

To become a model region for clean shipping

(Coordinated by Denmark)

Presentation of the issue:

In the Baltic Sea Region, maritime transport constitutes an important backbone for trade (at any given moment over 2000 ships are in the Baltic Sea). Both the number and the size of ships have been growing in recent years currently representing up to 15% of the world's cargo traffic (and this is predicted to increase by over 100% in the Baltic Sea), especially oil tankers. Also, while it is a clean mode of transport when measured in emissions per tonnes of cargo, shipping is nevertheless an important source of greenhouse gas emissions. In the context of the Integrated Maritime Policy, turning the Baltic Sea into a model region for 'clean shipping' is an umbrella for a range of measures aimed at reducing the environmental impact of maritime transport.

Preventing pollution is one key theme for the BONUS research programme (cf. priority area number 1. 'To reduce nutrient inputs to the sea to acceptable levels').

Hotspot (main problems):

The main negative environmental effects of shipping includes air emissions, illegal and accidental discharge of oil, hazardous substances and other wastes and the introduction of alien organisms via ships' ballast water and hulls. This is all the more important for the Baltic Sea given its semi-closed environment.

Baltic Sea Region Added Value:

Marine transport provides important services to the Baltic Sea Region and the whole EU. The Baltic Sea was designated by the IMO in 2005 as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area and as the first special SO_x Emission Control Area (SECA) with limits on sulphur emissions under the MARPOL Convention¹ (Annex VI). This provides a good basis for the implementation of measures to ensure sustainability of shipping in the Baltic. In view of the importance of maritime traffic in the Baltic Sea and the effects on the marine environment, it is important for the countries in the Baltic Sea Region to act jointly to minimise ship-based pollution, while aiming at and maximising the positive impacts of the maritime transport mode for the region.

Actions:

Strategic actions:

"Implement actions to reduce ship pollution" (in the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the EU and HELCOM). The 'Baltic Sea Action Plan' (BSAP) of HELCOM contains a specific section on maritime activities (for example technologies to reduce pollutions in harbours). At international level, the MARPOL (Annex VI) introduces even stricter conditions for SO_x in the Baltic Sea (the sulphur content of any fuel oil used on board ships within the Baltic Sea - which is a SO_x Emission Control Area -, currently set at the level of 1.50% m/m, shall not exceed 1.00% m/m from 1 July 2010, and 0.10% m/m from 1 January 2015). Hence, SO_x emission will be reduced substantially by 2015. As to NO_x emissions, the MARPOL (Annex IV) provides for establishing marine areas as a NO_x emission control areas. New rules would require that ships built on and after 2016 to reduce emissions by around 80%. In this context, the possibility to establish the Baltic Sea as a NO_x Emission Control Area should be addressed.

¹ MARPOL is an International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution From Ships adopted in 1973 and modified by the Protocol of 1978. ('MARPOL' is short for MARine POLLution).

While taking into account that the international shipping regulations must be adopted if possible within the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the EU will continue to assess, depending on progress of negotiations on several key issues, whether action is required at EU level or specifically within the Baltic Sea Region.

Cooperative actions:

"Encourage ports, local and regional authorities, and shipping companies to adopt voluntary measures reducing wastewater discharges from shipping and boating² and providing facilities³ in ports for preventing or limiting air emissions of vessels ", for example through the introduction of voluntary labels for clean Baltic shipping and sustainable port management complemented by awards for clean shipping projects and environmentally friendly ports (in line with the Baltic Sea Challenge⁴ and Clean Baltic Shipping⁵ initiatives).

Flagship projects (as examples):

"Promote measures to collect ship generated waste" (enhanced application of HELCOM's 'no special-fee' system for port reception facilities especially for oily wastes from machinery spaces, sewage and garbage). It is important that the main ports implement a uniform and transparent approach. Furthermore, the availability of port reception facilities in the Baltic Sea Ports should be further enhanced covering the delivery of all wastes, especially waste waters, taking into account the proposal by the HELCOM Member States to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), asking for a prohibition of the discharge of sewage from ships, especially from passenger ships and ferries.

(Lead: to be agreed; Deadline for progress review: to be determined) **FAST TRACK**

"Promote measures to reduce emissions from ships and enhance the development" for shore side electricity facilities or for emission treatment in all major ports around the Baltic Sea in order to aim at full coverage by 2015. Their use should be promoted including for example through taxation or tariff measures in order to come to a level playing field.

(Lead: Finland and Sweden; Deadline for progress review: to be determined by the lead Member State) **FAST TRACK**

"Introduce differentiated port dues depending on the environmental impact of ships" in the main ports of the Baltic Sea in order to set incentives for ships producing low emissions, managing waste water and ballast water in a sustainable way, using environmentally friendly technologies (especially propulsion systems with, for example, improved energy efficiency), having high safety standards, etc.

(Lead: to be agreed; Deadline for progress review: to be determined) **FAST TRACK**

² As decided by HELCOM in Regulation 6 of Annex IV of the 1992 Helsinki Convention and Recommendation 22/1.

³ For instance shore-side electricity.

⁴ The Baltic Sea Challenge: The objective of this project is for Baltic Metropolises and UBC cities to challenge each other and other cities, municipalities, ports and harbours and shipping companies around the Baltic Sea to inter alia reduce wastewater discharges from shipping and boating as well as create better conditions for vessels in regular operation to use shore to ship electricity in ports.

⁵ 'Clean Baltic Shipping' is a project supported by several Inter-Governmental Bodies active in the Baltic Sea Region. The objective is to an action plan in partnership with stakeholders to promote sustainable shipping (shoreside electricity supply, voluntary ban of waste water discharges, ...).

"Eliminate the discharge of sewage from ships", especially from passenger ships, by establishing, through the International Maritime Organization, the Baltic Sea as a Special Area according to the Annex IV of MARPOL⁶.

(Lead: to be agreed; Deadline for progress review: to be determined)

"Improve the waste handling on board and in ports" within the framework of Baltic Master II project through better involvement of different actors, i.e. coastal municipalities and ports together with national authorities, research institutes, universities and pan-Baltic organisations and finding practical solutions to improve waste handling.

(Lead: to be agreed; Deadline for finalisation: 24 January 2012) **FAST TRACK**

⁶ MARPOL (for MARitime POLLution) is an international convention for the prevention of pollution from ships which has been signed in 1973. It is coordinated by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).