

# Technical Bulletin: UK ETS scope expansion to include domestic maritime activities

10 April 2026

## Introduction

This Technical Bulletin applies to all UKAS-accredited Verification Bodies for the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS). UKAS is now accepting applications for extending accreditation scope to include maritime.

Following the publication of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme (Amendment) (Extension to Maritime Activities) Order 2026, this bulletin has been produced to update Verification Bodies and stakeholders on the UKAS approach for supporting applications to extend scope under ISO/IEC 17029:2019 and ISO 14065:2020 for greenhouse gas verification for the UK ETS to include maritime activities.

The extension of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS) to domestic maritime activities introduces a revised regulatory framework for the monitoring, reporting and verification of maritime emissions. The previous standalone UK Merchant Shipping MRV regime has been revoked and, for in-scope activities, replaced by UK ETS maritime requirements.

The new requirements come into force on 01 July 2026 and relate to the mandatory verification of domestic maritime voyages (between UK ports) and emissions from ships at berth in UK ports. The monitoring of the relevant data becomes mandatory for affected operators from 01 July 2026 to 31 December 2026. Most verification activity is expected to take place between October 2026 and March 2027, and verified reports must be submitted by 31 March 2027.

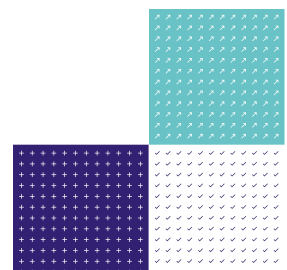
As part of the accreditation assessment, UKAS will evaluate whether Verification Bodies have appropriately taken account of relevant UK ETS legislation and the UK ETS regulator's statutory guidance when developing and implementing their verification processes for the maritime scope.

UKAS intends to complete accreditation decisions to extend the scope by 30 September 2026, ahead of the next reporting cycle. While new applicants that are not already accredited to ISO/IEC 17029:2019 for ISO 14065:2020 and UK ETS, or UK Merchant Shipping MRV, are welcome to apply, please note that it is unlikely that accreditation can be obtained in time for the 2026/27 reporting period.

## Key changes between UK Merchant Shipping MRV and UK ETS - Maritime

Key changes relevant to verification bodies and UKAS accreditation activity include:

- + Maritime operators must apply to the UK ETS regulator for an emissions monitoring plan; plans are issued by the regulator rather than approved by verifiers
- + Obligations are on the maritime operator (registered owner by default, or the ISM company where applicable), rather than to individual ships in isolation
- + In scope maritime activities include defined voyages within UK jurisdiction and specified in-port activities (including movements within a port of call and time at berth), subject to explicit exclusions
- + Operators must submit an annual emissions report supported by an independent verification report (using the METS system); the former UK MRV document of compliance is no longer part of the regulatory framework
- + Verification now covers carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) calculated on a CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent basis, which has implications for verifier competence and methodologies
- + Verification bodies should ensure their scope, procedures, and technical competence align with UK ETS maritime requirements, including correct operator identification, activity scoping and broader greenhouse gas verification



## Assessments for UK ETS scope expansion

UKAS is now accepting applications from accredited Verification Bodies wishing to extend their scopes to include domestic maritime. The assessment activity will follow a standardised approach, and assessment durations will vary depending on existing accreditations held for the applying Verification Body, as follows:

- Existing UK MRV customer applying for UK ETS and maritime sector scope:
  - Document review (0.25 day each - Lead and Technical Assessor)
  - A head office assessment covering both the new UK ETS application and technical assessment (0.75 days site/remote + 0.25 days reporting each - Lead and Technical Assessor)
  - Assessment Manager effort (1 day)
  - Total effort - 3.5 days
  
- Existing UK ETS customer applying to expand the scope to include the maritime sector:
  - Document review (0.25 days each - Lead and Technical Assessor)
  - A head office assessment (0.5 days site/remote + 0.25 days reporting each - Lead and Technical Assessor)
  - Assessment Manager effort (1 day)
  - Total effort - 3 days
  
- Existing UK ETS and MRV customer applying to expand UK ETS scope to include the maritime sector:
  - Document review (0.25 day + 0.25 days reporting each - Lead and Technical Assessor)
  - 0.5 days to be added to the next scheduled head office assessment for the Technical Assessor to assess the effectiveness of implementation
  - Assessment Manager effort (1 day)
  - Total effort - 2.5 days

**N.B.** Under normal circumstances, witnessed assessments will not be required for granting an extension to the scope for existing UK MRV or UK ETS customers, but will be scheduled during the ongoing accreditation cycle following the grant of extension. However, UKAS reserves the right to require witnessed assessment activity where significant risk indicators are identified during document review or head office assessment, in accordance with UKAS risk-based assessment principles.

Assessment effort for new applicants for initial accreditation to ISO/IEC 17029:2020 and ISO 14065:2020 for UK ETS, including maritime scope, will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

## Assessment timeline

Date	Milestone / Activity
10 April 2026	UKAS Technical Bulletin published - UKAS is accepting applications for scope extension from this date.
31 August 2026	All UKAS assessment activity to be completed.
30 September 2026	1 <sup>st</sup> tranche of UKAS decisions to be completed. Decisions required after this will be completed on a first-come, first-served basis.
31 March 2027	Accredited verification of operator data to be completed in the new scope. Annual surveillance/reassessment activity of UK ETS verification bodies to be completed.
01 June 2027	UKAS to submit an annual report to the competent authority.

Should you require any clarification on the above, please contact your Assessment Manager in the first instance.

In the absence of your Assessment Manager, one of the following may be able to assist:

- + Richard McFarlane: Head of Technical - [richard.mcfarlane@ukas.com](mailto:richard.mcfarlane@ukas.com)
- + Jonathan Wibberley: Technical Focus Person - [Jonathan.wibberley@ukas.com](mailto:Jonathan.wibberley@ukas.com)
- + Adam Ward: Accreditation Specialist - [adam.ward@ukas.com](mailto:adam.ward@ukas.com)
- + Leanie Du Toit: Director of Corporate, Certification and Verification - [leanie.dutoit@ukas.com](mailto:leanie.dutoit@ukas.com)