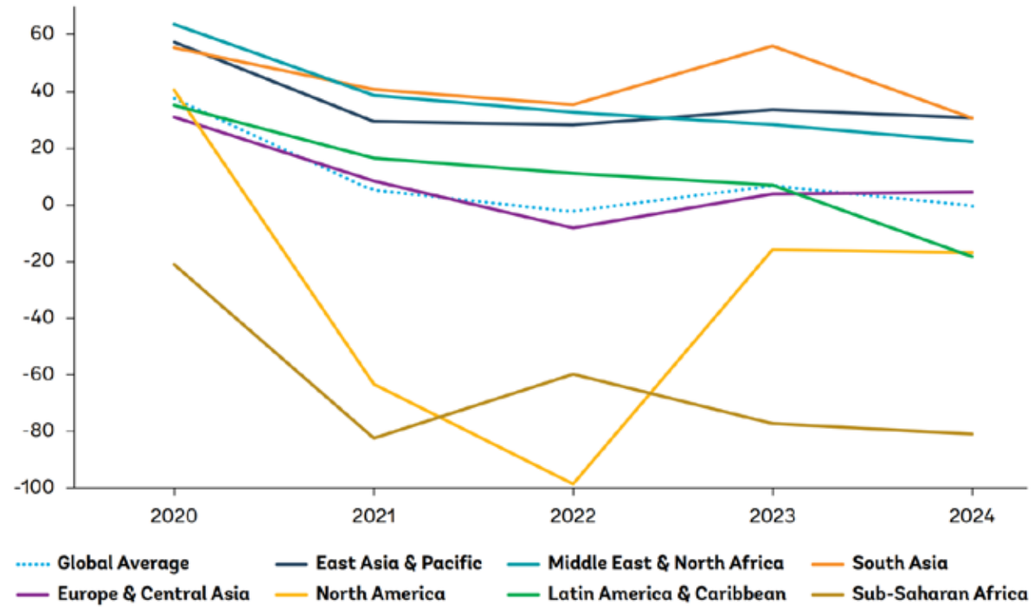
I was particularly pleased to see how CPPI trajectories align with other supply-chain stress metrics (global supply chain pressure, port congestion indices, freight indices) and regional shock events, reinforcing its role as a diagnostic tool rather than a ranking exercise. It is comforting to see that regions which are affected by different crises, also show comparable CPPI patterns. Thus, having more and more years of data, allows the CPPI to mature into a dynamic barometer.

Aligning five-year CPPI trends with global and regional patterns

The CPPI's five-year story tracks well with what we already know about how the pandemic, logistical stress, and geopolitical disruptions reshaped maritime trade. It

Pictured: Multi-year analysis is useful to understand key trends in port performance, especially during more volatile times
Photo: Jan Hoffmann

CPPI averages by World Bank region, 2020 to 2024



Source: World Bank calculations, based on data provided by S&P Global

notes strong co-movement between CPPI and the Global Supply Chain Pressure Index (GSCPI), Global Supply Chain Stress Index, port congestion indices, and freight indices.

Take North America. In 2022, North American ports posted some of the lowest CPPI scores globally, reflecting how Covid disruptions, labour bottlenecks and inland congestion affected US and Canadian gateways. But by 2024, North America and Europe had largely stabilised their ports' scores relative to 2023, underpinning a fragile resilience.

South Asia offers a contrasting perspective. Its average CPPI score in 2023 exceeded its 2020 baseline; it showed exceptional development compared to other regions. But the Red Sea disruptions in 2024 hampered further gains, showing how South Asia, like any region, remains vulnerable to exogenous stress.

The Middle East and North Africa region saw early advantage in 2020, but its average performance weakened in 2023–2024, largely due to spillovers from the Red Sea crisis.

Sub-Saharan Africa, meanwhile, remains mostly stuck in a lower band, handicapped by low automation, weaker hinterland links, and at times ageing infrastructure. The 2024 rerouting of ships via the Cape of Good Hope added even more congestion for African ports already operating with limited slack.

Thus the CPPI trend series is not an isolated curiosity. It does resonate with the evolving geography of disruption and recovery observed in trade, shipping and logistics.

What CPPI can do for IAPH members

For IAPH members, it is hoped that the CPPI and its trend insights offer a useful data set for reflection and diagnosis – and for collaboration with us at the World Bank.

First, the CPPI report includes information about CPPI components, and the share ships spend at berth vis-à-vis at arrival and anchor. This can help pinpoint where inefficiencies lie, for example, in waiting times or berth productivity. The report notes that adopting 24/7 crane operations, optimising crane deployment, and linking port systems to customs and logistics digital platforms can yield measurable gains. Because the CPPI is now normalised to one base year, a port can see whether it is improving relative to peers facing similar vessel- and call-sizes.

Second, the trend data allows port management to distinguish between short-term perturbations and structural change.

Third, CPPI can guide internal and external benchmarking: an IAPH member can see how its performance trajectory compares to regional peers or to ports in similar income groups.

Fourth, the CPPI framework provides a narrative for external stakeholders (government ministries, investors, financiers) to link port investment and reform efforts to measurable gains. When a port authority commits to digitalisation, automation, or hinterland upgrades, one can project how those steps might shift CPPI components.

Finally, for policy and resilience planning, the CPPI trend data allow ports to 'stress test' their vulnerability: how did my port fare under pandemic stress? Under Panama Canal constraints? Under rerouting pressures? That historical lens can inform strategies in staff, capital, redundancy, or alternate routing.

Thus, the CPPI should be less an exercise in prestige and position, and more an opportunity to identify areas for improvement.

Top 20 ports improvement in CPPI 2024/2020

Port	Economy	CPPI 2024	Change 2024/2020
Posorja	Ecuador	107.0	72.8
Gothenburg	Sweden	50.8	71.2
Marseille	France	-36.9	59.3
Philadelphia	United States	92.4	51.7
Mawan	China	133.0	48.8
Tin Can Island	Nigeria	-21.4	46.3
Port Said	Egypt	137.4	41.5
Lagos	Nigeria	-24.2	36.4
Muhammad Bin Qasim	Pakistan	42.8	35.2
Jawaharlal Nehru Port	India	99.7	33.3
Paita	Peru	65.8	28.2
Nantes-St Nazaire	France	30.3	27.1
Buenaventura	Colombia	90.8	26.8
Aarhus	Denmark	99.5	26.1
Savona-Vado	Italy	36.5	23.5
Mundra	India	97.3	21.6
Fuzhou	China	139.2	21.4
Haiphong	Viet Nam	86.8	16.7
Penang	Malaysia	35.1	16.1
Khalifa Bin Salman	Bahrain	45.9	15.2

Source: World Bank, based on data provided by S&P Global Market Intelligence

Top 20 ports improvement in CPPI 2024/2023

Port	Economy	CPPI 2024	Change 2024/2023
Cape Town	South Africa	-280.7	237.9
Cotonou	Benin	-16.5	226.7
Mersin	Turkey	42.3	226.7
Coega Port	South Africa	-283.5	160.4
Prince Rupert	Canada	-54.4	134.0
Iskenderun	Turkey	21.0	133.9
Imbituba	Brazil	52.5	124.1
Trieste	Italy	-34.1	118.3
Dakar	Senegal	22.8	104.7
Damietta	Egypt	-4.1	86.7
Gdansk	Poland	61.7	85.4
Lyttelton	New Zealand	-9.4	85.1
Le Havre	France	3.9	71.6
Oakland	United States	-86.9	71.5
Qasr Ahmed	Libya	-12.0	67.9
Ashdod	Israel	-31.3	61.7
Paita	Peru	65.8	59.5
Montevideo	Uruguay	-12.5	57.0
Jawaharlal Nehru Port	India	99.7	52.0
Koper	Slovenia	11.2	50.8

Source: World Bank, based on data provided by S&P Global Market Intelligence

Key lessons and recommendations

From the trend patterns and regional alignments, several recommendations stand out:

- Invest in digital integration. Ports that coordinate real-time data across terminal operations, customs, and logistics chains tend to withstand stress better.
- Intensify use of 24/7 operations and flexible crane deployment, especially in congested contexts.
- Enhance maritime and hinterland connectivity and redundancy, especially for ports in regions susceptible to rerouting shocks (e.g. African, Latin American contexts).
- Build adaptive capacity rather than optimised lean only. Slack and buffer infrastructure matter under shock conditions.
- Engage in knowledge exchange within IAPH and World Bank: ports that managed structural upward trends are valuable case studies for peer learning.

A concluding word

In sum, this fifth CPPI edition aims at providing a multi-year trend lens. For IAPH members, we hope the CPPI score is not seen as a badge of honour but as a feedback mechanism.

While the CPPI methodology successfully manages to compare small and large ports in one index, different port characteristics and external shocks do have a bearing on each port's CPPI score. Thus, we recommend to look at your port's development not so much in a global ranking, but more as a KPI (key performance indicator) where you compare your port this year to your port last year, taking into account external developments that are beyond the port's control.

We embarked on the CPPI and its continuous improvement not to assign blame, but to illuminate pathways for all ports – large and small – to strengthen, adapt and learn from each other. The intent is to support better diagnosis, foster collective learning, and ultimately raise the floor of global port performance, which in turn will help make global supply chains more resilient — a common objective of the IAPH and the World Bank Group. ■



To access the CPPI report please visit: http://tiny.cc/cppi2024

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US ports industry: a year in review

Looking back at 2025, international trade, despite the geopolitical dynamics, has avoided scenarios many predicted subsequent to the Liberation Day tariff policies announced in April. And all parties are aware that the stakes remain high should we have long-term disruption to the supply chain.

The resilience displayed by a multitude of links in the international supply chain, as they made the effort to cope with the radical uncertainty of 2025 is notable given the disruptive factors. However, the pandemic experience reminds us of the serious supply chain disruption we must avoid.

Throughout the year, as new trade policies were announced and implemented, the industry was forced to set aside its best practices of scrutinising economic forecasts and making prudent long-term planning decisions, and instead try a new policy – wait and see.

Not wait and see as in give up and do nothing, but go about your business – build, maintain and operate your port or your link of the supply chain – while the leadership of the world's countries negotiate issues far beyond the control of port authorities.

I'm an optimist, so I'm naturally of the opinion that the parties will eventually work out their differences, and move to pragmatic resolutions that accomplish their respective mutual interest. There may be legitimate objectives to address, however. The tariff and retaliatory actions going back and forth across oceans can be challenging and disruptive. But I do believe the optimistic outlook will bear out.

I've only recently come to the decision to retire as Port of Long Beach CEO, and start a new direction of my life. It's a move that has nothing to do with the situation that ports and the trade industry in general found themselves in over the past many months.

On the contrary, the challenges have been rather invigorating – albeit dismaying.

Our partners – the shippers and ocean carriers – struggled to meet strong consumer demand while their cargo and ships face new taxes and fees. Port labour and logistics support businesses had to deal with fluctuating cargo volumes, sometimes causing the closure of longstanding companies. Going forward, let's hope for a state of normality.

In my years in the logistics industry, it's extremely disappointing when employers need to close their doors due to economic factors beyond their control. And in 2025, the volatility surrounding the trade industry was greatly increased.

Still, the industry delivered. Ocean carriers demonstrated skillful adaptability, adjusting services and at times shifting individual vessels to best suit changing conditions created by tariffs or port fees. Port authorities took lessons learned in the pandemic to accommodate surges in front-loaded cargo. The supply chain continued to power the global economy and facilitate the commerce that provides opportunity and improves people's lives around the world.

We've worked closely with our stakeholders to help them find solutions, and I know as I move on, ports around the world will continue to do so. We will also continue to follow our policies that got us where we are today – striving to improve the efficiency of cargo flow, serving the local community and improving the environment.

I leave the Port of Long Beach in capable hands. I also leave the day-to-day operations of the port industry in very good hands as well. Take heart: global trade will always be essential. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MARIO CORDERO is an international maritime industry leader, Long Beach resident and attorney, and chief executive officer of the Port of Long Beach, California, a key US gateway for trans-Pacific trade, named to the post by the Long Beach Board of Harbour Commissioners in 2017.



MARIO CORDERO
CEO, Port of Long Beach

THE COLUMN



Adoption of the International Maritime Organization's Net Zero Framework (NZF) was pushed back by at least a year at the close of the Marine Environment Protection Committee extraordinary session in October. Despite the shock decision, Roel Hoenders, Head, Climate Action and Clean Air in the IMO's Marine Environment Division, says there is still room for optimism

FELICITY LANDON

This was not the outcome expected. The IMO's NZF setting out global regulations to reduce GHG emissions from international shipping had been approved by the MEPC in April – and was lined up for formal adoption six months later. But in October, after four days of intense discussions, delegates voted to adjourn for a year.

What happens next to a framework that was so carefully and meticulously crafted, representing several years of collaborative and cooperative work?

Roel Hoenders acknowledges the shock of the decision to adjourn. "Member States had agreed on a timeline for the development of these measures and had particularly identified this extraordinary session as the milestone at which the mid-term measures developed as the NZF should be adopted," he says. "There has been a lot of work going into the development of the framework by many delegates, Member States, industry, NGOs and others and we had a very inclusive process in which everyone proposed elements."

The legal text approved at the April session reflected these various inputs to the largest possible extent, he says. "We had gone through an extensive impact assessment process, looking at various scenarios. I think Member States had developed a framework collectively that was balanced – reflecting the need to reward first movers, providing investment and legal certainty, while also providing certainty to developing countries, especially Small Island Developing States (SIDS), about a revenue stream that could help them be part of the transition."

The outcome of the April MEPC was "quite extraordinary, in that we had been able to find such a balance in a very complex area", says Hoenders. "That we were unable to find an agreement or move forward to adoption was of course a disappointment."

However, he emphasises, the IMO seeks to develop rules and regulations that can ensure a global level playing field, and therefore it's important to have the broadest possible consensus.

"If you have a process whereby certain Member States do not feel part of the agreement or consensus, there is always a risk they will opt out of what has been agreed and therefore you would still not achieve the global level playing field that is behind the whole mechanism."

It was no secret that there were concerns leading up to the October meeting – among them the question of whether LNG would be acceptable as a fuel (or would the framework lead to stranded assets of LNG-powered ships ordered in the past five to ten years?).

There were also questions around fuel production and a lack of confidence that sufficient 'future fuels' would be available for the shipping industry. "It is a bit of a chicken-and-egg situation – regulations can also determine demand and thereby the production," he points out. "But at the same time, it's true that these kinds of investment decisions for production capacity do take time."

There were also concerns, particularly from SIDS and developing countries about the reward mechanism and how it would work in practice.

This may all sound negative, but Hoenders stresses that meetings continued the week after the main MEPC event. "The intersessional working group made good progress on further developing the NZF guidelines, including on how to determine the reward for users of zero and near-zero fuels and technologies, and how to calculate the GFI (Global Fuel Intensity), looking into how certain elements can be further clarified in the GFI, including wind-assist and onboard carbon capture."

A real positive, he says, is that no delegation questioned what was agreed in the IMO GHG Strategy (which was adopted with full consensus in 2023) or the need to continue working on binding measures – albeit taking into account the need to avoid disruptions to maritime trade, safeguard energy and food security, and find a solution that works for all shipping segments.

MEPC 84, taking place in April 2026, will decide when to resume the adjourned extraordinary session – it will likely be planned around MEPC 85, in November 2026.

Meanwhile, the behind-the-scenes work will continue. "At MEPC 84, we may receive new documents and proposals that in some way or another have an impact on the framework, so the Committee will also have to look carefully at those papers to see if any adjustments need to be looked into in more detail," says Hoenders.

There is room for optimism – not only for the NZF's eventual adoption, but also because many shipping lines, ports, cities and regions have already made Net Zero commitments of their own. There is a growing interest in green shipping corridors and a significant increase in renewable fuel developments around the world.

As for the next steps in the NZF programme, he says: "It's important that in the year ahead delegations use the time wisely to provide more certainty about implementing decisions, talk to each other about what they can/cannot accept, and discuss how we can have a smooth and orderly transition. This needs to be a year of reflection. And as the IMO, what we can do in this very complex time is work to keep the climate ambition alive, as set out in the IMO GHG Strategy." ■

A night to remember

Held during the World Ports Conference in Kobe, the IAPH Sustainability Awards 2025 highlighted groundbreaking innovation, advanced technology and industry-leading sustainability initiatives across the global ports sector



Three ports from Africa and two from South Korea were among the seven winners celebrated at the IAPH Sustainability Awards ceremony during the World Ports Conference in Kobe in October.

The prestigious evening event took place on 8th October at a gala dinner in Kobe's impressive Portopia Hotel, hosted by Francesca Vanthielen (pictured right, middle photo), a Belgian journalist, news anchor and presenter.

Out of 112 projects and entries, African ports claimed three of the top awards: Ghana Ports & Harbors Authority won the Community Building category, Kenya Ports Authority landed the Environmental Care prize, and Benin's Autonomous Port of Cotonou took home a second consecutive Akiyama award as runner-up from a developing country.

Ports from South Korea won two awards: Incheon Port Authority for Infrastructure and Busan Port Authority for Health, Safety and Security. A Japanese port – the port of the City of Yokohama – also earned recognition in the coveted Climate and Energy category, while Port of Antwerp-Bruges claimed its fourth triumph with its APICA digital twin in the Digitalisation category.

Highlighting the unprecedented success of the awards, and the parallel World Ports Sustainability Program (WPSP), which has seen its database swell greatly in the past year, IAPH technical director Antonis Michail commented: "This year's awards broke all records – number of initial submissions, the 7600+ people who voted, and the expanded jury which now reaches 15 to score the qualifying finalists. Our WPSP database of now 516 projects will continue this upward trajectory with so many projects from ports taking part for the first time."

Here, we take a look at how each winner in 2025 is leading in their field and in the advancement of the ports sector.

World Ports Sustainability Program

Find out more about the IAPH World Ports Sustainability Program and how your port can participate, including at next year's event, at: sustainableworldports.org/submit-your-project/







All photos: Richard Langdon

Category sponsored by

REPS



INFRASTRUCTURE

Incheon Port Authority

ICT-based Smart Maintenance Technology for Port Infrastructure

Incheon Port Authority landed its first IAPH Sustainability Award for its ICT-based Smart Maintenance Technology for Port Infrastructure project. This offers a breakthrough solution that transforms port safety and sustainability in the face of climate change, disasters and infrastructure ageing. The jury liked the innovative use of several technologies with one jury member commenting: "This is the future of infrastructure management."

Korea's port facilities, mostly built in the 1970s–1980s, require maintenance. Manual inspections have reached their limits. The Incheon project introduces a paradigm shift: from reactive repair to AI-powered prevention. It integrates IoT sensor networks, marine robotics and real-time data platforms to detect structural abnormalities before failure.

A dual-technology model was developed: underwater robotics with multi-sensor fusion to inspect submerged quay walls, and smart IoT sensor modules embedded in structures to monitor strain, displacement and tilt. With 95-100% accuracy verified through field validation, the system enables predictive maintenance, optimal repair timing and emergency risk mitigation. Real-time 3D visualisation and digital twin integration further enhance operational readiness.

The project not only solves the challenge of ageing port assets, but also establishes an innovative model of digital transformation, applicable to ports worldwide.

Award recipient: Ms. A Reum Choi, manager of the Research & Development Department, Incheon Port Authority
Presented by: Laura Wiedmann, chief operating officer, REPS



ENVIRONMENTAL CARE

Kenya Ports Authority

Mangrove Restoration Programme

Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) is restoring 500 acres of degraded mangroves in Kwale County through its Green Port Policy, aligning with Kenya's plan to plant 15 billion trees and promote sustainable blue economy practices.

In partnership with the Pongwe-Kidimu Community Forest Association (CFA), KPA has planted over 10,000 mangroves since 2023, achieving an 80% survival rate. Mangroves protect coastlines, support fish breeding and enhance biodiversity, directly benefiting marine life and local livelihoods.

According to the CFA, deforestation had led to flooding and fish decline, but restoration has revived marine stocks, with prawns up 19% and lobsters up 18%. KPA also provides stipends to locals for mangrove maintenance, strengthening community ownership and economic empowerment.

The awards panel praised KPA for the project and noted that mangroves are one of the most powerful nature-based solutions for protecting wildlife and the environment and an integral part of the country's ecosystem.

Award recipients: Captain William Ruto, MD, Edward Kamau, general manager corporate services, Geoffrey Kavate, general manager finance, KPA
Presented by: Lynn Loo, CEO, Global Centre for Maritime Decarbonisation



DIGITALISATION

Port of Antwerp-Bruges

APICA Digital Twin

APICA (Advanced Port Intelligence & Coordination Assistant) is a real-time, 2D/3D digital twin of the Port of Antwerp-Bruges. It integrates data from thousands of sensors, drones, cameras and digital 'iNoses' to monitor operations, infrastructure, environment, and energy use in real time, enhancing safety, efficiency, and sustainability. An impressive fourth win for the Port of Antwerp-Bruges, the jury said the project stood out as visionary and unique in its use of the five different human senses.

Combining intuitive visualisation with AI-powered simulations, APICA predicts scenarios such as congestion or hazards and recommends targeted actions. Accessible to all employees, it supports informed, decentralised decision-making and forms the backbone of the port's Smart Port vision, its digital nervous system connecting all operations.

Developed with technology partners and aligned with EU innovation projects, APICA also engages academia, public services and port stakeholders demonstrating how digital transformation drives sustainability and resilience in modern ports.

Award recipient: Jacques Vandermeiren, CEO, Port of Antwerp-Bruges
Presented by: Vilosh Naidoo, sector specialist, transport infrastructure, Development Bank of Southern Africa



COMMUNITY BUILDING

Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority

CSR Beyond Port Boundaries

A first award for Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA), the jury liked the project's good community outreach and measurable outcomes. Underpinning the idea, GPHA views its mandate as extending beyond managing seaports to fostering socio-economic growth in Ghana, and to ensure that port development aligns with community advancement.

Its corporate and social responsibility (CSR) strategy – anchored in education, health and community and environmental development – is geared to driving inclusive national progress. In education, GPHA supports learning through infrastructure development, digital literacy initiatives and research funding. The health pillar promotes wellbeing by improving healthcare facilities, providing clean water and enhancing sanitation. The community and environmental development component focuses on social inclusion, sports, environmental sustainability and resilience through local engagement and green initiatives.

Across Ghana, GPHA's interventions have had tangible impacts: clean water access in over ten underserved communities, upgraded health facilities in four regions, scholarships and educational support nationwide and recreational and disaster-relief infrastructure. These initiatives demonstrate GPHA's belief that thriving ports depend on thriving communities, embedding social impact into its core strategy for sustainable, people-centred and environmentally-responsible national development.

Award recipient: Brigadier General Paul Seidu Tanye-Kulonu, director general, and board chairman Johnson Aside Nketiah
Presented by: Yesim Elhan-Kayalar, advisor, Office of the Chief Economist, Asian Development Bank



CLIMATE & ENERGY

Port of Yokohama

Port Decarbonisation Plan

In March 2025, the Port and Harbour Bureau of Yokohama City introduced the 'Port and Harbour Decarbonisation Plan' to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, putting together a council of 29 firms, including energy providers, manufacturers and shippers, to collaborate to reduce CO2 emissions and strengthen public-private partnerships in the area. The plan aims for net-zero emissions in the waterfront area and the absorption of 250 tons of CO_2 per year through blue infrastructure by 2050.

It particularly impressed the jury with its scope, the large stakeholder network, and the 121 separate initiatives that the decarbonisation plan entails, as well as an innovative green financing aspect. These separate initiatives span various categories, such as decarbonising industries, terminals and creating an abundant ocean.

Three aspects also distinguish Yokohama's plan: developing supply systems for next-generation marine fuels like methanol, launching a sustainable finance framework to improve access to green funding, and positioning the port as a hub for electricity from floating offshore wind power.

Award recipient: Yasuhiro Shimbo, director general, City of Yokohama Port and Harbor Bureau.
Presented by: Mark Assaf, chief of TrainForTrade, UNCTAD

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HEALTH, SAFETY & SECURITY

Busan Port Authority

Unified Strategy: Safety, Health & Resilience

As Korea's busiest port, Busan faces increasing risks from automation, climate change and operational complexity. To address these challenges, Busan Port Authority (BPA) committed to closing safety gaps, modernising its systems with smart technologies, improving worker wellbeing and building disaster response capacity through collaborative governance.

It established Korea's first Port Safety Experience Centre, providing immersive VR and real-life training to 700 frontline workers, and introduced AI-powered systems to prevent incidents involving cranes and yard tractors.

In disaster management, BPA cut facility recovery times in half, ensured zero incidents during Korea's first simultaneous LNG bunkering and cargo handling operations, and facilitated real-time coordination through five joint emergency response councils. On the health side, it also implemented a range of tailored programmes focused on preventing various illnesses and disorders and supporting mental health. In 2024, these efforts led to measurable improvements: zero fatalities, a 33% reduction in port-related accidents, and a 76% decrease in disaster-related property damage.

The jury felt this was a very well-rounded project with a solid strategy, where technology and innovation meet, resulting in improved overall employee safety and wellbeing.

Award recipient: Sang-keun Song, president & CEO, Busan Port Authority
Presented by: Marcus John, managing director, Thomas Miller Australasia



AKIYAMA AWARD

Port Autonome de Cotonou

Dockworker Safety & Welfare

Winning this award for a remarkable second year running, Port Autonome de Cotonou was recognised by the jury panel for creating a great social project that has made a demonstrable impact to dockers' working conditions, safety and security. Previously employed informally and without protection, over 5,000 dockers now benefit from formal contracts, social security, safety equipment and professional training, following the establishment in 2023 of the Single Hiring Office (BEU), which covers employees at the Port of Cotonou and the dry port of Alada.

Created as an Economic Interest Group (GIE) by cargo handling companies, the BEU promotes shared governance and long-term responsibility. Through its PPE Centre, it supplies locally produced protective gear from the Glo-Djigbé Industrial Zone (GDIZ), all managed through a digital traceability system. The BEU is also establishing a port and logistics training school and a modern health centre to enhance skills and wellbeing.

Developed collaboratively with dockers, unions, employers and port authorities, and supported by Port of Antwerp-Bruges International and Enabel, the BEU is helping to promote a safer, fairer and more sustainable port community. ■

Award recipient: Bart Van Eenoo, CEO, and Charles Fayomi, harbour master, Port Autonome de Cotonou
Presented by: Masaharu Shinohara, outgoing IAPH regional vice president Asia, South/West, East & Middle East and executive officer, Kobe-Osaka International Port Corporation

WHAT IS THE AKIYAMA AWARD? Created in memory of one of IAPH's founding fathers, **Toru Akiyama**, who was Secretary-General of IAPH from 1967 to 1973, the Akiyama Award goes to the highest-placed IAPH Sustainability Awards finalist runner-up from a Least Developed Country, a Landlocked Developing Country or a Small Island Developing State.

REGIONAL FOCUS CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA

A new paradigm for ports

Central and South America is seeing a structural realignment of trade dynamics around three central axes according to the Maritime Policy Bureau: the reconfiguration of global supply chains, the energy transition and logistics digitalisation

DEAN DAVISON

Central and South America has undergone a period of remarkable transformation in trade and logistics," explains Guimara Tuñón Guerra, CEO founding partner, Maritime Policy Bureau, adding, "In 2024, exports from Latin America and the Caribbean grew by around 4%, reversing a 1.6% decline recorded in 2023, driven mainly by higher export volumes despite weak global prices. The recovery, however, remains uneven: South America is leading the rebound, while parts of Central America continue to face stagnation."

Central America and South America are subregions of the wider Americas continent and represent a significant landmass with large-scale consuming population and cargo-generating locations. The areas have far-reaching geographic and economic trading partners, meaning that the role of ports in supporting trade facilitation and being vital components in the supply chain are more important than ever – but they face their own challenges too.

Pictured: The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) is undertaking a 'decade of transformation' as it gears up for the future
Photo: Pixabay

There is a need for fundamental change for Central and South America to see itself as an integrated market according to Tuñón Guerra: "Intra-regional trade remains limited, even though Central and South America together represent a vast and complementary consumer and industrial base. Strengthening trade within the region would not only reduce dependency on extra-regional markets but also reinforce resilience in times of global volatility."

The executive also explains that part of the complexity facing Central and South America is a "lack of cohesion among port communities" which often operate in silos with limited coordination between authorities, municipalities and logistics shareholders. This is a valid point to make because without a shared vision, integrated planning and sustainable agendas are difficult to implement.

Ports in transition

Tuñón Guerra says there is a transitionary process underway in Central and South America: "Ports across Central and South America are responding to global trade shifts with a more strategic and coordinated mindset. Many countries are reviewing port concession frameworks to introduce innovation, sustainability and transparency, moving away from outdated contracts that provide limited incentives for modernisation."

These comments are apt because ports in Central and South America are focusing on technological modernisation, interoperability and human capital development. For example, the adoption of digital tools, workforce training and international cooperation, through initiatives such as TrainForTrade, Port Leaders, and PortMujer, demonstrates that transformation in the region is as much cultural as it is technical.

"Collectively, ports are evolving from infrastructure-driven entities into institutions grounded in governance, knowledge and collaboration, essential to achieving long-term global competitiveness," Tuñón Guerra adds.

Five challenges

Looking at the ports across Central and South America, there are five interconnected challenges that will define port trajectory for the remainder of the current decade:

1. **Regional digital interoperability:** Building shared data platforms and standards across borders to streamline trade and improve efficiency.
2. **Sustainability and the energy transition:** Incorporating decarbonisation, clean energy and environmental protection as competitive advantages.
3. **Governance and concession renewal:** Updating frameworks to promote transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.
4. **Human capital and professional culture:** Empowering the next generation of port leaders through training, exchange and inclusive leadership.
5. **Global integration and projection:** Engaging more actively in international networks such as IAPH to share knowledge, adopt best practices and ensure Latin America's voice influences global port policy.

"These challenges are deeply interconnected and demand a coordinated, region-wide response. Their successful resolution will determine whether the region consolidates as a globally competitive maritime system," explains Tuñón Guerra.

A new regional landscape

As stated, ports in Central and South America are generally moving toward a new model of port development that seeks to blend infrastructure, innovation and governance with the aim of targeting sustainable competitiveness. There are a number of examples.

The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) declares it is undertaking a 'decade of transformation'. In 2025, the Panama Canal experienced a combination of operational challenges and increased trade. Over the past couple of years severe drought conditions negatively impacted water levels necessary for vessel transits, restricting successful transits and causing congestion, although for the first eight months of 2025 there has been a confirmed 30% increase in average daily vessel transits. A new dam to Gatun Lake is also underway.

ACP has also launched NetZero Slot, a new category within its transit reservation system designed to encourage the decarbonisation of maritime shipping to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. In an initial phase, vessels must be registered as dual-fuel and capable of operating on at least one fuel with a carbon intensity factor equal to, or less than 75 gCO_2e/MJ. Eligible fuels include green methanol, green ammonia, bio-LNG, or bio-LPG. While immediate use of these fuels will not be required, the canal will recognise the investment and capacity to operate them once supply becomes available.

Confirmed benefits for being awarded a NetZero Slot include freedom to select a preferred transit date within the assigned week, guaranteed transit within 24 hours and flexibility to exchange, or substitute vessels of equivalent specifications.

At a recent media event in Panama, chaired by the Minister for Canal Affairs, Jose Ramón Icaza, it was also confirmed that the pre-feasibility study for the Corozal Port is advancing into the contracting phase, with results expected in the first quarter of 2026 and construction scheduled to begin in 2028.

Tuñón Guerra summarises activities in Panama: "The Canal and its logistics ecosystem are undergoing a new transformation phase, focused on water resilience, digital efficiency and energy diversification, cementing Panama's position as the logistical heart of Central America."

In Mexico, the Pacific ports of Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas have become pillars of nearshoring strategies, while the Port of Veracruz on the Atlantic side continues expanding to strengthen links with North America and Europe.

Expansion plans in Manzanillo are especially pertinent. With new container infrastructure and the ability to leverage the strong inland rail connectivity offered by the likes of Ferromex, the port will be able to develop a dual role in serving both Mexican hinterlands, while also offering beneficial cargo owners access to North American hinterlands, such as Texas and the US Midwest.

David Taylor, managing director of Apex Marine Advisors and Consultants, a Panama-based firm supporting technical and commercial port projects in the Americas, explains further:



"Mexico's Pacific Coast ports already serve US markets, but planned container terminal developments in Manzanillo mean it could offer an effective alternative to several key US hinterlands over ports such as Los Angeles and Long Beach. This will be achieved through efficient railroad services offering competitive cost and delivery times."

At the start of 2025, Silvio Costa Filho, Brazil's Minister of Ports and Airports, announced a significant investment plan for the country's port sector this year, confirming anticipated investment of R$20bn (US$3.3bn).

Project management service provider, Brasil Concessões e Infraestrutura, confirms that between 2024 and 2026 an estimated R$18.2bn is being spent in ports and waterways, stating: "Brazil stands at a pivotal moment, with significant opportunities emerging in its port and waterway infrastructure. These sectors are crucial for national development, facilitating trade, enhancing logistical efficiency, and driving economic growth."

Further regional projects in port infrastructure across Central and South America show the topic is high on the agenda. "In Peru, the Chancay–Callao corridor is redefining Pacific connectivity, while Uruguay's Port of Montevideo consolidates its status as a transparent and stable hub for transshipment and logistics in the Southern Cone. Ecuador is strengthening its Pacific competitiveness through Posorja; and Colombia continues modernising Cartagena and Buenaventura, enhancing its dual-ocean connectivity between the Caribbean and the Pacific," Tuñón Guerra explains.

A shared agenda

There are clearly a wide range of projects occurring throughout the region but the challenge is to connect meaningfully with the global maritime system. Ports must engage internationally, not just through trade, but through ideas and policy. Active participation in global forums, like IAPH, for example, delivers opportunities to learn from experiences of others and influence the agenda with a distinctly Latin American perspective.

Tuñón Guerra sums up the position succinctly: "The new era of port development in the region will not be measured by infrastructure alone. Its strength will lie in collaboration, sustainability and global connectivity, the cornerstones of a maritime future built with purpose and shared vision. Ultimately, Central and South America regional success will depend not on external influences, but on the ability to build a balanced, forward-looking trade strategy, one that embraces intra-regional integration, sustainable investment and global cooperation." ■

Pictured: Uruguay's Port of Montevideo is consolidating its status as a transparent and stable hub for transshipment and logistics
Photo: Shutterstock (Claire Salvail Photos)



Mercy mission

Sailing into the Port of Freetown, the image shows the Global Mercy, the world's largest non-governmental hospital ship, preparing to dock and bring urgent care and medical treatment to the people of Sierra Leone.

It is one of two vessels owned by Mercy Ships, a Christian international health charity, whose floating hospitals bring free, life-changing care to women, men and children across sub-Saharan Africa. The charity also trains healthcare professionals to build stronger medical services locally in partnership with host African nations.

At 174 metres long and weighing 37,000 GT, the Global Mercy features six operating rooms, a hospital deck with 200 beds, a laboratory and various clinics, including general outpatient, eye, and dental clinics. The ship also has first-class training facilities for local medical professionals and is home to up to 600 volunteers who serve on board.

The ship also features a 682-seat auditorium, student academy, café, shop and library – all of which have been designed to accommodate up to 950 crew onboard when docked in port.

Its sister ship is the Africa Mercy, a former Danish rail ferry, which contains five operating rooms and houses about 400 volunteer crew members from up to 40 nations. Last year, Mercy Ships teamed up with MSC Group and MSC Foundation in a project to build a third, purpose-built hospital ship.

There is a strong relationship with the ports in which the vessels berth. Other ports visited in West Africa include Cotonou (Benin), Dakar (Senegal), Douala (Cameroon) and Conakry (Guinea).

Many of the volunteers on board also come from a port industry background. Ian Lawrence, a marine pilot at the Port of Southampton, spent much of the past year volunteering for the charity. After being granted a year's unpaid leave from Associated British Ports, his whole family flew to join the Global Mercy in Tenerife where the ship was preparing to sail to Sierra Leone. The family of four had their own cabin, and the two children attended the ship's Academy, which teaches children from the age of 4-18.

"Being here has made me realise you can't fix everything, but how wonderful it is to see children on the ward who are walking for the first time without pain thanks to paediatric orthopaedic surgeries," said Lawrence. "At times it's very raw. But I love that I can bring my professional skillset and put it to use in a really good way. It's a life-changing experience." ■

For more information visit: mercyships.org

Main Picture: The Global Mercy arrives at the Port of Freetown in Sierra Leone. **Inset:** 11-year-old Yusif received surgery to correct his right hand and arm after being bitten by a snake when he was just five
All photos: Mercy Ships

Shaping the Future, Sustainably

At the Kenya Ports Authority, sustainability is woven into the very fabric of our operations. As a Ports Authority, we are committed to shaping a future where port efficiency and sustainability go hand in hand.

Guided by our Green Ports Policy, we are actively aligning our expansion and growth with environmental conservation and protection, implementing various greening initiatives such as restoration of mangrove ecosystems, as tangible steps toward this goal of building a legacy of resilience and sustainability.

This year, our efforts were honoured with the highest international recognition under the IAPH Sustainability Award 2025 in the Environmental Care category.

We celebrate this milestone not as a destination, but as a powerful affirmation that we are on the right path steering towards a brighter, more sustainable future.





KEBS ISO 9001:2015 Certified Org. No. 087

KENYA PORTS AUTHORITY

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SPONSORED STATEMENT TRELLEBORG MARINE & INFRASTRUCTURE

Trelleborg brings safer, smarter mooring to Japan



Trelleborg Marine & Infrastructure is spearheading a landmark trial in Japan, showcasing its commitment to advancing port safety and efficiency through cutting-edge mooring technology. The company's DynaMoor system has been installed at the Hitachinaka Thermal Power Station, operated by JERA, Japan's largest power generator, in partnership with Nippon Yusen Kabushiki Kaisha (NYK), the country's largest shipping line.

For NYK, mooring safety has become a key focus of its ESG strategy, with particular attention on the risks of mooring line snapback – one of the most serious hazards in port operations. Trelleborg's DynaMoor was identified as a solution capable of addressing these risks while simultaneously improving operational uptime.

The trial site presented a specific challenge. Long period waves regularly enter the harbour, pushing berthed vessels along the quay and placing high tension loads on mooring lines. These surge forces can sometimes result in very high line tensions, increasing the risk of mooring line failures, and potential interruptions during cargo operations – especially during the monsoon season. DynaMoor is designed to tackle exactly these conditions. Its electronically-controlled hydraulic damper regulates mooring line tension in real time, reducing vessel motion and balancing loads across the lines. The system is self-contained, as it is independently anchored to the wharf and does not rely on existing mooring equipment, significantly reducing snapback zones and enhancing safety on the quayside.

Installing DynaMoor required careful adaptation, including calibrating the system to work with existing mooring lines and applying the correct pre-tension settings. With the solution now in place, Trelleborg is leading the way in demonstrating how smart mooring systems can future-proof port operations against growing safety and efficiency demands.

While the trial is ongoing, this project underscores Trelleborg's role as a pioneer in mooring innovation – bringing together advanced engineering, digital integration, and global partnerships to deliver safer, smarter port infrastructure in Japan and beyond. ■

Pictured: Trelleborg's DynaMoor system, installed at JERA's Hitachinaka Thermal Power Station in partnership with NYK, provides a self-contained, digitally enabled solution to regulate mooring line tension, reduce snapback risks, and enhance safety and efficiency at the berth
Photo: Trelleborg

#IAPH2026: the Prime Meridian for Ports

In 2026, port professionals will gather in London between 3-6 November for the World Ports Conference. *P&H* reflects on why this city, steeped in maritime history and standing at zero degrees longitude, remains so integral to IAPH's success

During IAPH's 70-year journey, London has always stood out as a milestone destination. Those previous editions of the World Ports Conference that were held in the UK capital each marked significant moments in IAPH's development. In recent years, the establishment of a shared office near London Bridge heralded the expansion of the association's presence in Europe. Similarly, the institution of annual in-person Technical Committee days in London demonstrated the practical power of IAPH's 'engine room'.

London stands at the Prime Meridian, at zero degrees longitude on the world map; Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) has been the reference point for global time since 1884. It is a hub for maritime insurance and finance, and of course, the home of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). Appropriately, in 2026, the city will be the Prime Meridian for port professionals – next year's IAPH World Ports Conference will be held in the UK capital, on 3-6 November.

The 2026 edition – the third time the city has hosted – will aim to set a new benchmark in showcasing how ports worldwide can meet the challenges of sustainability, digitalisation, and resilience. The venue will be the iconic Olympia in Kensington, which will be ready to host the event in style, having undergone an extensive renovation. The Port of London Authority (PLA) has already been confirmed as a Diamond level headline sponsor.

Port perspectives at LISW

Fittingly, the announcement of the venue for #IAPH2026 was made during London International Shipping Week (LISW) held 15-19 September. Since its founding in 2013, LISW has grown into a biennial institution for the shipping industry. 2026 will be one of its 'gap years', providing a perfect opportunity for the maritime industry to pivot focus to the ways in which ports and their customers can interact more profitably, efficiently and sustainably.

The announcement of London as venue for #IAPH2026 came in a pre-LISW curtain-raising event, in which an invited group of maritime professionals and officials attended a special IAPH screening of the 1955 Antwerp-based film (Seagulls Die in the Harbour) at the Curzon Aldgate cinema in the City of London. Following this event, IAPH's European team members were out and about attending events across the city and putting forward the global port perspective, while distributing stress toys in the shape of the iconic red London bus – and taking selfies – to spread the word about next year's conference.









Pictured: On the buses: IAPH staff distributed iconic red London bus stress toys during LISW

Pictured: Sixty years of selfies: from London to Kobe (and back)





London has hosted the World Ports Conference on two previous occasions, both of special significance. The 1965 edition, the fourth conference since IAPH's founding, symbolised the association's global 'coming of age.' In the IAPH's infancy, there were arguably three long-term institutional goals that would make it an effective representational body for world ports: it should be a recognised NGO, it should have a consultative status with leading international organisations, and it should operate on a truly global basis. All three milestones were reached around the time of the organisation's 10th anniversary in London in May 1965.

Held at the Café Royal on Regent Street, the event was chaired by Viscount Simon of the PLA with HRH The Duke of Edinburgh as its patron. Strong delegate numbers mirrored the organisation's rapid membership expansion, particularly with regard to European ports. Until this point, "Europe had been a hard nut to crack for IAPH", remembered founder and secretary general Gaku Matsumoto.

Discussions at the conference emphasized cooperation with global organizations like the UN, World Bank, and OECD. The next year, IAPH was granted Category B non-governmental advisory status by the UN and went on to acquire consultative status with organizations such as UNCTAD and the IMO (then IMCO). As Matsumoto later observed, "it is not too much at all to say that IAPH became a world organization only by dint of the London conference."

By the late 1990s, IAPH had turned its attention to contemporary topics of global interest: the transformative effects of the dot-com boom and the unquantifiable risks of the Y2K problem. In 1997, IAPH returned to London and the PLA again hosted the event. The opening ceremony took place at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre on June 1, weeks before the venue's official opening. Proceedings included a demonstration of the new home page of the first official IAPH website, as well as the introduction of the IAPH 2000 Special Task Force. The mission of this group was to "allow IAPH to better respond to the needs of its members at the turn of the new millennium".

A historic legacy

In recent years, London has increased in importance for the association. It is the home of the IAPH Europe team, with a shared office space at the headquarters of the British Ports Association. It has also become the venue for the annual in-person Technical Committee days, hosted by the International Chamber of Shipping and associate member TT Club.

At the 2025 World Ports Conference in Kobe in October, the baton was passed from one global city to another, as London was formally announced as the successor venue. Siân Foster, director of corporate affairs at the PLA and Richard Ballantyne, chief executive of the British Ports Association, joined IAPH managing director Patrick Verhoeven on stage at the Hotel Okura to explain what delegates could expect. Siân presented a video that highlighted the importance of the city to trade in the UK and globally.

The trio then played homage to an image from the first London conference – delegates turning to face the camera at the back of the plenary hall – this time with a twist: a group 'selfie' of the entire audience. Conference delegates showed their support for the 2026 event by brandishing red London bus stress toys. There could be no mistaking the next destination for this group of global port professionals. ■

#IAPH2025 HIGHLIGHTS

P&H looks at some of the key issues and opportunities identified at the World Ports Conference held recently in Kobe and which marked 70 years since IAPH's formation



Pictured: The Heinan plenary room on day one

This year's IAPH World Ports Conference, held in Kobe, Japan from 7-9 October was a special event. Special as it marked the 70th anniversary of the formation of IAPH and, as part of this, highlighted the organisation's progress over the years to the point where today it has a major role to play at a political, regulatory, commercial and other critical levels in shaping the global port industry's direction of travel and its role as a key interface in the supply chain.

The significance of the occasion, the veracity of the conference programme and supporting events – including the renowned IAPH Sustainability Awards - was not lost on the IAPH membership and other participants who thronged to Kobe, with total exceeding the 650 mark.

Welcome and keynotes

The conference programme was formally opened by IAPH managing director, Patrick Verhoeven, with Jens Meier, IAPH president, following with welcoming remarks. Between them, they encapsulated the unique culture of the conference: the sense of history, positive evolution, the growth of IAPH's influence over the years – as highlighted in a contemporary sense during the Kobe event by diverse working agreements signed with various eminent organisations, including a two-year Memorandum of Understanding with the Asian Development Bank (ADB)*. Under this ground-breaking agreement IAPH and ADB will focus on regional connectivity and integration, port and supply chain infrastructure development, digitalisation (with a focus on port call optimisation and cyber resilience) and capacity building in modernising sustainable maritime operations. Other equally notable partnership initiatives forged during the conference are highlighted in the accompanying box story on page 37.

Masato Kanda, ADB president, prior to the signing, made his opening keynote speech, preceded by additional welcome addresses from Hiromasa Nakano, Minister, Ministry of Land Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan, Kizo Hisamoto, Mayor of Kobe and Masami Kubo, president of the Japan Harbour Transportation Association.

Kanda opened the door on the main conference theme of *Reinvention and Prosperity in Turbulent Times*. He spoke of the need to close the public sector financing gap via mobilising private sector finance, a step seen as essential to expedite energy transition initiatives. He highlighted a central talking



Pictured: L-R Emile Hoogsteden (CEO, Sohar Port), Jens Eskelund (Chief Representative, Greater China and Northeast Asia, Maersk), Sakura Kuma (Executive Officer/Managing Director Mitsui O.S.K. Line/MOL (Asia Oceania)), Richard Ballantyne OBE, Chief Executive British Ports Association



Pictured: L-R Claes Lindgren (Global Category Manager – Logistics and Transport, IKEA), Ingrid Boqué Sastre (Director of Institutional Relations, Port of Barcelona), Jon Goldner (Chief Executive – Asia and Middle East, APM Terminals), Thomas Kazakos, (Secretary General, International Chamber of Shipping)

point of the conference that thinking on new clean fuels is still evolving: methanol, LNG, shore power and other options all have challenges associated with them and funding requirements.

"Economic security," Kanda underlined, is essential and he cited the ongoing importance of China as an engine of growth and conversely the reduction in container export movement from Europe. He noted that the first six months of 2025 has seen global container growth ramp up by 6% but acknowledged the uncertainty around future trade growth development due to the difficult geo-political situation.

Working programme

The working sessions of the Day One Conference programme placed major emphasis on future fuels and, as an allied topic, the IMO Net Zero Framework. There was considerable speculation as to whether the IMO Net Zero Framework would be adopted – there was optimism that it would be, by both speakers and delegates, but also doubts expressed.

In late October, shortly after the Kobe conference, the initiative was postponed for a year as a result of a motion being passed by 57 in favour, 49 against with 21 abstentions. The plan is for IMO member states to keep working on the framework and associated guidelines over this period with a view to another vote at the end of 2026.

The Kobe conference programme went on to discuss the practicalities of how ports can achieve tangible results from climate resilience investments and how they can prepare themselves for a new, multi-fuel world. It was acknowledged that larger ports may be the beneficiaries of a clearer demand picture from the shipping line client side, although even in this sector there was not always certainty, while for medium- to small-size ports both aspects frequently remained highly challenging.

Key afternoon sessions elaborated on the prominent issue of trade policy uncertainty – tariffs, changing tariff directives, the impact on trade flows and a specific focus on the 'hot spot' of the Red Sea. Questioned as to how the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority (DP&FZA) was responding to the challenges, Aboubaker Omar Hadi, chairman of the board, highlighted a strong focus on Africa, Ethiopian cargo, South Sudan and pointed out the possibilities raised by the so-called DESSU Corridor



Pictured: L-R Yesim Elhan-Kayalar, (Adviser, Office of the Chief Economist, ADB), Masahiko Furuichi, (Secretary General, IAPH), Hideaki Iwasaki (Director General Sectors Development 1, ADB), Jens Meier, (President, IAPH), H.E. Masato Kanda (President, ADB), Marika Kalfas (regional VP Asia, East, Oceania, IAPH), Masaharu Shinohara (outgoing regional VP, Asia South and West, Middle East, IAPH), Ichio Motono, (incoming regional VP, Asia South and West, Middle East, IAPH), Patrick Verhoeven, (Managing Director, IAPH)



(Djibouti-Ethiopia-South Sudan-Uganda). One particular goal in conjunction with the latter project is to solve South Sudan's oil distribution problems caused by armed conflicts and a raft of governance and institutional challenges. None of the initiatives are a quick fix but they demonstrate the drive of ports in the region to build new sources of business against a background of disruption in the normal trading environment.

Also notable in the afternoon programme of Day One was the spotlight thrown on the newly-launched 3rd edition of the World Bank's Port Reform Toolkit, a product developed with input from IAPH. The toolkit is presented in a modular format, allowing users to focus on aspects most relevant to their individual situation. The toolkit contains updated sections on regulation, governance and private sector involvement



Day Two opening keynote presentations were delivered by Hitoshi Nagaswa, president, Japanese Shipowners' Association and Ong Kim Pong, Group CEO, PSA International. They further brought into focus the aspects of private sector finance, clean fuels, digitalisation, and introduced discussion on port call optimisation, capacity building, cyber resilience and modernising sustainable maritime operations.

Ong Kim Pong talked of PSA's vision of the port of the future. He said: "We envision the port of the future as a connected ecosystem – bridging land and sea, physical and digital – to drive agility, collaboration, and value across supply chains." This vision, he explained, is embodied in PSA Singapore's Tuas Port Ecosystem; PSA's re-imagination of a resilient, future-ready global trade hub, made possible through strong partnerships. Underpinning the vision presented, he traced the development of container activities in Singapore, elaborated on the remarkable development of the new port zone of Tuas, entailing a major relocation of container handling facilities, and how a leading smart port can be established drawing on new technologies and has to be sustainable, not only in an environmental context, but also in terms of the ability to navigate increasingly complex trade arrangements buffeted by geopolitical factors.



Pictured: Flemish Minister for Mobility and Public Works, Ports, and Sports, Government of Flanders' Annick de Ridder intervenes during the plenary "The current investment climate for ports – storm clouds with silver linings?"

Finance was a particularly strong theme surfacing in a number of lively panel discussions including the sessions on the current investment climate for ports, port financing and risk, and maximising the value of port land through smarter concessions. Key points that emerged from the combination of these sessions include:

- Geo-political factors are reshaping trade patterns and port financing strategies. Trade patterns are likely to shift towards the growing importance of intra-Asia trades as well as more trade between the East Asia and Africa and Latin America. Alongside this, G2G governance arrangements are becoming more prominent in ports, both with port authorities and operations. Some argue a slow retreat from international competitive bidding for Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) and Public-Private -Partnerships (PPP) is underway.
- Emerging market port authorities, serving small national economies, are facing many of the same disruptions as larger ports - climate risk exposure, digitalisation and security, ship and cargo handling technology changes - but are struggling to put in place plans to manage these disruptions.
- Pressures to embark on a green transition and net zero pathway are especially problematic in these smaller ports; not least as technology choices around fuels and landslide power are still nascent in much of the world.
- The financing challenges facing smaller emerging market ports are materially different from larger more mature markets; there is often a higher exposure to risk and less capacity to manage these risks. Thus, there is a need for new approaches and instruments to de-risk investments and to transfer risks where possible. The needs of these smaller market ports should be better provided for and should be elevated within the IAPH community.
- Port financing investment criteria and risk assessments vary significantly depending on the scale and types of port (containers, bulks, multi-purpose) and brownfield vs greenfield. Further complexity is added when port authorities are often tasked with managing both inside and outside the port gate infrastructure requirements and externalities that impact on operations and returns.
- Access to concessional port financing increasingly depends not only on the strength of fundamentals - ROI and cashflow - but also contributions to wider economic benefits such as job creation and other ESG considerations.
- You can start with distinct goals in concession arrangements, such as maximising land values, but invariably it is not one but a combination of benefits that wins the day. There remains significant scope for upgrading tender procedures and bidding arrangements as well as procedures governing concession extensions or retendering. ■



as well as new sections on environmental and sustainability, change management, digitisation and cyber risks and port city relationships. Insight into the third edition was expertly delivered by Jan Hoffmann, global lead, maritime transport, World Bank and Patrick Verhoeven, IAPH managing director. ■

**Other landmark partnership agreements signed by IAPH during the Conference included:*

- *A two-year Coalition Partnership agreement with the Global Centre for Maritime Decarbonisation aimed at accelerating the decarbonisation of the maritime sector.*
- *A Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Cruise Lines International Association to boost* cooperation on sustainability including shore power and port planning.



GIVING BACK

Jens Meir, IAPH president, in his opening welcoming address emphasised the 'family' of IAPH built upon a collaborative culture and what amounts to the generosity of spirt of its membership. A snapshot of this was evident among participants in the exhibition accompanying the conference. Both Trelleborg Marine and Shore Tension, suppliers of harbour equipment, gave away the TV screens employed on their respective exhibition stands. Trelleborg donated to a local special needs school and Shore Tension to the Kobe Seamen's' Mission.

New members

We are pleased to welcome as new members of the association:

Regular members

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www.worldbank.org/ext/en/home
Cordula Rastogi, Senior Transport Specialist

IAPH vice presidents: 2025-2027

Introducing our team of six regional IAPH vice presidents







AMERICA, CENTRAL & SOUTH
Vinicius Patel
Director of port administration,
Port of Açu, Brazil (re-elected)

Re-elected this year is Vinicius Patel, who will continue work as vice president for Central and South America. Director of port administration at Port of Açu, Brazil. Vinicius also occupies the position of chair of the ESI board.

AMERICA, NORTH
Eugene Seroka
Executive director, Port of Los Angeles, USA (re-elected)

Eugene Seroka, executive director, Port of Los Angeles, USA, has been re-elected as vice president for North America, having completed a full term alongside IAPH president Jens Meier.

EUROPE
Jacques Vandermeiren
CEO, Port of Antwerp-Bruges, Belgium (re-elected)

Following his election and appointment late last year, Jacques Vandermeiren, CEO, Port of Antwerp-Bruges, Belgium, has been re-elected as IAPH vice president for Europe.

IAPH is pleased to announce that vice presidents for the following six regions have been elected by their member ports, for the period 2025 to 2027, following voting that took place in the summer. This follows the re-election of Jens Meier, current president of IAPH and CEO of Hamburg Port Authority following a formal voting process which took place earlier this year. The new president and vice presidents officially took office following their endorsement at the Annual General Meeting in Kobe.



AFRICA
Dr Abubakar Dantsoho
Managing director and CEO,
Nigerian Ports Authority, Nigeria

Dr Abubakar Dantsoho, managing director and CEO, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), is the new IAPH vice president for Africa. His NPA career dates back to 1992, where he started as a trainee, progressing to a marketing role, before taking over at the helm. A former Chief of Staff to the Minister of Transportation, he has chaired several external and in-house technical committees, and completed multiple consultancy projects with various partners.



ASIA, SOUTH WEST, EAST & MIDDLE EAST
Dr Ichio Motono
Senior executive director,
Yokohama Port Corporation, Japan

We would also like to welcome Dr Ichio Motono, senior executive director at Yokohama Port Corporation, Japan, who has been named as the new IAPH vice president for the broad Asia, Southwest, East & Middle East region. Dr Motono has already been serving as chair of the IAPH port planning, operation and finance committee which convened in person in Kobe before the 2025 conference.



ASIA, SOUTHEAST AND OCEANIA
Marika Calfas
CEO, NSW Ports, Australia

Marika Calfas, CEO of NSW Ports, Australia, has been named vice president for the Asia, Southeast and Oceania region, after being appointed at the IAPH annual general meeting in Kobe recently. She has over 20 years' experience in the sector, including in port planning and development. She is also a director of TT Club, deputy chair of Ports Australia and Infrastructure Partnerships Australia. as well as a Council Member of the Australian Logistics Council.

EVENTS TIMELINE 2025-2026

16 NOVEMBER 16-22
Hong Kong Maritime Week
Conferences, events and seminars in Hong Kong
hkmw.hk

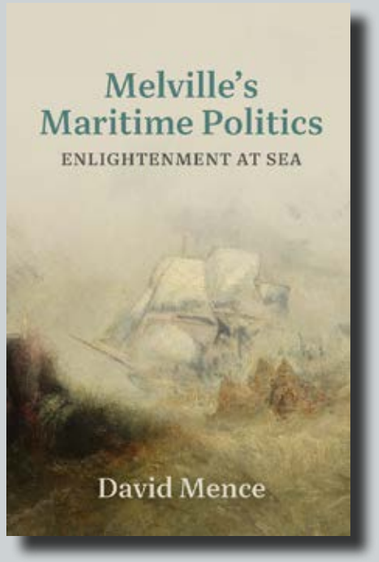
20 NOVEMBER 20
Annual Trends in Shipping Review 2025
Understanding and adapting to current and future changes, London
maritimeindustries.org

9 DECEMBER 9-10
IAPH Harbor Cafe
Virtual meeting with IAPH president Jens Meier (online)
iaphworldports.org

16 DECEMBER 16
IAPH-Mercator Webinar:
Decarbonization of Ports and Shipping: How the recent IMO and COP 30 decisions will influence port priorities
iaphworldports.org

22 APRIL 22-24
IAPH Technical Committee Days
2026 IAPH Technical Committee meetings in Singapore
iaphworldports.org

3 NOVEMBER 3-6
#IAPH2026 World Ports Conference
The IAPH flagship conference in London, UK
worldportsconference.com





BOOK AUTHOR

DR DAVID MENCE honorary associate, School of Culture & Communication, University of Melbourne, is an independent scholar who focuses on the political thought of the Enlightenment. He has a particular interest in social contract theory and notions of Atlantic Republicanism.

THE REVIEW

Melville's Maritime Politics: Enlightenment at Sea

MARTIN CLARK

★★★★½

Herman Melville (1819-1891) was an American writer, who spent part of his early life at sea, but was most famously known for his epic novel, Moby Dick. Published in 1851, it centres on the sailor Ishmael's narrative of the maniacal quest of Ahab, captain of the whaling ship Pequod, for vengeance against Moby Dick, a giant sperm whale that bit off his leg during a previous voyage.

Publishing 10 January 2026 (OUP), Melville's Maritime Politics: Enlightenment at Sea offers a reappraisal of the political thought of the author within the context of the times and the social and cultural movement known as the Enlightenment, which emphasised reason and skepticism towards traditional authority.

Reading Melville in dialogue with great thinkers like Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant, this book demonstrates how his fiction and poetry engaged with the great debates of political modernity. Melville's works, it argues, not only responded to competing visions of the American Republic but also reflected upon the turbulent political realities of his own century, an age marked by expansion, civil war and the brutality of slavery.

Tracing the ship of state metaphor throughout Melville's career, the study charts the evolution of his political imagination, from the Romantic Federalism evident in other works such as Typee and Omoo, to the 'tragic pragmatism' of Battle-Pieces and Billy Budd, Sailor, another well-known novel, but left unfinished at his death in 1891. Mence illustrates how Melville's shifting nautical imagery mirrors his growing skepticism toward the moral and institutional stability of American democracy.

At the heart of the argument lies the claim that Melville's vision was shaped by the early Republican–Federalist debate, which sought to interpret the meaning of the American Revolution in light of the cataclysmic events of the French Revolution (1789-1799). Nowhere is this hostility more powerfully rendered than Moby Dick, which dramatises the 'shipwreck' of the American Republic, brought about by Captain Ahab's hubristic quest to slay the Leviathan, representing the state itself.

Across six chapters, the author presents Melville's political vision as one of "perpetual upkeep at sea" – a vision of democracy as a fragile, ever-labouring vessel that must be navigated, maintained and repaired as, to borrow from Moby Dick, the "wildest winds of heaven and earth conspire to cast her on the treacherous, slavish shore." ■

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