



EU Taxonomy: a ports' perspective

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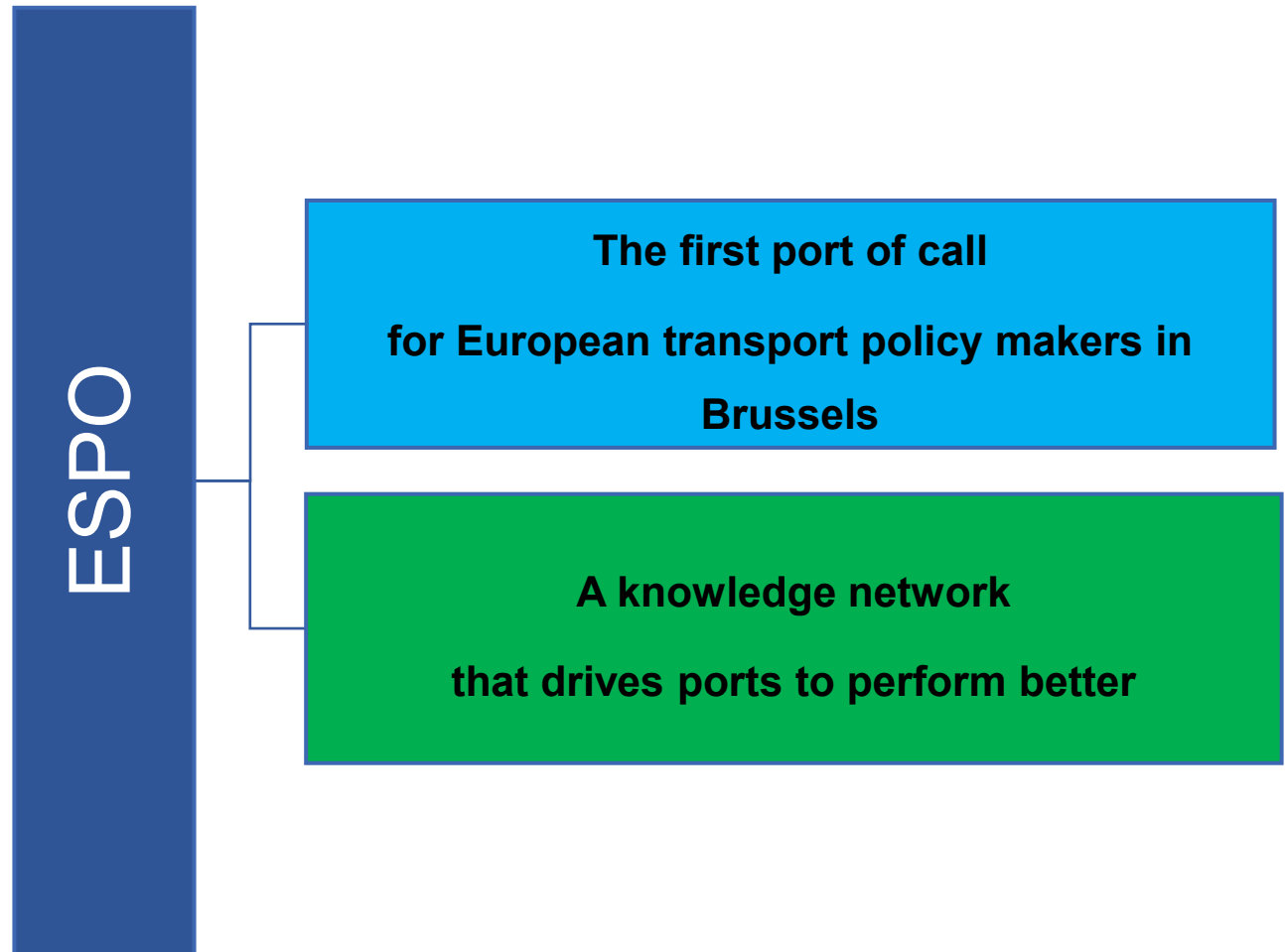


European Sea Ports Organisation



ESPO represents the port authorities, port associations and port administrations of the seaports of 22 Member States of the European Union and Norway at EU political level.

ESPO also has observer members in Albania, Iceland, Israel, Montenegro, Ukraine and United Kingdom.



An aerial photograph of a port area. In the foreground, a wide canal flows from the bottom left towards the center. To the right of the canal is a large industrial complex with several large white storage tanks, a long white warehouse-like building, and various smaller industrial structures. Further back, another industrial area is visible, including a large white dome-shaped structure. In the background, a large body of water (the sea) is visible, with a line of offshore wind turbines stretching across the horizon. The land around the port is a mix of green fields and some residential areas in the distance.

*Ports' role is changing:
are becoming even more critical and
essential*

THE DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EUROPEAN PORTS



Gateways to the world

Essential nodes of the multimodal transport chain

Hotspots for Europe's industrial activity

Nodes of energy

Safe and secure shelters

Hubs of innovation and digitalisation

Linking Europe's peripheral regions and islands to the mainland

Key players in the transport of passengers

Essential part of an emergency supply chain and facilitators of military mobility

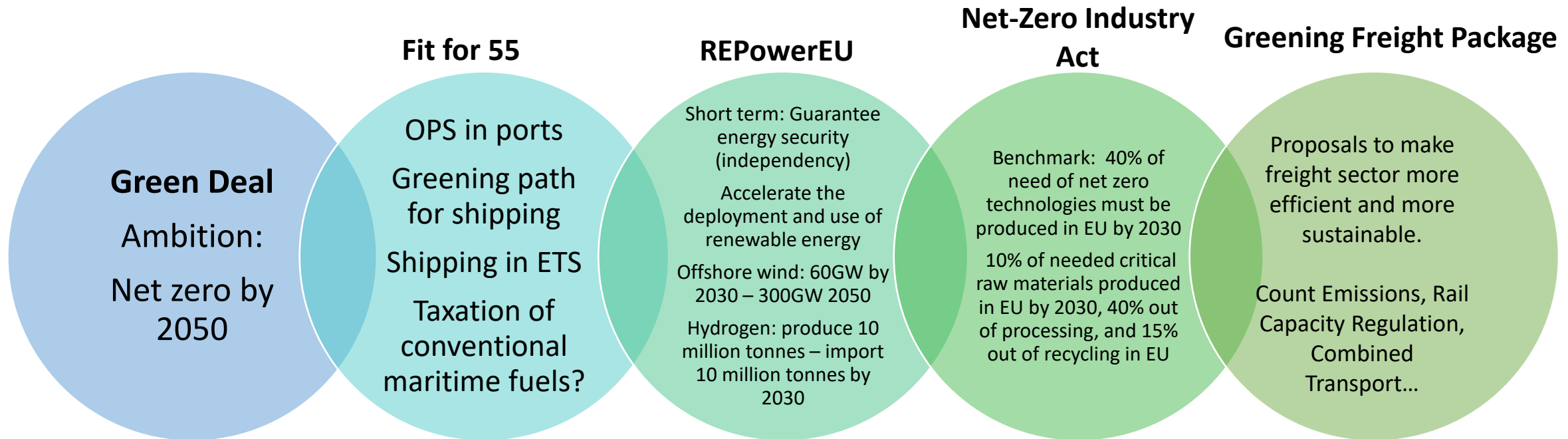
Clusters of blue growth

PORTS ARE MULTITASKERS



**THE INFRASTRUCTURE
INVESTMENT NEEDS
AND FINANCING
CHALLENGE OF
EUROPEAN PORTS**

UNDER REVISION



TEN-T policy review

Funding schemes: Recovery Fund
Sovereignty Fund, Innovation Fund ...



EU SUSTAINABLE FINANCE

#InvestGreen



European
Commission



EU taxonomy for sustainable activities

What the EU is doing to create an EU-wide classification system for sustainable activities.

The EU Taxonomy sets out the conditions that an economic activity has to meet in order to qualify as “environmentally sustainable”.

- In force since July 2020 // regularly updated (via DAs) to keep up with evolving policy contexts and technologies (*e.g. recently revised Taxonomy Climate Delegated Act*)
 - Involves many economic activities from various economic sectors, including the transport sector.
 - Contains six environmental objectives: climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, circular economy, pollution prevention, biodiversity, and protection of water and marine resources.
- **The primary objective: to encourage investors to prioritise green and sustainable investments, through a clear “manual” with common definitions.**
- **+ wider EU application: the Taxonomy classification system is increasingly referenced as a basis for EU funding instruments and programmes, including the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).**

EU Taxonomy – what does it mean for ports?



Disclaimer: *the Taxonomy does not impose any obligation on investors to invest only in those economic activities that meet the criteria.*

Investments in economic activities that are outside the Taxonomy are still possible!

Port activities that receive the “green label”:

“The construction, modernisation, operation and maintenance of infrastructure required for zero tailpipe CO2 operation of vessels or the port’s own operations, as well as infrastructure dedicated to transshipment and modal shift and service facilities, safety and traffic management systems”

“The construction, modernisation and operation of waterways, harbour and river works, pleasure ports, locks, dams and dykes and other.....”

Excluded from Taxonomy:

“The economic activities in this category exclude dredging of waterways”



- **Exclusion of dredging: highly problematic! Dredging is an indispensable activity that enables basic operations of a port.**
 - Waterways constitute an integral part of the waterborne transportation system.
 - Depths of waterways need to allow for the operation of vessels and need to be maintained as such, for which dredging is required.
 - A zero tailpipe CO2 emission vessel – in fact, any vessel – will not be able to call at a port if the depths of the waterway is not safe and technically sufficient to enable utilisation of the port's capacities.
 - Excluding dredging will have a spill-over impact and hamper many other (maritime) activities which fall under the Taxonomy principles, including those desperately needed to deliver on the net-zero ambitions.
- Vague formulation: “dredging of waterways” – does it include dredging in the port??
- The sector is pushing the COM (DG ENVI) to include “sustainable dredging”.



- **Infrastructure enabling the modal shift is included: positive, but the concept is not well-defined.**
 - Inclusion was a clear wish from the sector.
 - Modal shift concept should be better defined: to include the shift towards short-sea shipping as a sustainable transport mode.
- **Climate adaptation needs/activities of ports**
 - Ports are increasingly vulnerable to climate change and are taking steps to strengthen the resilience of port infrastructure (existing infrastructure + part of new infrastructure development projects.)
 - Reference to climate adaptation activities of ports should be clearer.



Conclusions (for both sea- & inland ports):

- Investment needs of ports are growing (new roles, new obligations).
- EU taxonomy is excluding some essential port activities (e.g. dredging).
- Activities outside the EU Taxonomy can still happen and investors can still invest in them.
- But: no “green label” + financial repercussions for ports??

An aerial photograph of an industrial complex, likely a refinery or chemical plant, situated along a large canal. The facility features numerous large storage tanks, processing units, and industrial buildings. A prominent red and white building is visible on the right side of the complex. In the background, a series of wind turbines are installed in a line across a body of water, extending towards the horizon. The surrounding area includes green fields and some residential development in the distance.

Thank you!
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