



23 March 2018, Antwerp, Belgium

## **WORLD PORTS SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM STARTED**

More than 250 professionals from ports, shipping, government and society met at the Port of Antwerp yesterday for the official launch of the World Ports Sustainability Program (WPSP) that was initiated by IAPH last year. The Program aims to demonstrate global leadership of ports in contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. It notably wants to empower port community actors worldwide to engage with business, governmental and societal stakeholders in creating sustainable added value for the local communities and wider regions in which their ports are embedded.

Her Majesty Queen Mathilde of the Belgians opened the first day of the WPSP Launch Event with a keynote address in which she underlined the important role that ports play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, which are at the core of WPSP. IMO Secretary General Kitack Lim commended the initiative of IAPH and referred to the platform that IMO is offering for more collaboration between shipowners, ports, maritime administrations and other stakeholders. WPSP Coordinator and IAPH Managing Director Policy and Strategy Patrick Verhoeven pointed at the work that now lies ahead: ‘We need to chart the course of WPSP with concrete priorities for the years ahead and to ensure that port community actors worldwide engage in achieving the objectives we have set out.’ That process starts in Antwerp today during the second day of the Launch Event, which consists of a series of interactive workshops on the main themes of the Program.

The first day of the Launch Event was concluded with the signature of the WPSP Declaration by the Founding Partners of the Program: representatives of the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA), AIVP – The Global Network of Cities and Ports, the European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO) and the World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure (PIANC) joined IAPH President Santiago Garcia Milà in the signing ceremony. In addition, representatives of the International Cargo Handling Coordination Association (ICHCA) and the International Association of Dredging Companies (IADC) joined the Program as structural partners.

### **Background:**

On 12 May 2017 the International Association of Ports and Harbors decided to set up a World Ports Sustainability Program. Guided by the 17 UN SDGs the program wants to enhance and coordinate future sustainability efforts of ports worldwide and foster international cooperation with partners in the supply chain. The World Ports Sustainability Program builds on the World Ports Climate Initiative that IAPH started in 2008 and extends it to other areas of sustainable development. WPSP established and maintains a global library of best practices; it provides a portal for projects and initiatives of international port-related organisations that joined the program as partners; it functions as a think-tank and breeding ground for new collaborative projects and it will report regularly about the sustainability performance of the global ports sector. The program is developed along five themes: 1) resilient infrastructure, 2) climate and energy, 3) community outreach and port-city dialogue, 4) safety and security, 5)

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*The Global Ports' Forum for Industry Collaboration and Excellence*  
NGO Consultative Status: ECOSOC, ILO, IMO, UNCTAD, UNEP & WCO

7th floor South Tower New Pier Takeshiba, 1-16-1 Kaigan, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0022 JAPAN  
T: 81-3-5403-2770 • F: 81-3-5403-7651 • info@iaphworldports.org • www.iaphworldports.org

governance and ethics. A dedicated website already hosts the global library of best practices and portal of partner projects and initiatives: [www.sustainableworldports.org](http://www.sustainableworldports.org). In a second phase, the website will also include a platform for new collaborative projects.

For more information, please contact:

Patrick Verhoeven – [patrick.verhoeven@iaphworldports.org](mailto:patrick.verhoeven@iaphworldports.org) - + 32 477 30 12 26



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