Declaration of Cooperation for Accelerating Nuclear for Maritime Applications to meet Climate Ambitions

Towards a collective European commitment to advance nuclear technologies for a sustainable and secure maritime future.

An initiative impulsed by France, European and international nuclear and maritime industries.

Based on the French initiative launched by :

PREAMBLE

Acknowledging the critical role of the maritime sector in achieving global climate goals, and the need to transition towards sustainable energy systems, it is important to address the unique challenges of decarbonizing shipping, one of the hardest sectors to abate. This calls for urgent, coordinated efforts to align maritime transport with global climate objectives. As a cornerstone of global trade, ensuring the sector's sustainability is essential for a just transition and long-term resilience.

Recognizing the pivotal role and transformative potential of nuclear technology, expected in the form of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), as a safe and reliable, low-carbon energy solution. Deployed industrially, SMRs offer a unique opportunity to decarbonize global shipping and port operations, as identified by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Taking note that the integration of nuclear reactors in civil maritime operations requires coordinated international efforts to address technological, safety, regulatory, and societal challenges as well as to mobilize significant investments and human resources.

Recognizing the urgent need to shape the international standards, regulations and practices for a safe and sustainable deployment of nuclear technology in the maritime sector.

Underlining the importance of collaboration between industry stakeholders, regulatory bodies, and research institutions to develop pilot projects, study the techno-economic viability, establish best practices, and create an enabling ecosystem for civil nuclear technology deployment.

Considering the ongoing efforts to build synergy between nuclear innovation and maritime decarbonization, it offers an unique opportunity to combine the nuclear and maritime industry within a strategic vision for a sustainable future. Strong public-private leadership will be key to driving the cooperation and investment needed to meet global climate goals.

Welcoming the French Government's initiative (France 2030 Investment Plan) and the industrial declaration of intent jointly issued by the industry associations GIFEN, GICAN, and Armateurs de France, to further advance nuclear technology innovation - including SMRs - further underscore France's commitment to positioning itself as a global leader in integrating nuclear solutions within maritime operations.

Considering the Call of the French partners towards their counterparts in the European countries to join their efforts, skills, foresight and entrepreneurship to play a pivotal role in shaping the international standards and practices and to get prepared for a timely industrial deployment of nuclear in maritime as another European sector of excellence.

THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS DECLARATION

1. **Share (and Commit) to a Collective Vision**

To advance the sustainable and secure integration of nuclear reactors in civil maritime applications, positioning France in a leading role in maritime decarbonization and nuclear innovation by identifying best use cases and regulatory and safety key enablers.

2. **Collaborate for a Sustainable Future**

Foster collaboration among French and European companies, regulators, research institutions, EU and international partners to:

- Address technological and regulatory challenges.
- Develop innovative solutions for maritime energy systems.
- Build public trust through transparent communication and stakeholder engagement.

3. **Proclaim a Commitment to responsible Leadership**

Declare that the undersigned organizations will work together to maximize the contribution of nuclear technology to maritime emissions reduction (all of them), ensuring safety, responsibility, and sustainability in their deployment.

4. **Identify Demonstrators and Pilot Projects**

Focus on identifying opportunities for demonstrators and pilot projects that explore the integration of nuclear reactors into maritime and port operations. This step aims to assess the potential of such initiatives to transform energy use in these sectors, while acknowledging the complexity of prioritizing actions due to the diverse and sometimes conflicting objectives of economic and political stakeholders.

5. **Simplify and Communicate on Nuclear Safety and active Public Engagement**

Develop a simplified and accessible presentation of nuclear safety related issues/technologies and the regulatory framework to foster understanding, transparency, and public confidence in the use of nuclear reactors in the maritime domain.

6. **Strengthen International Collaboration**

Thanks to the founding work by the different French Maritime and Nuclear Associations, accelerate the work with interested stakeholders and express their shared interests in the different discussions taking place at IAEA and IMO (International Maritime Organization). Continue the collaboration with international initiatives such as NEMO (Nuclear Energy Maritime Organization) to enhance the chances of success.

7. **Structure a European Ecosystem**

Built on the European initiative by the EU Industrial Alliance for SMRs, develop a robust European ecosystem for nuclear technology in the maritime sector for land and offshore uses. This should include the creation of a clear roadmap to guide research, innovation, as well as European infrastructure to ensure a reliable supply chain in support to the deployment efforts across member states.

8. **Call on Governments and Institutions**

Urge the French government, European institutions, and international bodies to:

- Provide regulatory clarity and an enabling policy environment for nuclear reactors integration in maritime operations.
- Ensure equitable access to climate finance for nuclear-powered maritime solutions.
- Ensure worldwide safety standards for nuclear development in alignment with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) guidelines and promote best- in-class safety practices.
- Support public-private partnerships to drive innovation and investment in nuclear technologies.

9. **Monitor Progress and Accountability**

Commit to an annual review of progress towards the goals outlined in this declaration, ensuring accountability and alignment with global climate and energy transition targets.

INTENTION OF COOPERATION

We invite all stakeholders from the nuclear and maritime sectors to join this collective commitment, pooling their expertise, resources, and innovation to advance the integration of nuclear technology in civil maritime applications. Together, we can build a sustainable, secure, and resilient maritime future, that highlights French and European leadership and excellence on the global stage.

In this context, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) plays a crucial role. As its 110th session in June 2025, the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) agreed that the Ship Design and Construction Sub-Committee, will prepare, during its January 2026 session, a roadmap to revise the existing IMO Code ("Nuclear Code") of safety for nuclear merchant ships (adopted in 1981). This roadmap will be submitted for approval at MSC111 in June 2026. Our input and representation will be important.

We encourage all interested partners to actively participate in preparing and sharing their views and proposals on this revision during dedicated workshops. We also invite stakeholders to contribute their assessments of other relevant issues related to the planned deployment of nuclear technology in maritime contexts.

References and Inspiration

- IAEA, "Small Modular Reactors: A Pathway to Decarbonization"
- IAEA Safety Standards Series
- IMO Codes in particular the SOLAS and Res A.491.XII
- 24th INPRO Dialogue Forum on Floating Nuclear Power Plants
- IMO MSC 110th session in June 2025
- The New Energies Coalition: The Role of Nuclear in Shipping Decarbonization
- The NEA Small Modular Reactor Dashboard: Third Edition
- The EU Industrial Alliance for SMR's
- Industrial declaration of intent jointly issued by the industry associations GIFEN, GICAN, and Armateurs de France (Déclaration d'intention industrielle des filières maritime et nucléaire)