



**Making inland navigation in Flanders more attractive
The Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform**

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1. The Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform: a platform with a future

1.1. The platform

Flanders' emission policy places primary emphasis on the challenge to meet the European standards for fine particles. These past years the environmental policy was focused on keeping fine particles emissions under control. Transport is a major source of fine particles. The share of inland navigation in the emissions balance is particularly small. To meet the standards, however, all polluters must help reduce air emissions. Studies by the Department of Environment, Nature and Energy mapped the emissions originating from inland navigation and proposed measures for lowering inland navigation emissions, and in particular fine particles emissions.

Meanwhile, the measures for inland navigation (shipping) of the Air Quality Plan were adopted by the Government of Flanders on 30 March 2011 and must therefore effectively be implemented. For inland navigation this means providing possibilities for support for emission-reducing technologies, developing a regulatory and logistics framework for Liquid Natural Gas (LNG), making optimal use of shore power opportunities, appointing a shore power coordinator and establishing a shore power platform.

After consultation between the Department of Environment, Nature and Energy and the Department of Mobility and Public Works a shore power coordinator was appointed who originated from the Ports and Water Policy Division which comes under the Department of Mobility and Public Works. A shore power platform was established with all parties concerned. The first shore power platform took place on Tuesday 12 June 2012.

The shore power platform resulted in a substantially enriched and reinforced partnership approach and coordination. That is why it was decided to extend the shore power platform to other services, viz. waste collection and drinking water. This led to the creation of a Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform.

1.1.1. Objective

The aforementioned platform aims to bring together all inland navigation stakeholders to promote the interests of the services for inland navigation in a coordinated manner and to work on the realisation of several objectives and challenges, namely:

1. to continue to build a network of suitable berths and rest areas with adapted facilities for barges;
2. to optimise, report and stimulate the use of services for inland navigation;
3. to improve communication and the image of inland navigation as a sustainable and environment-friendly mode of transport;
4. to facilitate and foster innovations relating to services for inland navigation.

1.1.2. Activities

The platform **coordinates**:

- i. the initiatives of waterway managers and port authorities to fulfil the obligations regarding service provision;
- ii. the vision on inland navigation infrastructure services (design, management and maintenance);
- iii. the compilation of a composite index map with existing service facilities;
- iv. annual reports on waste delivery and the consumption of drinking water and shore power.

The platform provides **information**:

- v. It gives an overview of developments in policy and practice.
- vi. It offers a state of affairs of actions regarding services.
- vii. It highlights current affairs.
- viii. It provides an index map of existing service facilities.
- ix. It refers to publications, articles, thematic information packages.
- x. It refers to the annual reports on waste delivery and the consumption of drinking water and shore power.
- xi. It communicates on study days and international partnerships.

The platform is a **point of contact**:

- xii. The parties concerned can submit any questions or remarks regarding shore power, waste collection and drinking water facilities.

The platform promotes the **use**:

- xiii. It is directed at anyone looking for information about the services provided.
- xiv. It makes available tools and information about good practices.
- xv. It standardises and harmonises the management and payment systems of the different types of services.
- xvi. It offers campaign material for awareness-raising actions.
- xvii. It works on an upgrade of inland navigation within the logistics chain.

1.1.3. Partners

The partners of the Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform include sea ports, waterway managers, the Promotion Office for Inland Navigation in Flanders (in Dutch: *Promotie Binnenvaart Vlaanderen*), organisations of inland navigation entrepreneurs and the private and public sectors.

- **Public authorities**

- Department of Mobility and Public Works - Ports and Water Policy Division (coordination of shore power and drinking water facilities);
- Public Waste Agency of Flanders (coordination of waste collection);
- Department of Environment, Nature and Energy - Air, Nuisance, Risk Management, Environment and Health Division;

- Waterway managers:
 - nv De Scheepvaart;
 - Waterwegen en Zeekanaal NV.
- **Port authorities**
 - Gemeentelijk Havenbedrijf Antwerpen;
 - NV Maatschappij Brugse Zeevaartinrichtingen;
 - Havenbedrijf Gent agh;
 - Autonoom Gemeentebedrijf Haven Oostende.
- **Kenniscentrum Binnenvaart Vlaanderen**

1.2. Shore power coordination

The shore power coordinator monitors developments through the platform and solves any problems relating to shore power.

1.2.1. Strategic shore power objectives

The Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform pursues the following strategic objectives with regard to shore power:

- to coordinate initiatives of barges and waterway managers / port companies to meet the strict needs and obligations laid down by Flemish Parliament Act;
- to look for solutions which make optimal use of the added value generated by shore power;
- to develop a joint/coordinated vision on infrastructure (design, management and maintenance);
- to standardise the provision and payment system;
- to coordinate the compilation of a composite index map of shore power facilities;
- to coordinate actions directed at federal policy makers (like consultation on taxation with the federal authorities).

1.2.2. Implemented and current actions

The Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform has taken several actions since 2012:

- It has mapped existing shore power facilities and systems. In June 2013, 64 shore power units with a total of 308 connections were available.
- In April 2013, the shore power website was launched, www.walstroomplatform.be, where inland navigation entrepreneurs can find an index map of all the shore power infrastructure in Flanders.
- Within the framework of a TEN-T project, a study was carried out in 2013 into the standardised provision of shore power. Subsequently, a pilot study was performed in 2014 during which best available technologies were implemented in a number of shore power facilities in the Port of Antwerp, the Ring Canal around Ghent and on

the Albert Canal. For the whole project a European subsidy amounting to €1.2 million was allocated (the implementation runs until 2015).

- On 12 December 2014, the Government of Flanders gave the green light to the third package of climate fund measures within the framework of the Climate Policy Plan 2013-2020. The measure “extension of shore power infrastructure for inland navigation” has been implemented as a one-off investment subsidy to Waterwegen & Zeekanaal NV for the construction of shore power infrastructure at Evergem and to nv De Scheepvaart for the construction of shore power infrastructure at Wijnegem.

1.2.3. Challenges for shore power facilities

In order to increasingly anchor shore power throughout Flanders, substantial efforts are still to be made for:

a. A standardised shore power provision and payment system

Several different payment systems are currently in place. The Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform is working on the implementation of a standardised provision and payment system for Flanders as a whole.

The TEN-T project around standardisation is currently being implemented. The project is coordinated by the Department of Mobility and Public Works (Ports and Water Policy Division). The Port of Antwerp has had a shore power management system developed and installed. A similar management system needs to be designed in Evergem (by Waterwegen en Zeekanaal NV) and in Wijnegem (by nv De Scheepvaart).

For purposes of standardisation a central coordinating user management system is required. The idea is to make the central management system available for consultation on the shore power website. Alignment must be achieved between the central web services and the local management systems.

b. Financial support for shore power

To further expand shore power infrastructure, shore power rates should become more attractive.

Use should be made of the financial instruments available within the framework of the Energy Taxation Directive.

Article 19, paragraph 1 of the Directive offers the possibility of introducing tax exemptions or reductions. This tax reduction was applied for by the Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform.

c. Communication with bargees

To create support for a payment system, it is paramount that the different stakeholders (i.e. the bargees themselves) are sufficiently informed and consulted. Since the ultimate purpose is to make the best possible use of shore power, a standardised payment system will be beneficial. This process must be implemented by the Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform.

The success of shore power is entirely dependent on its acceptance by the bargees. The bargees' stakeholder organisations point out the problems they face when using shore power.

The Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform aims for open and transparent communication with bargees. The communication of current initiatives regarding financial support and tax reduction for shore power may help stimulate its acceptance by bargees.

1.3. Waste collection coordination

The Convention¹ on the collection, delivery and reception of waste produced during navigation on the Rhine and inland waterways (CDNI) was signed in Strasbourg in 1996 and came into force on 1 November 2009 following ratification by all parties to the Convention. This Convention lays down the principles for the collection and financing of ship-generated waste. The general principle of the Convention is that the polluter pays the costs relating to the collection, treatment or processing of waste. This Convention on an environmentally responsible collection of waste from barges distinguishes three types of waste:

- Part A: Oily and greasy waste produced in the course of operating the vessel.
- Part B: Waste connected with the cargo: the party unloading the ship or the organisation mandating it is in principle responsible for cleaning the hold spaces or tanks and side decks after unloading.
- Part C: Other waste produced in the course of operating the vessel such as domestic waste, small hazardous waste and sanitary water.

The Public Waste Agency of Flanders (in Dutch: *Openbare Vlaamse Afvalstoffenmaatschappij* or *OVAM*) is the public authority competent for the management of waste and material cycles in Flanders. Its powers include supervising the delivery of ship-generated waste and monitoring compliance with the aforementioned Convention. Within the Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform waste collection was coordinated by OVAM in cooperation with the Ports and Water Policy Division of the Department of Mobility and Public Works.

1.3.1. Strategic waste collection objectives

The Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform pursues the following strategic objectives with regard to waste collection:

- to coordinate, together with OVAM, all the initiatives in order to satisfy waste collection needs;

¹ Convention relative à la collecte, au dépôt et à la réception des déchets survenant en navigation rhénane et intérieure.

- to standardise the provision and registration system for Part A waste collection;
- to manage the database on waste collection and report outcomes;
- to coordinate the compilation of a composite index map of waste delivery facilities.

1.3.2. Implemented and current actions

In 2013, OVAM carried out a study into the optimisation of this network and the collection of ship-generated waste in Flanders. This study was performed in consultation with various stakeholders and formulated a number of practical recommendations for the optimal density of the reception facilities network in Flanders, a cost-efficient and environmentally efficient collection, the cooperation between port and waterway managers and possible changes to the relevant legislative framework.

In the context of the applied scientific research on the environment, a study was executed in 2013² into a standardised provision of waste delivery points.

Thanks to the standardised provision of waste facilities for inland navigation the waste delivery points can be realised on a large scale.

A website was launched for waste collection in inland navigation where entrepreneurs can find an index map of all the waste delivery points in Flanders. The website offers unprecedented opportunities for efficient communication. Member organisations may use it to stay in permanent contact with their members and stakeholders.

1.3.3. Waste collection challenges

Since the start of the CDNI, ship-generated waste in Flanders has been collected through the existing network of reception facilities of ports and waterway managers.

Some of the actions for optimising this network and the collection of ship-generated waste in Flanders have been implemented. More efforts are required to standardise the registration and collection system, optimise the density of the reception facilities network in Flanders, ensure a cost- and environmentally efficient collection and make changes to the legislative framework, if necessary.

a. Standardisation of the registration and collection system

For the moment, each waterway manager is responsible for the collection and treatment of domestic waste. As a result, several different types of containers and contracts are in place for waste treatment. At least for the registration of the collected waste volumes it is recommended to implement a standardised system, without affecting the powers of the managers concerned.

² Research into a more optimal collection of ship-generated waste originating from inland navigation in Flanders. TWOL study 2014: D/2013/5024/43.

b. Necessary changes to the legislation

The development of a standardised waste collection system may have repercussions on the structure of the current delivery system.

If structural changes are made to the delivery system, this will necessitate direct adjustments to the applicable legislation.

1.4. Drinking water coordination

The Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform is in charge of coordinating drinking water supply.

1.4.1. Strategic objectives regarding drinking water facilities

The Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform pursues the following strategic objectives with regard to drinking water facilities:

- to coordinate all initiatives to meet the strict needs regarding drinking water facilities;
- to develop the joint coordinated vision on infrastructure (design, management and maintenance) of drinking water facilities;
- to standardise the provision and payment system;
- to coordinate the compilation of a composite index map of drinking water facilities.

1.4.2. Implemented and current actions

To promote the use of drinking water facilities, the Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform has mapped the existing facilities.

Within the framework of the TEN-T shore power project, a study was carried out in 2013 into the standardised provision of drinking water (besides the provision of shore power).

1.4.3. Challenges for drinking water facilities

The different Flemish port services and inland navigation managers implemented several local actions to optimally utilise the possibilities for providing shore power and waste collection. However, more efforts are required for drinking water.

a. Standardisation of the drinking water provision and payment system

The shore power provision and payment system which is to be organised centrally and is being developed within the framework of the TEN-T shore power project allows for the future integration of drinking water points.

The web services needed for this are still to be developed and harmonised with the local management systems of water managers.

b. Extension of the drinking water network

The Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform is taking up the challenge to extend the number of drinking water points in Flanders. To that end, the Department of Mobility and Public Works must play a coordinating role to ensure the connection of drinking water points to the central system.

2. Future challenges for the Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform

The expected growth of inland navigation and its strengthened position as a sustainable, environment-friendly and co-modal form of transportation pose great challenges to the Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform. The different stakeholders, i.e. waterway managers, port managers, public authorities and bargees, have high expectations and call for greater coordination.

Despite the different efforts of the Platform there still appears to be a need for improved communication towards the different target groups and increased support for inland navigation. The Platform must accept the challenge to map the degree of acceptance of services (shore power, drinking water and waste collection to be paid for) to meet the concerns of bargees to a maximum extent. To arrive at cooperation between the different stakeholders, several consultations will have to be organised.

Within the Platform efficient communication should constitute the basis for improved cooperation between all stakeholders. Such cooperation is indispensable for developing sufficient support in the process intended by the Platform.

2.1 Environment-friendly inland navigation

All sectors are already aware of the social, economic and ecological importance of sustainability. However, this awareness will only grow in the coming decades. In anticipation of authorities' demands, but especially of the broad social need for sustainability, the logistics of 2030 can be characterised as inherently sustainable. In this context the Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform must effect a transition from 'promoting' sustainability to 'demanding' sustainability from businesses by means of government policy. The transport and inland navigation sectors must respond to these demands with sustainable concepts.

2.2 Improved cooperation

The analysis of the Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform's current actions and activities shows that enhanced coordination and cooperation is needed between the federal authorities, port companies and bargees.

2.3 Open communication

Open and adequate communication should not be one way. Information must be mutually shared. In 2014, the Flanders Inland Navigation Services Platform used several communication media to promote shore power, waste collection and drinking water. A communication strategy for bargees is still to be designed.

2.4 Efficient investment

European and Flemish subsidies facilitate the improvement of both the capacity and the service provision of the different berths. This is perfectly illustrated by the TEN-T shore power project for standardising the shore power provision and payment system within Flanders. Similar project proposals must be developed for other types of services. The coordination of relevant joint project proposals by the Department of Mobility and Public Works will play an important role in this.

2.5 Necessary adjustments to legislation

Structural changes like the waste delivery system and the provision and payment system for shore power and drinking water may require a direct adjustment of the relevant legislation. Essential in this respect is a coordinated initiative of bargees and waterway managers/port authorities to fulfil the strict needs and obligations laid down by Flemish Parliament Act with regard to the provided services.