

Press Release · Pressemitteilung

The leading international maritime trade fair Shipping sector sets a clear course for climate protection

Friday was the closing day of the 30th SMM which took place on Hamburg's exhibition campus from 6 to 9 September. During the anniversary edition of the flagship fair the maritime industry demonstrated its commitment to tackling the energy transition. Organisers, exhibitors and trade visitors alike delivered a positive summary of the event.

Hamburg, 09-09-2022 – The enthusiasm was palpable. After a four-year wait, the international maritime community was finally able to meet for a physical SMM in Hamburg again: For four days, 2,000 exhibiting companies and over 30,000 industry visitors from more than 100 countries formed the "United Nations of Shipbuilding". "There was an enormous sense of anticipation, and expectations were high. The more enthusiastic I am to see that we have been able to confirm our status as the leading global maritime trade fair once again," said Bernd Aufderheide, President and CEO, Hamburg Messe und Congress. The maritime energy transition and the technologies and expertise it requires, along with a clear commitment to making the necessary changes, were at the top of the agenda throughout the fully occupied exhibition campus and the accompanying conference programme of SMM. Retrofitting ships was one of the key topics of this fair. The industry is facing the enormous challenge to retrofit its fleet of roughly 60,000 merchant ships progressively to make them more eco- and climate-friendly.

The presence of political leaders attested to the special importance of the shipping industry in the efforts to achieve the climate goals. During his tour of the exhibition, **Kitack Lim**, Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization, IMO, was visibly impressed by the range of innovative technologies showcased. German Chancellor **Olaf Scholz**, the honorary patron of SMM, said in his video message, the focus of this SMM on climate-friendly technology was more than welcome since "every innovation in the maritime sector supports the global economy as a whole". The German Federal Maritime Coordinator, **Claudia Müller**, praised the motto of the 30th SMM, "Driving the Maritime Transition": "It perfectly describes the challenges facing the maritime industry today while demonstrating that we are actively driving these changes."

Focus on carbon neutrality

SMM delivers important stimuli to achieve this goal, said **Knut Ørbeck-Nilssen**, CEO of DNV Maritime, the main sponsor of the flagship fair: "SMM is one of the best events in the maritime



calendar. It is truly global, and with its focus on innovation, it gives people an impression what the future of shipping will look like."

The industry has set its goal: achieving climate-neutral shipping by 2050. This calls for practicable solutions from engineering firms, shipyards and suppliers, but also from fuel manufacturers. "As a marketplace for innovations, SMM is an important basis for investment decisions of German shipowners. The focus is on the climate-neutral transformation of the maritime sector," said **Dr Martin Kröger**, Managing Director of the German Shipowners Association (VDR). "We are communicating about this with shipbuilders and suppliers as well as experts around the world, many of whom we can meet at SMM in Hamburg."

Technologies for the energy transition

It is not by coincidence that SMM is the international platform of the maritime industry, from small start-ups through to global market leaders. For example, propulsion system specialists Wärtsilä Voyage showcased their new Fleet Optimisation System (FOS). "This holistic platform for data analytics, voyage planning and fleet performance optimisation can help shipping companies operate their ships and fleets with optimum safety, efficiency and sustainability," explained **Sean Fernback**, President of Wärtsilä Voyage.

Engine manufacturer Rolls-Royce presented fuel cell concepts, hybrid systems and engines designed to operate on e-methanol. "For the future, we are firmly committed to this ship fuel which we want to pioneer," said **Denise Kurtulus**, Vice President Global Marine at Rolls-Royce.

Mecklenburgische Metallguss (MMG) offer a portfolio of optimised-flow ship propellers which are used by shipowners such as Hapag-Lloyd to retrofit a major portion of their fleet in operation, enabling fuel and CO₂ savings of more than 10per cent. As a symbol for the entire fair, a high-efficiency MMG propeller was displayed at the entrance to SMM to greet the industry visitors.

The technology company ABB exhibited a new semiconductor power switch for safe, energy-efficient next-generation direct-current systems. **Thorsten Strassel**, Global Product Manager at ABB, said: "SMM is an ideal platform to present this innovative technology in support of the energy transition in the shipping sector." Renewable energies, battery storage and smart grids are key factors in making shipping more sustainable, he added.

RWO, a leading supplier of smart water management solutions, featured their latest oil-water separator system (OWS) at the flagship fair. RWO CEO **Stratos Papamichalis** explained: "We are pleased to offer owners of larger ships an efficient, flexible and cost-effective OWS solution that is suitable for both, newbuilds and retrofitting projects."

Retrofitting ships was one of the key topics of this fair. One of the challenges the industry faces is retrofitting its 60,000 merchant ships step-by-step to make them more eco- and climate-friendly. An enormous market for Europe's supply industry is opening up here, was the forecast given by **Stephen Gordon**, Managing Director of Clarksons Research.

Inventions such as the Mewis Duct, which earned the two shipbuilding engineers Friedrich Mewis and Dirk Lehmann the German National Environmental Award during SMM week, are significant contributions to climate protection. The flow optimisation device, which is sold by Becker Marine Systems, has already saved more than 12 million tonnes of CO₂ worldwide. Managing Director **Henning Kuhlmann** was more than pleased that SMM was able to take place in the customary form again: "There is no other place where so many customers, suppliers and other market stakeholders can meet within such a short time span. We have not only seen familiar faces but also introduced ourselves to many new people; we followed up on ongoing projects and signed several major new contracts," he reported. Kuhlmann's conclusion: "For Becker, SMM is and will always be the world's most important shipbuilding trade fair."

Supporting programme: Networking and transferring know-how

SMM was again accompanied by high-profile conferences covering specific topics such as digitalisation (Maritime Future Summit), ocean research (Offshore Dialogue), as well as security and defence (International Conference on Maritime Security & Defence). A conference which received special attention this year was the global maritime environmental congress, gmec: For the first time, one of the panel discussions was open to the general public. Environmental campaigners and industry decision-makers discussed the responsibility of the shipping industry for climate protection.

Apart from providing opportunities for knowledge-sharing, the organisers of SMM placed major emphasis on networking formats, providing the new Transition Stages as a new, dedicated platform for exhibitors to highlight their favourite topics. Additional highlights included the Start-up Award as well as the Maritime Career Market where young talents were able to make contact with interested potential employers. "There is no better opportunity to familiarise the general public, including young talents who are so important for our future, and political decision-makers with the breadth and depth of our industry," recapitulated **Dr Reinhard Lüken**, General Manager of the German Shipbuilding and Ocean Industries Association (VSM).

An assessment confirmed by surveys among trade fair visitors, 97 per cent of whom said that SMM is the most important trade fair of the maritime industry, with 86 per cent being determined to return for the next SMM. 97per cent of visitors confirmed that SMM provides an excellent opportunity to make contact with international stakeholders.



The next SMM will take place in Hamburg from 3 to 6 September 2024.

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