

SPONSORED SUPPLEMENT: SHIPPING & LOGISTICS - NETHERLANDS

Open society and a true trading nation

The Port of Rotterdam has an annual throughput of about 430 million tonnes. Photo: The Green Award Foundation

The Netherlands is an open society with a keen eye on international business developments. From the expansion of the earliest trade routes, the Dutch have built a reputation for establishing successful commercial trading partnerships the world over.

This innate ability to develop connections with other trading countries has enabled the Dutch economy to flourish over the centuries. Today, with their world-class shipping expertise, the Dutch continue to show their ability to do business, especially with China.

The Netherlands has been one of the leading European nations for attracting foreign direct investment since joining

the euro zone 10 years ago. The Dutch economy continues to hold its own, despite the present turbulence in the euro zone, through its substantial current account surplus, excellent industrial relations and moderate unemployment. Petroleum refining, food and agriculture, chemicals and electrical machinery all continue to play important roles within the country's economy. As a transportation hub, the Netherlands remains one of the most important in Europe.

Bordering the North Sea between Belgium and Germany, the Netherlands is the most densely populated country in the European Union. The relatively small nation has successfully developed trade

ties with neighbouring countries and key global markets.

Water dominates the Dutch landscape and more than a quarter of the country is below sea level. Three of the major European rivers (Rhine, Meuse and Scheldt) reach the North Sea via Holland.

In order to better manage these waterways, the Dutch constructed a water system consisting of dykes and weirs. In addition to the country's long tradition of world-class water management, the Dutch have also achieved international recognition as a country open to trade through its international maritime industry.

The Dutch have always been proud

of their open economy and their status as a reliable trading partner. With a desire to continually increase levels of foreign trade, the Netherlands' maritime industry continues to enable the Dutch to "rule the waves".

Dutch shipping companies are now eager to increase their focus on the growth markets of Asia while recognising the importance of creating a greener shipping industry. Leading this drive is the Royal Association of Netherlands Shipowners. Representing the interests of the Dutch shipping industry, the organisation promotes an internationally competitive business climate for shipowners in the Netherlands.

Dutch shipowners have always had a desire to improve performance and service in line with innovation and the developments in the shipping industry. Qualified crews, progressive labour policies and the highest standards of safety ensure the Netherlands' shipping industry remains a world leader. With one of the most up-to-date fleets in the world today, the industry is continuously looking towards green shipping and Dutch companies are leading the way in environmental technologies. Lighter ships, which increase fuel efficiency, and power and design innovations are leading to the creation of more environmentally friendly vessels.

The Dutch began to develop trade

ties with Asia in the 17th century and remain enthusiastic about their business within the region, particularly with China.

While official relations between the Netherlands and China began in November 1954, the two countries have long enjoyed strong trade ties. The Dutch East India Company was a chartered company established in 1602 – the world's second multinational corporation following the British East India Company founded two years earlier. Dutch traders with the VOC (Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie – Dutch East India Company) set up a trading post in Guangzhou, establishing trade between the two countries. Today, the Netherlands is China's third largest

trade partner in the European Union and Dutch exports to China include transport equipment, food, petrochemicals, machinery, high technology and fossil fuels. China's exports to the Netherlands comprise computer and consumer electronics, toys and clothes.

The two seafaring nations are continuing to benefit from their strong desire to do business together and share the benefits of a close partnership. With the Dutch maritime industry remaining buoyant and trade with China continuing to bring the two countries closer together, the Netherlands will undoubtedly continue to develop its reputation as a leading player in the global shipping industry.

Company takes lead role in ship recycling

There is an internationally recognised need to address the challenges of green ship recycling. Based in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, Sea2Cradle has successfully recycled more than 60 ships in China with a zero-accident record. Today, the company is looking to build on its growing reputation as a leading player in green ship and maritime structure recycling.

Tom Peter Blankestijn, Sea2Cradle's managing director, says: "Recyclable materials such as steel, aluminium and copper account for 97 per cent of a vessel's recyclable parts. We are concerned with the 3 per cent that cannot be recycled such as asbestos, paint, oil, mercury and other ozone depleting substances. At Sea2Cradle, we are driven to add value to our client's environmental policies."

The recycling procedure includes a rigorous pre-cleaning with all hazardous materials carefully handled, separated and disposed of according to the highest standards. After vessels have been cleaned, dismantling takes place under strict supervision. Sea2Cradle provides on-site surveyors to monitor the process and upon completion the client receives certified documentation of the entire process.

International and national legislation directly impact the recycling process. These include "The Basel Convention", a treaty on the control of trans-boundary movements of hazardous wastes and its disposal and the "Hong Kong Convention for the safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships 2009", which aims to minimise the risks to human health and safety and the environmental impact throughout the process of ship recycling.

Sea2Cradle is actively involved in drawing up new legislation, specifically for ship recycling, as the company is working to the highest standards known for this process. Sea2Cradle can also



Sea2Cradle's on-site surveyors check the quality and progress of the work.

perform audits on ships to create a ship-specific Inventory of Hazardous Materials, even if they are not yet due for recycling.

Sea2Cradle handles vessel types ranging from large floating storage and

offloading vessels to small survey vessels and has developed a client base comprising some of the most respected names in the shipping industry.

Nearly all the company's recycling takes place at state-of-the-art ISO 14000

and OHSMS 18001 certified facilities in China. The company has strong relationships with facilities in the United States, Britain, Turkey and Belgium which provide Sea2Cradle with additional recycling capacity and flexibility.

Sea2Cradle is actively involved in drawing up such new legislation, specifically for ship recycling, as the company is working to the highest standards known in the industry for this specific process

Blankestijn says: "There is a movement referred to as 'green China' and we intend to build on this. With China today being responsible for 55 per cent of new-builds, shipyards are investing heavily in new technology and have the capacity to perform in an environmentally sound way. Sea2Cradle will continue to responsibly manage the entire ship recycling process for our clients."

www.sea2cradle.com
www.sea2cradle.com/zh-hans/



City of Rotterdam

Committed to green shipping

Certifying international standards in environment, safety and quality, the Green Award Foundation is an independent, non-profit organisation committed to safe, clean shipping.

It was established in 1994 by Rotterdam Municipal Port Management and the Dutch Ministry of Transport.

The foundation stimulates improvements in shipping and environmental awareness and assists international ports in efforts to improve environmental procedures. The Green Award is presented by the Bureau Green Award, the executive body of the Green Award Foundation.

Certification consists of an office audit and a complete audit of individual ships and focuses on crew, operational, environmental and managerial elements.

The certification scheme is open to oil tankers and dry bulk carriers upwards of 20,000 deadweight tonnes, liquefied natural gas carriers and inland navigation vessels. "The Green Award certifies seagoing vessels and inland barges that go above and beyond international standards in environment, safety and quality," says managing director Jan Franssen. "International ports and service providers grant incentives to Green Award certified vessels including various financial and non-financial benefits and facilitate improvements in international shipping. We intend the Green Award to continue to be a leading example of a joint industry corporate social responsibility initiative."

www.greenaward.org

Fast facts

Area 41,528 km² (18.41 per cent water)
Population More than 16.5 million
Capital city Amsterdam
Government The Hague
Type of government Constitutional monarchy – parliamentary democracy
Currency Euro
National holidays Queen's Day (April 30), Liberation Day (May 5)
Highest point 323 m (Vaalsberg, Limburg)

Rotterdam is the second largest port in the world
Amsterdam has 1,281 bridges
Holland has more than 4,400 km of navigable rivers, canals and lakes



(Left) The final stages of recycling, double bottom sections are removed while the next ship is alongside, and (right) after 12 weeks small steel strips are all that is left.

