

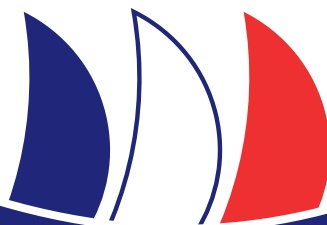


MINISTÈRE  
DE L'EUROPE  
ET DES AFFAIRES  
ÉTRANGÈRES

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

# FRANCE'S CANDIDACY FOR ITS RE-ELECTION IN CATEGORY B AT THE IMO COUNCIL

AIDE-MÉMOIRE



2024-2025 TERM



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# "THIS IS THE CENTURY OF THE OCEANS."

**Emmanuel Macron,**  
President of the French Republic  
Montpellier, 3 December 2019,  
Assises de l'économie de la mer

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France is present in every ocean, and monitors this fragile environment, contributing to both the protection of marine ecosystems and maritime safety and security.

Driven by the belief that oceans are a common good, France aims to be a source of proposals within the International Maritime Organization (IMO), alongside other Member States, to defend the sustainable maritime transport economy, a focus of the projects implemented by this organization. France is involved in research and innovation, and is also dedicated to the development of a blue economy.

Ocean governance – the protection of maritime spaces and coastlines, the ecological transition of ports and ships, the training of seafarers, and the modernization of maritime administration – is a key issue.

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To tackle these goals, France now has a Ministry for Marine Affairs, which is committed to guaranteeing the future of the maritime sector, reconciling the different uses of the sea and developing sustainable use of its resources.

France pays specific attention to the standards and rules of accountability that stem from the conventions and codes that govern global maritime activity.

In that respect, France has vast and diversified expertise that it has provided for the IMO since its creation.

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# A STRONG COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

France manages an exclusive economic zone with a total area of just over **10 million km<sup>2</sup>**. The expanse of habitats included in this zone implies high climate and ecological diversity. Around half of marine mammal biodiversity can be found there.

France has a strong, pragmatic environmental marine ambition; it plays an active role in international discussions in favour of the ecological protection of marine environments, in particular through:

- its commitment and tangible proposals within the Organization to reduce greenhouse gases;
- an approach to strengthen the protection of the marine environment in the Mediterranean Sea with the creation of a sulphur emission control area (SECA MED) which will enter into force in 2025;
- conservation, protection and marine and coastal ecosystem restoration: 33% of French waters were covered by at least one marine protected area in 2022, with the creation of the national natural reserve of the French Austral Lands;
- a marine mammals protection strategy, by working in particular to prevent collisions with cetaceans and against underwater noise: France proposed and obtained the creation of a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area in the western Mediterranean;
- setting up a plan to fight plastic pollution which does serious damage to the oceans. France will be hosting the second session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-2) in Paris from 27 May to 2 June 2023, which will be tasked with drafting a legally-binding international instrument on plastic pollution.

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- banning the use of exhaust gas cleaning systems (or scrubbers) on ships in proximity to French coastlines as of 1 January 2022;
  - developing green technologies, renewable energy and intelligent use of resources.

**In February 2022, France organized the One Ocean Summit. In 2025, it will host the third United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice, jointly organized with Costa Rica.**

Furthermore, France has positioned itself against seabed mining, and is launching a plan for the exploration and mapping of the deep seabed with the France 2030 Investment Plan (Ulyx IFREMER deep-sea drone).

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# CONTINUOUS DEDICATION TO INTERNATIONAL MARITIME TRANSPORT SAFETY AND SECURITY

As a coastal state (20,000 km of coastline) on several oceans and seas (Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean, English Channel, North Sea, Mediterranean Sea), **France actively participates in ensuring the safety of maritime navigation and protecting our exceptional natural environment.**

It is responsible for:

- Rescue operations (SAR areas) **across some 24 million km<sup>2</sup>**;
- Issuing maritime safety information (MSI) and coordinating its dissemination in the eastern Atlantic;
- Marine mapping of waters under its jurisdiction and in those of a dozen coastal States in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean.

As a member of the international Hydrographic Organization Council, it consistently monitors **international maritime transport safety.**

In 2021, in French waters, **160,000 commercial vessels were monitored by the Regional Operational Centres for Monitoring and Rescue (CROSS). 626 damage situations were reported.**

France instigated the first memorandum of understanding (MoU Paris) which harmonized the control of foreign vessels in ports. It also signed the Indian Ocean and Caribbean MoUs.



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France also supports **the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA)**, whose work in the safety of navigation was recognized through **its transformation into an international organization**. France, which approved the **Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation in December 2022**, is the **depository State of the Convention and host State of the future Organization**.

Lastly, France plays an active role in several international operations to combat piracy and illegal trafficking at sea.

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# FRANCE, A DIVERSIFIED MARITIME ECONOMY

► **The French flag is internationally recognized as one of the safest in the world.**

This year once again, the Registre International Français (RIF), a register for merchant vessels, qualified for the US Coast Guard's QUALSHIP 21 program, which rewards ships that meet criteria for "quality shipping for the 21st century".

The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) designated the French flag as fulfilling the criteria of environmental quality, vessel safety and employment law.

In terms of tonnage, on 1 January 2021 the French fleet ranked **27th among global fleets by flag** and **22nd for its controlled fleet**. French ship-owners operate in all traditional maritime transport trades, and operate almost 900 vessels with more than 100 UMS, of which more than 400 fly the French flag.

► **In 2019, 312 million tonnes of goods transited through French ports, equivalent to 87% of the total volume of goods recorded in France. Around 32 million passengers travel through French ports yearly.**

French ports rank **fifth in Europe**.

Sea ports define and implement a long-term vision of the sustainable planning of their port zones. They implement exemplary processes in terms of environmental protection and the energy transition by developing the distribution of alternative fuels and connecting moored vessels to electricity.

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► **The French shipbuilding industry is ranked sixth in the world and second in Europe.**

French shipyards are specialized in building the most complex high added value products such as cruise ships.

The French marine industry, which brings together the naval industry, renewable marine energy, the boating industry and services, as well as the offshore sector, employs **125,600 people**, generating turnover of **€45 billion per year, 60% of which comes from exports.**

More broadly, the maritime economy represents **525,000 direct jobs, with a production value of €91 billion.**

► **France ensures that its flotilla of 7,370 vessels practices sustainable fishing and that its oyster and shellfish production sector has good quality water.**

The French fishing industry is the **fourth-largest in Europe** with **11% of the total volume caught.**

Lastly, the yachting sector is an important industry with almost **11 million water sports enthusiasts.** This sector represents an annual turnover of almost **€5 billion.**

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# FRANCE, RECOGNIZED EXPERTISE AND SERVICES

France is adapting its maritime education system to technological developments, new regulatory requirements and a constantly-evolving labour market.

**Women account for more than one in five jobs** in the French maritime sector, and on vessels one in every ten crew members is a woman. French maritime education encourages women to join professions in the sector.

France has high-quality training courses in all maritime disciplines, enabling it to maintain and develop an efficient ecosystem of services to increase growth in the sector:

- **French banks are attractive**, and ranked among the leaders in the maritime finance market;
- **French shipbrokers have one of the best reputations in the world**, with an age-old tradition;
- **Maritime insurance companies are highly efficient** on the international market;
- **Bureau Veritas Marine Offshore SAS**, a classification company, ranks second in the world in the number of vessels classified;
- Around **6,800 researchers**, engineers, doctorate and post-doctorate students work in the field of marine science and technology, in some **222 research units**.

France has internationally recognized centres of technical and scientific excellence, such as the French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea (IFREMER) and the Centre for Documentation, Research and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution (CEDRE).

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# FRANCE, ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF MARITIME INNOVATION

France is on the cutting edge of reflection and innovation to respond in particular to digital technology and environmental challenges. In 2018, it established a Council for Guidelines on Research and Innovation for the Maritime Industry (CORIMER). Several projects developed in France attest to this:

- **Use of alternative “low-carbon” fuels** in container ship fleets (23,000 TEU) and passenger ferries (Ponant and Brittany Ferries), in particular hydrogen (Occitanie dredger, oceanic buoy tender project, and 10 CMA CGM container ships of 2,000 TEU);
- **Incorporation of various types of wind-assisted propulsion solutions**, which harness a renewable energy source (hard/ soft wingsails, retractable sails, kites, etc.), with several French stakeholders: Chantiers de l’Atlantique, Solid Sail, Rotorsails, AirSeas, TOWT, NEOLINE (vessels include the Canopée, TOWT 2, and Ville de Bordeaux);
- **Construction of vessels and research stations which are unique in the world** (Polar POD, SeaOrbiter and Tara Polar Station), demonstrating the excellence of this sector in France;
- **Introduction of a new digital broadband transmission system**, NAVDAT, which operates on MW and LW radio, and can provide a higher volume of information on maritime safety and security, at a faster rhythm, than the current NAVTEX system, including graphical data;
- **Digitization of administrative procedures to manage registers:** port single window, ship single window, management of shipping lines and sailors (sailors’ portal, shipping lines’ portal), portal for maritime professional training.

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# FRANCE, PLAYING AN ACTIVE ROLE AT THE IMO SINCE ITS INCEPTION

France has long been active in developing international standards for the safety and security of maritime transport as well as preventing vessels from polluting the seas. **It took part in the negotiations for the first version of the SOLAS Convention.**

It has a permanent representation in London to the IMO, the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO), and the International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC). **Its vast network of experts and its maritime administration enable it to play an active role in all of the committee and sub-committee sessions,** and in almost all of the working groups, in-person or remotely.

France has ratified almost all IMO instruments, including the most recent ones, such as the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships. In 2018, it ratified the Cape Town Agreement on fishing vessel safety, the SUA Convention and its 2005 Protocol, and in 2019 the STCW-F Convention. **It is currently preparing the procedures to ratify the Convention on the transport of hazardous and noxious substances (HNS) and the amendments made to the IMO Convention in December 2021.**

France is highly active within this Organization, **promoting multilingualism, gender equality and the rise in the number of women in maritime roles.**

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**It is committed to ensuring the human aspect is taken into consideration** in its work, and that there is a particular focus on the subjects in common with the International Labour Organization (ILO) (such as harassment, preventing fatigue, etc.).

**France ranks 20th among contributors to the Organization's 2023 budget, and each year makes voluntary financial contributions,** for the management of ballast water, or for multi-donor funds for technical Cooperation on greenhouse gases, including the fund to facilitate the participation of the most vulnerable States in the meetings of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) and the Intersessional Working Group on Greenhouse Gas Emissions (ISWG-GHG).



# FRANCE AT THE IMO COUNCIL 2024-2025

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