

# Closer to the environment

Interview with Gert Nørgaard of CMP, Chairman of the BPO Environmental Working Group

**Ports across the Baltic Sea region are struggling with many eco-issues, starting with the International Maritime Organization's stricter SOx and NOx regulations, through ballast and wastewater management, to simply trying to be more pro-active as the right thing to do. We talk with Gert Nørgaard, Manager Strategy & Planning at Copenhagen Malmö Port and Chairman of the BPO Environmental Working Group (EWG), about current and future eco-challenges.**

■ *The BPO Environmental Working Group is a platform for co-operation between ports in order to find solutions to environmental problems associated with port activities. What is the EWG dealing with at the moment?*

BPO-EWG is at present monitoring and taking part in HELCOM's initiative aimed at providing adequate port reception facilities, so cruise ships in the SECA areas can deliver all their sewage in ports instead of discharging it at sea. Furthermore, the EWG is monitoring how the shipping industry will handle the new IMO regulation concerning the reduction of sulphur in ships' fuel as well as the NOx regulation.

■ *What are, in your opinion, the main environmental problems occurring in Baltic ports? What kind of issues will the ports need to face over the next few years?*

Waste handling will always be a big issue in the Baltic (and also among ports), though the shipping industry is responsible for only a minor percentage of wastewater pollution across the Baltic Sea. This issue is very visible for politicians and the public, too. Furthermore, dredging, noise and obtaining environmental permits necessary for port development are among the main issues for most of the ports.

■ *How do you see the future development of environmental protection measures by the Baltic countries?*

Various HELCOM initiatives will be among the main measures, but let's not forget about various projects with regard to alternative fuelling and emission reduction from ships. It may also imply new waste types to be handled in the ports (from scrubbers) and investment in new storage and loading/discharging facilities for new fuel types.

■ *The Baltic Sea was designated by HELCOM as a Nitrogen-Oxides (NOx) Emission Control Area (NECA) on ship emissions. What does that mean for the ports? What technology is available to meet NECA requirements by ships?*

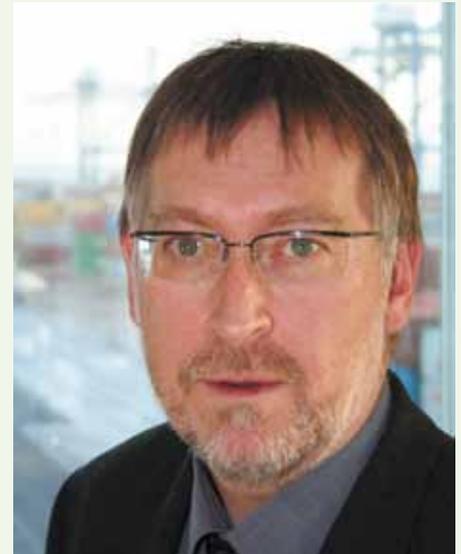
The NECA is mainly an issue when we walk about the need for ships to adapt their engine technology, however, higher investment and transport costs may mean laying down certain shipping activities as well as trigger a fall back to land-based transport. The case of alternative fuelling is highly uncertain for the shipping industry and for ports as well. Making a wrong decision may be catastrophic for a single company.

■ *What do you think about the Ballast Water Management Convention? How can ports help in fighting off dangerous and destructive invasive species?*

In our opinion, technology should be developed so invasive species can be dealt with at sea. Several technologies are under development and the process ought to be speeded up. Ports may have to establish tank facilities within their premises, but this solution is not the best way because it delays the shipping activities and this way would be more costly in the long run.

■ *Will cold-ironing become a common solution utilized across the Baltic Sea ports? What are the pros and cons of setting up such installations?*

Cold ironing is a good solution locally but only cost-efficient for frequent traffic, such as ferries, ro-ro and perhaps short-sea vessels in regular traffic between low numbers of ports. Furthermore, cold ironing does not work while a ship operates at sea, which most often is more than 85-90% of its working time. Installations are expensive and very expensive when a frequency



converter is needed. Also, not all countries have removed duties on the sale of electricity to ships in international service.

■ *What can ports do to help shipping companies to prepare for the stricter sulphur regulations? Is paying shipping companies money in return for using low-sulphur fuel within a port's area a good stimulus? Or will this only convince the convinced?*

I am afraid that ports need to run as commercial entities and paying shipping companies is not an option. Ports can assist shipping companies in becoming more cost-efficient in their performance and through this contribute to holding the costs down. The Swedish government and Swedish ports introduced a reduced fee for ships using low sulphur fuel some time ago, but this initiative is not directly adaptable to other countries because they use different systems to cover costs for maintaining fairways. All modes of transport must cover their own costs they lay upon the environment. This is the fairest way to improve the environment across all transport businesses.

Przemysław Myszk

BPO Environmental Working Group consists of 6 members representing following ports: Copenhagen-Malmö, Stockholm, Tallinn, Helsinki, Turku and Rostock. The first meeting of the BPO EWG took place on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2010 in Tallinn. The main task for the Working Group is to follow the regulatory development that affects the port business, especially those related to HELCOM activities. Among many topics, emissions of SOx, NOx from shipping and port reception for sewage from passenger ships are the most important.

# The first step

**In recent years, the awareness of eco-issues' importance has been steadily rising. Ports, as a business sector, have also put pressure on the environment. The goal is to keep the negative impact as low as possible. How can a port make its contribution in this matter? The Self Diagnosis Method (SDM) can be the first step.**

**P**orts are indeed complex structures. They can be found in different sorts and types, handling a whole palette of goods in various geographical and weather conditions for the benefit of consumers. Nonetheless, ports are a significant source of pollution as well – starting with noise, through harmful particles, dust, soil contamination, to waste & ballast waters. Ports are also primarily situated near urban centres, thereby posing a serious health risk if something goes wrong.

SDM has been designed to serve as the first step in a port's eco-path. It is a methodology to assess the quality of environmental management in seaports. Thanks to SDM, people who are not experts can find out in couple of hours: the characteristics of a given port's environmental context and management, periodically self-evaluate the port's eco-improvement, check compliance with environmental legislation, compare their port's performance against a European benchmark, carry out a SWOT analysis, identify business risks and, last but not least – motivate the port authority to improve its performance or pursue higher levels of eco-management.

The Self Diagnosis Method was developed because more advanced methodologies (ISO 14001, Eco-Management and Audit Scheme and ESPO's Port Environmental Review System) require a certain dose of know-how and are by no means suitable for rookies. Nonetheless, SDM was created in accordance with the abovementioned standards so it's easier to fathom them after becoming familiar with SDM.

The Self Diagnosis Method consists of two sections (questionnaires) – the 'Port Profile' and 'Environmental Management and Procedures'. The first aims at identifying a port's main features such as legal status, port operators, location, cargo and passenger traffic and commercial activities. The latter section focuses on eight factors: environmental policy, management organization and personnel, environmental training, communication, operational management, emergency planning, monitoring and records as well as review and audit.

After completion, the port disposes a set of outcomes as a starting point. The port authority sees its current eco-performance and, by completing subsequent SDM studies, can compare its activities over a period of time – be it an internal comparison or with other ports. SDM also provides good material for a gap analysis which points out necessary undertakings to meet the abovementioned international standards (such as e.g. ISO). Other benefits stem from conducting a SWOT analysis as well as from gaining feedback on environmental business risks, conformity with legal regulations, not to mention increasing eco-awareness among the port's decision makers.

The Self Diagnosis Method has one more story to tell. It is a voluntary tool and so far nobody is pushing anybody to use it. This may change over time as the proper market develops and starts to put pressure on port authorities. But before that, somebody must shape the market and filling out the SDM can be a first step in achieving that. ■

Przemysław Myszk



### Port Environmental Management – demonstrating your licence to operate

A growing number of stakeholders throughout the port area, city and the logistics chain seek evidence of a port authority's performance in terms of compliance with legislation, sustainable development and condition of the environment.

By the same token, government departments, investors and senior managers increasingly require proof of cost- and risk-reduction as well as of more efficient use of resources.

A useful tool for Port Environmental Managers is EcoPorts' 'Self-Diagnosis Methodology' (SDM). This user-friendly checklist of key components of an Environmental Management System (EMS) was developed by port professionals for port professionals. SDM has been used widely throughout the sector for fifteen years and it forms the basis of the European Sea Ports Organization's (ESPO/ EcoPorts) database of environmental performance.

Use of the Self-Diagnosis Method is in this instance free of charge. It takes less than two hours to complete. You first need to register information about your port and then continue to fill in the SDM on-line (Yes/No questions). There is no pass or fail. The responses are summarized anonymously and in confidence. A Memorandum of Understanding to this effect has been in place since 1996 between ESPO and its members. Your participation will be acknowledged on EcoPorts' website as an 'EcoPort'.

The SDM is useful for all ports even if you are already using other management tools to monitor and manage the environmental performance of the port. Use of the SDM assists your port in establishing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats concerning so-called Environmental Management. Members of the Baltic Ports Organization can assess their own progress and receive a benchmark performance for the whole sector.

Use of the SDM serves as an annual review, generates data and information for reporting, assists in establishing a level playing field within the sector, and most significantly, it is a strong signal of intent and capability to the European Commission that the port sector is capable and competent to deliver compliance on the basis of voluntary self-regulation.

The SDM can be accessed on-line via [www.ecoport.com](http://www.ecoport.com). Follow the instructions under 'Join Now – Join the network'. If there are any problems in filling in the SDM, do not hesitate to contact the Science Coordinator, Dr. Chris Wooldridge, via his e-mail address: [wooldridge@cfac.uk](mailto:wooldridge@cfac.uk).

**Gun Rudeberg**

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