

## Platform News – Joint publication of a position paper on ship recycling by the Platform and Greenpeace EU

2012-11-13 23:11:37 Shipbreaking

**13 November 2012** - The NGO Shipbreaking Platform and Greenpeace EU, both based in Brussels, published today a joint position paper on ship recycling called "A principled and practical solution for ship recycling: NGO Shipbreaking Platform and Greenpeace Position on the European Commission Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Ship Recycling (COM 2012/118)". The position paper can be downloaded [here](#) and can also be found on our "European Campaign" web page: <http://www.shipbreakingplatform.org/european-campaign/>

### Event at the EU Parliament

This position paper comes a week after an event about shipbreaking took place at the European Parliament. The event, titled "Shipbreaking: taking responsibility for hidden costs" and which was hosted by Carl Schlyter MEP and was co-organised by the NGO Shipbreaking Platform, gathered a large crowd made of members of the European Parliament, the European Council, environmental activists, academics and industry representatives. The event featured a panel discussion chaired by Mr Schlyter, who is the rapporteur to the Environment Committee of the European Parliament on the European Commission proposal for a ship recycling regulation. Amongst the panelists was Karl Falkenberg, director general of the DG Environment of the European Commission, who declared that EU-flagged ships (which are the only ships concerned by the Commission proposal in its current form) would not be allowed to be sold to ship recycling facilities using the beaching method. It was the first time that a representative from the Commission made a public statement against beaching as a possible method for recycling EU ships.

### EU Commission proposal deemed illegal

Other panelists included Ludwig Krämer, environmental lawyer at ClientEarth, who explained that the Commission proposal in its current form is illegal. Mr Krämer said the proposal if adopted would effectively withdraw end-of-life ships from the EU Waste Shipment Regulation, whereas this is forbidden by law as the EU is bound by an international treaty known as the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, which defines end-of-life ships as hazardous wastes. The EU has also made the export of these ships from the EU to developing countries illegal by transposing what is known as the Ban Amendment into EU law through the same Waste Shipment Regulation. Jim Puckett, executive director of Basel Action Network (BAN), explained that the EU had always been a champion of the Ban Amendment and said that this Commission proposal was worrying as it represents a big step backwards if indeed the EU intends to continue protecting developing countries from becoming the dumping sites for richer countries' hazardous waste. Finally, Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) and advocate at the Supreme Court of Bangladesh said that the EU Commission should make sure the waste present within EU-flagged ships is properly treated in the EU instead of being sent to developing countries like Bangladesh, who lack the proper facilities to effectively manage hazardous waste. She called on the European Commission to ban beaching for EU ships so that they would have to choose alternatives to developing countries using this method. Her presentation can be downloaded [here](#).

### Harrowing documentary highlights fatal flaws of beaching

The event was also the occasion for Ralph Vituccio, an award-winning documentary film maker and Director of Media Development in Communications Design at Carnegie Mellon (USA), and his colleague Tom Clancey, a Los-Angeles-based cinematographer, to present the trailer of their upcoming documentary "The Shipbreakers", filmed in the shipbreaking yards of Alang, India. The film makers shared with the audience their experience while filming in the yards, describing in detail the pollution they witnessed and the lack of proper equipment and infrastructure the shipbreaking workers have to deal with every day.