

ACTIONS LISTED IN THE ON-GOING ACTION PLAN FOR THE PROMOTION OF SHORT SEA SHIPPING

A number of obstacles hinder the optimal development of Short Sea Shipping:

- It has not yet reached full integration in the door-to-door supply chain;
- It involves complex administrative procedures;
- It requires higher port efficiency and good hinterland accessibility.

The 2003 Programme for the Promotion of Short Sea Shipping set out 14 actions with the objective to improve the efficiency of the mode and overcome obstacles to its development:

1) DIRECTIVE ON CERTAIN REPORTING FORMALITIES FOR SHIPS (IMO FAL)

With the adoption of directive 2002/6/EC relating to formalities for vessels at arrival to /departure from ports, the Community adopted forms in line with the IMO Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (IMO FAL Convention).

The Commission has actively advocated to non-EU countries the example that the EU has now set in accepting internationally agreed IMO FAL.

The Commission proposed on 21st January 2009 a recast of the directive COM (2009)11 in order to rationalise the use of different forms and generalise the use of electronic forms in year 2013 at the latest.

2) THE MARCO POLO PROGRAMME

The subvention programme Marco Polo I became operational in 2003 and Marco Polo II in 2007. In the first selection rounds, approximately half of the accepted projects involved starting up new lines of Short Sea Shipping.

The new programme identifies Motorways of the Sea as a specific new action.

This action should decrease road traffic over time on a given corridor by shifting goods from road to Short Sea Shipping operating on Motorways of the Sea.

Work will continue to ensure the utilisation of Marco Polo to the benefit of Short Sea Shipping until 2010 and beyond.

3) INTERMODAL LOADING UNITS

The final adoption of the Commission proposal for a Directive on Intermodal Loading Units is still pending.

4) MOTORWAYS OF THE SEA

Motorways of the Sea are an important instrument for promoting Short Sea Shipping.

The revision of the Community Guidelines on the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) in April 2004 contains a priority project with four Motorways of

the Sea areas. In February 2005, the Commission developed a Vademecum facilitating the practical application of the legal framework.

Implementing Motorways of the Sea requires partnership and co-operation. This is vital to accomplish the concentration of freight flows that is imperative for Motorways of the Sea to become viable. Motorways of the Sea are proposed by at least two Member States, they should involve both the public and private sectors, and should include short-sea links.

Motorways of the Sea are also about quality of services (frequency, punctuality, liability, perennality), as well as quality infrastructure and superstructure in ports and hinterlands connections, and efficient administrative procedures.

A European co-ordinator for Motorways of the sea was appointed in 2007.

The first Motorways of the sea are put into place within the TEN-T and the Marco Polo programmes. The Commission adopted guidelines on Motorways of the sea funding by Member States and the EU in December 2009.

5) ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE OF SHORT SEA SHIPPING

Maritime transport has higher energy-efficiency than other modes of transport and is, in general, less harmful to the environment. Increased use of Short Sea Shipping would be in line with the Union's environmental policies and CO₂ targets.

Nevertheless, environmental improvements are needed in shipping, in particular in the areas of SO_x, NO_x and particulates. Measures to reduce those pollutants through the modification of the Annex VI of the MARPOL Convention been agreed in IMO in October 2009.

The Commission endeavours to find a right balance between the necessity to continuously reduce the noxious emissions and greenhouse gases emissions by Short Sea Shipping versus the modal backshift which would be induced by an excessive increase of compliance costs for new standards.

6) GUIDE TO CUSTOMS PROCEDURES FOR SHORT SEA SHIPPING

The Commission presented, in 2004, a Working Document on "Authorised Regular Shipping Service" which is a service authorised by the Customs to carry Community goods between two Member States with the minimum of formalities.

With the concept of European maritime transport space without barriers, the Commission proposes to extend this facilitation to all vessels involved in intra-Community trade and sailing between European ports.

7) IDENTIFICATION AND ELIMINATION OF OBSTACLES TO SHORT SEA SHIPPING

Finding solutions to identified bottlenecks in door-to-door Short Sea Shipping has produced tangible results since 1999. The exercise was re-launched in April 2005. Work continues to tackle the remaining bottlenecks. The Commission feels that it is necessary to focus efforts on the port sector so as to enhance the role of ports as nodal points in the logistics chain.

The Commission launched in 2006 a wider bottleneck exercise, which encompasses all transport and logistics sector. It reflexes to other tools to collect more bottlenecks, solve those which can be addressed and disseminate best practices.

8) SIMPLIFICATION OF COMMUNITY CUSTOMS PROCEDURES

As a first step towards e-Customs, the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS) has been operational since mid-2003. In this system electronic messages replace the earlier paper procedure relating to the transport of goods under the single administrative document (SAD).

In February 2008, the Council and the Parliament adopted the Decision N° 70/2008/EC on a paperless environment for customs and trade which gives the objective of year 2013, for the implementation of paperless administrative customs procedures.

In the communication and action plan with a view to establishing a European maritime transport space without barriers, the commission announced measures in view of the deployment of e-maritime services in year 2013. These systems will provide advanced and interoperable communication systems for business to administration applications as well as for business to business purposes.

9) RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

A number of research actions are taking place within the Community Research Framework Programme with relevance to Short Sea Shipping. These relate, *inter alia*, to lowering ship emissions, new ships types, engines and port equipment.

Work will continue to follow up the results under Research Programme, secure good results and carry out effective dissemination. Short Sea Shipping, as part of the waterborne platform needs to be a priority.

10) ONE-STOP ADMINISTRATIVE SHOPS

The Decision N° 70/2008/EC on a paperless environment for customs and trade launched preparatory works with all stakeholders in view of the creation of single windows for all procedures related to goods.

The proposal for a directive on reporting formalities for ships arriving in and/or departing from ports of the Member States of the Community and repealing Directive 2002/6/EC adopted on 21 January 2009 stipulated that Member States should install at the latest in 2013 national single windows for all vessel related administrative procedures. These national single windows should be interoperable with the customs single window.

11) SHORT SEA SHIPPING FOCAL POINTS

Short Sea Shipping Focal Points are representatives of national maritime administrations and responsible for Short Sea Shipping in their administrations. The Commission has continued to highlight their vital role in short-sea policy and has organised regular meetings with them to exchange information, discuss Motorways of the Sea, and solve obstacles to the development of Short Sea Shipping.

Work continued with half-yearly meetings of the Focal Points and to secure the flow of information and achievement of results, including Motorways of the Sea.

12) SHORTSEA PROMOTION CENTRES

There are currently 22 Shortsea Promotion Centres (SPCs) operating in Europe. These Centres are driven by business interests and offer neutral, impartial advice on the use of Short Sea Shipping to meet the needs of transport users. They are essentially independent from specific interest groups and work in line with the European promotion policy. The national Centres are networked in the European Shortsea Network (ESN) which offers a common, virtual tool for European promotion. The Commission strongly supports these Centres, their work and their networking and expects this support to be matched at national level.

The Commission is currently examining ways to promote a wider concept of multimodality based on the existing structures.

Work continues to ensure good functioning of and guidance to the SPCs. Efforts to secure at least medium-term financial security for the SPCs are a priority.

13) IMAGE OF SHORT SEA SHIPPING

Based on information received from the maritime industries and through the European Shortsea Network, efforts to improve the overall image of Short Sea Shipping have been successful.

However, full integration of Short Sea Shipping in logistics chains still remains to be improved. Consequently, efforts on promoting the image of the mode should now focus on this targeted segment that can also help Motorways of the Sea. Shippers, cargo owners, forwarders and hauliers should continue to be important targets for promotion and so should attracting young people to the profession.

The Commission launched in 2006 the PROPS project in view to enhance the image of Short Sea Shipping, notably through a pan European promotion campaign. The project is led in co-operation with the SPC.

14) STATISTICS

The Council Directive on Maritime Statistics that came into full effect in 2000 will gradually become the main source of short-sea data when it will be able to provide sufficient data series, in tonne-kilometres, to analyse trends.

The Commission has instituted a working group of national statisticians in view to improve the quality of statistics and allow coherent comparisons between modes by converting the tonne-based short-sea data into tonne-kilometres used in other modes.

The Commission continues to work towards a single, reliable statistical source for Short Sea Shipping. It is now important to get more detailed data on the different types of Short Sea Shipping (ferries, transport of containers, bulks, feeding services...), in order to assess the performance and need for all of them.