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EU research project recommends fast introduction of low sulphur fuel



CREATING, a European project aiming to stimulate waterborne transport within logistic chains, paying attention to both economic, environmental and safety aspects focused in its October news on emission reduction of shipping engines after extensive research into this topic. The very first step leading to cleaner ships is a fast introduction of low sulphur fuel as it leads to considerable reductions of harmful emissions. Moreover, fuel containing only 10ppm sulphur is also a prerequisite for application of the most important emission reduction techniques. CREATING also shows that improving the environmental performance of a ship is not necessarily harmful to the ship owners' wallets: a reduction of fuel consumption facilitates the return on emission reduction investments. [More...](#)

EUR 10 million for innovation Dutch inland waterway transport



The Dutch government and the inland shipping sector signed on 14 November 2006 a memorandum to untap the potential of inland shipping. The agreement focuses on innovation with special attention to sustainability, new logistics concepts, better regulation, sound infrastructure maintenance and the implementation of river information services. The government will ensure an adequate financial, legal and organisational framework while the industry commits itself to turn objectives into concrete action. The agreement covers an innovation programme of EUR 10 million and calls upon the EU to introduce low sulphur fuel for inland shipping soon. [More...](#)

Large river lock opens up hinterland in France



The French Transport Minister, Dominique Perben has confirmed the port of Le Havre will be equipped with a large river lock to ensure an optimal connection to the new Seine-Nord canal to be built between Paris and Lille. This choice means barges of 11.7m width and 185m long will be able to pass through this lock, allowing push barges of up to 450 containers to travel on this important link to the hinterland. Also, 155m long, 5 container wide vessels will be able to travel along this route. Maritime containers will thus be able to rapidly travel over waterways to the hinterland, avoiding road congestion and environmental pollution. [More...](#)

Flemish waterways shift 1.3 million truck movements



A lot of companies have their back to the waterway and do not use waterfreight transport. With public-partnerships for the construction of public quaywalls, the Flemish government wanted to address this potential. The programme has become an instant success and will lead to more than 50 million tonnes extra on the Flemish waterways over a period of 10 years. The positive effect of the programme led to new measures in 2006: estuary transport by barge, support mechanism for domestic waste transport by water, the set-up of a cooperation platform with the freight forwarders and mapping by waterway managers of abnormal indivisible goods. The government will also spend some EUR 290 million on infrastructure maintenance. [More...](#)

Cross-border water transport promotion meeting in Lille



On Tuesday, 21 November 2006, Voies Navigables de France, Promotie Binnenvaart Vlaanderen and Office de la Promotion des Voies Navigables will jointly organise a workshop "Crossborder transport between France and Belgium, the waterways alternative" at the Grand Palais in Lille. The objective of this workshop is to make interested transport users familiar with the benefits of choosing for waterways freight transport, to counteract the risk of traffic jams and the ensuing loss of efficiency, and also to present grants for network access. [More...](#)

Hungary active on implementation river traffic management



The new General Director of the Hungarian General Inspectorate of Transport, Zsolt Csaba Horvath, declared the implementation of River Information Services (RIS) as a priority for Hungary. The General Inspectorate of Transport takes a major role in the introduction of the EU regulations in the field of road, rail, river and air transport in co-operation with the Ministry of Economy and Transport. With the deployment of river information services on the Hungarian Danube, the General Inspectorate of Transport wants to ensure navigation safety and efficiency as well as the integration of the Schengen objectives. The General Inspectorate of Transport has commissioned the National Association of Radio Distress-Signalling and Infocommunications (RSOE) after public procurement with operation of the Hungarian River Information Services. [More...](#)

via donau publishes blue pages



Austrian waterway manager and development agency via donau launched the "Blue Pages", a bilingual (German-English) comprehensive directory of transport services providers on the Danube, containing company profiles of the most important inland navigation companies, forwarding companies and agencies operating on the river. With this publication via donau intends to offer a work of reference for international transport services offered along the Danube and to improve the knowledge level regarding Danube Navigation. The "Blue Pages" aims to serve as an interface between demand and supply, supporting new partnership projects between the inland navigation sector and the manufacturing industry. Given the dynamic character of the transport sector, regular updates of the "Blue Pages" through via donau's web services are foreseen. [More...](#)

Moselle Convention celebrates 50th anniversary



On 27 October 1956, France, Germany and Luxembourg officially signed the convention on the river Moselle in order to cooperate together on the navigability of the waterway. The convention established an international shipping regime on the river. This enhanced cooperation led in 1962 to the establishment of the Moselle Commission regulating all navigation matters at an international level and between the 3 riparian states. The Moselle, linking the industrial centres of Luxembourg, Lorraine and Saarland to the Rhine, carries at present some 3.5 billion tonkilometres annually. [More...](#)

Ports sharing environmental experience



ECOPORTS, a network of ports and related stakeholders sharing environmental experience organises a conference on 14-15 December in Genoa on cooperation to implement good practice solutions for the top environmental issues such as clean transport solutions, water quality management, dredging, noise and waste. The conference is supported by the European Commission, the European Sea Port Organisation and the European Federation of Inland Ports. [More...](#)

Navigating the network - PIANC conference in Brussels



On 31 January 2007, PIANC, together with its partners in the Navigation Task Group on the Water Framework Directive, will host a conference in Brussels, Belgium, on the EU Water Framework Directive and the issues it raises for ports, navigation and dredging. The main part of the meetings consists of a trio of workshops dealing with three issues facing the navigation sector: the relationship between the WFD and EU Maritime Strategy, the role of sediment management in river basin management planning, and the need for practical solutions for hydromorphological issues. [More...](#)

European Parliament pushes ambitious navigation policy



In follow-up to the Council of EU transport ministers, the European Parliament adopted in plenary the Naiades programme of the European Commission. The MEPs stress inland waterway transport deserves more political priority and greater ambition. More European money should be allocated to a European waterway transport innovation fund and also to infrastructure projects and the traffic management system River Information Services (RIS). The Parliament also asked the Commission to listen to the sector asking for an accelerated introduction of sulphur low fuel to allow the market transfer of eco-innovative systems. With this clear signal, it is now up to the European Commission and the Member States to translate plans into concrete acts. [More...](#)

New de minimis rules will no longer exclude transport



The de minimis rule sets a threshold of EUR 100,000 for government subsidies below which aid is automatically compatible with EU law, so that the measure need no longer be notified in advance to the Commission. The ceiling of EUR 100,000 is set per undertaking over any three year period. The rule is based on the assumption that, in the vast majority of cases, small amounts of aid do not have an effect on trade and competition between Member States. The de minimis rule does not yet apply to the transport sector, but a new proposal in the pipeline which is expected to be adopted before the end of 2006 will finally cover inland waterway transport. This proposal also aims at an increase of the threshold figure to EUR 200,000. [More...](#)

Transport ministers reindorse Naiades in Bucharest



At a pan-European conference on 14 September 2006 in Bucharest, transport ministers and government representatives from the EU, Romania and Bulgaria adopted a declaration reiterating full support to the plan of the European Commission to promote inland waterway transport across Europe, considering it a basis for pan-European action. Calling for a sound implementation of the plan, they stressed in particular the importance of harmonising the regulatory frameworks, the implementation of traffic management systems (RIS) and the creation of a structured dialogue to develop waterway infrastructure. [More...](#)

European Parliament pushes more ambitious navigation policy



The transport committee in the European Parliament unanimously adopted a resolution calling for a more ambitious inland waterway policy. The committee stressed that priority has to be given to the implementation of the Naiades programme, the creation of a European waterway transport innovation fund, a shift from funding of road and rail projects to waterway projects and the implementation of a Europe-wide traffic management system (RIS). The Parliament also asked the Commission to listen to the sector asking for an accelerated introduction of sulphur low fuel. [More...](#)

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