

SME PORTS : home for innovation in green port technologies and blue growth?

On October 10, DUAL Ports had organized a workshop in Brussels, during the EU Week of Regions and Cities. 25 participants from the maritime industry, EU policy representatives and partners of DUAL Ports spend the afternoon learning about innovative green port solutions, and had fruitful discussions about how to tackle challenges in greening port business.



Felix Leinemann, Head of Unit Blue Economy Sectors, Aquaculture and Maritime Spatial Planning in DG MARE addressed the opportunities for Blue Growth and informed the interested listeners that blue economy is growing exponentially compared to other sectors. Developments in new technologies and digitalization, underwater robotics and innovative aquaculture creates a great potential for growth. He also stated the importance of ecological management – taking the environment into consideration during this vast development. As he put it – “We cannot make a profit, if we do not keep the sea healthy”.

The growing industry is also one of the main motivations for the existence of DUAL Ports, which has the objective of making small and medium sized (SME) ports more sustainable, but also more competitive. In a growing economy and with large investments in new technologies, SME ports often struggle with limited funds and staff. In order to tackle this, DUAL Ports works to develop methods and test concrete measures that will save both cost and carbon emission, for the benefit of the ports.



The audience was given a short presentation of three DUAL Ports pilots, by representatives of Port of Vordingborg, Denmark and Niedersachsen Ports, Germany. The pilots on sustainable and intelligent ports lighting, sustainable port management and port extension with waste materials demonstrated how these challenges are being tackled by SME ports. The session was followed by a debate between the speakers and

the audience about how to improve conditions, to make sustainable ambitions more doable for small ports. Some of the main topics for discussion were the technologies available today and the legislation that needs to follow, and adapt to new methods and framework conditions. Also, the audience addressed questions related to funding - particularly why funding is often earmarked for large ports who already have resources - opposed to small ports, with limited financial and staff resources. The solution is still to come.

The keynote speaker, Gesine Meißner, President of the European Parliament Intergroup Seas, Rivers, Islands was very positive about DUAL Ports and stated that all ports should be made aware of the findings that have come and will continue to come out of the project.

The workshop was organized by the DUAL Ports partnership; hosted by the Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI), Niedersachsen Ports and Region Niedersachsen. Learn more about DUAL Ports at our website: www.dualports.eu

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