

Press Release – EU jeopardizes jobs by exporting end-of-life vessels: Industry calls to promote green ship recycling in Europe

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Industry calls to promote green ship recycling in Europe Brussels, 27 November 2012 - Ship recyclers based in the EU are concerned that the future European regulation on ship recycling will divert even more end-of-life vessels to Asia and hamper their business instead of keeping this valuable stream inside the EU, according to a common Statement of Concern signed by major European ship recyclers and released today by the NGO Shipbreaking Platform. Addressed to the European Parliament and to EU Member States, the statement[1] calls on decision-makers to take into account the ship recycling capacity offered by European facilities rather than brush them off as not sufficient and leave the gates open for end-of-life vessels full of hazardous materials to be exported to developing countries. Every year, about 1,000 ocean-going ships are sent for recycling, most of which end up on the beaches of South Asia. Shipbreaking in developing countries leads to disastrous environmental pollution and is often done in extremely dangerous working conditions. *“Keeping end-of-life vessels in the EU would ensure that hazardous waste in their structure - such as asbestos - is properly managed and that workers’ rights are protected”*, says Patrizia Heidegger, Executive Director of the Platform. *“We expect the EU to create sustainable jobs in green ship recycling facilities in Europe by guaranteeing a steady supply of end-of-life vessels to European ship recyclers”*. In its proposal for a regulation on ship recycling, the European Commission argued that European end-of-life vessels were exported to South Asia because capacities within the EU and the OECD would not suffice. However, the Commission failed to take into account facilities in Canada, the US, Mexico, and Turkey. A recent report[2] published by the Platform shows that all EU-flagged ships could be recycled in OECD facilities, without having to send them to the beaches of South Asia. *“The capacity for safe and environmentally sound ship recycling is here – it is a question of political will to demand and promote green ship recycling in Europe”*, says Patrizia Heidegger. Tomorrow, the European Parliament’s Environment Committee will be debating the Commission Proposal and the draft report by rapporteur Carl Schlyter MEP. Schlyter’s draft report[3], which was made public last week, supports the development of EU ship recycling capacity through a funding mechanism. This would be an incentive for shipowners calling at EU ports to recycle their ships in an environmentally sound and safe manner. Currently, European facilities can hardly compete with the prices offered to shipowners by sub-standard shipbreaking yards in India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. The NGO Shipbreaking Platform and Greenpeace EU Unit support this funding mechanism in their joint position paper on the European Commission Proposal[4]. The Platform is currently working on a survey that will detail how such a mechanism could work. **NOTES** [1] The signed statement of concern is available here: <http://bit.ly/V5OZHL> [2] The report “Industrial Capabilities of North America: A report on “green ship recycling in the United States, Canada and Mexico” is available here: <http://bit.ly/T6wOSJ> [3] The draft report by Carl Schlyter MEP on the European Commission’s proposal for a ship recycling regulation is available here: <http://bit.ly/Tj6kNh> [4] The joint position paper on the Commission’s proposal published by the Platform and Greenpeace EU Unit is available here: <http://bit.ly/TGKbKi> **CONTACT** NGO Shipbreaking Platform www.shipbreakingplatform.org Patrizia Heidegger Executive Director patrizia@shipbreakingplatform.org +32 2 6094 419 Roberto Ferrigno Policy Adviser roberto@shipbreakingplatform.org +32 497 43 36 88