

BlueWeek 2016: winds of change and an ocean of opportunities

Making smart use of the environment to develop sustainable activities at sea



Following the success of Blue Week 2015 that was hosted by Deltares in Delft, MARIN's headquarters in Wageningen welcomed the conference back this year. Here are some of the many highlights.

Initiated five years ago by MARIN, Blue Week is hosted each two years at a participant's location. With the event back where it all began, some 120 people joined the many different seminars and workshops, and pitched their proposals for new Joint Industry Projects.

For several years now, projects have focused on the use of wind for assistance or as the main propulsion method. This year the 'Natural Propulsion Seminar' dealt with the use of the environmental forces for shipping.

'Thank you very much for a very interesting participation at BlueWeek and for the invitation to speak. This is definitely an event I'd like to re-visit next year.'

Magnus Rahm, Hexicon AB

Guilhem Gaillarde
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Because of the domination of wind as a source of power in the current projects, the seminar was co-organised with the International Wind Ship Association. And Gavin Allwright, Secretary of the IWSA, was chairing the seminar.

Presentations covered technology progress, current projects and regulation. There were several interesting initiatives coming from Spain, the United States, England, France and the Netherlands and these helped provide a good overview of possible niche markets where wind could be efficiently used. Initiatives included 'micro shipping' in developing countries, shortsea shipping in Europe and new generation cruise vessels.

On the supplier side, systems to extract wind energy are progressing much further towards large-scale, reliable products that shipping could benefit from. Similar to ESD (energy saving devices) that have flourished in the last years to save energy by improving propulsion efficiency, we talk today about EPD (Energy Producing Devices) making smart use of environmental forces. Finally,

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'Thank you and all of the MARIN team for your hard work and hospitality. I can speak for all IWSA members saying that we really appreciate all of your efforts.'

Gavin Allwright, International Windship Association (IWSA)

and that incentives from government and harbour authorities may be necessary to boost the market.

Another fascinating part of the programme dealt with the challenges and solutions in the offshore wind sector. These sessions were chaired by Bob Meijer from TKI Wind op Zee. This showed how dynamic the market is, and gave the audience a chance to get a glimpse of the challenging technical issues that need to be solved before the vast potential of offshore wind can be realised.

The Seminar closed with a session concerning blue technology at sea, illustrating the ways oceans can and should be cleaned. The huge potential of sustainable farming of seaweeds was another interesting discussion point, showing the route towards blue growth.

At the end of the day, there was the chance to pitch new Joint Industry Projects. Development of marine platforms to grow seaweed was the theme of the Seaweed proposal, which aims to optimise the anchoring and damping systems used. The installation and engineering of gravity based structures for

the installation of offshore wind turbines will be considered in the GBS wind turbine foundation JIP. And then there is another potential JIP looking into the dynamic effect and influence of the design of electric cables within the ACDC initiative brought by AMOG from Australia. Finally, two initiatives were presented to further develop wind propulsion. The WISP JIP was on the macro scale and aims to make shipping companies aware of wind propulsion's potential for their current fleet, and on the micro scale, the Cargo Prao JIP is looking to create simple and accessible wind propelled, autonomous transport within developing countries lacking harbour infrastructure.

The location and date of Blue Week 2017 will be announced before the summer, so keep an eye on www.blueforum.org to get the latest news and to make your proposals for next year! On the same website, the presentations for the 2016 sessions are available and will hopefully inspire even more people to join next year.

Wishing fair winds until the next edition of Blue Week! —

