

THE SEA CARGO CHARTER ASSOCIATION

# Overview and Guiding Principles

September 2025

**The Sea Cargo Charter is a framework for assessing and disclosing the climate alignment of chartering activities of charterers and shipowners around the globe.**

The Sea Cargo Charter (SCC) provides a global framework for aligning chartering activities with responsible environmental behaviour to promote international shipping's decarbonisation.

The Charter is consistent with the policies and ambitions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) 's Greenhouse-Gas Strategy, including its latest ambition to reach net-zero emissions from international shipping "by or around" 2050 compared to 2008 levels, with interim targets in 2030 and 2040, and considering full lifecycle emissions ("well-to-wake").

## Background

Launched in 2020 and developed by charterers, shipowners, and industry experts in collaboration with the Global Maritime Forum, UMAS and the Smart Freight Centre, the SCC sets a standard methodology to calculate the greenhouse-gas emissions, the emissions intensity and hence the climate alignment of charterers and shipowners in the bulk and tanker trades. In 2024, the framework was updated to fully include shipowners in the framework. The SCC bases its decarbonisation trajectories on the [2023 IMO GHG Strategy](#).

## Eligibility & Scope

### Eligible signatories:

- Charterers and shipowners operating in the dry bulk and tanker trades.
- Companies occupying any position in the charterparty chain: charterers, sub-charterers, disponent owners with commercial control, and registered owners with commercial control.

### Not eligible:

- Third-party managers without a corporate relationship to the shipowning entity, and shipowners who only charter out vessels on bareboat terms.

### Scope of application:

- Time and voyage charters (including contracts of affreightment and parcelling) with a mechanism to allocate ballast voyage emissions.
- Voyages by dry bulk carriers, chemical tankers, oil tankers (crude and product), combination carriers and liquefied gas carriers engaged in international trade (excludes inland waterways).

## The Principles of the Sea Cargo Charter

The requirements for signatories fall under the four Principles that constitute the Sea Cargo Charter and that are also shared by the [Poseidon Principles Association](#).

### 1. Assessment of climate alignment

Annual calculation of emissions intensity and a formal climate alignment assessment vis-à-vis the SCC decarbonisation trajectories that are based on the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy. The reporting requirement takes effect in the calendar year after a company becomes a signatory.

## 2. Accountability

Signatories must rely on the data types and sources, and emissions calculation methodology specified in the SCC Technical Guidance to ensure consistency and credibility.

## 3. Enforcement

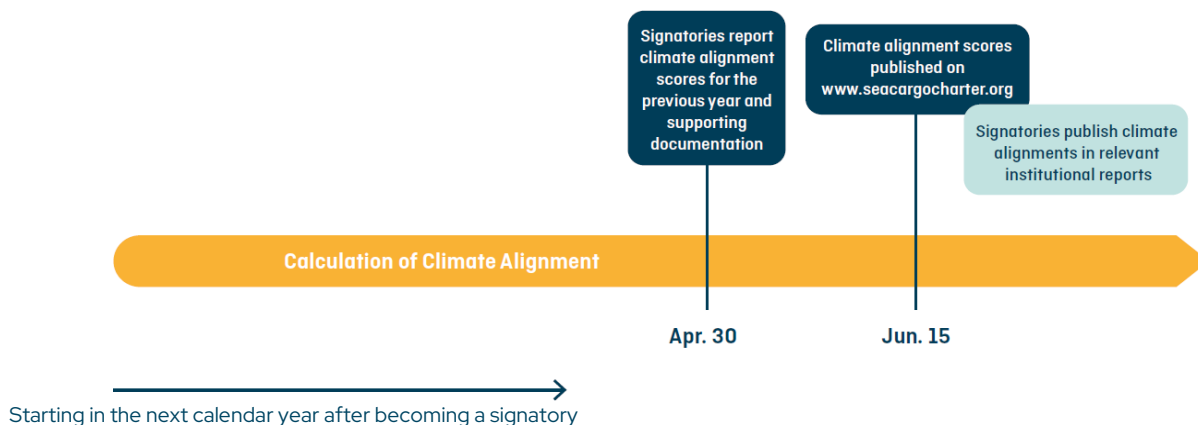
Signatories must cooperate with owners, disponent owners and business partners to obtain the information needed to calculate the emissions intensity of their activities. The SCC provides a [recommended charterparty clause](#) to support data sharing.

## 4. Transparency

Companies publicly acknowledge that they are a signatory and publish their annual climate alignment scores in the Sea Cargo Charter Annual Disclosure Report and in their relevant institutional reports.

## Timeline for Signatories

The general reporting timeline is outlined in the figure below:



## What this means for Business Partners

**Data requested:** For each voyage, signatories will typically request noon or voyage reports containing:

- Fuel type and consumption (metric tonnes) across the relevant ballast and laden legs;
- Actual distance sailed laden (nautical miles);
- Cargo carried (metric tonnes) per bill of lading.

These inputs feed the Energy Efficiency Operational Indicator (EEOI)-based calculation that the SCC uses to estimate voyage emissions intensity.

**Sea Cargo Charter Clause:** The Association provides a recommended, non-prescriptive clause and data-collection templates for inclusion in charterparties. The clause (recommended, not mandatory) clarifies data requests, consent for data sharing and privacy protections in a way that is broadly compatible with different charterparty forms.

**Data privacy & aggregation:** Reported results are aggregated by vessel categories (type and size). Signatories do not disclose partner identities or voyage-level climate alignment; the Secretariat only receives vessel-category aggregated scores and annual totals, protecting commercially sensitive information.

## Fees for Signatories

To join, submit the Standard Declaration, Membership Agreement and Signatory Application to the SCC Secretariat ([info@seacargocharter.org](mailto:info@seacargocharter.org)). Current financial terms (for 2025): a one-time sign-on fee of EUR 10,000 and an annual fee of EUR 9,700.