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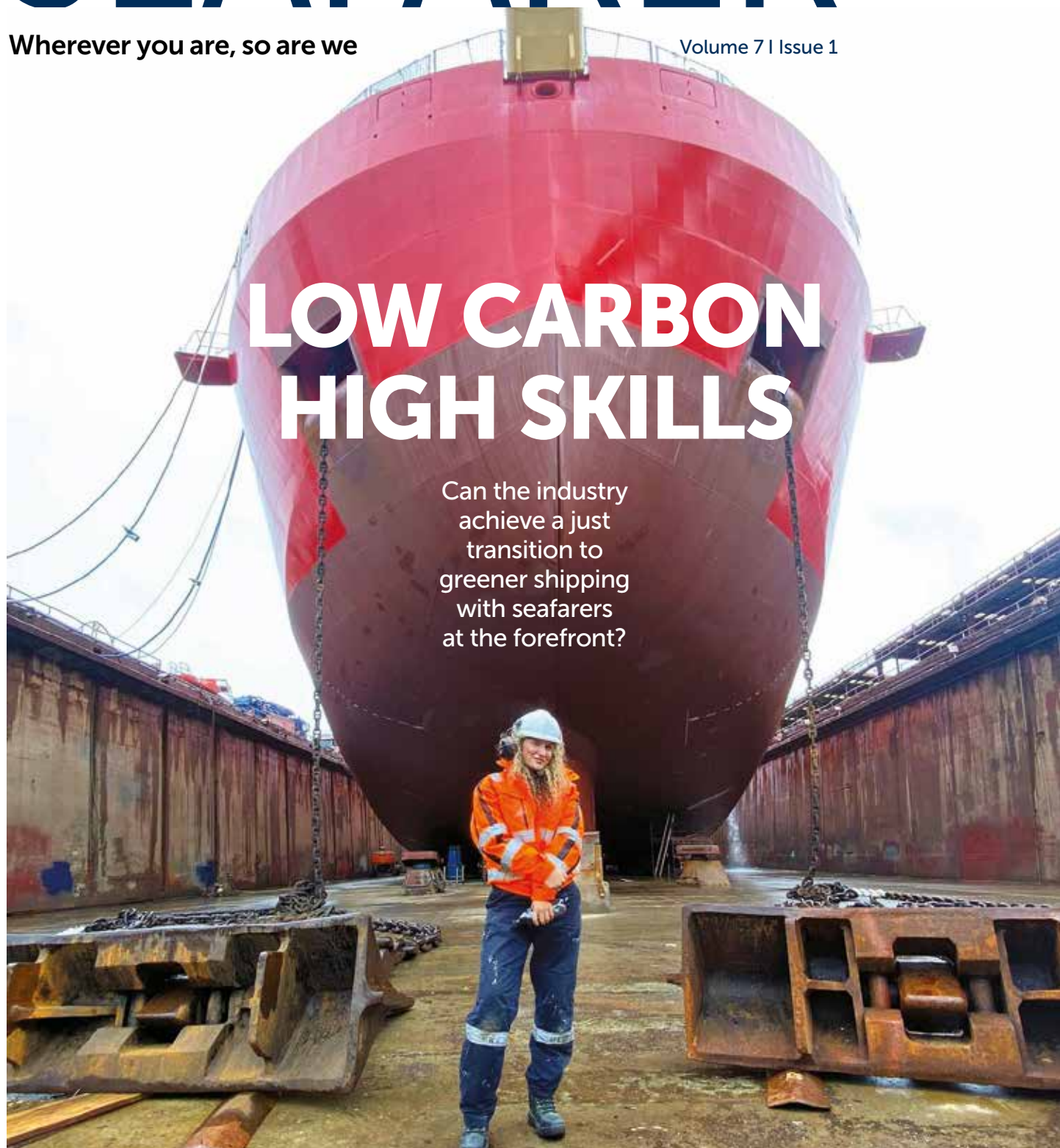
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Wherever you are, so are we

Volume 71 Issue 1

LOW CARBON HIGH SKILLS

Can the industry
achieve a just
transition to
greener shipping
with seafarers
at the forefront?



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Cover image & Credit:
Nautilus member Scarlett Burnett-Smith

Words matter



Nautilus Federation Director
Mark Dickinson

Shipowners who committed to continuous improvement under the Maritime Labour Convention must be good to their word

In labour relations, especially in the complex world of the global shipping industry and its hugely competitive international labour market, we are often told to 'keep our eyes on the prize' and to 'see the big picture' and not worry too much about words. As someone who has spent the best part of 45 years in shipping, engaging in collective bargaining and social dialogue and negotiating texts in international instruments – not least the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) – these are valid observations. Without compromise and a willingness to appreciate the other side's position, little would be achieved. It takes two to tango.

However, words matter. Words are what we use to describe commitments, obligations, rights or even just to agree issues to be discussed in the future. They allow parties to international instruments, memorandums, agreements, etc., whether they are legally binding or not, to judge the commitment of the other party. They prove the intent of each party in a negotiation or a discussion. They give confidence that a relationship is mutually beneficial.

When it comes to seafarers' living and working conditions it matters that employers deliver on their commitment, enshrined in the MLC, to continuous improvement. It matters that they continuously improve the health and safety of the workplaces of our members, of all maritime professionals, and that shipowners and ship managers continuously improve training and expand opportunity so that all seafarers can take part in a just transition to net zero, decarbonisation and human centred technological advancement in the maritime industry.

Shipowners like to remind seafarers that we all supported the development of the MLC because of

the need for a level playing field in global shipping. They suggest that, until all countries have ratified the MLC, 'improvements' in the international minimum standards must be on the basis of compelling need.

This view is an abrogation of the commitments given to the Seafarers Group at the International Labour Organization (ILO) during the negotiations for the MLC. The level playing field, as desirable as we all thought it was, could never be supported by the seafarers if the standards of the MLC remained static. The principle of a level playing field was agreed only in return for continuous improvement in the standards enshrined in the MLC and a simplified amendment process is testament to that.

Furthermore, continuous improvement is not predicated on compelling need, it is already a requirement in Title 5 and must be enforced by the competent authority of the ratifying state. Ironically, given the regular and ongoing attacks on trade unionism, it is most readily and easily demonstrated through social dialogue and collective bargaining. You would think that might be something shipowners and ship managers would want to discuss, even to shout about, given how vocal they were and how often they metaphorically clapped for seafarers during the Covid-19 induced crew change crisis.

So yes, words matter. It is high time shipowners and ship managers understood that and engaged in a discussion about how together we deliver continuous improvement. We can sign all the MOUs you like, but for sure we will keep our eyes on the prize and see the big picture. We will never stop reminding the industry of their commitments in international law. If these commitments are just words on a piece of paper then we are in for a difficult time.



The crew of USNS Yuma was represented at the awards ceremony by Third Mate Steven Shields (left), a member of MM&P.

Seafarers recognised for bravery at sea

Seafarers have been recognised for their bravery at the recent Admiral of the Ocean Sea (AOTOS) awards.

The United Seamen's Service, which hosts the AOTOS event in New York City, honours US seafarers involved in rescues at sea, as part of an annual tradition.

Two vessels crewed by the International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots (MM&P) and the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA) were selected as honourees and invited representatives accepted AOTOS 'Honored Seafarer Awards' on behalf of the crews.

The first award was presented to the officers and crew of M/V CMA CGM Herodote, for their part

in the rescue of three fishermen off the coast of Japan in March 2022.

The crew saw billowing smoke about eight nautical miles away and after diverting towards the fire they discovered a Japanese fishing vessel, the Yuujin Maru 51, engulfed in flames. There was no sign of survivors and there was no name visible on what was left of the boat.

The crew of the Herodote began a search for survivors, put out a call to other merchant ships in the area and contacted the US Coast Guard Command Center Honolulu and Japan's Coast Guard.

The crew of the Herodote eventually located three fishermen in the water and continued the search for seven hours, until they were relieved by Japan's Coast Guard.

Out of the fishing vessel's crew of eight, the three people that the US-flagged vessel located were the only survivors.

The second award – an AOTOS Mariner's Plaque – was presented to the officers and crew of Military Sealift Command vessel USNS Yuma for helping to avert a humanitarian disaster in the Eastern Mediterranean in September 2022.

The vessel diverted to assist a sinking migrant vessel that had collided with a Maltese tanker. The Yuma and an Italian naval vessel were able to rescue all 90 migrants and the Yuma's medical officer and other crew members rendered assistance to the injured.

MM&P and the MEBA are Nautilus Federation affiliates.

Just transition plan for seafarers launched at COP27

UN organisations, shipowners and trade unions have come together at the COP27 climate summit in Egypt to launch a decarbonisation action plan for the global seafaring workforce.

The Mapping a Maritime Just Transition for Seafarers paper was commissioned by the Maritime Just Transition Task Force, which was formed at COP26 in Glasgow from key industry stakeholders to ensure that shipping's response to the climate emergency consults the needs of seafarers and communities. Nautilus International was one of the contributors to the paper.

The paper puts forward a 10-point action plan in response to new research warning that hundreds of thousands of seafarers will need reskilling to handle alternative fuels in the run-up to 2050, as shipping seeks to decarbonise.

The three emission reduction scenarios assessed in the research highlight an immediate need to start putting the training infrastructure for this in place.

The findings also suggest that a lack of certainty on alternative fuel options is having a knock-on effect for seafarer training.

In response to the training challenge that the modelling lays bare, the Action Plan makes recommendations for industry, governments, seafarer unions and academia (including training providers). These include:

- strengthening global training standards and monitoring which skills are needed/taught
 - investing in training and skills
 - ensuring a health-and-safety-first approach
 - establishing advisory national maritime skills councils
 - addressing problems with seafarer recruitment and attrition
- The International Transport Workers'



Federation (ITF) – of which Nautilus International is a member – is part of the Maritime Just Transition Task Force.

ITF general secretary Stephen Cotton commented: 'All three scenarios identified require some form of retraining the workforce.

The good news is that seafarers are prepared and willing to be part of this transition. But crew want to know that the fuels they're handling are indeed safe, and that we as an industry have the training pathways established to upgrade their skills.'

Tune in to our latest Off Course podcast!



Do you experience sea-sickness? Want to know how to counteract its symptoms? Then the third instalment of Nautilus's new podcast is for you.

'Off Course: a sideways look at life at sea' is a series in which we explore why the maritime sector remains such a mystery to so many people in the UK when it plays such an important role in all our lives.

In the Nautilus International's Maritime Barometer survey, which surveyed 2,000 members of the

British public, it emerged that sea-sickness is one of the top reasons why people wouldn't consider a career at sea. So episode three of the podcast focuses on this issue, which many of us who work or travel by sea are all too aware of.

It features Dr Tom Stoffregen, an expert in motion sickness from the University of Minnesota. Dr Stoffregen discusses his theory of why some people are more susceptible to sea-sickness than others and offers some advice

to alleviate symptoms. He tells us there is only one known cure... you're going to have listen in to find out what it is!

In case you missed it, episode one features Captain Rich Phillips – played by Tom Hanks in the Hollywood blockbuster – for a discussion about piracy, and episode two features a trailblazer for greater diversity within the industry, Sanjam Sahi Gupta, who talks to us about her experiences as a woman in the maritime industry and how that has informed her campaigning work.

STILL ABSOLUTE?

In a connected world, will the authority of the master remain absolute, or will shipowners and operators come to play an ever-increasing role in managing the vessel?

Could they even intervene in emergency situations?

Two safety reports released in the wake of serious maritime incidents have highlighted different attitudes towards the responsibility of a master for his or her vessel

Dutch Safety Board report challenges onboard authority



The 5,460gt Eemslift Hendrika was evacuated after developing a 45-degree list during a force 09 storm

CREDIT: Norwegian Coastal Administration

Modern communications mean that the master's traditional authority onboard a ship can be challenged by shore management, a Dutch Safety Board report has argued.

Following an investigation into the near-capsize of the Dutch-flagged cargoship Eemslift Hendrika during a storm off the coast of Norway last year, the board has concluded that an owner should be able to impose an instruction upon a master in 'exceptional circumstances'.

The 5,460gt Eemslift Hendrika had to be evacuated after developing a 45-degree list when several 60-tonne azimuth thrusters in the cargo hold shifted and punctured an anti-heeling tank and ballast water tanks during a force 9 storm. The ship drifted to within 7nm of the coast in waves up to 15 metres before a tug managed to secure a line and tow it to Ålesund harbour.

Investigators noted that the storm had been forecast and the owners had 'advised' the master to take a more sheltered alternative route. The report notes that the master had not perceived the passage across open water as an immediate danger and his concerns over the paperwork involved in taking a route involving pilotage had influenced his decision to reject the advice.

'The ship was able to handle the predicted conditions, but the captain underestimated the effect of the northwestern storm on the height and direction of the waves,' the report states. 'This made it almost impossible to maintain course and speed, forcing the captain to ride the storm.'

The Safety Board noted that the ISM Code gives the master the 'final responsibility' onboard a ship. However, the report argues, 'this fact does not mean that the captain cannot be obliged or instructed to follow proposed advice.'

'The perception among part of the industry that a captain cannot receive instructions has historically grown,' it adds. 'Traditionally, a captain was dependent on himself and his crew during sea voyages. In the present time, shore communication with ships has improved and there is regular contact between the office and the ship. This allows an operator or shipowner to give instructions in if a situation requires it.'

The report recommends that the operator should consider imposing instructions on a master 'in exceptional situations where the safety of the crew and the ship is or is likely to be compromised'.



An aerial photo of Kota Bahagia shows smoke from the cargo hold fire in the New Zealand port of Napier in December 2020

Master should have authority during emergencies, New Zealand report finds

CREDIT: James Hooker/TAIC

Shipmasters should have the ultimate authority during an emergency onboard their vessel, a new report has concluded – intensifying a debate that was sparked by a Dutch investigation which argued that shore management should have the right to over-rule a captain in certain circumstances.

A report by New Zealand's Transport Accident Investigation Commission (TAIC) about a serious blaze onboard a general cargoship in the port of Napier in December 2020 says that shore-based firefighters failed to give 'due regard to the master's command status and knowledge of the ship and its systems'.

This meant that 'valuable time was lost' as the master of the Singapore-flagged Kota Bahagia tried to explain the intended tactics to the officer in charge of the unified command team, investigators found. The fire was not declared officially extinguished until six days after it began and there was extensive damage to a cargo hold and its contents of high-value wind turbine components.

The fire began when gas-cutting

work was taking place while cargo discharge operations were underway onboard the 18,180gt vessel. Local engineers had been using oxy-acetylene equipment to remove cargo stoppers and investigations showed that molten material had probably ignited dry sawdust from timber dunnage nearby, with the smouldering fire spreading to polyvinyl-chloride tarpaulins and other combustible components of the fibreglass project cargo.

The ship's master had determined that the best way to tackle the blaze would be to close the cargo hold hatch and activate the vessel's fixed carbon dioxide fire-extinguishing system. The hatch cover could not be closed until a crane wire and container spreader had been hoisted out of the hold.

However, as the master told investigators, it had taken 20 minutes to secure agreement on this with the Fire and Emergency NZ team sent to the scene. 'It is very likely that the fire would have been suppressed earlier if the crew had been able to continue with the master's original plan,' the TAIC report states. 'This

incident illustrates the importance of an appropriate initial engagement and exchange of information between masters and shore-based emergency responders.'

Investigators noted that a master might not be the incident controller during a coordinated response to an emergency onboard a ship in port. 'However,' the report adds, 'the master retains the overriding authority to make, and the responsibility for making, decisions regarding the safety and security of the vessel. The master is responsible for the safety of life on board, the care of the cargo and protecting the marine environment from ship-borne pollution. Fire and emergency responders need to take this into account as part of their responses to ship fires.'

TAIC pointed out that it had made recommendations in 2018 on improving training and procedures for shipboard firefighting in response to a similar incident in the port of Tauranga. Although guidance and procedures for ship fires have been updated, a revised training regime has yet to be compiled and implemented.



Bed bugs cause itchy bites, leading to insomnia and sometimes infections. They are almost impossible to get rid of without the help of pest control experts

Sleep tight

CREDIT: Getty Images / John Downer

Do you get itchy in your cabin? Maritime medics have sounded the alarm over signs of a resurgence of bed bug infestation onboard ships, writes **Andrew Linington**

A study published by the International Maritime Health Journal warns that bed bugs have once again become a major worldwide public health problem, largely as a result of growing resistance to insecticides. Ships – which have long been affected by infestations – are particularly exposed to the new proliferation and face associated economic and welfare risks, the report stresses.

Researchers from five French maritime and occupational health organisations noted that cases have recently been reported on cruiseships and on a US nuclear submarine. However, they pointed out that there has been little scientific work done to examine the scale of the problem at sea.

Bed bugs usually arrive onboard in luggage and personal belongings and can survive for up to two years without feeding. Although their bites are usually painless, excessive scratching can lead to secondary infections and the bites can also cause insomnia and anxiety.

The researchers found that 27% of French maritime doctors had been told of bed bug infestations onboard and 18% had been approached by

shipowners for support in dealing with infestations. More than one-quarter of the doctors said they considered that the problem is increasing.

‘Our survey showed that bed bug infestation is a growing issue for French seafarers,’ the study concludes. ‘While the frequency of infestations appeared still limited, the occurrence of bed bugs has a major impact onboard. Ships are occupational and living spaces all together. Limited living spaces increase the impact of bed bug outbreaks, as confirmed by physicians’ statements.’

The report notes that scientific and governmental agencies have issued no specific recommendation or guidelines to ships on dealing with bedbugs. However, it adds, many passenger ships have well-developed Integrated Pest Management systems with training courses for staff members and protocols on insect or rodent infestation management.

The researchers said early detection of onboard infestations is of critical importance and ‘it is essential to inform and educate seafarers on best practice’ – especially cruiseship personnel. Any significant outbreaks onboard should be dealt with by specialist professionals, they added.

27%

of French maritime doctors told of bed bug infestations onboard

18%

of these doctors have been approached by shipowners for support in dealing with infestations

Lifeboat abandoned during training exercise

Calls for European and international action to tackle survival craft safety have been made following an incident in which an enclosed lifeboat heeled over during a training exercise.

The enclosed lifeboat – which was also approved for use as a rescue boat – had to be abandoned when it began to list heavily and became flooded with water through an open side hatch.

In a report on the incident, Sweden’s Accident Investigation Authority (SHK) calls for the EU to ‘take necessary measures’ to ensure that the requirements in respect of lifeboat stability are fit for purpose and do not constitute a risk to maritime safety.

It also recommends international action to develop guidance for the safe use of small, enclosed lifeboats with side openings near the gunwale and urges the manufacturers to revise the operation and maintenance manual for the lifeboat type.

The accident occurred in April 2021 at a training centre in Frihamnen harbour, Stockholm, while six Merchant Navy officers and an instructor were taking part in a refresher course session to practise rescuing survivors from the water using a lifeboat.

The 5.7m Viking-Norsafe JYN 57T craft – which had a 26-person capacity – heeled heavily to port and half filled with water during a change of helmsman.

Three people were thrown into the water, while the others were able to cling to its sides until other rescue boats arrived.

‘The accident was caused by the lifeboat’s stability properties, which meant that small changes in centre of gravity gave rise to large angles of heel,’ SHK said.

Investigators said tests had shown that small forces could generate large angles of heel, especially when a lifeboat is lightly loaded and has few people onboard.

Their report questions the adequacy of the International Life-Saving Appliance Code, pointing to ‘inconsistencies’ in

the format of the regulations. ‘The stability requirements are designed for static conditions in calm water and there are no requirements in respect of dynamic forces or heavy weather,’ it points out.

‘In a real situation, especially in heavy weather, there should be no doubt that a lifeboat has sufficient stability for the rescue tasks that may need to be performed, at least within reasonable limits,’ the report concludes.



CREDIT: SHK

Nautilus concerned over Panama Canal flood

Nautilus has been concerned to see reports that the Panama Canal flooded at the Gatun locks.

In a statement posted on the Panama Canal’s Twitter feed, the Authority said: ‘We inform you that... the western Gatun lock has overflowed. A specialist team from the Canal is investigating the causes.’

Pictures seen on social media showed water spilling onto roads and railway lines alongside the canal.

A spokesperson for one of the unions

representing Canal workers said: ‘We have never seen this before. It is a worrying development in a line of recent incidents on the Panama Canal.’

‘The Canal is essential to the world’s supply chains, and despite the money made by the Canal each year, it appears that there is a significant underinvestment in facilities.’

‘We expect the Authority to invest the money it makes into improving and maintaining safety for all those who work on and who transit the Canal.’



IMO secretary general Kitack Lim opening the event, which covered the social aspects of the green transition

INTERNATIONAL IGNITION OF A JUST TRANSITION

The International Maritime Organization's second symposium on low and zero carbon fuels was titled: 'Ensuring a just and inclusive transition towards low-carbon shipping'. Despite a general lack of focus on front-line workers, there were still some highlights for seafarers. **Rob Coston** reports

'The IMO will promote a just and equitable transition with no-one left behind'

IMO secretary general Kitack Lim

Nautilus International has long been pressing for a 'just transition' to new low- and zero-carbon propulsion technologies, so it was good to see that the International Maritime Organization (IMO) had decided to focus on the topic for its second symposium on low and zero carbon fuels.

From the Union's perspective (see panel overleaf), a just transition to greener shipping is one that sees employers and governments investing in the skills and safety of the workers who will operate the new technologies. However, there are other viewpoints in which the term means – for example – that state financial support should be given to employers required by new laws to install greener technology.

IMO secretary general Kitack Lim opened the 21 October symposium in London by stating that 'decarbonising international shipping is a priority issue for IMO and we are all committed to act together in achieving the highest possible ambition.'

As the head of a United Nations body – indeed, one that has been accused of dragging its feet on the issue of decarbonisation – it is perhaps no surprise that much of Mr Lim's opening speech focused on the need for collaboration to solve climate problems. He further highlighted that the transition contains opportunities for developing nations, as well as costs. Seafarers did not feature especially highly in these opening comments, but the secretary general

did acknowledge that 'as well as new technology and new fuels, we should not forget we will need new training for the maritime workforce.'

The IMO will 'promote a just and equitable transition with no-one left behind,' he said.

Seafarers absent?

Unfortunately, much of the day-long event focused not on seafarers and frontline workers but on other topics – with around 20 speakers largely choosing to focus on the business case for decarbonisation, the different fuel options available to shipping companies and, more frequently, the opportunities for developing countries to benefit from the transition.

This aspect was covered expertly by panellist Christiaan De Beukelaer, senior lecturer culture and climate at University of Melbourne & Durham University.

'The current energy transition we face could be and should be an opportunity to improve lives around the world,' he said, which would require the process to be 'environmentally effective, procedurally fair, genuinely just and equitable'.

The transition could either widen, maintain or – preferably – reduce global disparities and inequalities, he pointed out.

'In practice we need to ensure worker safety/social justice, technological inclusiveness and global equity. These elements, along with the practical side of transitioning to green technology, are mutually reinforcing.'





T.

View a recording of the entire IMO symposium online at: bit.ly/MO_symposium

Unions highlight maritime workers

It was largely left up to one speaker and two audience participants to highlight the needs of maritime professionals.

Speaking from the audience, Jeremy Anderson, sustainable transport lead at the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), asked Mr De Beukelaar how we can ensure seafarers and other maritime workers can be better represented in the transition process.

'It is vitally important when we talk about just transition that we follow the

Paris Agreement and ILO literature, which says there is a need to consider workers and ensure representation for them,' Mr Anderson said.

'Decarbonisation is a major priority for the ITF. Our members know it won't work without their input.'

Mr Anderson took the opportunity to remind the delegates – who had spent much of the day discussing alternative fuels – that changes have life-changing implications for seafarers, stressing that the use of ammonia, for example, raises major safety concerns that must be addressed.

'It's very clear the industry is facing a major labour shortage. In terms of decarbonisation this is coming at the worst time,' he added. 'We need expertise. It's very important that we bring in a new generation of young seafarers, including women, and we need high quality training.'

Mr de Beukelaar responded: 'I think [the voice of seafarers] is something that is very absent and I think that's a real pity. It is a fact

that many people here in the room are former seafarers who have a thorough understanding of what it is like to work at sea. Recognising that experience is one thing, but recognising the voices of those who will have to train to deal with new fuels and a new work environment is vital, as they have to take the new risks.'

Another audience participant, Nautilus International's communications and campaigns organiser Robert Murtagh, reminded the panel that green technology is no longer something distant, and that current seafarers must be considered.

'When we talk about the people and skills element to the just transition, we often talk about "the future" and how the seafarers of the future must acquire the necessary skills,' he said. 'But how do we ensure the seafarers of today have access to upskilling so we don't see an exodus of skilled maritime professionals from the industry because they can't acquire proper training?'

Appeal from crewing hub

One speaker in particular was passionate about the needs of seafarers – and the dependence of the entire transition project on the skill and determination of maritime professionals. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this was Gerardo Borromeo, a representative of the Philippines on the global maritime industry's Just Transition Task Force, formed at COP 26.

He emphasised the need for 'human sustainability for the maritime industry', which requires making seafaring an attractive industry as well as investing in education. The latter is currently being hamstrung, however, by continuing lack of clarity on areas such as which fuels will be used, and what financing will be available for reskilling and upskilling.

'The decarbonisation and digitalisation transition is not solely dependent on the future of ships; it will depend on the maritime professional we develop,' he said. 'We can build a ship in less than three years but it takes 12 to 14 years to go from cadet to master.'

'Decarbonisation is a major priority for the ITF. Our members know it won't work without their input'

Jeremy Anderson, sustainable transport lead at the ITF



CREDIT: IMO

No more excuses

Whenever the subject of investment in green maritime technology arises, shipowners come up with reasons why they shouldn't have to do it, and the IMO seminar was no exception – **writes Sarah Robinson.**

A small cut in their profits would risk the viability of multinational shipping corporations, we hear. Another line is that shipowners shouldn't have to do much because other industries aren't doing much either, or because investment in these other industries would make a bigger difference to the environment than if the money were spent in shipping.

However, the dangers now posed by the climate crisis mean that, both legally and ethically, inaction is no longer an option.

A new study from the European clean transport campaign group Transport & Environment should therefore provide welcome reading for shipowners, as it indicates that the costs of change could be much less than many fear.

The study takes a real-world example of a named large container ship travelling between China and Belgium and looks at how much the unit cost of carrying common goods would increase if the shipowner changed to cleaner fuels.

The fuels analysed start with the ones that would be easiest/cheapest for a switch away from diesel, including 'full fossil' liquefied natural gas (LNG) and biodiesel blend.

Then there are the more sustainable biofuels and the likes of 'e-LNG', which has a lower overall greenhouse gas tally than full fossil LNG because the liquefaction process is carried out using electricity from renewables like wind or solar power.

Finally, the study looks at what the extra costs would be if the ship ran on 'green hydrogen' – the gold standard with virtually no greenhouse emissions from the ship or in production, because the fuel is created using electricity from renewables.

Careful consideration was given to a range of factors when the analysts made

their calculations, and for detailed information about the methodology, Telegraph readers are encouraged to download the study for themselves (link below).

Taking averages of the increased costs that would be incurred by changing to the various alternative fuels, the study's headline finding is this: 'Ambitious EU green shipping measures would add just cents to most consumer goods.' The cents in question are Euro cents, and the examples of additional costs for three different products are as follows:

+€0.008 Pair of shoes
+€0.10 TV
+€0.81 Fridge

Even changing to green hydrogen would incur only the following additional costs per item, the study says:

+€0.08 Pair of shoes
+€1.00 TV
+€8.00 Fridge

These seem like increases that consumers would be willing to bear in the retail price of the goods, says the study, but they don't need to. 'Given the highest historical earnings of the container carriers, it can be assumed that part of these costs, even if insignificant, can be assumed by the shipping operators,' concludes the report.

• Download the full Transport & Environment study report The small price to pay to clean up shipping from bit.ly/green_fuel_costs

WORDS INTO ACTIONS

At the global environment summit COP26 in November 2021, campaigner Greta Thunberg was not optimistic that politicians and industry leaders would keep their promises on decarbonisation. So with COP27 now upon us one year on, what's been happening in shipping? Are we going greener, or was it all just 'blah blah blah'?

Jon Parkin and Sarah Robinson report



Leaders gathered from all over the world at the COP26 climate summit, where they pledged to create green shipping corridors and reduce global emissions



A new report from the Maritime Just Transition Task Force has identified the need to begin reskilling seafarers now

CREDIT: Getty Images

The COP26 climate summit was a very high-profile global event, and all eyes were on the UK, which hosted the summit in the city of Glasgow. In the excitement of the moment, Britain made decarbonisation pledges relating to many different industries – but sadly some of these seem to be going by the wayside as the government now looks to increase domestic fossil fuel extraction in response to the fuel insecurity and price hikes caused by the Ukraine war.

However, things are looking better for the UK government's commitment to specifically maritime decarbonisation initiatives – and other countries are also making an effort in this area too.

Green shipping corridors

The Clydebank Declaration formed the backbone of the commitments at COP26, with 24 signatories committing to create at least six 'green shipping corridors' by the middle of the decade.

Green shipping corridors have been described as specific routes where the economics, logistics and politics of zero-emission shipping are more feasible and rapid deployment can be supported by policy and industry action.

Has any progress been made, though? The short answer is yes, although the UK's involvement with corridors is less impressive than that of other signatories. There are signs that green corridors will be popping up across the world. The deadline is looming, but the target could be met.

The port of Rotterdam is an obvious focal point, with several proposals for green corridors. In July it was confirmed that 'the world's longest green shipping corridor' would be launched between Rotterdam and Singapore. Further partnerships between Gothenburg and Rotterdam, and Gothenburg and Ghent were announced in October 2022.

On top of these, recent developments between Finland and Sweden have led to US\$1.6 million being put into the creation of a corridor between Turku and Stockholm, a route commonly used by ferry operator Viking Line.

Some activity on creating a green corridor between Spain and the UK was reported at a recent conference organised by the green transport campaign group Transport & Environment. At the event – titled **Does Spain really want to decarbonise shipping?** – the British Embassy in Madrid said there had been a number of discussions and workshops between stakeholders in Spain and the UK, with another set to take place in December of this year, but while these are positive steps, there don't appear to be any concrete plans to move forward with a corridor scheme any time soon.

In July it was confirmed that the world's longest green shipping corridor would be launched





CREDIT: Frans Berkelaar/Flickr

The Port of Rotterdam is becoming a focal point for green shipping corridors – including the world's longest, in partnership with Singapore



CREDIT: Alexander Bobrov/Pexels

Ship operators are starting to retrofit their ships' engines to run on greener fuels

➤ **Green maritime innovation**
Back in the UK, the government's Clean Maritime Demonstration Programme (CMDC) is now in its second round and has supported 86 projects with a total of £37 million.
In September 2022 the winners of the first round of the CMDC were announced. These included three feasibility studies into UK green corridors. Mooted corridors include Dover-Calais/Dunkirk, a 'Clean Tyne Shipping Corridor' and Aberdeen-Norway.
The second round of the CMDC is due to be completed in August 2023.

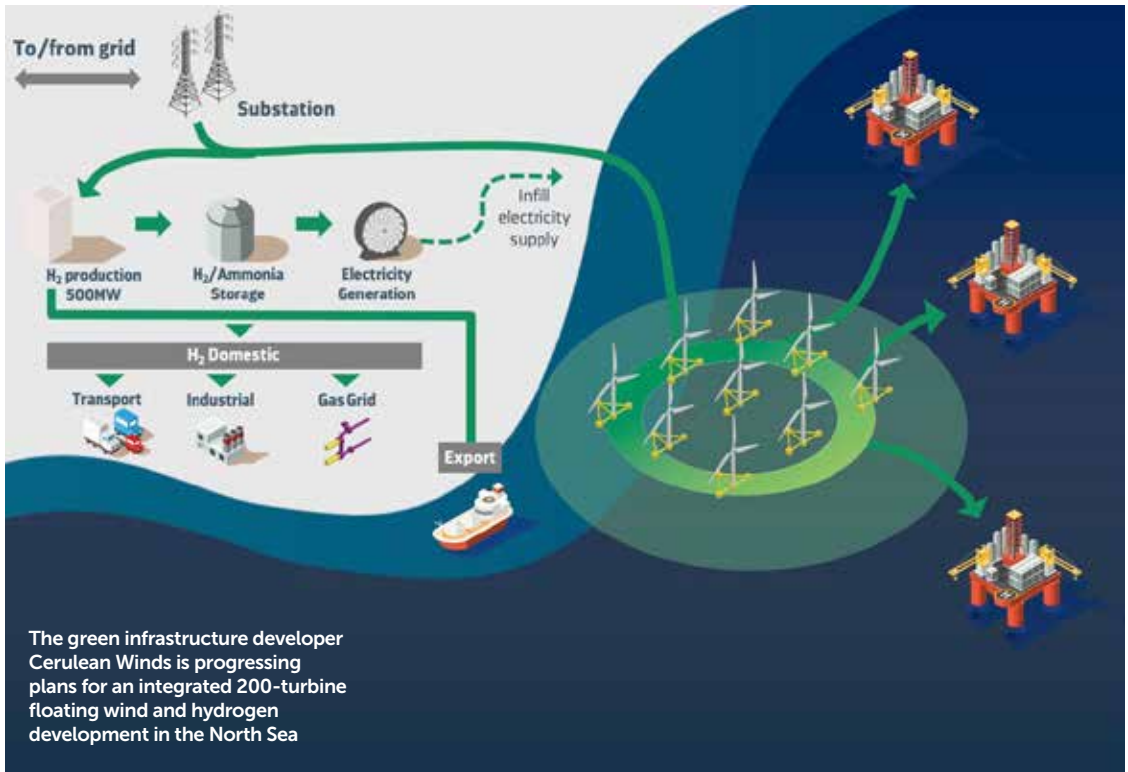
Delays to using fuels like hydrogen and ammonia are not necessarily a result of shipowners' unwillingness to invest

Implementation of cleaner maritime fuels
As the Telegraph has often reported before, ideas for using fuels like hydrogen and ammonia for vessel propulsion have been around for many years now but have mostly been stuck at the pilot stage. These delays are not necessarily a result of shipowners' unwillingness to invest; they can be as much to do with a lack of national and international infrastructure to produce these fuels at scale and make them available for bunkering in ports.
Transport & Environment's Spanish conference had some encouragement on these issues from Hydrogen Europe and Global Maritime Forum, who talked about their work to make greener fuels more commercially viable.
MAN energy solutions told the conference it has ammonia-fuelled engines set to come into service in

2024, and the option is now open for shipping companies to easily change their current MAN engines to low-carbon fuels via retrofitting.
However, speakers across the event were keen to stress one thing: more support from the European Parliament would help in the journey towards emissions reduction goals.
Meanwhile, a steady flow of press releases has been coming into the Telegraph inbox in the year since COP26 announcing contracts signed on green maritime infrastructure projects and vessel propulsion systems.
For example, green infrastructure developer Cerulean Winds has signed an agreement with px Group, an operator of large-scale industrial facilities, as it moves to progress its plans for an integrated 200-turbine floating wind and hydrogen development in the North Sea. This

development will produce 'green hydrogen' using the renewable energy from the wind turbines.
In Norway, shipowner Havila is fitting a coastal cruiseship to run on hydrogen and shore-charged batteries, with the aim of this entering service in 2023, and another three similar vessels on the way.
The tech company Ocean Infinity has announced the development of zero-emission, remotely operated and autonomous ready short sea container vessels that will operate in a green corridor between Norway and the Netherlands.
Shoreham Port on the south coast of England says it is collaborating with Local Fuels, Ricardo and H2 Green to explore developing a renewable green energy hub. The aim is for the hub to provide clean fuel for locally based fleets and be a catalyst for the





decarbonisation of transport across the region. These are all encouraging projects, albeit not all close to realisation, but what the upbeat announcements rarely mention is an important issue that was addressed at COP26: the need to upskill the workers who will be using the new fuels and operating the new technology.

The Just Transition report includes a 10-point action plan with seafarer unions at its heart

A fair green deal for maritime workers

At COP26, the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), of which Nautilus is a member, signed up to the new Just Transition Maritime Task Force. Other members of the task force include the International Chamber of Shipping, the International Maritime Organization and the International Labour Organization.

Since its formation, several further partners have been announced, with the Singapore Maritime Foundation becoming the first public partner in April 2022.

The Task Force set out to achieve its aims in two phases, the first being to understand what upskilling is needed to make sure no seafarers are left behind when new technology is introduced.

At COP27, which is being held in Egypt in November 2022, the Task Force released a report on the findings of phase one. This report covers areas such as diversity and inclusion, support for seafarers' skills and transferability of those skills, and health and safety.

It also calls for Skills Councils to be established which will focus on new fuels and technologies required for seafarers, and includes a 10-point action plan with seafarer unions at its heart (see page 5).

From there, phase two can progress, which aims to ensure decent work at ports, quality green jobs for workers, and positive interaction with communities affected by the transition to green technology.

Nautilus will be paying close attention to the Task Force's findings and proposals as the Union seeks to expand its own lobbying and campaigning for a just transition that supports the livelihoods and aspirations of members. A key part of this will be ensuring that seafarers can connect with 'abstract' environmental concepts and understand how they can future-proof their own careers in response to the changes that are coming, something that the Union will be doing in collaboration with its partners in the Nautilus Federation and beyond.



How to be menopause savvy

As female seafarers have increased in number and worked their way up the ranks, more mature women are working at sea.

But there is a danger that maritime employers might lose the expertise of these experienced professionals, as

recent research in the UK shows that a lack of support around the menopause is leading to as many as one in 10 women leaving their jobs.

It doesn't have to be this way, though. Menopause mentor Torild Boe dispelled some myths at a recent Maritime UK workshop.

What happens at menopause?

Menopause is more than just the hot flushes that can present as a woman's menstrual cycle ceases and she can no longer get pregnant. It can result in mood and sleep disturbances, feelings of anxiety and palpitations, as well as thinning hair, night sweats and over 30 other symptoms which can be distressing and debilitating. Experiencing these symptoms onboard a ship away from home can be particularly challenging. But good treatment and symptom management can get women back to feeling like themselves and working at the top of their game.

What should employers be aware of?

Some 51% of the workforce will transition through the menopause for two to 15 years of their life, but discrimination against menopausal women is still widespread. The UK government is investigating the legislation around this, and the number of successful tribunals citing menopause is increasing. Maritime UK has an online Menopause Hub which offers support in setting up workplace menopause policies: see bit.ly/maritime_menopause_hub.

How can I handle my menopause?

If you are one of the 75% of women who experience menopause symptoms, be sure to discuss the options of hormone replacement therapy with your GP/family doctor.

Here are some tips that can also help:

Diary your day: track what you eat, what you drink, whether you exercise and when you go to sleep.

Practise breathwork: calming and cooling yogic breathing techniques can help with sleep and hot flushes as they calm the nervous system.

Keep healthy: reduce caffeine and alcohol intake, especially before important meetings.

Before you sign...

You should never start work on a ship without a written contract. The best guarantee of proper conditions of employment at sea is to only sign a contract drawn up in accordance with an International Transport Workers' Federation-approved collective agreement. Failing that, the ITF has drawn up the following checklist you can consult

Check if the contract you are signing refers to a collective bargaining agreement (CBA). If so, make sure that you are fully aware of the terms of that CBA, and keep a copy of it along with your contract.

Never sign a blank contract, or a contract that binds you to any terms and conditions that are not specified or that you are not familiar with.

Make sure that the duration of the contract is clearly stated. Don't sign a contract that allows for alterations to be made to the contractual period at the sole discretion of the shipowner.

Always ensure that the contract clearly states the basic wages payable and make sure that the basic working hours are clearly defined. The International Labour Organization (ILO) states that basic working hours should be a maximum of 48 per week (208 per month).

Make sure that the contract clearly stipulates how overtime will be paid and at what rate. There could be a flat hourly rate payable for all hours worked in excess of the basic. There may be a monthly fixed amount for

a guaranteed number of overtime hours, in which case the rate for these hours should be clearly stated. The ILO states that all overtime hours should be paid at a minimum of 1.25x the normal rate.

Make sure that the contract clearly states how many days' paid leave per month you will get. This should not be less than 30 days per year (2.5 per calendar month).

Make certain that the payments for basic wages, overtime and leave are clearly and separately itemised in the contract.

Check that your contract states you are entitled to the costs of repatriation. Never sign a contract that contains any clause stating you are responsible for paying any portion of joining or repatriation expenses.

Don't sign a contract that allows the shipowner to withhold or retain any portion of your wages during the period of the contract. You should be entitled to full payment of wages earned at the end of each calendar month.

Remember – any contract that you enter into voluntarily will be considered legally binding in most jurisdictions



CREDIT: Danny Cornelissen

ITF INTERVENTION HELPS CANADA ACT ON CREW CHANGE

The ITF has helped crew aboard a Panama-registered vessel, who were trapped onboard by their employer, to finally get home.

The crew of the Medi Perth spent more than 14 months onboard, even though they had only signed up for nine months. This is significantly over the maximum allowable under the Maritime Labour Convention.

When the vessel arrived in Vancouver, Canada, on 1 July 2022, the crew were informed that they would not be repatriated. Instead, their employer expected them to continue working on the ship's next voyage to China, where crew changes are still not permitted due to Covid-19 rules. This would mean working for at least another three months before repatriation.

ITF Vancouver was informed of the situation and acted quickly to resolve it. Thanks to this intervention, Transport Canada became involved. It rejected the arguments of the owners and charterers and detained the vessel so that the crew could leave. The ship's departure was significantly delayed while a new crew was brought in.

This action by the ITF, and the positive reaction from the Port State Control inspectors, sends a strong message that Canada will act to protect seafarers, and that shipowners should therefore have a joining crew ready to relieve those onboard.

An individual employment contract will not always include details of additional benefits. Therefore, try to obtain confirmation (preferably in the form of a written agreement or contractual entitlement) of what compensation will be payable in the event of:

- sickness or injury during the contractual period
- death (amount payable to next of kin)
- loss of the vessel
- loss of personal effects resulting from loss of the vessel
- premature termination of the contract

Don't sign a contract that contains any clause that restricts your right to join, contact, consult with or be represented by a trade union of your choice.

Ensure that you are given and retain a copy of the contract you have signed.

Check the conditions for terminating your contract, including how much notice the shipowner must give you.

Keep copies of your contract, payslips and other correspondence from the shipowner and crewing agent that relate to your conditions of employment, even after you have finished working on the vessel. You will need these as evidence if you need to make a claim for wages or compensation.

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To find out if your ship is covered by an ITF-approved agreement, go to itf.seafarers.org and click the tab 'Look Up a Ship', or use the ITF Seafarer App

WHY SHIPPING CONSORTIA MUST BE STOPPED

The European Transport Workers' Federation is demanding an end to a loophole in EU competition law that benefits shipowners at the expense of maritime workers, writes **Berardina Tommasi**



Berardina Tommasi
ETF policy officer
for dockers

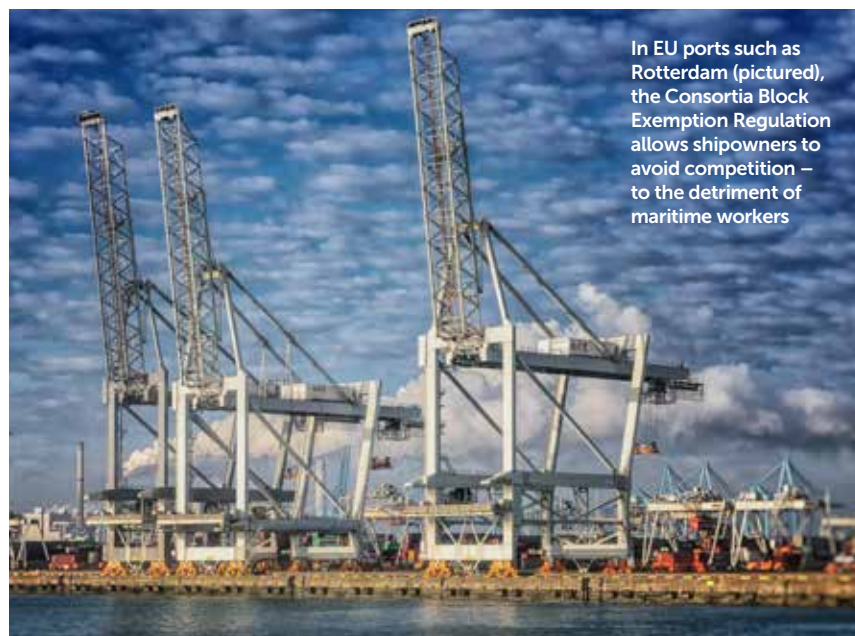
The Consortia Block Exemption Regulation (CBER) is an exemption from EU antitrust rules that allows some shipping lines to share vessel capacity and coordinate sailing schedules. The aim was to help shipowners adapt to demand fluctuation, but it has resulted in them having an ever-more dominant position over terminal operators and other actors in the supply chain.

The CBER is detrimental to seafarers because it allows employers to team up and set their procedures as a group. Companies do not therefore need to compete to attract workers on more favourable terms and conditions than their rivals.

In the ports, dockworkers suffer because the powerful shipowners exert pressure as a group to have things done how they want, when they want. Schedules for seafarers and dockworkers alike see more unpredictability and stressful peaks of activity.

The ETF is fighting for these workers' rights in a context where European and global shipping has become more and more powerful over the years, due to economies of scale, maritime subsidies and, more recently, to the effects of Covid-19 and the massive disruptions to the global maritime supply chain.

Sea miles being equal, the rates for transferring a container from East Asia to Europe have increased by 600% over the last few years, and the shipping lines' net profits rose by 50% in 2021. Shipping companies are rich and successful.



In EU ports such as Rotterdam (pictured), the Consortia Block Exemption Regulation allows shipowners to avoid competition – to the detriment of maritime workers

CREDIT: Tama66/Pixabay

They do not need an antitrust loophole like the CBER, which has served shipowners to the detriment of workers, consumers, and taxpayers.

The lethal mix of this exemption and maritime subsidies allows the consortia to act as if they were the only players in the maritime industry and use these advantages as leverage to massively increase their profits.

The role of the European Commission in the EU should be to guarantee a level playing field, but the CBER has turned out to be a disproportionate advantage that has caused harm to the workers and the principle of fair competition in the sector.

Ensuring a socially sustainable sector should be an EU priority; therefore, it's time to put an end to the CBER.

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If you have any questions about the ETF's work, contact Danny McGowan, Nautilus Federation coordinator: dmcgowan@nautilusint.org

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