

Articles from NGO Shipbreaking Platform

Platform News – 32 Multinational Companies Say ‘No’ to Dirty and Dangerous Shipbreaking

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Brussels, 2 April 2015 – Major companies such as H&M, Tetra Laval, ABB, Philips, Volvo and Volkswagen do not want to be associated with substandard shipbreaking practices in South Asia and have asked their forwarders – the shipping companies they use to transport their goods – to adopt sustainable ship recycling policies.

In January, the NGO Shipbreaking Platform **published its annual list of global dumpers** including 641 ships that were sold for substandard shipbreaking on the tidal beaches of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Several of these ships were owned by companies that the members of the Clean Shipping Network (CSN), a network of 32 multinationals, use to transport their products. MSC, Hanjin, MOL, Yang Ming, Conti, G Bulk and Danaos were some of the ship owners that last year made a deliberate choice to sell their end-of-life vessels to a substandard shipbreaking yard for the sake of higher profits – a choice of profits at the cost of people and the environment.

CSN members **have now reacted to this irresponsible practice with a statement** condemning the breaking of ships on tidal beaches. In the statement, shipping companies mentioned on the Platform’s list of dumpers are asked to review their policies and practices regarding the selling and recycling of end-of-life vessels. The shipping companies are also asked to report on their ship recycling policy in the Clean Shipping Index questionnaire, a tool used by leading international cargo owners to evaluate the environmental performance of their providers of sea transports.

Eleven of the CSN members even went one step further by sending a letter directly to their business partners in the maritime industry stating that working with companies that do not deal responsibly with their end-of-life fleet is unacceptable for them. They warned that sustainable ship recycling is an issue they will consider when signing agreements with shipping companies, and stated that poor performance in the field of environment and social policies have consequences for their business decisions.

“We believe collaboration is a must to bring about systematic change to the sea transport industry. The Clean Shipping Network members use the procurement process to enhance sustainable development and to raise awareness on how the shipping industry impacts the environment”, says Sara Sköld, Director of the Clean Shipping Index.

With increasing pressure from also their customers, many ship owners will have to seriously consider revising their ship recycling practices. Currently thirteen large shipping companies follow sustainable ship recycling policies, including Royal Dutch Boskalis, Canadian CSL Group and Singapore-based China Navigation Company. More recently, German Hapag-Lloyd joined the group of ship owners that opt for ship recycling off the beach. They did so on principle, even if they have to compromise on their profits – just as the other progressive ship owners committed to the proper end-of-life management of their fleet, they simply do not want to be responsible for polluting sensitive coastal zones and putting workers lives at risk during dirty and dangerous shipbreaking on tidal beaches.



Fredrika Klarén, Sustainability Manager KappAhl

"At KappAhl, one important task in our sustainability work is to contribute to a sustainable development in our suppliers' business. Thus we take measures to promote a shipping industry built on environmental and social values.

Sustainability requirements are a part of all of our supplier relations. We have followed the development of social issues in the shipping industry closely, and have seen the reporting from the Shipbreaking Platform regarding ship dismantling on the beaching yards of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, which leads to environmental pollution and unsafe working conditions.

To address this issue, we have integrated requirements regarding a policy for safe and environmentally sound recycling of vessels in our tender process with forwarders, with good response from our suppliers. But, in the end, the availability of ship owners with the right policy and control systems is low, and we have not been able to see a direct effect from our requirements.

We are therefore very happy to now collaborate with our fellow members in the Clean Shipping Network in order to address the urgent need for action when it comes to this matter – we hope that it will contribute to the change that is needed to end these unsustainable practices which effect the environment and people's lives so negatively."

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