



 **Green** Inland Ports

# Good Practices

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Training port employees

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## 1.1 Description

A training programme can play a role in helping ports to become more environmentally friendly and sustainable. Such programs are designed for both port managers who want to improve their knowledge and skills and students who want to work in the port sector. Similar programmes already exist and often involve collaboration between a training/education centre and a large port authority. The programmes often consist of the following topics: Sustainable policy, energy transition, digitalisation, and port infrastructure. Examples of existing port training programmes are as follows:

Hungarian Federation of Danube Ports and Ecotech training program:

- A training programme developed by the Hungarian Federation of Danube Ports and Ecotech, a non-profit organisation, and offered at the University of Dunaújváros in Hungary. The training is targeted at port professionals and freight-forwarding experts (regulates transport and modes of transport), as well as ministry and government employees and consultants whose work is related to ports and shipping. This training programme was developed because competences in port management and administration and management along the Danube need to be harmonised to improve the quality of services (Hungarian Federation of Danube Ports, n.d.).

Port of Rotterdam training programs:

- The port of Rotterdam offers port professionals personalised training programs which provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics of the port industry, with challenges such as the energy transition and digitalisation. The courses are offered through a company that provides training and education within the maritime shipping sector. More information can be found at [Port Management Program 2024 \(STC\)](#).

APEC Green Ports program:

- APEC is the Port Training Centre of the port of Antwerp-Bruges, a collaboration between the Flemish government, the port of Antwerp-Bruges, and the port labour training centre Ceba. The programme targets HSEQ (health, safety, environment and quality) managers and officers, as well as port professionals involved in the development of sustainable ports and environmental policies. The programme offers six modules, including sustainable policy, environmental policy & regulation, environmental management, energy transition, sustainable development goals and innovative solutions. More information can be found at [APEC Green Ports](#). In 2023, APEC, the port management of Suriname and the port of Antwerp-Bruges collaborated to organise a course on sustainable development at ports in Paramaribo, Suriname, in which energy efficiency, waste reduction and pollution prevention were some of the topics discussed (Havenbeheer Suriname, 2023).

UNCTAD Port Management program:

- The UNCTAD Port Management Programme is a programme used by several ports, including the Port of Belgrade. It is mainly aimed at supporting port communities in developing

countries with the delivery of more efficient and competitive port management in the future. The main objectives are to strengthen the institutional capacity and efficiency of port and related agency management, promote port community participation and public-private partnerships, improve port competitiveness and the quality of their services, and improve the environmental sustainability and social responsibility of ports. The Port Management Programme also provides technical assistance in various areas, including port planning, management and operations, logistics and supply chain management, port security, safety and environmental protection, and legal and regulatory frameworks. It organises training courses, workshops and seminars and conducts research and analysis on port-related issues (UNCTAD, 2022).

Port of Seville good practices guide:

- The Port of Seville has been working on a guide of good practices to handle solid bulk cargo. This will be presented to port operators and give them the right guidelines to improve these operations in the port area.

## 1.2 The aim of the training

The aim of these training programmes is to pass on complex knowledge on port management and to help ports become more environmentally friendly and sustainable.

## 1.3 Ports that offer training programmes

- Several inland ports along the Danube, mainly in Hungary.
- Port of Rotterdam
- Port of Antwerp-Bruges
- Port of Brussels
- Port of Belgrade
- HAROPA Port
- Port of Seville

## 1.4 Stakeholders

- Port authority: Inland ports must meet environmental and sustainability goals at European level, but in many cases, there are also goals and targets at national level. An educational programme focused on incorporating sustainability and environmental performance within the prosperity goals of port activities can help a port to train its staff to achieve the goals and meet their targets.
- University or other educational/training institution: Port training programmes are often designed and offered by universities or other educational and training institutions, providing structured knowledge and skills to participants.
- Port employees: Training programs offer current port employees with the opportunity to improve their skills and become more competent in their roles.
- Students: young professionals who are interested in the port sector can benefit from specialised studies. This would help and provide them with the necessary skills for future career in the industry.

## 1.5 Voluntary or mandatory

Participating in a training programme is voluntary for current port employees and students, unless port authorities consider such a programme as a requirement for certain functions.

## 1.6 Realised/potential impact

Although quantifying the impact of such programs is challenging, there are notable benefits. According to an interview with Stogianidis, A., (2024) there are clear benefits to offering a training program regarding more efficient cargo handling. After following such a training, cargo handling is often more careful, which leads to less spillage and less environmental/water pollution.

## 1.7 Possible obstacles

- Financial costs: Training programmes can be quite expensive for employers to invest in.
- Time limitations: In addition to the financial obstacle, time is also a major obstacle. According to Stogianidis, A., (2024), time can even be a bigger problem. Work in a terminal/port often continues 24 hours a day and after all, there must be enough employees present to keep the terminal/port running.
- Limited interest: This field is niche and requires sufficient interest to provide a training programme.
- Variability in environmental focus: Environmental management and policy are part of the curriculum of the afore-mentioned training programmes. However, the amount of time specifically focused on these topics can vary greatly between different programmes in different countries.

## 1.8 Key learnings

- It is important to create awareness among port operators regarding sustainability and environmental friendliness. Because port/terminal operators act as managers of ports/terminals, they can play an important role in combating environmental challenges. Training can help them with this matter.
- A port training programme should put the emphasis in the right place. It is important to share knowledge about port operations and port economics, but environmental values and sustainability should also play an important role within the programme.

## 1.9 Sources

**APEC.** 2024. Green Ports, <https://apecporttraining.com/courses/green-ports-2/>

**Havenbeheer Suriname.** 2023. Training Sustainable Development in Ports, <https://havenbeheer.com/training-sustainable-development-in-ports/>.

**Hungarian Federation of Danube Ports.** n.d. Port Operator Training, <https://www.hfip.hu/training/>.

**Stogianidis, A.** 2024. Port/crane operator training.

**UNCTAD.** 2022. TRAINFORTRADE's Port Management Programme, UNCTAD  
<https://tft.unctad.org/thematic-areas/port-management/>.