

HKUST Research on Designing Cost-effective Shipping Retrofitting Incentives

Jeremy Jiajing Chen
PhD Student

Division of Environment and Sustainability
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

September 2025



- The Hong Kong Marine Department's Green Incentive Scheme covers **only until the end of 2026** (deadline: December 31, 2026), but unknown/ undefined afterwards
- China's Ministry of Transport (MOT) and National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) introduced new subsidies for vessel replacement and renewal (August 2024), but comprehensive retrofitting policies remain lacking

Research Overview

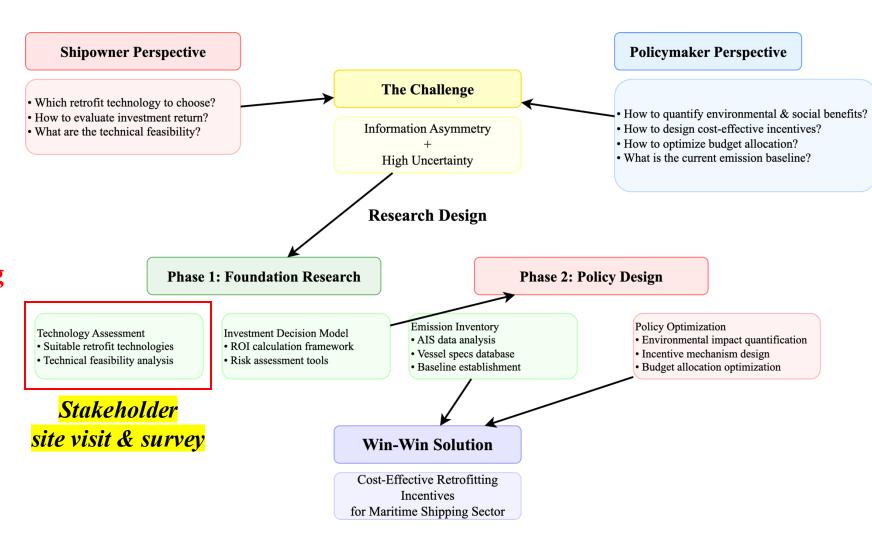


> Research Goal

 Design cost-effective retrofitting incentives for China's coastal container shipping sector

> Objectives (Phase 1)

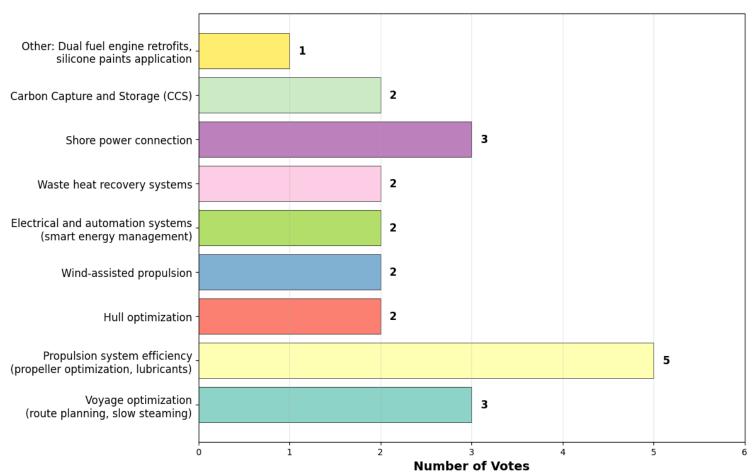
- Identify suitable retrofitting technologies for maritime shipping
- Develop investment decision model
- Update emission inventory



Some Result Samples of Part II Survey Form (Ocean-going Vessels) based on Returns from 7 Shipping Companies



Voting Results for the Most Feasible Energy Efficiency Technologies



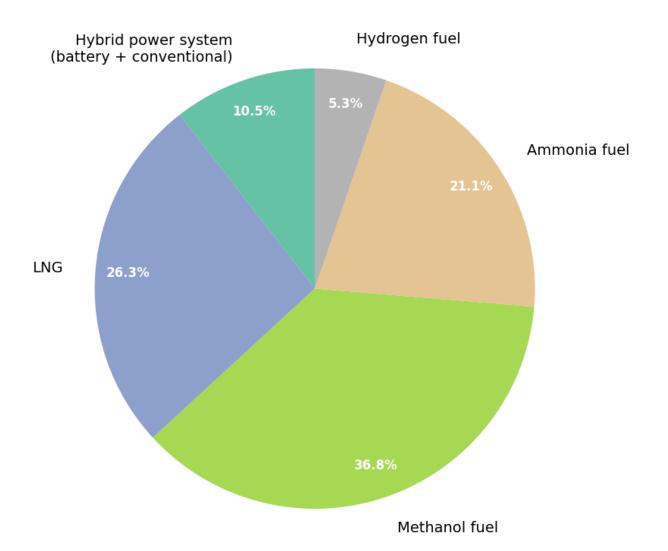
Note: Respondents could select up to 3 options | Survey Results from 7 Shipping Companies

- Most Popular Technology: Propulsion system efficiency (5 votes)
- **Joint Second Place**: Voyage optimization (3 votes) and shore power connection (3 votes) needs terminal operators' advice on their clients' OPS potential
- Technology Diversification: 7 companies distributed relatively evenly across 9 technologies, showing industry openness to multiple solutions

Some Result Samples of Part II Survey Form (Ocean-going Vessels) based on Returns from 7 Shipping Companies



Voting Results for the Most Feasible Retrofitting Alternative Fuel Types

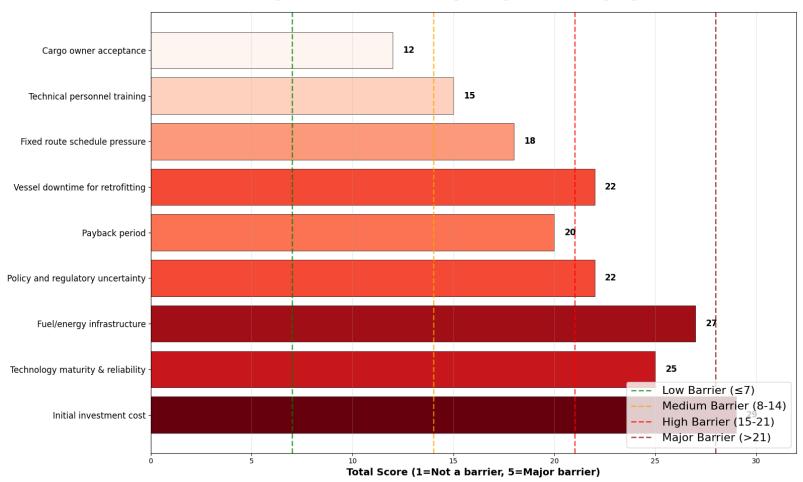


- Methanol Fuel Leading: 7 votes, becoming the most favoured retrofitting fuel type
- LNG Stable Choice: 5 votes, as a mature alternative fuel
- Ammonia Fuel Potential: 4 votes, showing attention to future fuels
- No Vote for Pure Battery

Some Result Samples of Part II Survey Form (Ocean-going Vessels) based on Returns from 7 Shipping Companies







Note: Barrier scale 1=Not a barrier, 5=Major barrier | Survey Results from 7 Shipping Companies

- Greatest Barrier: Initial investment cost far exceeding other factors => Will Financial Institutions offer solution?
- Technology and Infrastructure Challenges: Fuel/energy infrastructure and technology maturity => Will Port authorities facilitate infrastructure building?
- Operational Impact: Policy uncertainty and vessel downtime also important considerations

We need your voices!



HK-Registered Ocean-going Vessels



China Registered Coastal Vessels



