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## Press Release · Pressemitteilung

### Asia strengthens its role at SMM 2026

Growing cooperation between Europe and Asia drives participation at the world's leading maritime industry event

**Hamburg, 29 April 2026 – The maritime industry is becoming increasingly interconnected on a global scale, and the importance of Asian markets continues to grow – driven by geopolitical shifts and rising demands for resilient supply chains. Following press talks held during Singapore Maritime Week and SEA Japan, SMM 2026 in Hamburg is increasingly positioning itself as the central platform for cooperation between Europe and the Asia-Pacific region.**

“The SMM brings together the strengths of both regions: Asia as a dynamic driver of growth and Europe as a leader in innovation and technology, supported by clear regulatory frameworks for the maritime transition,” says **Claus Ulrich Selbach**, Vice President Exhibitions Maritime & Energy, Hamburg Messe und Congress.

At the same time, the two regions complement each other in a unique way: Asia as a dynamic production and growth hub, and Europe as a centre for innovation and regulatory frameworks.

#### Europe and Asia move closer together

In the maritime industry, international cooperation is becoming a decisive success factor. Topics such as decarbonisation, digitalisation, energy efficiency, as well as resilient supply chains and maritime security are driving closer integration between Europe and Asia. At the same time, maritime industries, energy systems and infrastructure are increasingly converging, creating new ecosystems and business opportunities. Global investment in maritime infrastructure remains high, with particularly strong growth in Asia. This is creating increasing demand for technologies, expertise and partnerships – especially in the European market.

“The SMM provides exactly the environment required for this transformation: a global platform where decision-makers meet, partnerships are formed and concrete business opportunities are developed,” Selbach adds.

#### SMM as a gateway to the European market



Hamburg Messe und Congress GmbH  
P.O. Box 30 24 80 · 20308 Hamburg  
Messeplatz 1 · 20357 Hamburg  
Germany



Phone +49 40 3569 2441/2451  
presse@hamburg-messe.de  
smm-hamburg.com



MB: Uwe Fischer (CEO), Heiko M. Stutzinger (CEO)  
Chairman of Supervisory Board:  
State Secretary Dr. Christopher Schwieger  
Commercial register: local court Hamburg HRB 12054



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For companies from the Asia-Pacific region, SMM offers direct access to the European market, leading shipping companies, technology providers and regulatory developments as well as key infrastructure projects and market requirements in Europe. Against the backdrop of increasingly complex regulatory requirements – particularly in the fields of decarbonisation and alternative propulsion technologies – the need for international exchange and highly specialised expertise continues to grow. SMM brings together this expertise across the entire maritime value chain.

Companies from other Asian markets – particularly **Southeast Asia and China** – are continuously expanding their presence at SMM and using the event as a strategic entry point into the European market. **India** is also significantly stepping up its engagement: for the first time, the Indian government is organising an official national pavilion, highlighting the country’s growing importance as a maritime nation at the world’s leading trade fair in Hamburg. **Korea** is also expanding its participation: the national pavilion is growing by around 15 percent and underlines the country’s strong and consistent presence at SMM. In addition, companies **from Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam** are planning to participate for the first time. This trend is particularly evident in the case of **Japan**: Japanese companies have already secured around 13 percent more exhibition space compared to SMM 2024, while the national pavilion organised by JSMEA has grown by 22 percent.

### **Hamburg as a global hub of the maritime industry**

With SMM, Hamburg becomes a key global hub of the maritime economy. More than 2,200 exhibitors and around 50,000 participants from 120 countries bring together a unique concentration of international decision-makers. For companies from Asia, this provides ideal conditions to establish new business relationships, position technologies globally and expand their presence in the European market.

SMM is therefore becoming a key platform for further strengthening cooperation between Europe and Asia. As global supply chains, energy systems and maritime technologies continue to evolve, this collaboration will gain further importance. SMM 2026 provides the platform to actively shape this transformation – and to position companies strategically in an increasingly competitive international environment.

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### **About SMM**

**SMM – the world’s leading maritime industry event** – will take place from 1 to 4 September 2026 in Hamburg. Under the guiding theme “Driving the Maritime Transition”, it brings together international stakeholders from across the maritime industry to discuss key future topics and actively shape the development of the sector.

More than 2,200 exhibiting companies from around 60 countries and approximately 50,000 participants from up to 120 nations are expected. Spanning around 90,000 m<sup>2</sup> across twelve exhibition halls, SMM showcases the entire value chain of the industry.

The focus is on **energy efficiency** as a key lever of the maritime transition, complemented by **maritime security and defence**, artificial intelligence, decarbonisation, and digital technologies. SMM serves as a central platform for innovation, international exchange and business development.

A comprehensive conference programme accompanies the exhibition, including **TradeWinds Shipowners' Forum**, **Maritime Future Summit**, **gmec** – Global Maritime Environmental Congress, **MS&D – International Conference & Expo on Maritime Security & Defence**, and **Offshore Dialogue**.

Running alongside SMM, all about ports will launch as a new platform for integrated port solutions. The international conference and accompanying exhibition focus on port infrastructure, terminal technology and port logistics, bringing together port operators, technology providers and investors.

**Further information:** [SMM – driving the maritime transition | 1 – 4 Sept 2026 - SMM](#)

### **Supporters of SMM 2026**

**Main sponsor:** DNV

**Supporters:** VDR, VSM, VDMA, GMT, VDS, CLIA, and VDI

**Conference partners:** gmec: Seatrade Maritime News; MS&D: German Maritime Institute (DMI) & Mittler Report Verlag; Offshore Dialogue: Society for Maritime Technology (GMT); Maritime Future Summit: HANSA – International Maritime Journal; TradeWinds Shipowners Forum: TradeWinds

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### **Digital press kit**

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### **Press Contact**

**Nele Bruns**

PR Manager

Phone: +49 (0) 40 3569 2439

E-Mail: [nele.bruns@hamburg-messe.de](mailto:nele.bruns@hamburg-messe.de)

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