NABU pushes for better air quality in European port cities

Title

In Europe, an average of 500 people dies prematurely from air pollution every year. Several measures have been taken to regulate and control air pollution. However, many ports have been exempted. In the recent workshop “Clean Air in Ports” organised by NABU (BirdLife in Germany) at the Belgian port of Antwerp the issue of improving the air quality in European port cities was debated. The Clean Air Project aims to connect institutions in and around ports and also to connect different ports in order to enhance an exchange on the topic and tuning of measures.

Only joint efforts, involving all the relevant authorities and stakeholders will enable the development of coherent strategic plans and to select the most feasible and effective measures. That is why besides the port authorities, the terminal operators, companies and industries and operating traffic, it will also be the responsibility of the cities and regions to take part in the air quality plans and measures.

Some ports are already taking the lead in such projects. During the seminar, the ports of Flanders and Antwerp in Belgium were used as examples of "green" ports. Discussions were also held regarding positive measures being taken to combat air pollution without damaging the economy, which included the use of scrubbers, better practices for terminal operators and exploring the policy options and enforcement of a port authority.

Antwerp Port Authority acted as co-host along with Natuurpunt (BirdLife in Belgium). NABU plans on hosting four more workshops in European port cities throughout 2014 and 2015.