

Boot 2014 Conference

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The Yacht Recycling Conference took place on 22 January 2014, as sub-event of the annual Boot exhibition at Duesseldorf, Germany. It was a very interesting event featuring speakers and participants from various countries. These were the [boot conference speakers](#). The [Final programme boot Conference 2014](#) looked like this. See [here 4 interviews with the main speakers taken directly at the conference](#).

Plus 3 presentation slides given, in order of speakers:

- [Pierre Barbleu \(President of French boat dismantling network APER\)](#)

about a “network of recreational craft dismantling” in France, dedicated to developing best practise dismantling schemes. The network features 52 yacht dismantling stations across France.

- [Nicholas Forsyth, designer at LADIDA](#), explaining the importance of considering a yacht’s ecological footprint at design stage already and sharing some interesting, better-practise sample cases from the automotive industry. Also yacht design should switch to component reduction, simplification, enable disassembly – designers are strongly called here.

- [Lola Rodriguez of the LEITAT Technological Centre](#), about the BOAT DIGEST project and the general situation in Europe: Main problems, how these actually constitute opportunities for sustainable business (loved that part!) and knowledge transfer, plus a crystal clear work plan set up for the EU project BOAT DIGEST.

Present as audience-participants was a mixed crowd of recycling companies, journalists, yacht builders and scientists from Spain, Italy, UK, Netherlands, Germany, among other.

Most interesting thoughts I heard:

According to Forsyth, 80% of a Yachts impact is decided at design stage. Reason why it makes much sense for yacht design studios to get involved in the topic much more than it happens now.

The problem with boat disposal started to show up as of 2000, roughly 40 years after mass production of GRP began. In other words: It is perfect time for yacht recycling. Especially now that composite recycling has become possible as well.

In terms of bureaucracy, competence and business opportunities to take, EU institutions should become much more interested and flexible. Despite the huge potentials of yacht recycling and the fact that many companies actually do have the means and knowledge to practise it, there is neither directed funding nor enabling legal frameworks to support specific businesses.

Yacht recycling

<http://yachtrecycling.org>

Interesting case in point here was also Netherlands based [Bootdump Nederland](#). Whose manager Bram van der Pijll said that roughly 35% of their income is generated by selling components and materials – and that it is possible to generate income out of it: “The challenge is to persuade people to deliver their boats for recycling at all”. An ambitious enterprise in itself, not just because of the costs involved. But also seen the fact that The Netherlands currently still lack an official registry for ship owners. Which makes it hard to trace those of abandoned boats.

It also is still unclear who should pay for the costs of sustainable yacht dismantling and recycling: Yacht owners? Insurance companies? The yacht designers, brokers? All these sharing responsibility and incorporating a respective ‘basic fee’ in their prices?

Legal regulation is definitely needed – but should economically support and enable all involved stakeholders, not cripple their operability.

Recycling can mean many different methods and practices: Transferring components into other crafts. Selling materials extracted, transforming them into other substances (fascinating case from Japan: Plastic can be recycled into gasoline) – or resizing and incorporating it into other structures. Like composites used in concrete buildings.

Another thought presented: Recycling of components and materials does not have to take part in the same industry where they are extracted – cooperation across industries is a very real possibility. This came from the first speaker, Adjiedj Bakas, a trend watcher based in NL. He also gave a nice introduction about our quickly changing times and the opportunities this presents.

Have a look at the materials and feel free to join the [Linkedin Yachtrecycling group](#) to share your thoughts!

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