



2024 ZERO-EMISSION SHIPPING

PROGRESS REPORT



Amazon is not using its full sphere of influence and resources to take steps to achieve zero-emission maritime shipping in accordance with its purported commitment. The unfortunate reality is that from 2019 to 2023, while these efforts were underway, Amazon's [maritime emissions actually saw a 26%¹ increase](#). Its pledge to reach [net zero by 2040](#) is not aligned with science-based targets to prevent further climate chaos and it has failed to disclose a roadmap that demonstrates how it will even reach this goal.

How did Ship It Zero evaluate Amazon's trajectory for maritime shipping since the 2023 report card?

In the five years since making its Climate Pledge, Amazon's maritime emissions saw a 26% increase.

In 2023, Amazon earned a "D" on [Ship It Zero's inaugural decarbonization report card](#). In that report, Ship It Zero thoroughly reviewed Amazon's sustainability commitments, evaluated its current efforts toward achieving zero-emission maritime shipping and outlined tangible steps Amazon must take to meet the urgency needed for our climate and the portside communities enduring the harms of shipping pollution.

A year later, Amazon's poor track record on addressing maritime shipping emissions remains unchanged and has arguably worsened, including four metrics the campaign tracked, including: (1) the trajectory of emissions from maritime shipping over the last five years has increased; (2) interim actions toward zero-emission shipping are more akin to greenwashing than comprehensive climate action; (3) Amazon has failed to take leadership despite its market share and industry influence; and (4) the retailer has failed to commit to a plan for maritime shipping that would meet a 1.5 degree Celsius trajectory, a critical threshold defined by climate scientists to avert irreversible climate chaos, defined in the [Paris Agreement](#).

Growing maritime emissions. On the heels of Amazon's five-year anniversary of its Climate Pledge, it's clear that Amazon is headed in the wrong direction. Since then, its emissions from



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dock-to-door have grown by [approximately 25%](#)² and the company has dropped its [Shipment Zero](#) goal.

Lacking leadership. As one of the largest retailers in the world that represents a whopping [~38% share of the U.S. e-commerce market](#), Amazon has a unique opportunity to position itself as a first mover on innovative sustainability efforts, especially to advance zero-emission maritime shipping. When Amazon makes investments and strategic moves in its supply chain, [other companies tend to follow](#) to remain competitive in the marketplace. In a world where one corporation has that level of power and influence to shift the market, Amazon is failing to make significant progress toward achieving zero-emission shipping.

Lack of ambition. We know Amazon is capable of demonstrating leadership in the pursuit of reducing emissions, but its efforts still lack ambition. The company is [a founding member](#) of Cargo Owners for Zero Emission Shipping (coZEV) and the Zero Emission Maritime Buyers Alliance ([ZEMBA](#)). Both of these organizations were [created with the goal](#) of developing and accelerating the introduction of zero-emission shipping solutions to the market alongside their fellow cargo owners. These significant increases in emissions expose how Amazon's actions do not match its commitments to decarbonize its operations.³ If Amazon can lead the effort to move cargo owners toward zero-emission shipping, why hasn't it also shown us it is making the necessary investments to achieve zero-emission shipping across its own logistics supply chain?

As it stands, Amazon has committed to net zero-emission shipping by 2040 with no plan or clear interim benchmarks to hold itself accountable to this timeline.⁴ Setting a 2040 goalpost for itself allows Amazon to “kick the can” down the road while continuing to expand its maritime shipping pollution.⁵

No plan to meet climate goals. The language that is embedded in its net zero goals allows Amazon to appear climate-conscious while evading accountability to actually reach said goals. The reality is that net zero is not a tenable goal for reducing emissions.⁶ As stated by [Amazon Employees for Climate Justice](#), “the ‘net’ in that commitment allows Amazon to buy its way out of the problem.” If Amazon can simply purchase offsets without truly reducing its emissions profile, no progress toward zero emissions actually gets made. This is deeply troubling, as [current projections show](#) ocean-going ships are on track to account for 17% of human-caused carbon emissions by 2050 without urgent action from major retailers like Amazon.⁷





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The impact of inaction. The port and shipping pollution from this growth in emissions will result in serious public health impacts on nearby communities. Frontline and fenceline communities, such as the [39 million people](#) in the United States who live near ports, are the ones who continue to pay the price of inaction on climate change. Fossil-fueled ships spew toxins linked to increased rates of asthma, heart disease and other health problems in portside communities, which have a high percentage of people of color and people with lower incomes. One of the busiest ports in the country, the Port of Long Beach, is home to thousands of families who are exposed to elevated risks of asthma and lung disease from port pollution, [70% of whom are people of color](#).

Amazon backsliding on its zero-emission commitments and pursuing false solutions like “net zero” goals⁸ is the opposite of what it should be doing. It’s time for Amazon to invest in and advance real solutions that benefit people and planet.

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Amazon has the resources and influence to lead the industry toward a just future where portside communities can breathe clean air and all ecosystems on our planet are thriving. To do this, Amazon must go from Prime Polluter to First Mover by transforming its shipping operations and becoming an industry trailblazer for shipping decarbonization. The planet and communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis and port pollution need Amazon to commit to 100% zero-emission ocean shipping by 2030, emissions reduction solutions like shipping exclusively on shore power-ready vessels and invest in zero-emission fuels and technologies as they are brought to scale.

End notes

¹ Archer, Joshua, et al. *Prime Polluter: Amazon's Growing Emissions Problem*. Stand.earth, Sept. 2024, <https://publications.stand.earth/prime-polluter/>.

² Archer, Joshua, et al. *Prime Polluter: Amazon's Growing Emissions Problem*. Stand.earth, Sept. 2024, <https://publications.stand.earth/prime-polluter/>.

^{3a} "About the Climate Pledge." *The Climate Pledge*, <https://www.theclimatepledge.com/us/en/the-pledge/About>. Accessed 4 Oct. 2024.

^{3b} Archer, Joshua, et al. *Prime Polluter: Amazon's Growing Emissions Problem*. Stand.earth, Sept. 2024, <https://publications.stand.earth/prime-polluter/>.



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⁴"Progress." Amazon Sustainability, <https://sustainability.aboutamazon.com/progress>. Accessed 4 Oct. 2024.

⁵Amazon Employees for Climate Justice. Burns Trust: The Amazon Unsustainability Report, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/65681f099d7c3d48feb86a5f/t/668ebf702516716ca72bbf98/l720631157044/unsustainability-report.pdf>. Accessed 4 Oct. 2024.

⁶"Not Zero: How 'Net Zero' Targets Disguise Climate Inaction." Corporate Accountability, <https://corporateaccountability.org/resources/explainer-not-zero/>. Accessed 4 Oct. 2024.

⁷Axelrod, Josh. "Corporate Honesty and Climate Change: Time to Own Up and Act." *Natural Resources Defense Council*, 26 Feb. 2019, <https://www.nrdc.org/bio/josh-axelrod/corporate-honesty-and-climate-change-time-own-and-act>.

⁸"Not Zero: How 'Net Zero' Targets Disguise Climate Inaction." Corporate Accountability, <https://corporateaccountability.org/resources/explainer-not-zero/>. Accessed 4 Oct. 2024.

