

MAURITIUS PORTS AUTHORITY

World Maritime Day

The Mauritius Ports Authority (MPA) recognizes the need to conduct port activities in a sustainable and climate friendly manner in line with its Greenport Initiatives (GPI). MPA is a member of the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH) which, on 12 May 2017, decided to set up the World Ports Sustainability Program (WPSP). The WPSP builds on the World Ports Climate Initiative (WPCI) that the IAPH started in 2008 and extends to other areas of sustainable development. Ports subscribe to the Paris Development Goal which aims to keep global warming well below 2 °C. Building on the output of the WPCI, ports community actors worldwide are collaborating in refining and developing tools to facilitate the reduction of CO₂ emissions from shipping, port and landside operations. In addition, they are taking initiatives to enable energy transition, improve air quality and stimulate circular economy.

It is within the above context that the MPA, with the technical assistance and funding of the COI/World Bank, commissioned a feasibility study to define the preferred/best approach for reducing emissions from cruise ships. Onshore power supply (OPS) is one of the strategies recommended by the WPSP for reducing the environmental impact of seagoing vessels in ports. When berthed, ships require electricity to support activities like loading, unloading, heating, air conditioning, lighting and other onboard activities. Today, this power is generally provided by auxiliary generators that emit carbon dioxide (CO₂), oxides of nitrogen, sulphur and air other pollutants, affecting local air quality and ultimately the health of both port workers and nearby residents. The generators also create a noise nuisance. As an alternative to onboard power generation, vessels can be connected to an onshore power supply, normally the local electricity grid.

This study, which was completed in May 2022, has the objective to analyze the technical feasibility, financial viability and environmental benefits of using shore sourced power on cruise ships moored at the Christian Decotter Cruise Terminal. The grid connection would provide cruise vessels with the necessary energy to power on board facilities such as air conditioning, hospitality facilities and cargo handling machinery needed for both crew and passengers on board the ship. The study also includes a brief review of the other opportunities for reducing the environmental impact of other operations in Port Louis harbour, focused on their use of hydrocarbon fuel. It should be pointed out that this initiative is also aligned to the Initial IMO Strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from ships which calls, amongst other initiatives, for the encouragement of port developments and activities globally to facilitate reduction of GHG emissions from shipping, including provision of ship and shoreside/onshore power supply from renewable sources.

MPA is also actively participating at the level of the International Association of Ports & Harbours (IAPH) – IAPH occupies an influential seat at the table of the International Maritime Organization, with both shipping and ports now beginning to open meaningful dialogues together on climate action, digitalization, trade facilitation and environmental performance. In consideration to the above, it has been proposed to use the Feasibility Study on the Shore Power at Port Louis Harbour as a Case Study in the development an OPS Training Package under the GreenVoyage2050 Project.

26 September 2022