

## Press release – NGOs applaud Matson for clean and safe recycling policy, but regret ship beached in India

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**Brussels, 23 September 2015** – The NGO Shipbreaking Platform applauds US shipping company Matson, Inc. for committing to recycle its old ships only in responsible yards in the future. This decision is significant, as 23 vessels in the Matson fleet have to be dismantled in the coming years. This decision comes in the aftermath of the Platform's US-based member organisation Basel Action Network (BAN) having revealed and strongly criticized the sale of the Matson owned HORIZON TRADER for substandard scrapping in India. The vessel will soon be beached in Alang. The Platform and BAN call on All Star Metals of Brownsville, Texas, the last holder of HORIZON TRADER, to return the ship and ensure the clean and safe recycling of the vessel. The HORIZON TRADER, a 42 year-old US flagged container ship was acquired by Matson when they purchased Horizon Lines late last year. A decision was then made to scrap the vessel and it was delivered to the All Star Metals ship recycling facility in Brownsville, Texas in January 2015. BAN obtained the original Horizon Lines Memorandum of Agreement for the sale of the HORIZON TRADER, which stipulated that the buyer would responsibly recycle the vessel in the U.S. Shipbreaking yards in India operate under dangerous and polluting conditions. Workers labor on tidal sands to dismantle the vessels, breathe in toxic fumes and asbestos, and fall victim to accidents. They live in shacks close to the yards often without basic sanitary facilities or supply with drinking water. Asbestos removed from the vessels is freely traded in the local marketplace. Recent satellite images show oil spills from beached vessels. *"The conditions in the shipbreaking yards are not line with international standards for environmentally sound management, occupational health and safety rules, and fundamental labor rights – if Indian shipbreakers want to be part of a global industry providing services to international shipping companies that are more and more conscious of environmental and social issues, they have to live up to these standards"*, says Patrizia Heidegger, Director of the NGO Shipbreaking Platform. *"While the export of the Horizon Trader may be legal according to U.S. law, it outsources pollution and U.S. jobs to Asia and is highly irresponsible. We ask All Star Metals as a U.S. ship recycling company purporting to be a green ship recycler, to turn the HORIZON TRADER back to Texas for proper recycling,"* said Colby Self, green ship recycling campaigner at the Basel Action Network. The HORIZON TRADER was photographed on September 2nd being towed out of the Port of Brownsville with fresh paint on the ship's hull masking the true identity of the vessel. BAN then notified Matson and asked the company to recall the ship, and while they claimed they no longer had the authority to recall the ship, they released the following statement: *"Because of concerns with recycling practices in South Asia, Matson has decided to expressly prohibit recycling of its vessels in this region going forward."*



The statement is reflective of a growing consensus amongst ship owners. Already in Europe, the Norwegian Shipowners' Association and its 160 members recently voted to prohibit Norwegian-owned ships to be scrapped on South Asian beaches. This move follows other large foreign ship owners that have also adopted "off-the-beach" ship recycling policies, including Norwegian ship owners Grieg, Wilhelmsen and Høegh, along with German Hapag-Lloyd, Danish Maersk Lines, Royal Dutch Boskalis, Canadian CSL Group, and Singaporean China Navigation Company. *"Matson's off-the-beach commitment reflects a level of corporate leadership which we hope will be echoed by other U.S. shipping companies,"* said Colby Self. The U.S. government has likewise maintained a long-standing policy that requires its own ships to be recycled domestically and off the beaches. Ironically this stands in stark contrast to the fact that the U.S. government allows private ship-owners to legally reflag their vessels for disposal on foreign shipbreaking beaches. **CONTACT** Patrizia Heidegger Executive Director NGO Shipbreaking Platform [patrizia@shipbreakingplatform.org](mailto:patrizia@shipbreakingplatform.org) +32 2 6094 419 Basel Action Network: Colby Self [colby.self@gmail.com](mailto:colby.self@gmail.com) +1 (206) 250-5652 Jim Puckett, Executive Director [jpuckett@ban.org](mailto:jpuckett@ban.org) +1 (206) 652-5555