Communiqué - Energy Observer and CMA CGM join forces to make hydrogen one of the energy sources of tomorrow

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A common ambition: zero-emission shipping

A shared challenge: to deploy hydrogen on a large scale in the shipping industry

Combining the innovation of our floating laboratory with the expertise of a world leader in shipping and logistics

The CMA CGM Group, a world leader in shipping and logistics and a pioneer in the field of energy transition, is joining forces with Energy Observer, the first hydrogen vessel around the world.

A common ambition: zero-emission shipping

Energy Observer, formerly a legendary race boat, is now a genuine experimental platform for tomorrow's energy sources. It is sailing round the world in order to speed up development of the most innovative solutions for the environment.

This partnership with CMA CGM deals with the development of cleaner and more sustainable energies to eliminate CO2 emissions, greenhouse gases and air pollutants. It aims to experiment, test and develop energy solutions based on hydrogen, solar, tidal and wind power.

A shared challenge: to deploy hydrogen on a large scale in the shipping industry

Hydrogen is a limitless energy source that generates up to 4 times more energy than coal, 3 times more than diesel. The green hydrogen used by Energy Observer is made from seawater using on-board renewable sources of electricity (solar, wind and hydropower). Producing and burning hydrogen does not result in any greenhouse gas or fine particle emissions.

CMA CGM will contribute its industrial expertise to our floating lab, in order to promote the use of hydrogen as a zero-emission fuel source for the shipping industry in the years to come.

A unifying partnership that is speeding up the development of innovative environmental solutions

Energy Observer and CMA CGM R&D experts will pool their expertise and knowledge to develop technological solutions capable of limiting the environmental impact of shipping. The mobilization of CMA CGM will make possible the industrialization of new concrete energy solutions tested on board our floating laboratory.

CMA CGM will also contribute its shipping and logistics expertise to Energy Observer. The Energy Observer village will be made from containers converted and transported by CMA CGM with the large-scale operational support from the whole CMA CGM network around the world. It will travel the globe, presenting the latest technological innovations to the largest possible number of people and raising awareness about ecological transition issues among all audiences.

CMA CGM: a world leader in shipping and logistics and a pioneer in the field of ecological transition

CMA CGM has long been committed to protecting the environment and reducing its carbon footprint. Between 2005 and 2015, the Group reduced its CO2 emissions per container transported by 50%, and it has set itself the target of reducing it by a further 30% between 2015 and 2025.

CMA CGM has made many pioneering decisions:

A commitment to the use of liquefied natural gas (LNG) for large capacity vessels. LNG reduces sulphur oxide and fine particulate emissions by 99%, nitrogen oxide emissions by up to 85% and CO2 emissions by around 20%;

The decision that none of its vessels will use the Northern Sea Routes in order to preserve the fragile and unique ecosystems of the Arctic;

The world's first partnership to successfully test a latest-generation biofuel, made from recycled vegetable oils and forest residues, that reduces CO2 emissions by 80% over the entire life cycle;

The development of numerous advanced eco-technologies on the Group's fleet to improve its performance and reduce energy consumption: optimization of bows' shape for better hydrodynamic efficiency, innovations on the propellers and the engines to reduce fuel and oil consumption;

The creation of a Fleet Center to which all the Group's vessels (506) are connected 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This unique system in the maritime transport industry makes it possible to optimize shipping routes (including by reducing speeds) in order to combine operational efficiency, safety and fuel consumption optimization, thus reducing CO2 emissions.

The launch of an international coalition for the energy of tomorrow in order to federate all transport and logistics players. Supported by the French President, this high-level coalition is working on the development of clean energies for carbon-free transport.

Tanya Saadé Zeenny, Executive Officer of the CMA CGM Group, said: “CMA CGM is joining forces with Energy Observer to accelerate the development of tomorrow's energy solutions, particularly hydrogen. Our partnership will mobilize all of CMA CGM's know-how. Our teams of engineers and R&D experts are already working and our network around the world will be strongly mobilized to ensure the
Victorien Erussard, Energy Observer’s Founder and Captain, added: “CMA CGM is a key partner in our quest for clean transport. With CMA CGM's huge experience in the shipping industry, our respective engineers and our technology partners, we have every chance of achieving our goals, which are ambitious but increasingly realistic. We are all driven by the same passion for technology and the desire to develop alternative energy solutions. The sea is something we can all share, and it is time to share our skills in order to protect the ocean, our favourite environment. We are delighted to be joining the 500-plus vessels in the CMA CGM fleet.”

About Energy Observer
Energy Observer is the first energy self-sufficient vessel, with zero CO2 emissions, zero fine particles, and zero noise, producing its own hydrogen onboard from seawater using a mix of renewable energies. This vessel of the future has already traveled more than 18,000 nautical miles around the world.

Designed as a floating laboratory, Energy Observer experiments and validates all sorts of embedded soft mobility innovations. This real floating smart-grid, prefiguring the energy networks of tomorrow, draws its energy from nature without damaging it or wasting its resources.

She sails around the world, stopping in many iconic cities to meet the pioneers of the ecological and solidarity transition, but also elected officials, decision-makers, shipowners and major economic players. Energy Observer demonstrates on a daily basis that fully carbon-free, decentralized and digitized energy has become a reality within everyone's reach, applicable at various scales (remote sites, districts, cities...).

Next to its innovation program, Energy Observer is developing a mission of general interest to help raise awareness on the challenges of the ecological transition among all audiences, through its audio visual productions, exhibitions, and meetings with scientists. Like as modern day Calypso, the boat and her crew relate their journey around the world, in an original documentary series called « The Odyssey for the future® ». Energy Observer also produces a web-series "Solutions" with a permanent focus on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, allowing as many people as possible to discover new concrete solutions for the future.

Energy Observer has received the High Patronage of Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic. French ambassador for the UN's sustainable development goals, supported by the Ministry for Ecological and Inclusive Transition, UNESCO, the European Union, Irena, Ademe, and all the institutions concerned with ecology, Energy Observer is the inspiring and positive voice of the vital ecological transition.

About CMA CGM
Led by Rodolphe Saadé, the CMA CGM Group is a world leader in shipping and logistics.

Its 506 vessels serve more than 420 ports on five continents around the world and carried nearly 21 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) in 2018. With CEVA, a world leader in logistics services, CMA CGM handled more than 500,000 tons of airfreight and 1.9 million tons of inland freight in 2018.

CMA CGM is constantly innovating to offer customers new maritime, inland and logistics solutions.

Present on every continent and in 160 countries through its network of 755 offices and 750 warehouses, the Group employs 110,000 people worldwide, of which 2,400 in Marseille where its head office is located.

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