NGO
SHIPBREAKING
PLATFORM

Rue de la Linière, 11
BE-1060 Brussels
Ph.: +32 2 6094 419
www.shipbreakingplatform.org
www.offthebeach.org

ANNUAL REPORT 2012

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ABOUT THE REPORT
Published by the **NGO Platform on Shipbreaking** (asbl),
Rue de la Linière 11, 1060 Brussels
Design: Cellule Verte 2013
Editors: Patrizia Heidegger and Delphine Reuter
Photos: YPSA (pp3-4, 11) ; NGO Shipbreaking Platform (pp1-15)
Printed on 100% recycled, chlorine-free paper using vegetable ink.
We thank the support of the European Commission for the publication of this report.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The year 2012 witnessed an unprecedented peak in numbers of toxic ships sent for breaking on beaches in India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. At least 838 end-of-life vessels containing tens of thousands of tons of different hazardous wastes were broken down in substandard facilities in South Asia – that's 70% of all ships dismantled last year. At least 365 of these ships belonged to European shipowners.

Mainly due to the financial crisis, the overcapacity of ships all around the world is huge: scrapping is often more economical than keeping an idle ship. Shipowners, bankers, or fund managers make decisions quickly without due consideration of the impacts for workers, local communities, and the environment.

Despite the agreement of the international community that corporate entities also need to respect human rights when doing business, many shipowners still do not feel responsible for the clean and safe recycling of vessels from which they have economically benefited. Some reject criticism by saying that they have sold to a cash buyer who was then responsible for the ship; others bluntly deny any sale for demolition – even if there is clear evidence of the sale having taken place. The NGO Shipbreaking Platform and its members are convinced that the beneficial owner of a ship needs to be held responsible for environmentally sound and safe recycling and cannot disregard his responsibilities by selling a ship off to a middleman who transfers it to a scrap yard.

Thanks in no small part to the continued efforts of the NGO Shipbreaking Platform and its members, companies are increasingly calling for just and sustainable solutions to the global shipbreaking crisis. The Platform welcomes every shipowner's decision to publicly state that the beaching of end-of-life vessels in developing countries is unacceptable. These industry leaders will play a pivotal role for change.

How urgently the stakeholders need to take responsibility, became again obvious during our fact-finding mission to the shipbreaking yards in Gadani, close to Pakistan's major city Karachi, in December 2012. The international community, and in particular the industrialised and shipowning nations on the one side and the governments of South Asia on the other, as well as the industry, especially shipowners and shipbreakers, have all done too little to substantially change shipbreaking for the better. Just to mention one aspect of our findings: there is hardly any awareness with regards to the dangers of asbestos. Workers pulling out the material from the vessels are only equipped with gloves. They breathe in fibres and carry them home in their clothes. The asbestos is then dumped in plastic bags behind the yards in an unmarked area – nobody ensures its safe disposal.

Over the past few years, the European Commission and the European Parliament have become aware of the global shipbreaking crisis – also thanks to our continued efforts with European decision-makers – and have repeatedly called it a political priority. In March 2012, the Commission finally presented its proposal for a regulation on ship recycling. However, the Platform and its members were utterly disappointed: the proposal seeks to exempt end-of-life vessels from the EU Waste Shipment Regulation and therefore from the Basel Convention and the Ban Amendment, under all of which the export of hazardous waste to developing countries is prohibited. Instead of introducing mechanisms to reduce the waste flow, the proposal seeks to facilitate the trade of toxic end-of-life vessels without even being able to safely control the waste management in the country of destination. The NGO Shipbreaking Platform – backed by the legal opinions of environmental law experts – points out that the exemption of ships from international waste law constitutes a breach of European law and the EU's obligations under international law.

Both regarding the reluctance of many shipowners to play a decisive role in the safe and clean recycling of their ships and the tendency of political decision-makers to fall behind established rules of international environmental law, the need for the NGO Shipbreaking Platform to continue to counterbalance such arguments is crucial. In 2013, we will continue to try convincing the shipping industry to make a choice for better solutions, and to seek support in the European Parliament and the European Council for a strong regulation in line with already established principles of international environmental law. Moreover, members of the Platform are going to visit Chinese ship recycling yards, that are becoming increasingly popular destinations for European ships, despite the fact that also China has ratified the Basel Ban Amendment, which prohibits the import of hazardous wastes.

Together with our members from all around the globe, we will continue our struggle in 2013 to prevent the human rights abuses and environmental injustice provoked when toxic end-of-life vessels are dumped in developing countries.

Patrizia Heidegger
Executive Director of the NGO Shipbreaking Platform

ABOUT THE PLATFORM

The NGO Shipbreaking Platform, based in Brussels, Belgium, is a coalition of 18 environmental, human and labour rights organisations first created in September 2005. That year, it was realised by some of the few NGOs working on the shipbreaking issue that a broader base of support both geographically and in orientation was needed to challenge the arguments from a powerful shipping industry not used to being held accountable for its substandard practices. With member organisations based in consumer, owner as well as in the largest shipbreaking countries, the Platform has built up a solid north-south network and is the only organisation addressing the shipbreaking issue at the international level.

1. SHIPBREAKING IN THE WORLD IN 2012

1.1. ALL RECORDS BROKEN IN 2012

Never have as many ships been sent for breaking. The shipping boom of the years 2000s and the financial crisis stirred many ships faster towards the exit door as shipowners are tempted to dispose of uneeded tonnage. Although the Platform witnesses that shipowners are aware of the impact their sending the ships to the South Asian beaches can have, unfortunately the numbers show that the large majority of large ocean-going vessels are still being sent to South Asia.

The NGO Shipbreaking Platform monitors and tracks vessels sent for breaking. Last year, approximately 1,300 ocean-going ships reached the end of their service life and were broken down to recover steel. In 2012, 97% of all end-of-life ships were dismantled in five countries: India, Bangladesh, China, Turkey and Pakistan. The three South Asian countries together accounted for 68% of the total, while China and Turkey respectively accounted for 16,5% and 12% of the capacity dismantled. Ship recycling facilities located in the European Union only dismantled 2% of all end-of-life ships in 2012. Less than 1% was sent to yards about which the NGO Shipbreaking Platform still lacks information, amongst which Bahrain, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, the Philippines, and Ukraine.

1.2. A GLOBAL CRISIS

Last year, about 68% of all end-of-life ships were simply run ashore on tidal beaches in developing countries such as Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, where shipbreaking companies exploit minimal enforcement of environmental and safety rules to maximize profits. On the beaches of South Asia, poor and unskilled migrant workers are deployed by the thousands to break down the ships manually, which are often full of toxics such as asbestos, lead, PCBs and heavy metals. Although the local and international press sometimes reports about improvements in the yards, it remains a fact that little care is given to worker safety or protection of the environment. Lifting equipment is seen in Pakistan and India, but its use should be more widespread, especially in Bangladesh. The toxics that are freed during the breaking of the ships sicken the workers and ravage coastal ecosystems, not only the marine environment but also the surrounding areas. Hazardous waste such as asbestos is often dumped in landfills without being properly treated. The muddy sand and shifting grounds of tidal beaches cannot support heavy lifting equipment or safety gear, therefore accidents maim or kill dozens of workers each year.

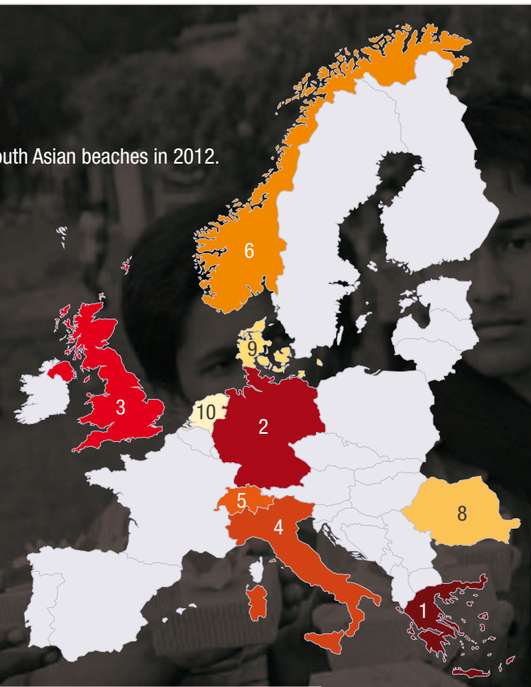
In 2012, at least 15 shipbreaking workers were killed in the Bangladeshi yards. The Platform is monitoring press coverage and collecting information from local sources, but it remains difficult to know the exact number of victims and injuries caused by shipbreaking.

THE TOP 10 EUROPEAN GLOBAL DUMPERS

Shipowners based in EU (and EFTA) countries sent at lot of ships to the South Asian beaches in 2012.

1. Greece (167 ships)
2. Germany (48 ships)
3. UK (30 ships)
4. Italy (27 ships)
5. Switzerland (24 ships)
6. Norway (23 ships)
7. Cyprus (13 ships)
8. Bulgaria (8 ships)
9. Denmark (6 ships)
10. The Netherlands (5 ships)

The rest of the ships were sent by shipowners based in Estonia (3 ships), Sweden (3 ships), Lithuania (2 ships), Belgium (2 ships), Romania (2 ships), Latvia (1 ship) and Poland (1 ship).

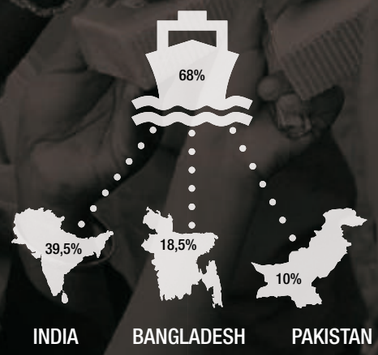


THE TOP 5 DESTINATIONS FOR ALL END-OF-LIFE SHIPS IN 2012

- INDIA: 488 ships
- BANGLADESH: 229 ships
- CHINA: 205 ships
- TURKEY: 151 ships
- PAKISTAN: 121 ships

The rest of the ships were sent to EU-based ships recycling facilities, to Bahrain, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Ecuador, the Philippines, Canada, Croatia and Ukraine.

68% OF ALL END-OF-LIFE SHIPS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD WERE SENT TO SOUTH ASIA IN 2012



CALL TO ACTION

The NGO Shipbreaking Platform calls upon the United Nations, the European Union and national governments around the world to set industry standards that will stop dangerous and polluting shipbreaking practices on the beaches of developing countries.

2. ADVOCACY – EUROPE

2.1. A NEW REGULATION

The European Commission presented on 23 March 2012 a "Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Ship Recycling (COM 2012/118)". The proposal suggests amongst others to remove ships from the existing European Waste Shipment Regulation (WSR); enforce the requirements of the Hong Kong Convention; establish a list of facilities globally that meet the suggested European standards; and would require European-flagged vessels to only use these listed facilities. There is no mention of improving implementation of existing legislation banning the export of hazardous materials, nor any economic mechanism that would ensure the polluter pays principle.

2.2. PLATFORM ACHIEVEMENTS

GAINING SUPPORT IN THE PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL

On 22 March 2012, the Platform secretariat was invited to meet the European Commission's Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik, a day prior to the publication of the proposal. A few weeks later, the Platform met with the European Economic and Social Committee Rapporteur on this file, Martin Siecker, a Dutch trade unionist. The Platform participated to the EESC's study group meeting on the issue and organised a photo exhibition during the EESC' section meeting in June. The final EESC opinion, which was published on 12 July, echoed many of the Platform's demands.

Since June 2012 the Platform has met repeatedly with Carl Schlyter, a Swedish member of the European Parliament and member of the Green party, who is also the Rapporteur to the Parliament's Environment Committee on the EC proposal. The Platform published a joint Policy Paper co-signed by Greenpeace's EU Unit, and distributed it to all members of the Environment Committee, amongst whom Vittorio Prodi from the Social & Democrats group (S&D), Sabine Wils from the Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left (GUE-NGL), Peter Van Dalen from the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), Chris Davies from Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), and others. The Platform secured support for its position during meetings with the MEPs.

At the same time, the Platform has met with permanent representations of the EU Member States to the European Union and has managed to maintain a trustworthy relationship throughout the process. The Council is now discussing whether the proposal for a regulation on ship recycling is legal or not. The Council's legal service eventually published a legal opinion warning that the proposal, if it was passed in its current form, could be in contravention of international agreements.

In December, the Platform made public two independent legal analyses that highlighted the legal issues raised by the EC proposal, which echoed the findings of the Council's legal service. The Platform then wrote to the European Council's legal service, asking for the public release of their own legal analysis of the Proposal. So far the Council legal service has refused to make the analysis public.

A NEW DIRECTOR

When Ingvild Jenssen, former director of the Platform, went on maternity leave in September 2012, the Platform continued its advocacy and monitoring work with the support of waste policy expert Roberto Ferrigno and his colleague Gaia Angelini. Patrizia Heidegger, who joined the Platform secretariat in October as the Platform's new executive director, has since met with members of the European Parliament and Environment attachés of permanent representations to secure support for our policy demands, especially as regards the financial mechanism, and to raise awareness about the EC proposal's possible breach of international environmental law.

EVENT IN THE EU PARLIAMENT

On 6 November, during the Platform's Annual General Meeting in Brussels, an event was co-organised by MEP Carl Schlyter's staff and the Platform at the European Parliament. Board members Rizwana Hasan from member organisation Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), and Jim Puckett from member organisation Basel Action Network (BAN, U.S.) participated to a panel of experts to discuss the European Commission proposal for a ship recycling regulation, and strongly criticised its limited lack of scope. Also on the panel was Ludwig Krämer, a well-known environmental lawyer who had analysed the Commission proposal and found it was in breach of international law. Mr Krämer said that if the proposal was left unchanged and became law, it would effectively remove the European Union and its Member States from the scope of the EU Waste Shipment Regulation, and thus would be contrary to the EU and its Member States' legal obligations under the Basel Convention and the Basel Ban. Karl Falkenberg, Director General of DG Environment at the European Commission, was also on the panel and condemned beaching, saying that the European Commission would not allow EU-flagged ships (the only vessels concerned by the EC proposal) to be beached in developing countries.

The event also featured a documentary filmed in Alang in 2010 by documentary film makers Ralph Vituccio and Tom Clancey who had flown in from the U.S. specially for the event. An exhibition featuring pictures taken in the Bangladeshi shipbreaking yards in 2010 by French photographer Pierre Torset, as well as panels explaining in detail the shipbreaking issue, were shown at the entrance to the event.

BUILDING A BROADER BASE OF SUPPORT

The Platform met with other Brussels based NGOs – including amongst others the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Seas at Risk and member organisation Transport & Environment - to build a broader base of support to influence the debates held in the European Parliament and European Council and help collect signatures for a sign-on campaign.

NETWORKING AT AARHUS UNIVERSITY

In May 2012, the Platform took part to a workshop about European waste policy organised by the NGO Public Citizen in Aarhus, Denmark. Several EU-based environmental organisations were present, and the Platformed contacted the Danish press to raise awareness about its European campaign.

COMMON STATEMENT WITH SHIP RECYCLERS

The Platform secretariat has been in touch with European-based ship recyclers to collect data about their current and projected recycling capacity, and to ask them to sign a common Statement of Concern raising issues about the Commission proposal. Seeing that the proposal in its current form does not take into account the current ship recycling capacity offered in the European Union, the ship recyclers are calling on the EU institutions to grasp this opportunity to create green jobs and keep a valuable stream of resources within the EU. So far, ship recyclers in the UK, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Spain, Belgium and Denmark have signed the statement.

TRADE UNIONS (EMF/INDUSTRIALL) MEETINGS

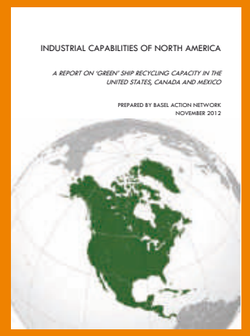
The Platform has met with Wolf Jaecklein, Policy advisor to IndustriALL (the new name of the International Metal Workers Federation and also of its European arm, the EMF), in October and November 2012. We briefed him about the shipbreaking issue and the work the Platform has done in South Asia. On 30 November, during an IndustriALL meeting, the Platform presented its European campaign, including the statement of concern signed by several EU-based ship recyclers.

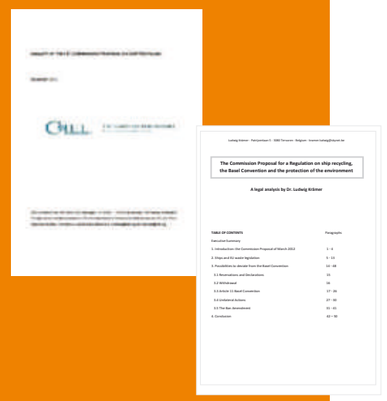
More information about our work can be found at
www.shipbreakingplatform.org/european-campaign

Rizwana Hasan, Chief Executive of BELA ; Karl Falkenberg, Director General of DG Environment ; Carl Schlyter, MEP and rapporteur to the ENVI Committee ; Ludwig Krämer, environmental lawyer and former Head of the waste unit in the DG Environment ; Jim Puckett, Executive Director of BAN.

Abu Eusuf Mollah from BILS; Omar Faruq from OSHE, Helen Perivier, Board member of the Platform; Merijn Hougee from North Sea Foundation and Board member; at the back: Colby Self from BAN; front: Satish Sinha from Toxics Link; Ritwick Dutta from LIFE and Board member

The Platform's European campaign banner (© Cellule Verte)





2.3. OUR PUBLICATIONS

JOINT POLICY PAPER

In November 2012, the Platform published a joint Policy Paper with Greenpeace's EU Unit called "A principled and practical solution for ship recycling: NGO Shipbreaking Platform and Greenpeace Position on the European Commission Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Ship Recycling (COM 2012/118)". The Paper calls on EU institutions to revise the proposal to keep end-of-life vessels under the competency of the Waste Shipment Regulation; to create two European Lists of ship recycling facilities, one listing all facilities in the OECD countries (including the EU) where end-of-life ships containing hazardous materials would be sent, and the other listing all facilities outside the OECD countries where non-hazardous ships would be recycled; to make the shipping industry internalize costs by setting up a funding mechanism that would work as a disincentive to re-flag, thus avoid applicable European legislation; to include a ban on the beaching of end-of-life ships; and to include the Substitution principle so that hazardous wastes can be replaced by safer, healthier alternatives as early as in the design phase of the ship, and throughout its operational life. (Download the policy paper http://bit.ly/TeEAz5)

REPORT ON NORTH AMERICAN SHIP RECYCLING CAPACITY

Colby Self, director of the green ship recycling campaign at U.S.-based member organisation Basel Action Network (BAN), moved to Brussels in November and worked with the Platform secretariat on the European campaign. On 6 November, he published a report, "Industrial capabilities of North America. A report on green ship recycling capacity in the United States, Canada and Mexico". This report was then distributed at various meetings with members of the European Parliament, the European Council, at events, etc. It has proved useful in showing that there is more safe and environmentally friendly ship recycling capacity than alleged by the European Commission. (Download the report http://bit.ly/T6wOSJ)

LEGAL SURVEYS OF THE EUROPEAN PROPOSAL

On 17 December, the Platform made public two independent legal analyses, one conducted by the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) and the other by Dr. Ludwig Krämer, an environmental lawyer and former head of the waste management unit at the European Commission's DG Environment, which both concluded that the European Commission had greatly overstepped its authority by attempting to unilaterally depart from its international legal obligations under the Basel Convention. Dr. Krämer's legal analysis concludes that "any proposal to remove ships from the Waste Shipment Regulation is in breach of EU and EU Member States' legal obligations under the Basel Convention." CIEL's legal analysis, authored by David Azoulay, was also in agreement, concluding that "the EU's Proposed Legislation attempting to unilaterally exempt a certain category of hazardous waste covered by the Basel Convention, namely end-of-life ships, from the control mechanisms of the Convention is illegal under international law and EU law."
(Download Ludwig Krämer's legal survey http://bit.ly/T3Oile and the CIEL survey http://bit.ly/WH98os)

3. ADVOCACY – INTERNATIONAL

3.1. EVENTS

LECTURE AT WORLD MARITIME UNIVERSITY

Ingvild Jenssen, then Director of the Platform was invited to speak at the World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden on 8 February during a one-week session on the Hong Kong Convention organized by Professor Raphael Baumler. Other speakers included representatives of the IMO, UNEP, ILO, IMF and the Turkish Shipbreakers' Association.

IMO MEPC 63&64

The International Maritime Organisation's Marine Environment Protection Committee met twice in 2012. MEPC 63 was held in London 27 Feb – 2 March 2012 and MEPC 64, also in London, from 1 to 5 October 2012. A working group on ship recycling was established to continue developing the Guidelines associated to the Hong Kong Convention. Svend Søyland, from Platform member organisation Bellona and member of the Platform Board, participated in the meetings under the flag of the Clean Shipping Coalition (CSC).

TRADEWINDS CONFERENCE

On 12 and 13 March 2012, the Platform participated to the 3rd Annual TradeWinds Forum on Ship Recycling entitled "Who's Paying?" in Singapore. Board members Rizwana Hasan and Merijn Hougee, and then-director Ingvild Jenssen participated to the event on behalf of the Platform. Merijn held an opening key note speech on the Platform's corporate campaign; Ingvild participated to a panel debate on legislation and policy developments; and Rizwana participated to a panel debate moderated by BBC journalist Nisha Pillai on current and future practices.

WISTA DEBATE

The Platform was invited as panellist to the annual Women Working in International Shipping and Trade Associations (WISTA) debate held in London on 19 March. Ingvild Jenssen represented the Platform and Nikos Mikelis represented the International Maritime Organisation in a debate about the IMO's Hong Kong Convention and its effectiveness in preventing the global shipbreaking crisis.

LLOYDS EVENT

On 19-20 June, Platform Board member Merijn Hougee and Platform staff participated to the 7th annual Lloyds Event on ship recycling in London. The conference covered issues related to market, policy and country developments and was attended by primarily industry participants.

ASBESTOS SEMINAR

On 17 and 18 September, a seminar about occupational health and asbestos was organised by member organisation IBAS, and trade union ETUC at the International Trade Union House (ITUH) in Brussels. IBAS secretary Laurie Kazan-Allen chaired the meetings. Annie Thébaud-Mony from member organisation Ban Asbestos France and former Board member, was present as well. The Platform secretariat participated and updated the other delegates about the current situation at the European level.

BASEL OEWG

The 8th Open Ended Working Group (OEWG8) of the Basel Convention met in Geneva 24-28 September 2012. Jim Puckett, executive director of Basel Action Network and Board member, and Platform staff participated to the Basel debate on shipbreaking. The Platform asked the Basel secretariat to remove the contradictory language on «green beaching» from its website and documents, specifically when referring to a Basel secretariat project in Pakistan.

CHINESE SHIP RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

In the last years, China has become an important destination for end-of-life ships. On 15 October, the Platform (Roberto Ferrigno, Patrizia Heidegger and Delphine Reuter) met with the Chinese National Ship Recycling Association (CNSA) who represents around 20 ships recycling facilities to discuss industry practices in China. The meeting was organised by Axel Singhofen, political advisor to the Greens at the European Parliament. The Platform kept in touch with the association and is now in the process of organising a visit to China to which Patrizia, Merijn Hougee, and South Asian delegates Kanwar Iqbal, Ritwick Dutta and Rizwana Hasan will take part.

A HOPE FOR LEGAL ACTION

THE TURIN ASBESTOS CASE

On 13 February 2012 in a historical ruling an Italian court sentenced two former top managers of Eternit, a multinational construction company, to a 16-year jail term and fines worth millions of euros. Both former managers were found guilty of having allowed the use of asbestos in the company's production chain knowing it could potentially poison and even kill thousands of its workers. The Platform issued a joint press release with Ban Asbestos France stating that the court ruling gave hope to asbestos victims in the shipbreaking industry and sent out a clear warning to companies that continue to fail to protect workers against the devastating effects of asbestos. Member organisations IBAS and Ban Asbestos France have been involved in this battle for several years.

4. RESEARCH - EUROPE

On 16 January 2012, the Platform published its annual list of European owned and flagged vessels that were broken on the beaches of South Asia. More that 200 European vessels were sold to shipbreaking facilities in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan in 2011. The Platform issued a press release and member organisations Bellona and the North Sea Foundation translated the press release into respectively Norwegian and Dutch giving the "naming & shaming" list a national angle. The issue received coverage in both European press and national press in Norway and the Netherlands, and prompted both the Dutch and Norwegian Ship Owners Associations to respond. Some shipowners in the Netherlands also contacted the North Sea Foundation for advice.

In September the Platform secretariat learned of three German-owned ships that had been sold for breaking to India. One of them, the "Northern Vitality" was still located in the German port of Wilhelsmhaven, and the Platform proceeded to alert the German ministry of Environment and the European Commission about this potential breach of EU law. The German authorities moved swiftly and the ship was grounded in the port until its owner could prove it would be sent for repair work to Bulgaria. Fearing the ship would continue its route to India, the Platform alerted the Bulgarian Environment ministry and updated the European Commission about the ship's location. At the end of 2012 the "Northern Vitality" was still in Bulgarian waters.

Pakistan, 2012

5. RESEARCH - SOUTH ASIA

5.1. PAKISTAN

FACT-FINDING MISSION

In December the Platform secretariat travelled to Pakistan for a fact-finding mission coordinated by member organisation SDPI (Sustainable Development Policy Institute). Kanwar IQBAL from SDPI organised the visit and also seized the opportunity to conduct a panel on shipbreaking organised during SDPI's 15th Sustainable Development Conference in Islamabad. The secretariat and Kanwar Iqbal also met with Pakistani-based stakeholders in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi, such as the European Union delegation, the International labour Organisation (ILO, who has guidelines for protecting the health and safety of shipbreaking workers), UNIDO and the WWF. The Platform also discussed with Majid Bashir, a lawyer who is interested in bringing cases linked to shipbreaking to different courts so as to enforce labour laws and environmental protection laws. In Karachi, the Platform was joined by Lahore-based Christine Habbard from member organisation FIDH (Fédération Internationale des Droits de l'Homme) to visit the shipbreaking yards of Gadani, where we liaised with workers, shipbreaking yard owners, and trade unionists. The Platform also met twice with Nasir Mansoor from the National Trade Union Federation, with whom we had already been in touch in the past to collect data on deaths and injuries in the yards. SDPI is currently working on a separate report for which shipbreaking workers in all Gadani yards were interviewed, and which will highlight whether labour and environmental protection laws are being enforced. The report will also contain policy recommendations and will be sent to stakeholders based in Pakistan and elsewhere to push for change.

SDPI SHIPBREAKING SURVEY

In October and November 2012, the Platform funded a field research carried out by member organisation SDPI in the shipbreaking yards of Gadani, Pakistan. The research was aimed at recording the voices of shipbreaking workers who are scarcely heard in research and even press reports. SDPI collected and compiled data which will be published in a comprehensive report in 2013. The field research also prepared the ground for the Platform secretariat's visit of December 2012.

5.2. BANGLADESH

BANGLADESH COORDINATOR APPOINTED

The Platform has strengthened ties with member organisation YPSA in Chittagong, Bangladesh. Muhammad Ali Shahin, who has already been collaborating for years with the Platform was appointed Platform Project Coordinator for Bangladesh during the AGM in Brussels in November 2012. Shahin has already sent the Platform secretariat a list of all ships beached in Chittagong in 2012, and is monitoring accidents in deaths in the yards, regularly sending the secretariat press reports on the subject. Shahin provides the Platform with valuable data and is also helping coordinate our advocacy work on the ground, providing support to international press covering the shipbreaking issue. Shahin also regularly meets with shipbreaking workers.

MONITORING THE LAW

Also in Bangladesh, Platform member organisation BELA has continued monitoring the progress of the shipbreaking issue in the courts. As of December 2012, there were two different sets of rules. As BELA chief executive Rizwana Hasan explained, "they are based on completely different premises and suggest totally different institutional and procedural mechanisms. Both the Rules are pending before the High Court for scrutiny as to their compliance with High Court directives. Both the Rules have been published. Legally speaking, the yards are not allowed to import ships but they are doing so with political blessings."

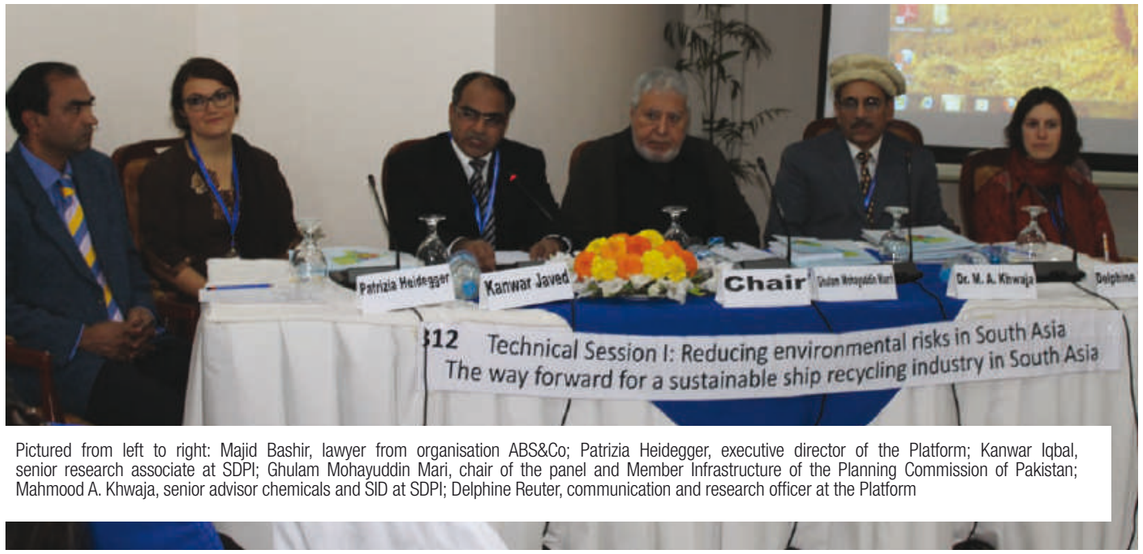
In September, Rizwana Hasan received the prestigious Magsaysay award in the Philippines, considered as the Asian Nobel Prize, from the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation. Rizwana was honoured for her legal work to improve social and economic justice in Bangladesh.

5.3. INDIA

THE EXXON VALDEZ IS SENT FOR BREAKING

On 30 July the Indian Supreme Court issued its ruling in the Exxon Valdez case, allowing the ship to be beached in Alang while reminding that Indian authorities need to follow the Basel Convention. The Platform issued a joint press release with BAN calling for a better enforcement of existing laws.

Muhammad Ali Shahin, Platform coordinator in Bangladesh



Pictured from left to right: Majid Bashir, lawyer from organisation ABS&Co; Patrizia Heidegger, executive director of the Platform; Kanwar Iqbal, senior research associate at SDPI; Ghulam Mohayuddin Mari, chair of the panel and Member Infrastructure of the Planning Commission of Pakistan; Mahmood A. Khwaja, senior advisor chemicals and SID at SDPI; Delphine Reuter, communication and research officer at the Platform

6. CORPORATE – THE OFF THE BEACH! CAMPAIGN

6.1. INTRO

The overarching goal of the NGO Shipbreaking Platform is to prevent toxic end-of-life ships from being beached in developing countries. The majority of the ships sold for breaking today are simply run up on the tidal shores of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. The beaching practice is at the source of extremely severe pollution, dangerous working conditions, exploitation of workers, and a blatant violation of international hazardous waste management laws.

Through our OFF THE BEACH! campaign, we aim to raise public awareness of the human rights abuses and pollution caused by shipbreaking practices in South Asia and promote marketplace incentives to divert traffic away from the infamous breaking beaches. Our goal is to find sustainable solutions that encompass the principles of human rights, environmental justice, "polluter pays", producer responsibility and clean production.

6.2. PLATFORM ACHIEVEMENTS

CLEAN SHIPPING INDEX

Merijn Hougee from member organisation North Sea Foundation (The Netherlands), and Board member of the Platform, is part of the Clean Shipping Index and regularly participates to their meetings. This initially Swedish-based initiative aims at offering cargo owners a web-based environmental performance rating system of shipping companies, thereby helping them choosing more responsible business partners. In 2012, the shipbreaking practices were added as an item in the Index, although as of December it did not influence the shipping companies' ratings.

DATA COLLECTION & WEB SITE

Throughout 2012, the Platform has been working on transforming the current www.offthebeach.org website into a research-driven website, where shipowners, cargo owners and the wide public can find information about the ships that were sent to the beaches of South Asia (Bangladesh, India and Pakistan) since 15 May 2009, which is the date when the Hong Kong Convention was adopted by the International Maritime Organisation. Delphine Reuter from the Platform secretariat worked on compiling data and on the future look-and-feel of the website. Colby Self from member organisation BAN and Merijn Hougee from the North Sea Foundation have been advising the secretariat throughout the project. A Dutch-based media company, Mr Lee.tv, worked on creating a video that would introduce the website to visitors. The new version of the website is planned to be launched in 2013.

EXXON MOBIL

Member organisation BAN continued closely following Texas-based oil company and ship owner Exxon Mobil's ship recycling policy.

GRIEG GREEN

Svend Søyland from member organisation Bellona and Board member, and Ingvild Jenssen met with Norwegian shipping company Grieg Green to discuss possible cooperation on the corporate campaign. Grieg Green has developed a service for green ship recycling in China.

MARITIME SEMINAR

On 7 June, the Platform participated in a Maritime Seminar on ship recycling and sustainable shipping organised by the Dutch Platform on Ship Emissions. The conference was held in Amersfoort in the Netherlands and was joined by approximately 40 participants from industry, trade unions as well as research and policy making. Ingvild Jenssen presented the Platform's campaigns and participated to a concluding debate. Most participants were supportive of progressive solutions that would move ship dismantling practices off the beach.

VISIT OF A SHIP RECYCLING YARD

On 22 November, the Platform (Patrizia Heidegger, Colby Self and Delphine Reuter) visited the Van Heyghen ship recycling yard in Ghent (now part of the Group Galloo), close to Brussels. The Platform took the opportunity to take pictures onboard a French gas tanker being dismantled has been using them to illustrate safer and environmentally sound ship recycling. The visit was part of a wider strategy to include EU-based ship recyclers in the Platform's advocacy campaign.

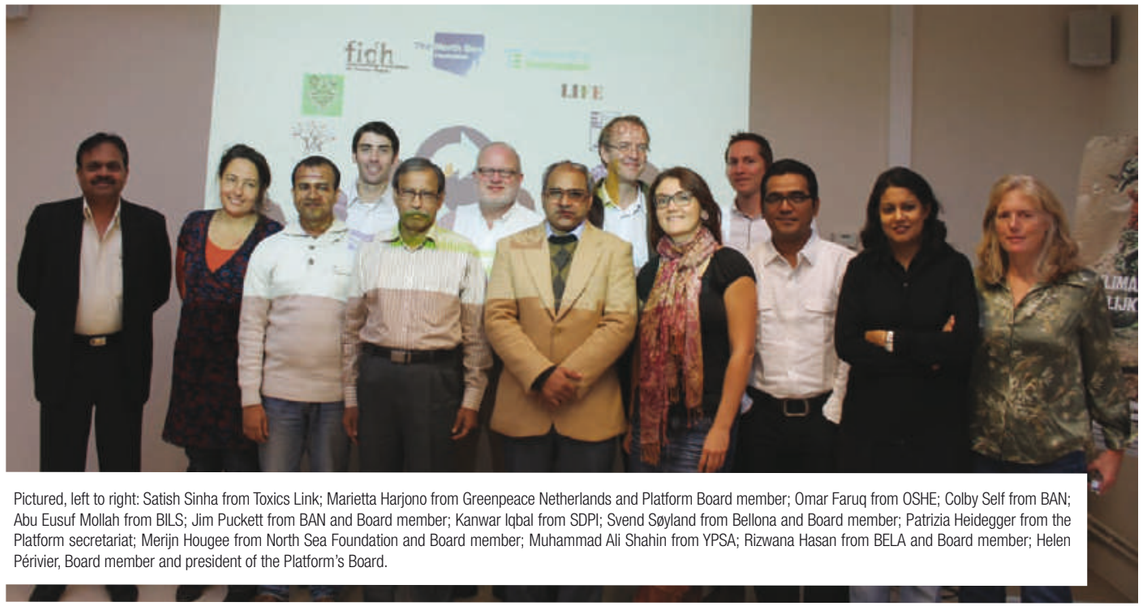
7. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2012

PLATFORM AGM

Representatives of nearly all member organisations of the NGO Shipbreaking Platform came to Brussels for a three-day meeting from 5 November until 7 November 2012.

The issues discussed during the AGM spanned all campaigns of the Platform, with the advocacy work done at the EU level sparking a lot of discussion. On Tuesday 6 November, the delegates from the Platform's member organisations all participated to a debate on shipbreaking and the future European regulation on ship recycling that took place at the European Parliament, and which was co-organised by MEP Carl Schlyter, the rapporteur to the Parliament's Environment Committee on this file, and by the Platform. On Wednesday 7 November, several South Asian delegates met with the Environment attachés of the permanent representations of European Member States, who are based in Brussels. This meeting allowed to give the file a South Asian perspective and highlighted the urgency of finding policy solutions to the global shipbreaking crisis.

Board members Svend Søyland, from member organisation Bellona (Norway), and Ritwick Dutta, from member organisation Legal Initiative for Forest and Environment (LIFE, India), were formally elected as Board members by the delegates of the member organisations. The Platform strengthened cooperation with Muhammad Ali Shahin from member organisation YPSA as he was chosen as the Platform's Project Coordinator in Bangladesh.



Pictured, left to right: Satish Sinha from Toxics Link; Marietta Harjono from Greenpeace Netherlands and Platform Board member; Omar Faruq from OSHE; Colby Self from BAN; Abu Eusuf Mollah from BILS; Jim Puckett from BAN and Board member; Kanwar Iqbal from SDPI; Svend Søyland from Bellona and Board member; Patrizia Heidegger from the Platform secretariat; Merijn Hougee from North Sea Foundation and Board member; Muhammad Ali Shahin from YPSA; Rizwana Hasan from BELA and Board member; Helen Périvier, Board member and president of the Platform's Board.

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Platform is grateful for the generous support it has received from its members, the agencies and the charitable organisations mentioned below.

INCOME 2012	
RESULT OF THE YEAR	
Contributions from member organisations	35 200,00
Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs Senternovem	20 305,00
The Sigrid Rausing Trust	53 326,00
Maribel Fund	27 114,00
European Commission LIFE+	156 513,00
Miscellaneous / Financial Income	3 037,00
TOTAL INCOME	295 495,00
EXPENDITURE	
ACTIVITIES	
Travel	6 888,00
Fact-finding mission Pakistan	6 592,00
Annual General Meeting and event at European Parliament	24 369,00
Consultants / Research	53 854,00
Advocacy and research in South Asia	10 000,00
Corporate campaign	5 747,00
Other direct costs	1 721,00
Transfer to partners	12 305,00
TOTAL ACTIVITIES	121 476,00
ADMINISTRATIVE / GENERAL COSTS	
Rental costs	4 317,00
Office costs	3 606,00
Communication costs	4 280,00
External costs	2 239,00
Other costs	898,00
TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE/GENERAL COSTS	15 340,00
STAFF / PERSONNEL COSTS	
Staff / Personnel Costs	147 691,00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	284 507,00
NET INCOME	10 988,00

9. BOARD MEMBERS & STAFF

9.1. BOARD MEMBERS

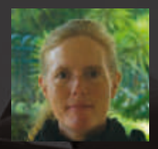
The NGO Shipbreaking Platform's board members are international experts in a wide range of sectors related to maritime policies, waste management, environmental law and occupational health. Their experience and know-how contribute immensely to the Platform's activities and successes.

RITWICK DUTTA is an environmental lawyer who has practiced in the Supreme Court of India since 2001. He has worked on environmental issues for over a decade, with a focus on forest and wildlife issues. Ritwick coordinates Lawyers Initiative for Forest and Environment (LIFE), a dedicated team of four full time environmental lawyers. LIFE supports grassroots groups across India by helping bring environmental cases to court.

MARIETTA HARJONO is a senior campaigner in Greenpeace Netherlands and has been working on the shipbreaking issue since 1998. She also coordinated Greenpeace's work on the Probo Koala case, the ship responsible for illegal dumping of toxic waste and resulting medical emergency in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

RIZWANA HASAN is an advocate of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh and Programs Director of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA). She has filed and advocated for the rights and interests of the landless, fishermen, farmers, and other affected communities in cases involving encroachment on public property; air, water, and soil pollution; compensation for land expropriation and other disruptive development initiatives. In 2009, she received the Goldman Prize for BELA's outstanding work on shipbreaking.

MERIJN HOUGEE is project leader of Clean Shipping at the North Sea Foundation where he works on a market-oriented approach to create sustainability in the maritime sector. Since 2008, he also works for the ProSea Foundation as a course leader, delivering sustainability training courses to naval cadets in the Netherlands.



HELEN PÉRIVIER is qualified as a navigation officer and has ten years on ships serving as a maritime professional on environmental research, advocacy and education tours. She led the Greenpeace campaign on the European REACH chemicals legislation.

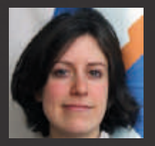
JIM PUCKETT has been an environmental health and justice activist for more than 20 years. He is the founder of Earth Economics and the Basel Action Network program. He has represented civil society within the Basel Convention since its inception in 1989.

SVEND SØYLAND holds a Master of Arts in criminology, where his focus was environmental crime. Svend headed Bellona USA in Washington from 2005 to 2008, and is presently working at Bellona's Oslo office – focusing on international climate negotiations. Prior to joining Bellona, he worked for the United Nations and the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment, and was a lecturer at the University of Hong Kong.

9.2. STAFF MEMBERS

THE BRUSSELS SECRETARIAT:

PATRIZIA HEIDEGGER,
Executive Director (since October 2012)



DELPHINE REUTER,
Communication and Research Officer

INGVILD JENSSEN,
Policy officer (on maternity leave from September 2012 until May 2013)

LOCAL CONTACT IN BANGLADESH:

MUHAMMAD ALI SHAHIN,
Platform Coordinator

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

The NGO Shipbreaking Platform has 18 environmental, human and labour rights organisations as members (including the secretariat based in Brussels), distributed in ten countries around the world.

BASEL ACTION NETWORK (BAN) confronts the issues of environmental justice at a macro level, preventing disproportionate dumping of the world's toxic waste and pollution on our global village's poorest residents.
>www.ban.org
>Contact: Jim Puckett, jpuckett@ban.org

BAN ASBESTOS is a network of local organisations monitoring anti-asbestos legislation where it exists and litigating for the abolition of asbestos where anti-asbestos legislation is lacking.
> www.ban-asbestos-france.com
>Contact: Annie Thébaud-Mony, annie.thebaud-mony@wanadoo.fr

BANGLADESH ENVIRONMENTAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (BELA) is an advocacy group that monitors and pursues the implementation of laws and regulations to protect the environment. It is considered a pioneer in public interest environmental litigation (PIEL).
>www.belabangla.org
>Contact: Rizwana Hasan, bela@bangla.net

THE BELLONA FOUNDATION is a multi-disciplinary international environmental NGO based in Oslo, Norway. It is a recognised technology and solution oriented, environmental defender with offices on two continents.
>www.bellona.org
>Contact: Svend Søyland, svend@bellona.no

BANGLADESH INSTITUTE OF LABOUR STUDIES (BILS) props up the endeavours of the labour movement to act in accordance with the labour rights issues and its social actions.
>www.bils-bd.org
>Contact: Abu Eusuf Mollah, bils@citech.net

THE CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY DESK- THE OTHER MEDIA coordinate a corporate accountability and environmental health desk that extends technical, logistics, legal and strategic support to communities that are fighting corporate crime.
>www.sipcotcuddalore.com
>Contact: Madhumitta Dutta, madhudutta.new@gmail.com

THE EUROPEAN FEDERATION FOR TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT is Europe's principal environmental organisation campaigning on sustainable transport. T&E's primary focus is on European policy to promote an environmentally sound approach to transport.
>www.transportenvironment.org
>Contact: Bill Hemmings, bill.hemmings@transportenvironment.org

THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (FIDH) includes 141 national human rights NGOs world-wide. FIDH has a generalist mandate and consequently works on all human rights be they civil, political, economic, social, or cultural rights.
>www.fidh.org
>Contact: Elin Wrzoncki, ewrzoncki@fidh.org

GREENPEACE is an international non-governmental organisation working on global and environmental problems. Greenpeace started its shipbreaking campaign by highlighting this environmental and human rights disaster in 1998.
>www.greenpeace.org
>Contact: Marietta Harjono, mharjono@greenpeace.nl

THE INTERNATIONAL BAN ASBESTOS SECRETARIAT (IBAS) is an independent body dedicated to the world-wide eradication of the continuing use of asbestos and the minimisation of dangers from asbestos products already within society.
>www.ibasecretariat.org
>Contact: Laurie Kazan-Allen, lka@btinternet.com

LEGAL INITIATIVE FOR FOREST AND ENVIRONMENT (LIFE) is composed of groups of lawyers working to protect areas of vital ecological importance through a unique combination of litigation, investigation, information dissemination, capacity building and supporting campaigns and movements.
>Contact: Ritwick Dutta, ritwickdutta@gmail.com

THE NORTH SEA FOUNDATION a Dutch NGO, is a lobbying organization with a constructive approach enabling a practical influence to be exerted over the marine environmental policies of governments and user groups.
>www.noordzee.nl
>Contact: Merijn Hougee, m.hougee@noordzee.nl

THE BANGLADESH OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT FOUNDATION (OSHE) is a specialized labour foundation established in 2003 by workers initiative working on issues affecting employment, income, economy and environment and the livelihoods of working people.
>www.oshebd.org
>Contact: Repon Chowdhury, oshe@agni.com

PREVENTION OF HAZARDOUS SHIPBREAKING INITIATIVE is a coalition of environmental and labour rights NGOs based in Turkey. The group focuses on proper waste management and respect of labour rights at the shipbreaking sites in Aliaga.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY INSTITUTE (SDPI) is an independent research organisation founded in 1992 on the recommendation of the Pakistan National Conservation Strategy (NCS). It focuses on sustainable development, globalisation, environment, education, health and trade.
>www.sdpi.org
>Contact: Kanwar M. J. Iqbal, kanwar@sdpi.org

TOXICS LINK is an Indian NGO working for environmental justice and freedom from toxins. It provides information on the poisons in our environment and bodies and on clean and sustainable alternatives for countries world-wide.
>www.toxicslink.org
>Contact: Satish Sinha, satish@toxicslink.org

YPSA, YOUNG POWER IN SOCIAL ACTION, is a social development organisation that started in 1985 in Bangladesh. It aims to promote sustainable development through a holistic approach. YPSA follows the issues related to workers rights, tries to obtain improved working conditions at Chittagong shipbreaking yards and does advocacy for a policy to ensure human rights in the shipbreaking industry. In addition to awareness raising activities and research publications about the subject, YPSA also provides instant help to injured shipbreaking workers and families of the dead workers along with different development programs for the villages surrounding the yards. Based in Chittagong, Bangladesh
>www.shipbreakingbd.info and www.ypsa.org
>Contact: Muhammad Ali Shahin, shahinhelpsgreen@gmail.com