

# Paving the way to sustainable port management

For centuries, ports have been the gateways to the world. As bridges for wealth and growth, ports can be meaningful for a region. Efficient logistical processes require the constant and long-term expansion of port infrastructure. To act and think sustainably is of central importance to our company.

Our responsible handling of scarce resources, the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions ashore and at sea, as well as the creation of good and safe working conditions for our employees and the development of our ports in line with market requirements is geared toward the future. A sustainable development will create additional benefits for all – our ports, our stakeholders and the environment – and thus has to be managed strategically.

**INTEGRATING SUSTAINABLE VALUES WITHIN THE PORT GROUP**  
Niedersachsen Ports (NPorts) is one of Germany's largest operators of public seaport infrastructure and an important link in the maritime value chain. NPorts provides the port infrastructure (such as locks, road and rail grids, quay facilities, and

Figure1: Locations of Niedersachsen Ports



lighting systems) for the maritime shipping and logistics industries in 15 ports in Niedersachsen.

Since the port group is a part of the maritime logistics chain, we need to take responsibility for our actions and keep the social and environmental effects in mind that arise from the operation, the development, and the marketing of our port infrastructure.

To think and act sustainably is engrained in our business activities

and an integral part of our corporate culture. This awareness is at the heart of our corporate mission statement:

- Taking over responsibility for the region
- Creating sustainable values
- Creating an encouraging working environment

## THE NEED OF A STRATEGIC APPROACH TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

The success of our previous

“The success of our previous projects and measures, motivates us to approach sustainability in an even more strategical manner.”

Figure 2: The sustainability strategy of Niedersachsen Ports

## Sustainability Strategy of NPorts 2018–2025

Action field goals	Operational goals until 2025	Selected measures
<b>CLIMATE &amp; AIR</b> "We make a proactive contribution towards climate protection and towards cleaner air."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compared to 2017, the direct greenhouse emissions are reduced by 30%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve energy efficiency for our facilities, buildings and the port lighting</li> <li>• Intelligent energy controlling &amp; management systems for own facilities</li> <li>• Raising the amount of renewable energies for own facilities and buildings</li> <li>• Development of joint solutions in cooperation with maritime and port related industries for the deployment of alternative energies and innovative technologies within the port</li> </ul>
<b>EMPLOYEES &amp; SAFETY</b> "We promote the development of our employees and provide an attractive and safe work environment."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compared to 2018, the average number of hours for advanced training and continuing education is up by 10%</li> <li>• The accident rate remained below the average number for comparable industries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of a staff development concept</li> <li>• Further development of measures for the work-life-balance of employees</li> <li>• Continuation and expansion of the corporate health and safety management</li> <li>• Further development of gender equality measures</li> </ul>
<b>NATURE &amp; RESOURCES</b> "We are managing our ports responsibly and we are using our resources in a smart and sparing way."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four environmental projects have been put into practice</li> <li>• Compared to 2017, the waste separation ratio for our wastes has improved by 10%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of environmental criteria during planning, construction, and maintenance of facilities and buildings to keep environmental intrusions to a minimum</li> <li>• Development and implementation of sustainability criteria for the purchasing process and for the realization of projects</li> <li>• Execution of a proactive natural habitat management on our surface areas and raising awareness for the protection of the environment</li> <li>• Optimization of the waste management systems</li> <li>• Creation of the right conditions for an ideal disposal of ships' wastes</li> </ul>
<b>CUSTOMERS &amp; THE REGION</b> "We are expanding our ports in a customer-oriented manner and we raise the awareness for the added values that our ports create within the region."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compared to 2018, the customer satisfaction has increased</li> <li>• Compared to 2017, the total handling tonnage has increased by 10%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimization of customer management</li> <li>• Introduction of a quality management system</li> <li>• Further development of risk management</li> <li>• Promotion of cooperation with regional stakeholders</li> </ul>

projects and measures, motivates us to approach sustainability in an even more strategical manner. A sustainable orientation is not only associated with resource and cost savings; it offers the opportunity to

position our port locations as future-oriented logistics hubs in Europe and to identify and implement innovation potential. The investment in more eco-friendly and more efficient technologies, or the initiation of

measures to motivate our employees will result in tangible benefits. We can gain benefits from acting sustainably and it is our answer to global future challenges, such as the enduring climate change, the increased



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scarcity of natural resources, environmental pollution and changes in demographics.

#### SETTING CONCRETE GOALS FOR A SUSTAINABLE PORT DEVELOPMENT

In cooperation with our employees, customers, politicians and other stakeholders, we have developed four major action fields and sustainability goals. With our action fields we focus on areas, where our contribution towards a sustainable development can be especially effective.

The action fields are important corner stones of the sustainability strategy of Niedersachsen Ports and address economic, social and ecological goals. The concrete goals help us to monitor and manage the development, and at the same time they provide orientation to our internal and external stakeholders regarding the future development of our port group.

In order to reach our sustainability goals for each action field, specific action plans were developed that consist of different measures.

#### SUCCESS FACTORS OF A SUSTAINABLE PORT DEVELOPMENT

There are a number of success factors that support us during the initiation and implementation phases of our measures and help us reach our stated goals. They all cause an effect on a number of action fields and must therefore be handled proactively:

#### • COOPERATION

We believe that partnerships and cooperation (with other ports, ship owners, port related companies and companies in the hinterland) are key to finding the best approach to effective solutions. Cooperations not only enable us to exchange know-how and experience, but also to benefit from new and valuable perspectives. In addition, risks and costs can be shared among several partners. A good example is the INTERREG project DUAL Ports where ports work together to find measures and strategies for tackling climate change.

#### • MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

We are developing a corporate-wide sustainability management system to meet our sustainability goals. A systematic approach supports us in planning the right measures, implementing them in our ports, and verifying their success.

In addition, we are planning on using various management systems, such as the port-specific environmental management PERS (Port Environmental Review System), the Quality Management System, and our Risk and Energy Management System.

#### • INNOVATION

We proactively strive to find progressive solutions today for issues that may arise in the future. We actively promote innovation and sustainable solutions – by participating in research projects,

by testing new technologies, or by setting up pilot projects – thus co-creating the future of the maritime economy.

Sustainable development does not happen overnight. It requires a long-term coordinated process and the active participation of employees. Sustainability must be reflected in the daily thought processes, actions, and within the decision processes of employees. If we pay attention to these factors, we can reach our ambitious goals and secure providing future-oriented, responsible and by that attractive port locations for our customers. ●

#### Contact information

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