

Greening the Sea

Maritime Green Corridors for Healthy Oceans

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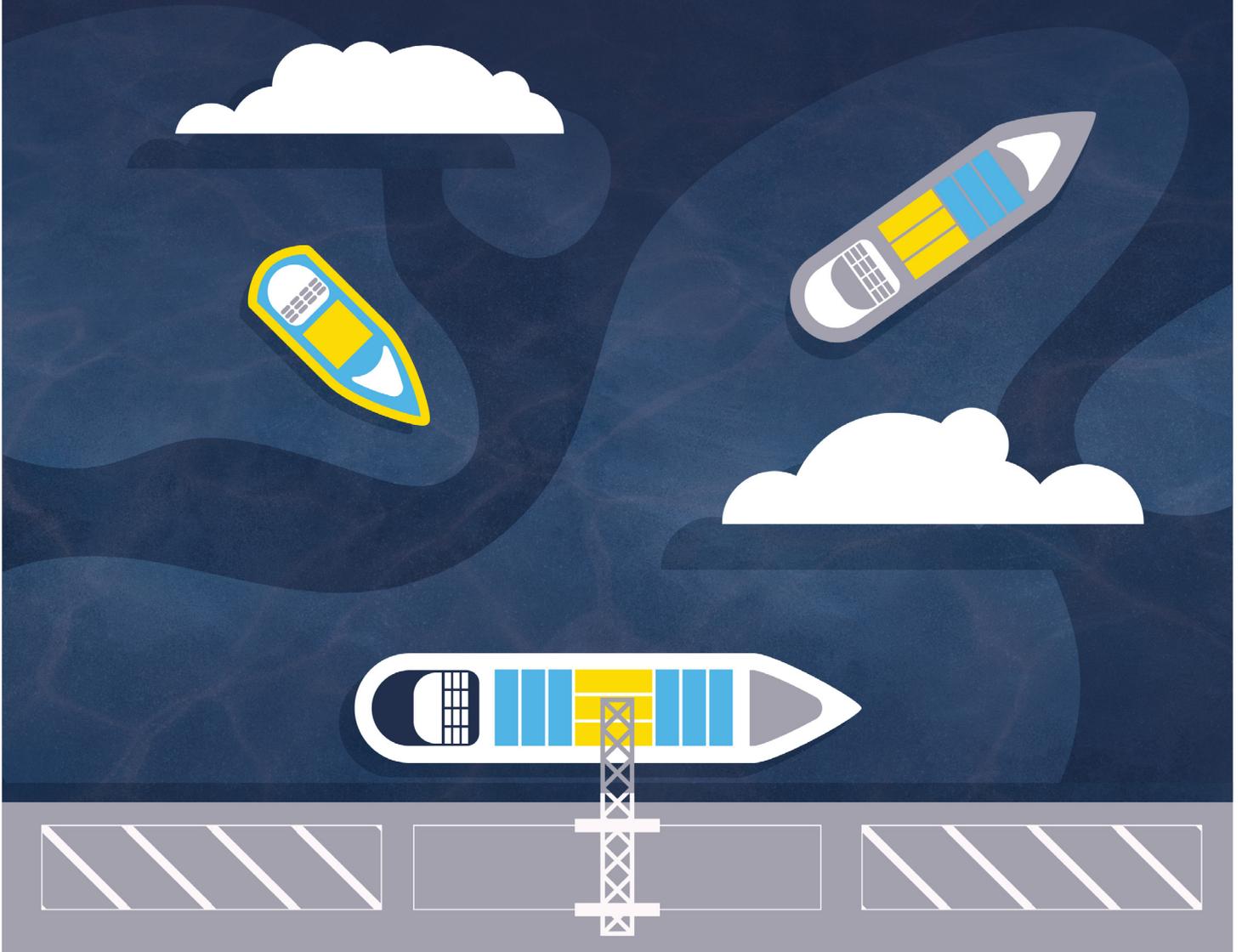
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GREEN SHIPPING CORRIDORS

Assessing port-city-industry coalitions
for a decarbonized maritime future



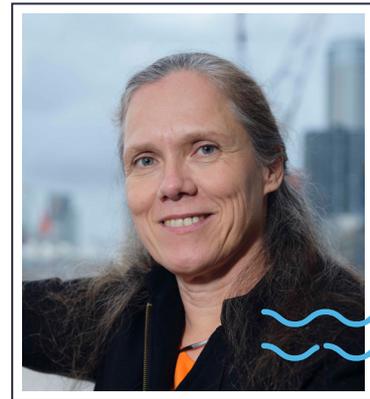
GREENING THE SEA - MARITIME GREEN CORRIDORS FOR HEALTHY OCEANS

PROF. CAROLA HEIN

Green Shipping Corridors, initiated in 2021, demonstrate a growing awareness among port and shipping stakeholders that the oceans and seas are more than blank spaces for industrial processes that don't find a place on land (Couling & Hein, 2018). Monitoring websites, like windy.com, visualize open access data, including on NO₂ and SO₂ air pollution. They highlight the continuity of air pollution along sea and land corridors, and reveal the densification of pollution in and around ports and along coasts. Green Shipping Corridors are thus a much-needed attempt to address maritime pollution and to create more sustainable transportation methods, both on land and at sea. Control of landside pollution is a task for national, regional and more local governance, but greening the seaside is much more difficult because of the mix at play of national jurisdiction zones and large areas under international law. Green Shipping Corridors and other practices for improving ocean health raise questions about how to embed these initiatives in meaningful international governance, controllable policies, and spatial planning that includes the sea. With the horizon of 2050, we need to clearly establish goals, timelines and impact indicators. What governance structures, tools, competitive incentives and control mechanisms do we need to green the sea? How will we assess the impact of these green corridors?

This publication provides a first insight into the role of Green Shipping Corridors and calls for a careful assessment of their impact. Together with AIVP, members of PortCityFutures have begun to reflect on how to assess green corridors. Mina Akhavan and Maurice Jansen have added their respective analysis and reflections on a taxonomy and glossary for Green Shipping Corridors; they also assess their role as a vector of the future of fuels. Through their geospatial analysis, members of the PortCityFutures team have emphasized the role of open-access data. The Port City Atlas (Hein et al., 2023) notably features 100 European port city territories as nodes in maritime and land-based corridors. Combining this atlas with open-access information from Copernicus on air pollution allows for transparency and long-term assessment of Green Shipping Corridors.

Such mapping raises questions about what needs to be measured to assess the impact and success of Green Shipping Corridors: Are we measuring primarily the type of fuel used or determining whether air quality has improved? Are the Green Shipping Corridors successful if they link with hinterland corridors? Or, shall these green corridors be places of increased biodiversity?



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Decarbonizing the shipping industry is an important step to maintaining global exchange routes while establishing sustainable logistics and protecting oceans and seas. As such, Green Shipping Corridors go hand in hand with other tools aimed at improving ocean health, such as maritime spatial planning promoted by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (see <https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/>; <https://www.ioc.unesco.org/en/guidance-marine-spatial-planning>).

The interviews with the different AIVP Ports, featured in this publication, provide insights into the challenges of establishing Green Shipping Corridors, the collaborative efforts they require (both international and local), and the variety of approaches and incentives.

This white paper serves as a first call to pay more attention to Green Shipping Corridors and to carefully promote their development.

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