

Athens, October 24, 2023

METAVASEA: Supporting a people-centred transition for maritime decarbonization in the East Mediterranean

HELMEPA-led wide collaboration of maritime stakeholders seeks to provide a snapshot of maritime decarbonization infrastructure in Greece & Cyprus, map the skills gap and support seafarers, port workers, shipping professionals and administrators with flexible training/ upskilling/ reskilling toolkits.

The ambitious 'METAVASEA: People-Centered Transition for Maritime Decarbonization in the East Mediterranean' project commenced with its inaugural partners' meeting on October 6th at the Athina Maritime Learning & Development Center in Athens.

METAVASEA aims to train and upskill 1,500 seafarers, shipping professionals, and port workers in new fuels, digital awareness, marine environmental awareness, and soft skills. It also seeks to boost the involvement of shipping companies and ports in maritime decarbonization initiatives, offer insights into shipping and community readiness for new fuels, and identify region-specific opportunities, gaps, and challenges. Moreover, it intends to enhance accident prevention through improved efficiency in on-board and port operations and raise climate awareness among 10,000 schoolchildren, 750 teachers, and 2 million residents in the East Mediterranean.

Supported by the [Lloyd's Register Foundation](#) (LRF), the project will be implemented between October 2023 and September 2028 under the coordination of the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMEPA), with partners Lloyd's Register, World Maritime University (WMU), Cyprus Marine Environment Protection Association (CYMEPA), Cyprus Marine & Maritime Institute (CMMI), Premium Consulting and the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture & Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE). Associate partners in the project include Athina Maritime Learning & Development Center of HELMEPA member-company Minerva Dry Inc, the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping and the Master and Mates Union of Greek Merchant Marine, the Hellenic Ports Association, and the Port Authorities of Elefsis, Heraklion and Thessaloniki (HELMEPA members), INTERMEPA - International Marine Environment Protection Association, KNOWL Social Enterprise, Gratia Publications (Naftika Chronika), Oriani and WISTA Hellas.

The project has already generated considerable interest among HELMEPA's membership and regional stakeholders to be engaged in the activities including 46 shipping companies and organizations-members of HELMEPA as well as public and private maritime organizations, such as the General Secretariat of Ports, Port Policy and Maritime Investments of the of the Hellenic Ministry of maritime Affairs and Insular Policy, the Deputy Ministries of Shipping and Tourism and the Chamber of Shipping in Cyprus, the Ministry of Transport and Road Safety of Israel, the Arab Network for Environment & development (RAED) and the Arab Academy for Science, Technology



& Maritime Transport in Egypt, Blue Visby Solutions and the Lloyd's Register Maritime Decarbonization Hub.

Mr. Constantinos Triantafyllou, HELMEPA Head of Strategy & Development, outlined the needs that led to the project submission: the rapid green and digital transition of the industry, necessitating the development of new skills in the East Mediterranean, a climate change hotspot. Additionally, the revision of the IMO Strategy for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships underscores the need for reskilling and upskilling of up to 800,000 seafarers by 2035.

Dr. Tim Slingsby, Director of Skills & Education at Lloyd's Register Foundation, highlighted the Foundation's mission to create a safer world and mentioned *"Lloyd's Register Foundation's support for METAVASEA shows our commitment to ensuring responses to the climate emergency have safety as a primary consideration. This work that HELMEPA is leading will build capability and demonstrates the importance of working in partnerships and wider collaborations to embed safety and increase capacity on a local level, creating a safe, equitable and sustainable maritime industry"*.

Meanwhile, Mr. Theodosios Stamatellos, Global Technical Client Care Director of Lloyd's Register and HELMEPA Board Member, emphasized the importance of prioritizing the human aspect in maritime decarbonization efforts.

Mr. Manolis Nikolaidis, Managing Director of Premium Consulting presented an outline approach of the research study that will involve ports, seafarers, and marine communities in the East Mediterranean, seeking to provide a region-specific state-of-play with regards to maritime decarbonization, a comparative analysis with other parts of the world highlighting best practices and a detection of readiness levels of local communities, all important elements for decision-making.

Dr. Tafsir Matin Johansson, WMU Associate Professor/Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute outlined the role of WMU in the project to enhance capacity building and create an international platform for dialogue and discussions, disseminating findings through their network at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and other UN bodies.

Following the productive meeting, participants enjoyed a guided tour of the excellent facilities of the Athina Maritime Learning and Development Center, with Mr. Stelios Volakis, Training Manager, offering the Centre's resources for the METAVASEA project's future needs.



(*) Note for the Editors:

About Lloyd's Register Foundation

Lloyd's Register Foundation is an independent global charity that supports research, innovation, and education to make the world a safer place. Its mission is to use the best evidence and insight to help the global community focus on tackling the world's most pressing safety and risk challenges. For more information, please visit www.lrfoundation.org.uk

About HELMEPA

The **Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association** (HELMEPA) is a non-governmental, nonprofit-making organization representing a 41-year long voluntary commitment of Greek shipowners and seafarers "To Save the Seas" by focusing on the human element. Today the Association has evolved into an open participatory platform of volunteerism, collaboration, and collective action with a membership comprising 344 shipping companies and organizations in Greece and abroad, 2,312 ocean-going vessels of all types and 14,250+ seafarers. www.helmepa.gr/en

Lloyd's Register Foundation & HELMEPA enjoy a long-standing and trustworthy cooperation in promoting environmental awareness, safety at sea and people-centered maritime decarbonization with extensive impact among the marine communities of Greece, Cyprus and the wider East Mediterranean region.

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