

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2007/2279(INI)	Procedure completed
Green Paper on better ship dismantling		
Subject 3.70.05 Marine and coastal pollution, pollution from ships, oil pollution 3.70.13 Dangerous substances, toxic and radioactive wastes (storage, transport)		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		10/09/2007
		IND/DEM BLOKLAND Johannes	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy		18/12/2007
		Verts/ALE HAMMERSTEIN David	
	TRAN Transport and Tourism		20/11/2007
		PSE EVANS Robert	
European Commission	Commission DG Environment	Commissioner DIMAS Stavros	

Key events			
22/05/2007	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2007)0269	Summary
13/12/2007	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
02/04/2008	Vote in committee		Summary
16/04/2008	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0156/2008	
20/05/2008	Debate in Parliament		
21/05/2008	Results of vote in Parliament		
21/05/2008	Decision by Parliament	T6-0222/2008	Summary
21/05/2008	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2007/2279(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/6/50700

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2007)0269	22/05/2007	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		SEC(2007)0645	22/05/2007	EC	
Committee draft report		PE400.627	05/02/2008	EP	
Committee opinion	TRAN	PE398.494	27/02/2008	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE402.904	10/03/2008	EP	
Committee opinion	ITRE	PE402.515	27/03/2008	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0156/2008	16/04/2008	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0222/2008	21/05/2008	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2008)3593/2	12/06/2008	EC	

Green Paper on better ship dismantling

PURPOSE: the presentation of a Green Paper on better ship dismantling.

CONTENT: both the Council and the European Parliament recognise the need to enforce a more credible policy on ship dismantling. The Commission already expressed its views on ship dismantling in its June 2006 Green Paper on maritime policy (see [INI/2006/2299](#)) and the European Parliament and NGOs also called for measures to be taken at European level.

Ship breaking is a dangerous activity and the cost for human health and the environment are high. For example, every year, two-thirds of all ships dismantled (between 200 and 600) are dismantled on beaches and river banks on the Indian sub-continent. Most of this is done in Bangladesh which has few sites that are able to contain or prevent pollution (such as oil sludge and asbestos leakages) from seeping into the water and soil. Few have waste reception facilities and the treatment of waste rarely conforms to even minimum environmental standards. Between 2001 and 2003, 14% of the ships that went for scrapping in the Indian sub-continent fly the flags of an EU Member State and 18% the flags of states which acceded to the EU in 2004.

Based on these facts, this Green Paper seeks to come up with some fresh ideas on ship dismantling. Its main purpose is to secure a more effective environmental and health strategy when dismantling ships. It does not seek to find answers to an artificial return of ship recycling business to the EU. The ultimate aim of the EU, as expressed through this Green Paper, is to ensure that a minimum level of environmental and health standards are observed world wide.

In order to arrive at some answers, this Green Paper gives a comprehensive and detailed account of factors that currently influence the debate. It examines, for example, the current legislative framework that governs ship dismantling ? mostly the ban on exporting hazardous waste; the economics of ship dismantling; environmental and social impacts; and the current international state of play.

The paper then goes on to assess what options exist to improve the EU's management of ship dismantling. One of these options includes better enforcement of EU waste shipment law. On an international level, the report notes, binding international standards should be supported in order to create a global level playing field. The IMO is the most relevant international forum in which to discuss these issues and the Commission strongly supports the future international Ship Recycling Convention.

One further option is to strengthen the EU's ship dismantling capacity. Current market conditions make it impossible for EU operates to compete with South Asian yards, which can offer much lower costs and higher metal prices. The report, therefore, considers whether or not direct financial support should be given to clean ship dismantling facilities in the EU or to ship-owners who send their vessels to ?green? yards. Current state aid rules on such forms of support are, for the moment, limited.

Other measures include: offering technical assistance and the transfer of technology and best practices to recycling states, encouraging

voluntary action and the setting up of a ship dismantling fund. On the latter point, a sustainable funding system could be organised on a voluntary basis, with commitments from the shipping industry. The IMO would be well positioned to manage such a fund.

To conclude, the Commission asks the Member States, industry and stakeholders a number of questions including, inter alia:

- How can EU legislation on waste be better enforced?
- Would improved guidance on waste shipment rules and definitions help to improve the implementation of existing provisions?
- What is the best approach to steer EU negotiations on the IMO's Ship Recycling Convention in order to improve ship dismantling globally?
- How can the EU ensure that European ships are dismantled in a safe and environmentally sound manner?
- How should the EU secure sustainable funding for clean ship dismantling in accordance with the polluter pays principle?

Green Paper on better ship dismantling

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the own-initiative report by Johannes BLOKLAND (IND/DEM, NL) on the Green Paper on better ship dismantling.

MEPs welcome the thorough analysis in the Green Paper of the principal social and environmental problems arising from operations involved in the dismantling of ships in Southern Asian countries. They consider that practical measures must be taken quickly at European and international level, the main aim being to protect the environment and public health.

According to the parliamentary committee, the most effective way of achieving that aim is to adopt and implement an international agreement laying down obligations incumbent upon all the parties involved in the process of dismantling ships. The Commission and Member States are therefore called to negotiate an IMO convention that incorporates extensive requirements and regulations which:

- ensures a level of control at least equivalent to that of the Basel Convention;
- provides for a high global safety and environmental standard of ship recycling that is third party audited and certified;
- disqualifies beaching from being an appropriate dismantling methodology,
- will not allow ship dismantling by non-parties;
- establishes the substitution principle for eliminating the current use of hazardous materials in the construction of new ships;
- requires that all hazardous materials from end-of-life ships are removed before sending them for dismantling to non-OECD countries or to send them to specially authorised recycling facilities in OECD or EU countries which comply with clearly defined safety and environmental standards.

MEPs consider it ethically unacceptable to permit the humanly degrading and environmentally destructive conditions involved in the dismantling of ships to continue any longer, thereby accepting that the health of thousands of employees in the Far East is put at risk. They call upon the EU to take immediate, concrete action, in co-operation with the IMO, to stop the practice of social and environmental dumping that stems from economic incentives and to reach a globally sustainable solution.

The report recommends that EU efforts aim at safeguarding minimum standards ensuring the highest environmental, health and safety protection. These standards should comprise regulations for the design and construction of ships, their operation, the preparation of ships for recycling, the operation of ship recycling facilities and the establishment of an appropriate enforcement mechanism for ship recycling, incorporating certification and reporting requirements.

In particular, the European Commission is called to:

- compile and maintain a list of seagoing ships which are likely to be scrapped within a few years;
- consider possible measures to reduce the potential financial implications of ship dismantling by setting more stringent production standards, such as a restriction on the use of certain hazardous substances;
- negotiate within the IMO with a view to standardising the materials used in the building and fitting-out of vessels and to tightening up the environmental requirements relating thereto;
- develop a list of preferred ship recycling facilities which comply with recognised international human rights and health and safety standards;
- propose specific measures to promote the transfer of know-how and technology in order to help dismantling yards in Southern Asia to comply with international safety and environmental requirements.

Lastly, MEPs believe that efforts must be made by the Member States and the Commission to create a mandatory ship-recycling fund, jointly funded by shipyards and ship owners (for example by means of taxes levied on new ships, port fees and annual taxes linked to IMO registration) and with shared responsibility. This fund would facilitate the pre-cleaning of vessels of hazardous materials and the development of ship recycling yards in the Union.

Green Paper on better ship dismantling

The European Parliament adopted by 645 votes to 8, with 12 abstentions, a resolution on the Green Paper on better ship dismantling.

The own-initiative report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Johannes BLOKLAND (IND/DEM, NL) on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

MEPs welcome the thorough analysis in the Green Paper of the principal social and environmental problems arising from operations involved in the dismantling of ships in Southern Asian countries. They consider that practical measures must be taken quickly at European and international level, the main aim being to protect the environment and public health.

According to the Parliament, the most comprehensive way of achieving that aim would be to adopt and implement an international convention laying down obligations incumbent upon all the parties involved in the process of dismantling ships. The Commission and Member States are therefore called upon to negotiate an IMO convention that incorporates extensive requirements and regulations which:

- ensure a level of control at least equivalent to that of the Basel Convention;
 - provide for a high global safety and environmental standard of ship recycling that is third party audited and certified;
 - disqualify beaching from being an appropriate dismantling methodology;
 - will not allow ship dismantling by non-parties;
- establish the substitution principle for eliminating the current use of hazardous materials in the construction of new ships;
- impose a requirement either to remove all hazardous materials from end-of-life ships before sending them for dismantling to non-OECD countries or to send them to specially authorised recycling facilities in OECD or EU countries which comply with clearly defined safety and environmental standards.

However, MEPs call for effective measures to be taken before 2010, prior to the adoption of the IMO Convention and prior to the peak year of the accelerated phase-out of single-hull tankers.

The Parliament considers it ethically unacceptable to permit the humanly degrading and environmentally destructive conditions involved in the dismantling of ships to continue any longer, thereby accepting that the health of thousands of employees in the Far East is put at risk. Moreover, it considers it ethically unacceptable that children are used by some dismantling contractors to do hard and hazardous work. Recognising that the EU is partly responsible for the existing social and environmental problems in the field of ship dismantling, MEPs call for immediate, concrete action on the part of the EU, in co-operation with the IMO, to stop the practice of social and environmental dumping that stems from economic incentives and to reach a globally sustainable solution.

The Resolution recommends that EU efforts aim at safeguarding minimum standards ensuring the highest environmental, health and safety protection. These standards should include regulations for the design and construction of ships, their operation, the preparation of ships for recycling, the operation of ship recycling facilities and the establishment of an appropriate enforcement mechanism for ship recycling, incorporating certification and reporting requirements.

In particular, the European Commission is called to:

- draft the requisite guidelines and mechanisms to ensure that every ship due to be scrapped and which does not fulfil all the requirements of international conventions, and consequently does not have valid certification issued by EU-recognised registers, is regarded as 'waste', pursuant to the definition in Directive 2006/12/EC;
- compile and maintain a list of seagoing ships which are likely to be scrapped within a few years;
- consider possible measures to reduce the potential financial implications of ship dismantling by setting more stringent production standards, such as a restriction on the use of certain hazardous substances;
- negotiate within the IMO with a view to standardising the materials used in the building and fitting-out of vessels and to tightening up the environmental requirements relating thereto;
- develop a list of preferred ship recycling facilities which comply with recognised international human rights and health and safety standards;
- propose specific measures to promote the transfer of know-how and technology in order to help dismantling yards in Southern Asia to comply with international safety and environmental requirements.

The Commission and Member States are called upon to implement the Waste Shipments Regulation more effectively by means of stricter inspections and supervision by authorities in Member States, with a view to empowering port states, flag states, and states with jurisdiction over owners (waste generators) to declare a ship to be 'end-of-life' and therefore waste regardless of whether or not that ship is still operable. The Resolution also urges that immediate measures be taken to support the development of a competitive and clean ship dismantling and remediation industry in the EU.

Lastly, MEPs consider that the Commission and Member States should create a mandatory ship recycling fund, jointly funded by shipyards and shipowners (for example, by means of taxes levied on new ships, port fees and annual taxes linked to IMO registration), with shared responsibility. This fund would facilitate the pre-cleaning of vessels of hazardous materials and the development of ship recycling yards in the European Union.