



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SUMMETH project gives green light to adoption of Methanol as a sustainable marine fuel

Project finds that methanol offers immediate environmental benefits and a zero-carbon pathway for ferries and coastal craft, giving further boost to adoption

Stockholm and Singapore, May 31, 2018. The Methanol Institute today welcomed the findings of the Sustainable Marine Methanol (SUMMETH) project, which has backed the increased use of Methanol as a marine fuel.

The research concluded that there are no obstacles to the efficient use of Methanol in a converted diesel engine and that smaller vessel conversion projects are feasible and cost-effective, with levels of safety that easily meet existing requirements.

Switching to Methanol would offer immediate environmental benefits, including close to zero SOx and particulate matter emissions and significantly lower NOx emissions compared to conventional marine fuels or biodiesel.

Joanne Ellis, Project Manager for SSPA which led the research says the partners sought to build on the work already done in earlier research projects that resulted in the Stena Lines and Waterfront Shipping methanol dual-fuel vessels, using a vessel type that could use Methanol in a converted single-fuel engine.

“The work on Stena Germanica and the Waterfront Shipping vessels proved the dual fuel concept in larger vessels; we wanted to understand whether conversion of a smaller engine was feasible. We looked at a road ferry with an engine capacity of about 350 kW which makes short trips between the mainland and the island of Ljusterö in the Stockholm archipelago, carrying people as well as cars, where there was a real desire to improve the emissions profile.”

Topic areas of the project’s final reports include the technical feasibility of converting vessels to propulsion using Methanol, the resulting environmental performance, bunkering issues and fuel supply now and in the future. The research programme was conducted by SSPA, ScandiNAOS, Marine Benchmark, Lund University, the Swedish Transport Administration Road Ferries, Scania, SMTF and VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland.

Dr Ellis adds that as Biomethanol increasingly becomes available, vessel operators will have the opportunity to blend in this zero-carbon fuel and progressively meet emission reduction targets set by the IMO.

“The Swedish government has recently asked the country’s Transport Administration to investigate making all of its ferries, pilot boats, icebreakers and workboats fossil-free by either 2030 or 2045, something that could make Biomethanol increasingly attractive. Sweden has the potential to satisfy required demand for the Biomethanol, which can be produced from renewable feedstock such as pulp mill waste, and there are several initiatives underway investigating the production of sustainable methanol.”

SUMMETH also concluded that there are no barriers to bunkering the ferries, since this is already carried out by truck and could easily be switched from diesel to Methanol, enabling the ferry operator to immediately reduce particulate emissions and progressively reduce carbon emissions as renewable methanol becomes available.

“These are encouraging results which reinforce our view that Methanol provides one of the simplest, most efficient and cost-effective ways for the industry to comply with 2020 regulations and future CO₂ emissions limits,” adds Chris Chatterton, Chief Operating Officer of the Methanol Institute. “The reductions not just in SO_x and NO_x but also PM will offer immediate environmental benefits, with the potential for Biomethanol to be progressively blended into the mix as more becomes available.”

SUMMETH was supported by the MARTEC II network and co-funded by the Swedish Maritime Administration, Region Vastra Gotaland, Oiltanking and the Methanol Institute. To read the full summary of the research, please follow the link below to the SUMMETH website.

Ends

About SUMMETH

The Sustainable Marine Methanol (SUMMETH) project had the overall objective of advancing the technological development and providing recommendations for introduction of methanol as an alternative fuel for coastal and inland waterway vessels to reduce their emissions and carbon footprint. The project investigated methanol combustion concepts and ship fuel systems that will lead to cost effective alternatives for ship operators to reduce their emissions and carbon footprint.

<http://summeth.marinemethanol.com/?page=reports>

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Picture: The SUMMETH project has concluded that methanol fuel offers immediate environmental benefits and a zero-carbon pathway for ferries and coastal craft. (Photo credit: Truls Persson). High resolution version available.