

**WWF challenges the OSCE countries:  
More sustainability for future maritime co-operation in the OSCE area and beyond**

Mr Chairman, Excellencies, ladies and gentleman.

Thank you very much for organizers for inviting WWF to give a talk in this OSCE meeting with a very important topic.

WWF is a global conservation organisation. Our mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature. To do so, we believe, it is necessary to take care of biodiversity, ensure sustainable use of nature and reduce pollution.

Our leading principles are to be global, independent and multicultural and to use the best available scientific data. WWF is seeking dialogue and create and provide solutions. We are building partnerships with companies, organisations, Governments, and local communities.

The biggest threats to the oceans, according to IMO, are over fishing, pollution, climate change and alien species. And all these threats are related to shipping. Thus, WWF is calling sustainability for shipping. Our aims in the oceans are that oceans should not be a "black hole", and accountability and transparency is needed not only on the high sea areas (i.e. areas beyond 200 NM) but for all shipping and fishing industry.

The seas connect countries and peoples, and over 95 % of trade is carried by the international shipping industry nowadays. By 2008, there are around 50525 merchant ships with a gross tonnage of over 728 Mdw, registered in over 150 nations, and manned by over a million seafarers of virtually every nationality. In 2005, 732 vessels totaling 14.4 Mdw were demolished whilst 1 341 vessels of 62.4 Mdw were built. Nowadays, approximately 35 % of the ships are more than 15 years old.

The major classes of shipping include: oil, chemical and liquid gas tankers (over 12 500 vessels, 25 % of the fleet), bulk carriers (7 000 vessels, 14 % of the fleet), containers (4 000 vessels, 8% of the fleet), general cargo 19 000 vessels, 37 % of the fleet); passenger (6000 vessels, 12 % of the fleet) and specialist ships such as tugs and ice breakers (2 000 vessels, 4 % of the fleet).

Among the major ship owning nations (beneficial owners) are Greece, Japan, Germany, China, Norway, the USA, Hong Kong, Korea, UK and Singapore. The 10 largest ship flagging countries are: Panama, Liberia, Bahamas, Marshall Islands, Hong Kong, Singapore, Greece, Malta, China and the USA. And many of these countries are also members to this organization, OSCE.

**Perspectives for future maritime co-operations in OSCE area and beyond**

As discussed in the previous OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum meetings the OSCE involvement may be envisaged at various levels, at OSCE wide level, at regional, sub regional and trans-boundary level; as well as at national and local level.

OSCE involvement in shipping and marine nature protection should be quite an easy task in a situation where some of the OSCE countries are among the biggest owners and ship flagging countries of the global merchant fleet, and at the same time many of the OSCE countries are contracting parties both to IMO and regional sea conventions such as HELCOM, OSPAR, Barcelona Convention and Black Sea Convention. Safe and secure shipping should be a vital part of co-operation at any of these levels: **(a)** we could require ships to fulfill certain technical standards and ships' crews to fulfill competence standards in the OSCE area and beyond. Furthermore, development of sea charts and navigation systems is always a good investment in improving maritime safety and protecting our marine nature. **(b)** I would like to remind you that sometimes we need public-private partnerships to speed up shipping industry to use best management practises and safety measures.

International shipping is a significant contributor to climate change, one of the biggest threats to our globe. The tank ship owner organization INTERTANKO estimates that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from burning fossil fuels for international shipping are about 1 200 million tons each year. This adds up to about 5 percent of annual global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. In addition, there are emissions from national sea transport like ferries, inland navigation, and fisheries. The release of particulate matter also contributes to global warming: for example soot build up on ice, reduces reflective capacity of ice for sun's radiation.

### **Arctic area**

Climate change is a global threat for environment but the impacts so far are most dramatic in the Arctic area. The Arctic is an ocean of 14 million km<sup>2</sup>, surrounded by continents of 30 million km<sup>2</sup>. Arctic states occupy 1/3 of land on Earth. This is truly a vast and mainly remote region. But Arctic is not a regional issue but a global one! Changes in the Arctic do not only affect people and species locally, but they have global consequences. Changes in the Arctic affect the rest of the world through warming across the globe, rising sea levels, alteration of oceanic processes and circulation, and potential release of huge volumes of methane, one of the most harmful greenhouse gases.

Arctic sea level is rising, over the past century the change was up to +10-20 cm. Sea level in Arctic areas rises faster than elsewhere, and could rise another half meter in the coming century. River flows are 25 % above average, leading to the freshening of the oceans. We don't know exactly what will happen due to freshening of the Arctic waters, but most probably many of you have heard different theories how this change could have impacts on the currents like the Gulf Stream.

We might have a new Arctic ocean, very much sooner than anyone would have guessed, just 1-2 years ago. This gives the shipping industry and the petroleum industry new opportunities. It challenges the Arctic Countries and the Global Society, OSCE contracting parties among the others, in how to manage these vast remote areas, and how to protect the vulnerable and valuable renewable and living resources. **(c)** In this field, OSCE could collaborate more with the Arctic Council.

Shipping accounts also for about 40 % of the oil spills, approximately 160 000 tons, to the oceans. Shipping accidents causes only 12,5 % of these spills and the rest are operational and/or illegal spills. In MARPOL "special areas" operational spills are prohibited. In WWF's view, the ban should be extended to all sea areas. **(d)** One of the objects for future co-operation in the OSCE area and beyond could be to ban operational oil spills globally.

Ship routing is a strong and recommended mean to protect wildlife and vulnerable natural resources. **e)** WWF asks the OSCE countries to show their environmental responsibility by voluntarily keeping their fleets away from sensitive areas, even before they achieve an international status as a protected area in any form. Most of the nature values and resources are relatively close to the shore. WWF therefore recommends planning of the ship journeys well off the coastlines.

Today is the opening day for the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP9) -meeting in Bonn, Germany. The most critical and important marine issue to be discussed and adopted during the next two weeks is the principle and scientific criteria for identifying ecologically or biologically significant marine areas in need of protection, in open ocean waters, and deep-sea habitats, in marine areas beyond the national jurisdiction (>200 NM), as well as scientific guidance for designing representative networks of marine protected areas. Many of the OSCE countries are contracting parties to CBD and present in Bonn. **f)** WWF is asking your understanding and support for the urgent need to establish marine protected areas both in deep-sea and high sea areas.

Finally, once more, I would like encourage all OSCE parties **g)** to ratify and implement international conventions and to increase political will to protect our seas.

Thank you for your attention!

**More information:**

Dr. Anita Mäkinen  
Head of Marine Programme,  
WWF-Finland  
[anita.makinen@wwf.fi](mailto:anita.makinen@wwf.fi)  
tel. +358-40 52 71425