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## Shipowners' role in recycling under spotlight

As the global ship recycling industry prepares to gather in Singapore, a fresh push is expected for European shipowners to recycle their old ships according to the standards of the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships (HKC).

Addressing delegates at next week's TradeWinds Ship Recycling Forum, Soledad Blanco, Director for Sustainable Resources, Management, Industry and Air, DG Environment European Commission will outline the shape of a new EU regulation replacing the EU's Waste Shipment Regulation.

She is expected to tell delegates "Once this regulation is in force in 2013 or

2014, European shipowners will have to establish a mandatory inventory of hazardous materials and to send their ships only to safe and sound recycling facilities worldwide.”

Blanco believes the new EU regulation covering EU-flag vessels “will shift a significant part of business to sustainable facilities. These upgraded facilities will be able to pass over the cost of their investments to shipowners in accordance to the polluter pays principal.”

The shipowner’s role in recycling will be further examined at the Forum by Yuichi Sonoda, Secretary General of the Asian Shipowners’ Forum (ASF) during the keynote presentation.

Sonoda’s message to the industry will be followed by Dr Nikos Mikelis, Head, Marine Pollution Prevention, Ship Recycling Section of the IMO, who, speaking in a personal capacity, will tell delegates that although there are quite a few shipowners’ who will recycle ships according to the highest practical standards, “like milk is not cream, these companies are not normal in the statistical sense of the word.”

Central to the Forum theme of 'Who's Paying?' Dr Mikelis is expected to tackle some of the issues that have surrounded the HKC from day one, not least whether the financial burden is being divided equally between stakeholders, including shipowners and recyclers.

On the heels of the shipping industry, a new campaign from environmental pressure group NGO Platform on Shipbreaking, targeting ship owners and charterers, will be presented by Merijn Hougee.

The TradeWinds Ship Recycling Forum is taking place as appalling freight markets have pushed shipowners into dispatching a massive volume of tonnage for demolition during the first two months of 2012. Perhaps reflecting the record levels of ships currently being scrapped, the Forum has attracted a record attendance, with delegates drawn together from the normally disparate worlds of regulation and commerce. Delegates from more than 20 nations will descend on Singapore's Four Seasons Hotel on Monday for the discussions.

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## Contacts



**Jon Chaplin**

Press Contact

Director

[jon.chaplin@tradewindsnews.com](mailto:jon.chaplin@tradewindsnews.com)

+44 207 645 2312

+44 7920 811412