



# OPEN PIERS

# STEERING FLOWS BETWEEN PEOPLE, PLANET, AND PORT CITIES

19<sup>th</sup> AIVP World Conference  
Lisbon, Portugal - November 27-29, 2024



Porto de Lisboa



# OPEN PIERS

## STEERING FLOWS BETWEEN PEOPLE, PLANET, AND PORT CITIES

19<sup>th</sup> AIVP World Conference  
Lisbon, Portugal - November 27-29, 2024

### CO-ORGANIZER



Porto de Lisboa

### PARTNERS



Champilimaud  
Foundation



ESCOLA SUPERIOR  
NÁUTICA  
INFANTE D. HENRIQUE

PORTO DE  
SETÚBAL



OEIRAS  
VALLEY  
PORTUGAL



LISBOA



TRANSPORTE DO LITORAL

### SPONSORS



Connected River



## INDEX

<b>OPENING REMARKS</b>	<b>4</b>
Foreword, Bruno Delsalle	4
AIVP Leads the Future: 19 <sup>th</sup> World Conference in the Port of Lisbon, Isabel Moura Ramos	6
Opening Speech, Mr Edouard Philippe	8
<b>ARTICLES</b>	<b>14</b>
Advancing the AIVP 2030 Agenda Towards Sustainable, Just and Inclusive Port City Territories, Carola Hein	15
Financing the Port City Transition, Geraldine Knatz	19
Port City Interface and Climate Change, Benno Bultink	21
Cruise and Mobility, Peter Hall	24
Culture and Governance, Hilda Ghiara	26
Environment and Biodiversity, Sébastien Dupray	29
Energy Transition, Michele Acciaro	31
Blue Economy And Innovation, Isabelle Vries, in collaboration with Mercè de Miguel i Capdevila	33
Port and City working together for the Agenda 2030: the case of Quebec, Sabah Zrari	36
1 <sup>st</sup> edition of the AIVP Prize Antoine Rufenacht, Lucile Audièvre, Carola Hein, Geraldine Knatz	38



## FOREWORD

BRUNO DELSALLE

More than three decades after AIVP's creation, the relationship between ports and cities remains, more than ever, a key issue for many coastal and fluvial territories worldwide. If the transformation of waterfront brownfields dominated the discussion in the first editions of the World Conference Cities and Ports, more recently we have seen how the port-city relationship has expanded its boundaries, including today's key topics such as the energy transition, climate change adaptation, cruises, and the blue economy, all visible in the [Agenda 2030](#) by AIVP. AIVP's work has multiplied with new international projects or specialized publications, such as the [Cruise Port City Compass](#) or the [Green Shipping Corridors](#). Our event in Lisbon was clear evidence of this evolution, with more than 400 participants bringing their expertise and good practices, covering these and many other topics.



**Bruno Delsalle**  
General Manager of AIVP

The 19<sup>th</sup> edition of our World Conference was the first time AIVP repeated the location of the event, coming back to Lisbon 20 years later. If in 2004 Portugal and its capital were eager to demonstrate their competitiveness in the international context, today they are well-established destinations in Europe for hosting global events such as ours. Their leadership in the blue economy is admired and their influence in international diplomacy is appreciated. The Port of Lisbon, a member of AIVP for more than 30 years, is today a reference in terms of port-city interventions, with new public spaces for the citizens, leading research institutions installed or planned in its territory, and forward-looking innovation programs. Surely, 20 years from now, the ambitious projects currently under development in Lisbon's waterfront will provide new good practices for port cities worldwide.

The year 2024 was also marked by the first edition of the Prize Antoine Rufenacht. This initiative was launched to honor AIVP's founding president and to recognize the best port city projects from all over the globe. It will become a vitrine for future port city practitioners to look for references and increase the visibility of major investments done by port and city stakeholders. The winning project in Tangier, Morocco, developed by Société d'Aménagement pour la Reconversion de la Zone Portuaire de Tanger (SAPT), represents design and planning excellence, significantly improving the quality of life of the citizens and combining port uses with new public spaces while respecting the local heritage.



Lisbon was also an excellent setting for launching a port-city declaration aimed at Chiefs of State that will participate in the third UN Ocean Conference, taking place in Nice (France) in June 2025. This declaration highlights the importance of port cities in the global debates surrounding the protection of the oceans and the adaptation of coastal territories to climate change. Important negotiations and actions will take place heading towards this key event. AIVP is proud to count on the support of its members and will defend the interests of port city stakeholders while emphasizing their role. Our World Conference offered us an excellent opportunity to reflect on this issue and build momentum for Nice.

After beating the record of participants in our event, we can only express our gratitude to our excellent host, the Port of Lisbon, and to the local and international partners and sponsors for making such an important moment possible. And of course, AIVP can only be extremely thankful to our members for their engagement and constant support, for joining us in the Portuguese capital and generously sharing their knowledge, helping others to develop sustainable port-city relationships. Personally, I also want to thank my collaborators for the well organisation of this event, and more specifically the members of the content team (José M P Sánchez, Caya Hein, Noémi Mené and Laureen Goletto), for the coordination of the programme.

The exchanges will continue in New York (USA) in the next edition of our Conference!



From Lisbon to New York City. The Port of Lisbon passes the baton to the NYC EDC for the 2025 edition of the World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant

## AIVP LEADS THE FUTURE: 19<sup>TH</sup> WORLD CONFERENCE IN THE PORT OF LISBON

ISABEL MOURA RAMOS

In November 2024, the Port of Lisbon had the honour of hosting the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference of the Association Internationale de Villes et Ports / International Association of Port Cities (AIVP). This landmark event promoted an enriching dialogue and the sharing of best practices, reinforcing the conviction that port cities contemporary challenges can only be overcome through collaboration and innovation.

For the Port of Lisbon, this conference represented a strategic opportunity to consolidate its own position on the global port panorama and to foster international partnerships. One of the most important milestones was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ports of Lisbon and Setúbal and the Port of Vigo, a decisive step towards uplifting blue economy and the sustainable development of port-city relations. The presence of political leaders and internationally renowned experts further enriched the event, affirming Lisbon as a hub of innovation and port sustainability.

An emblematic moment was the first edition of the **AIVP - Antoine Rufenacht Prize**, which recognizes innovative projects reinforcing the collective commitment to sustainable solutions for the port cities of the future.

The conference also saw the signing of the **Agenda 2030 of AIVP**, by Lisbon Port Authority, Lisbon Metropolitan Area, Lisbon City Council and Oeiras City Council. This formal commitment to a sustainable development model is based on 10 strategic objectives and 46 concrete measures to make port cities more resilient and inclusive. The agenda will be presented the next United Nations Ocean Conference, Nice, and underlining its global importance and reinforcing Lisbon's role in building a more sustainable future.



**Isabel Moura Ramos**  
Executive Board Member,  
Ports of Lisbon and Setúbal

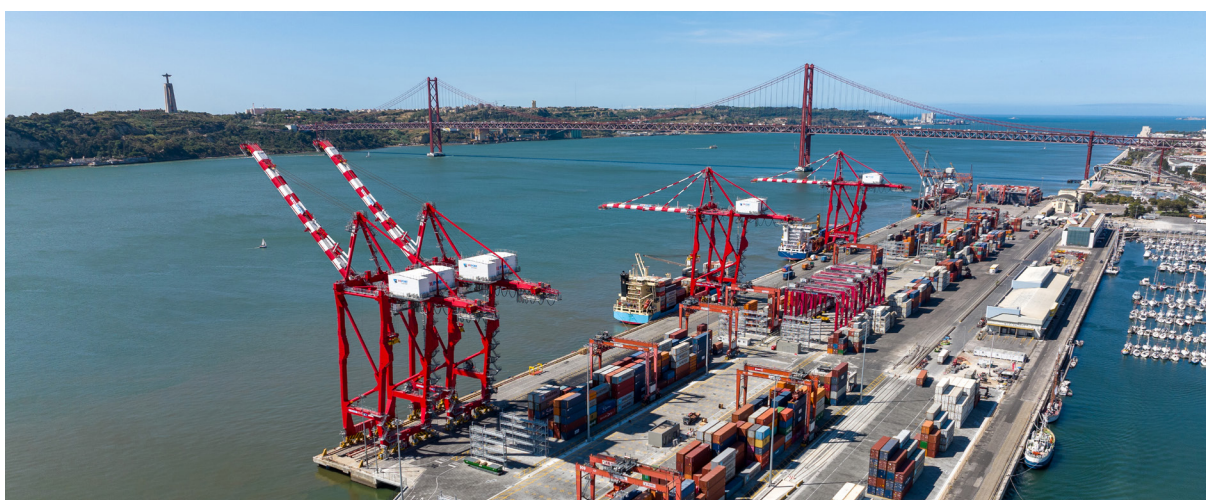


Signature of the Agenda 2030 of AIVP by the Lisbon Port Authority, Lisbon Metropolitan Area, Lisbon City Council and Oeiras City Council. Photo by Mike Sergeant

Port of Lisbon is firmly committed to implementing the **Agenda 2030**, promoting a greater integration between itself, the city and local communities. The strategy for the coming years is based on a symbiotic relationship between the port, the hinterland and its stakeholders, through joint port-city management instruments. Strengthening port-city identity is essential for the sustainable development of the maritime sector in Lisbon Metropolitan Area, transforming the port into a learning space and a pillar of the region's Atlantic identity.

The energy, dialogue and collaboration demonstrated throughout the conference are the driving force to address future challenges and build more connected, resilient and dynamic port cities. It became clear that the path to the future lies in cooperation between ports and cities, promoting integrated solutions that reconcile economic growth, social well-being and environmental protection.

By handing over the baton to New York, host of the conference in 2025, Port of Lisbon reaffirms its commitment to a more sustainable, integrated and prosperous future.



Port of Lisbon. Image source: portodelisboa.pt



## OPENING SPEECH

### AIVP WORLD CONFERENCE - LISBON, 27 NOVEMBER 2024

EDOUARD PHILIPPE

"Mr President of the Port of Lisbon,  
Mr Mayor of Lisbon,  
Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Never perhaps did any nation concentrate its forces more splendidly than did Portugal at the close of the fifteenth century. Not only did she find her Alexander and her Argonauts in Albuquerque, Vasco de Gama, and Magellan, but she discovered her Homer in Camões and her Livy in Barros. Men of learning, architects, and noted merchants seemed to crop up on all sides. As in Hellas under Pericles, in England under Elizabeth, in France under Napoleon, so, at this date, Portugal realized her ideal and made it materially manifest before the world. For a brief space in history, Portugal was the leading nation of Europe, the advance guard of mankind!"

You may recognize this passage from Stefan Zweig's magnificent biography of Magellan. The book tells not only the story of Magellan, or rather Fernão de Magalhães, the first explorer to circumnavigate the globe, but also of how Portugal, then Europe's smallest state, became the world's foremost maritime power. While France, Germany, and Italy tore themselves apart in fratricidal wars, Portugal broadened her horizons beyond all measure, pushing back the boundaries of navigation, geography, and science. For "whatever great deed is done by one nation," adds Stefan Zweig, "is done for all the nations. They feel, one and all, that a bold thrust forward into the unknown has made an end of the hitherto prevailing measures and concepts [...]. With remarkable clarity, Europe recognized that navigation and discovery were about to cause more decisive changes in the world than wars or heavy artillery."

The great discoveries that emerged from Portugal transformed the way we see the world, suggests Stefan Zweig, to an extent matched in history perhaps only by the conquest of space. In that sense, there are parallels between our age with its geopolitical, technological, and anthropological convulsions, and those experienced by Magellan and his contemporaries. As in the 15th century, many countries choose the path of war, whether declared openly or waged cleverly by trade and new technologies. But the courage, the tenacity, the genius of Portugal's great explorers serve as a reminder that there are other ways to change the course of history. And I would like to think, Ladies and Gentlemen, that all of us here are among those committed to transforming our world by peaceful means.



**Edouard Philippe**  
President of AIVP

So it is no coincidence that Lisbon has now become the first Port City to host the AIVP World Conference twice. The first occasion, in 2004, was a great success. Twenty years on, we can be proud of how far we have come. But twenty years on, we can see too the sheer scale of the challenges that still lie ahead. \*

Last year, in Venice, I talked about the upheavals in our maritime environment, which remains acutely sensitive to global geopolitical and economic events. Those tensions persist and are reaching a critical point, from Ukraine to the Middle East. Maritime trade is becoming hamstrung in certain straits, forcing merchant shipping to reroute. International instability has risen a notch with the election of Donald Trump. The multilateralist crisis is holding up international agreements that are vital to the stability and future of our planet. Neither the Cali biodiversity COP nor the Baku climate COP heralded any meaningful progress, despite climate change accelerating with global temperatures expected to rise by 4°C by 2100.

Our port cities are on the front line of extreme climatic events happening with increasing frequency. In the United States, the drought of the spring and summer 2024 disrupted all shipping on the Mississippi, depriving the country of a vital waterway for exporting cereals and other raw food materials. Our Caribbean members were once again struck by hurricanes, while flooding played havoc with road access to Brazilian ports in May. In Spain, the port city of Valencia was hit by unprecedented and deadly torrential rains. On behalf of all of us, I offer my most sincere condolences to the families of the victims.

Since our last conference, concerns have grown about what are seen as moves towards deglobalization. In an article for *Le Grand Continent*, MIT economist Olivier Blanchard wrote that globalization is being battered by five countervailing winds: the effects of distribution, national security, economic security, industrial policy, and climate change. The risk of trade wars - now high - threatens to usher in a period of deglobalization that would be both inefficient and costly. Although some mid-level powers are emerging, such as Vietnam and Mexico, there can be no doubt that the great powers are turning inward. An open outlook and a commitment to preserving high quality trade and cultural exchanges are, now more than ever, things we must fight for together.



Opening session of the World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant

Such is the backdrop against which we meet here for our world conference, on a theme not unrelated to all of those issues: “Open Piers!” In all our port cities, the piers symbolizes the link between the land and the sea, between the city and the port. It is a confluence, the soul of every port city that itself forms the nexus where flows of people, goods, capital, knowledge, and energy all converge in balance. That puts our piers on the front line of economic and geopolitical turbulence.

In the wake of 9/11, piers - once open and accessible to all - abruptly sealed themselves off for security reasons. In the years since, there has been a gradual tendency to reopen, one that AIVP has championed in an effort to ensure that interactions between ports and cities lead to improved quality of life for citizens. More and more people want to live and work in our port cities, and I think it's fair to say that AIVP has played an important role when it comes to driving positive developments.

Projects to redevelop the interface zones between ports and cities are focused on giving ownership of public spaces back to citizens, by creating parks, promenades, and pedestrian areas, whilst greening and renaturing. From Buenos Aires to Seattle, and from Oslo to Los Angeles, the finalists of the inaugural AIVP Antoine Rufenacht Prize are shining examples of that approach, and we will be learning more about them this evening.

These city port interface developments also reflect the growing public demand for accessible bathing areas at ports. It is something local residents have been calling for more loudly since the Olympic and Paralympic swimming events were held in the Seine. And increasingly they are being heard, with various kinds of public bathing areas being created in the heart of port cities. Examples include the Oasis in Quebec City, Pier 22 in Vienna, the floating swimming pool in New York, and many others.

Among the major transformations our port cities are leading, sustainable mobility is central. Although not every solution proposed is economically viable, we are seeing rising demand for inland waterways and rail to be integrated into logistics chains, whether for long-distance shipping or more local transportation. Urban logistics are following the same trend, with real benefits that inland port cities can capitalize on. The same goes for personal mobility. From Valencia to Vigo to Antwerp, more and more port cities are creating increasingly dense, safe networks of cycle paths on port land. What seemed ground-breaking just a few years ago is now becoming the norm, improving quality of life in our port cities.

This issue of low-carbon mobility is also taking hold at sea. There are more and more harbour ferry services running on electric power or hydrogen. A similar trend can be seen with service vessels, such as pilot boats and tugs. Decarbonization is continuing offshore too, on both the merchant fleet and cruise ships, to meet the targets set by the International Maritime Organization: cutting greenhouse gas emissions from shipping by 40% by 2030, and achieving full carbon neutrality by 2050. Cold ironing or shore power is also being rolled out at a faster pace, along with retrofitting of vessels and tests of new propulsion systems in the shipbuilding industry. Given that the payback period for a ship is around twenty years, and its design/construction life cycle is between four and six years, the task of designing the clean vessels that will sail our seas in 2050 has to start right now. For shipowners and ports alike, the investments needed are considerable and we must provide encouragement by promoting a stable national and international framework of tax and employment rules applicable to shipping.



Port cities are also doing their part to accelerate the energy transition. More and more calls are going out for proposals to develop fixed and floating offshore wind farms. Among them are projects launched by the ports of Massachusetts and Hastings. Other ports are focusing on solar energy, either by installing increasing numbers of solar panels on port logistics and office buildings, as in Liverpool, or in some cases hosting solar power stations, as in Kolkata.

I am delighted to see that these projects are now addressing the issue of biodiversity, by taking care to avoid denaturing sensitive areas and by restoring natural habitats like mangroves. In 2024, projects of this kind were launched by the ports of the Philippines or Shenzhen.



Speech from AIVP President - Mr Edouard Philippe. Photo by Mike Sergeant

All of these trends illustrate how port cities are taking action to meet the sustainability targets recommended by AIVP's Agenda 2030. Yet the challenges we face are formidable, and I'd like to talk briefly about one that is particularly important to me: the scourge of drug trafficking.

Earlier I spoke about the process of deglobalization, but the illegal drug trade is a rapidly growing and increasingly globalized maritime and criminal industry. Relying on the global shipping network, the black economy is prospering by using our ports, which form the main storage and transfer hubs. Europe has become a focal point for the cocaine trade, with criminal networks organized like multinational conglomerates, exploiting the legal and security loopholes offered by globalization.

Florian Manet, a senior gendarmerie officer and regular contributor to AIVP's training programs, describes in shocking terms the "maritime politics of drug trafficking" that has grown exponentially in response to consumer demand. He writes of the illegal drug trade that: "containers, the internet, and smartphones are the three basic building blocks in the maritime democratization of global narcotics." The 850 million containers handled by the world's ports every year are opaque, making the drug trafficker's job easier. Cartels also use AI and data mining. And the rise in crime that surrounds the illicit drug trade is not just destabilizing our port cities, but undermining international relations, rule of law, and our democratic societies. Narco-states flourish on the ruins of failed states and the illegal drug trade employs hundreds of thousands of people around the world.

This trade, we know, is built on considerable resources in terms of recruitment, corruption, logistics intelligence, and an economic capacity to assume one-off losses. A few simple figures serve to illustrate the exponential growth in cocaine trafficking: volumes rose from 60 to 70 tonnes a year between 2010 and 2015, to over 200 tonnes in 2020. There were only a few tonnes seized in Antwerp in 2013, but 110 tonnes in 2023. Of the 20,000 containers shipped between a production area in Latin America to a European port, whether directly or via the African coast, around twenty “boxes” may be part of the illegal drug trade.

All of this means drug trafficking puts significant pressure on our port and municipal stakeholders. It affects the everyday lives and safety of people living in our port cities. It tarnishes their reputation. It makes them less attractive, often dragging down residential property values in districts neighbouring the port. It sows doubt about the integrity of the thousands of women and men working at our ports.

So, to combat this global blight, I am calling for port cities on every continent to work together. Vigilant eyes are needed at every stage of the chain, from production to consumption. Coordination between police and customs officials can obviously be improved, but that alone is not enough. Cyber-surveillance and intelligence sharing require significant human and technical resources, with seamless international cooperation.

On 26 January 2024, a Belgium-led “Alliance of European Ports” was founded in Antwerp, in an effort to strengthen cooperation between private and public sector stakeholders in the fight against drug trafficking. The EU Commission has announced plans to work more effectively with third countries, to ensure that the Alliance’s European members have contacts in Latin America, with the ultimate aim of introducing the same standards everywhere. The creation early this year of an Alliance of Latin American Ports, including Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, represents a promising first step.

But Ladies and Gentlemen, I believe this initiative should be taken a step further with the creation of a worldwide port alliance under the aegis of AIVP. Our organization has no shortage of trump cards to play when it comes to fighting this plague. We are used to building international coalitions to address complex issues. We know how to develop expertise, knowledge, and innovation-friendly ecosystems to devise meaningful solutions. The fight against drug trafficking promises to be a tough one, but I firmly believe AIVP must bring all its experience and determination to the cause. Incidentally, Florian Manet has some suggestions for improving our strategic and operational capabilities, and they deserve our full attention.\*

As I come to the end of this speech, I’d like to quote the great Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, who once said: “Don’t come to me with conclusions. The only conclusion is death.” At the risk of putting a temporary downer on proceedings, I must say that I cannot help but admire the profound truth hidden in that quip. When this conference is over, we should remember that every let-up in the fight against drug trafficking or climate change costs the lives of men, women, and children, not just in our port cities but far beyond too. Everybody bears responsibility, even - and perhaps especially - consumers. But because all of us here have some degree of power, we have a duty to play our part to the full.

In 2022, Lisbon hosted the Second United Nations Ocean Conference. This June, the equally magnificent and welcoming city of Nice will be the venue for the Third United Nations Ocean Conference, focusing on efforts to protect our oceans and regulate the way they are exploited. We should not forget that since the industrial revolution began, the oceans have absorbed 93% of surplus CO2 emissions and that phytoplankton produce as much oxygen as trees. With our port cities on the front line of these vital ocean conservation and blue economy issues, I will propose that we adopt a declaration to be submitted to the organizers of the Third UN Ocean Conference, to help AIVP scale up its work to protect the oceans and the people that live by them.

In this world of growing instability that is fragmenting before our eyes, let us be a force for peace, cooperation, and innovation. Fernando Pessoa wrote: "The ancients invoked the Muses. We invoke ourselves." What is true in poetry is equally true of maritime and port geopolitics. We have only ourselves to rely on. But at the same time we should think of the Portuguese explorers of the 15th century, and remember that to choose the path of courage, perseverance, and peace, is already half the battle.



# ARTICLES

## ADVANCING THE AIVP 2030 AGENDA TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE, JUST AND INCLUSIVE PORT CITY TERRITORIES

CAROLA HEIN

The AIVP conference, held in Lisbon from 27 to 29 November brought together more than 400 participants in six parallel tracks and ten plenary sessions. Held in the wake of the COP29 in Baku, which called upon all actors to provide funding for developing facing the consequences of climate change, the conference emphasized the need to focus on the role of port city territories in the context of multiple global urgencies. In the plenary session on “How to implement local Port-City strategies in the face of climate change,” one of the conference participants, Eugene Seah from the Port of Baku showed images of the rapidly disappearing Aral Sea, pointing out that if the water disappears there is no more need for ports. Located at the edge of sea and land, port cities are among the first to experience contemporary urgencies of climate change related to water system change, migration, loss of biodiversity, or warfare.



**Carola Hein**  
Professor TU Delft, Erasmus  
University and Leiden University  
Co-Chair of the Prize Antoine  
Rufenacht

The six parallel tracks explored key topics for the future of port cities, such as the port city interface and climate change, cruises and urban mobility, culture and governance, the energy transition, environmental protection and biodiversity, innovation, and the blue economy. The main conclusions were presented by the rapporteurs of each topic in a special concluding session.

**Benno Bultink** manager for the Digital River project at Rijkswaterstaat (Directorate General for Public Works and Water Management, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management of the Netherlands). chaired the session on **Port City Interface and Climate**. Participants in this session presented different responses to climate change that are already been implemented. The discussion showcased both the similarities and differences between port cities on rivers and those on the coasts. Waterfronts and riverfronts are excellent contexts for developing innovative projects responding to climate change and the energy transition while combining different uses. Finding common ground through open public engagement processes is fundamental for the shared use of these spaces, including quality access to the water. The different cases demonstrated the importance of transnational cooperation and collaboration with academia.

**Peter V. Hall**, Professor of Urban Studies and Associate Dean, Simon Fraser University, reported on the session on **Cruise and Mobility**, which explored cruise shipping as both an opportunity and a challenge as it searches for a better integration between tourists and local inhabitants. As an activity that is intimately related to the cities it reaches, cruise tourism requires direct action on new forms of mobility, fuels, and mobility management. Cruise terminal design such as the one in Lisbon provide a good example of sustainable interventions. Questions of how to manage tourist flows require deeper investigation and collaboration.



Opening session of the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant

**Hilda Ghiara**, Researcher and Professor in Maritime Traffic, Ports and Regional Economics at the Università Degli Studi in Genova, attended the session on **Culture and Governance** which focused on finding shared values among the different stakeholders in the port city territory. To achieve a multidimensional vision of the port ecosystems requires multistakeholder collaboration. This includes finding governance systems in line with relevant power dynamics and existing AIVPs Port Centers aim to provide advanced knowledge on the working of the port for the city and foster a new port city culture through technical knowledge as well as cultural and/or no profit driven knowledge including through artistic and heritage practices. The aim is to facilitate co-existence between functions as different as industry and UNESCO biosphere sites.

**Isabelle Vries**, Senior Advisor Port City Developments for the City of Rotterdam reported on the session focused on the **Blue Economy and Innovation**. The focus on the sustainable use of ocean and river resources—blue economy—invites port cities to rethink their economic role and their position as leaders in the financial sector, in innovation or research. The session provided key take-aways for ports and cities to implement and succeed in developing innovation strategy in the blue economy. A digital scavenger hunt around the conference location was proposed to the participant, to provide insights around local innovation projects in a playful manner.



**Michele Acciario**, Associate Professor Department of Strategy and Innovation at Copenhagen Business School summarized the findings of the session **Energy Transition and Circular Economy** that brought together experts from European and international initiatives focused on alternative fuels and new practices related to the “green, just, and intelligent” transition in port city territories. The session included the recently published “Green Corridors” White Papers launched by AIVP and PortCityFutures. Social acceptance and spatial impact of the energy transition require new tools of outreach to gain advanced understanding of benefits and challenges.

**Sebastian Dupray** from CEREMA chaired the session on **Environment and Biodiversity** providing much needed insight into the threats from port cities on the ecosystem on land and in the sea, including challenges as diverse as plastic pollution and noise disturbance. These critical challenges require rapid intervention and good practices for better protection of habitats and ecosystems. The session emphasized the close relation between protecting biodiversity and life quality in and attractiveness of port city territories. Dupray pointed out that the “Ports are not only cargo handlers anymore, but local actors for the ecological transition of their territories.” Locally adapted intervention is needed to provide conditions for systemic and collaborative action over the long-term. Such interventions can only succeed if local citizens are involved systemically with clear monitoring and impact assessment.

As the concluding session showed, speakers and participants in the parallel sessions highlighted the challenges that port cities share despite varied **scales** and **locations**, diverse systems and amounts of **funding**, multiple degrees of **community involvement**, a broad range of approaches to **sustainability and environmental justice**, and multiple approaches to habitat restoration and **ecosystems** and different degrees of engaging with **heritage and culture**. Conferences and interactions such as the AIVP conference in Lisbon are important moments to provide solutions that are scalable, transferable, and inspirational. In line with the Lisbon Declaration for the integration of port cities into ocean politics and for sustainable engagement with rivers, seas, and oceans, offered as the outcome of the conference, the final session resulted in important takeaways that can inspire next steps and activities for AIVP.



Concluding remarks by the rapporteurs. Photo by Mike Sergeant

At the forefront of contemporary urgencies and leaders in innovation, port city territories can facilitate **Just Transitions** in the field of climate adaptation, sustainable fuels, new data and social inclusion (including gender and diversity aspects). Such transitions require attention to biodiversity as a basic building stone for meaningful human living. **Nature-positive interventions** on land and on sea should be leading values for such transformations. Decision-making in port city territories should be guided by providing added value to communities and territories. Instead of competition between ports, cities and territories for land, funding or people, different stakeholders need to find ways for **Coopetition, as mentioned in the Blue Economy session**, that is to collaborate within their own territory and among different locations even while competing, sharing knowledge and facilitating border-crossing governance. Such collaboration requires the development of shared values, and a multi-scalar and multi-stakeholder governance based on these values. Such collaboration is already difficult in a single national system, it becomes even more complicated when it involves cross-border planning. **Adaptive strategies** are needed to explore short, medium and long-term scenarios. All of the above-mentioned approaches require new ways of thinking, engaging professionals and academics, NGOs and citizens for shared action. **New maritime mindsets** that include awareness of the needs and interests of diverse partners and the unique challenges of each location, its waterbody and sea-land intersection. Transformative value-based change that provides added value for sea and land requires capacity building and impact assessment. Tools and methodologies are needed for general education, inclusive practices (including indigenous knowledge) and inclusion of blue and green.

## FINANCING THE PORT CITY TRANSITION

GERALDINE KNATZ

It is not surprising that the emphasis at COP29 was on how we finance decarbonization efforts globally. This panel focused on two model cities where ports and port industries were recognized for their environmental transitions and the creative ways various programs and projects were financed. First, Algeciras, Spain, selected as the City of Sciences and Innovation for three years within Network Innpulso, was represented by Gerardo Landaluce Calleja, President of the Port of Algeciras. Second, Dunkirk, identified by the World Economic Forum as one of the 20 global sites that are changing the world, was represented by the former Minister Delegate for Transport and Mayor of Dunkirk, and current President of the Urban Community of Dunkirk, Patrice Vergriete. The panel also included Geraldine Andrieux, founder and CEO of Blumorpho, a private organization accelerating innovation by establishing collaborations that bring private financing to the blue economy ecosystem.



**Geraldine Knatz**  
Professor University of Southern  
California

The Port of Algeciras highlighted the port's critical role in driving economic and environmental transitions. The financing arrangement for two of their recent projects included a funding program that would protect and enhance cultural and historic projects. Spain, along with Portugal and Morocco, will host the 2030 World Cup, with the Port of Algeciras potentially playing a key role in the logistics, providing a strong motivation to meet their 2030 sustainability goals for mobility and energy transition. Dunkirk is an industrial city. Over the next ten years, four to eight billion euros are expected to be invested to transform industrial processes and create about 20,000 jobs. Dunkirk's "reindustrialization" plan aims for net zero by 2050. But their plan is not just about industry. For example, Dunkirk's public transit is free. Financing free public transport involved some public funding but also a mobility tax paid by businesses. Businesses benefit, in turn, by not having to use valuable land for car parking.

Blumorpho was launched a decade ago to accelerate innovation in several fields, including the blue economy. The blue economy is not unique but is composed of various maritime-related economies such as fishing, water management, and ocean energy. Educating venture capitalists to consider blue economy investments has been a critical process. The challenge faced by Blumorpho was how to make this happen. Several key factors are necessary to bring capital to the blue economy. First, investors want profit—a return on their investment—but they also want to track value. They want to see the impact of their investment, and some are wary of "greenwashing." So how do you convince investors of the impact they can have in protecting the oceans? The answer lies in seaports. Ports are where the interests of all parties converge: innovators, investors, and maritime players who need solutions to their challenges. Ports can serve as test beds to showcase the implementation of technologies. Private investors can be very creative, but seeing a technology being tested and realizing its potential is what they seek.



Ports, Cities and innovation accelerators discuss the financing of the port city transition. Photo by Mike Sergeant

This panel highlighted the vital role of ports and port cities as innovation hubs, connecting industries, citizens, and investors to collectively address global challenges. The key take-away points are:

- **Collaboration:** All speakers emphasized the importance of partnerships between public and private sectors to drive innovation and sustainability.
- **Energy Transition:** Tackling energy challenges through renewable sources, reducing costs, and scaling solutions was central to their strategies.
- **Digitalization and Data:** Using AI and data centers to optimize logistics, reduce energy consumption, and support biodiversity efforts in increasing important. At the same time, it was recognized that data centers use large amounts of energy, and specific examples were shared of data centers achieving carbon neutrality through carbon credits and small nuclear reactors.
- **Sustainability Goals:** Achieving ambitious 2030 objectives, including decarbonization, mobility improvements, and holistic economic growth, was a shared priority.
- **Investor Confidence:** Educating and engaging private investors to showcase the profitability and positive impact of sustainability projects in needed to attract investments.

For AIVP members—ports and port cities—this panel underscored the strategic importance of collaboration and innovation. Blumorpho's membership in AIVP serves as a testament to the power of ports in connecting industries and shaping the future. By aligning with such transformative forces, AIVP has a unique opportunity to expand its network, amplify its impact, and redefine the future of sustainable port cities.



## PORT CITY INTERFACE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

BENNO BULTINK

A core topic of AIVP since its creation, the interface between the port and the city remains a subject of innovation and inspiration. In recent years, it is not just concerning the spatial interface between urban and port activities, but also about the impacts of climate change and foreseeing what they will be in the future. Indeed, planning of those spaces of porosity cannot be made without considering the increased threats of floods, drought, severe winds, and sea level rise. Port cities now have to adapt and include solutions to these issues in their plan to fight their more traditional challenges. All over the world, great examples have been developed by willing organizations (port authorities, local authorities, and more) to shape the interfaces along the waterfronts. Not only spatially but also in terms of uses, these examples should be shared and applied in other contexts and environments.

As it was in the session, the interface between the port and the city, as well as the impacts of Climate Change are core topics of the Connected River project. Not only is the use of the waterways and waterfronts increasing with a wide diversity of activities, but the changes are also happening fast paced. The safe combination of all uses does not happen by itself, that's why partners from 6 European countries are working together in Connected River. Being the initiator and project manager of this Interreg North Sea-funded project, I was honored to have been given the role of rapporteur and keynote speaker so that I could present this innovative project on a global stage.

This project aims to bring innovative and agile solutions to cities and port authorities which face challenges related to shared and conflicting uses of the waterways and waterfronts. I was happy to present the pilot experimentations taking place in Amsterdam and Nijmegen and to showcase how local partners are nowadays acting to prevent conflicting uses of the waterways and are promoting safety and sustainable activities. I am convinced the design thinking approach we developed can be a great help to organizations around the world to implement new solutions.

During the first part of the session, we focused on rivers, and how cities and port authorities can use them to provide a better and more sustainable living environment for the citizens. Some of the key challenges that were highlighted were: the diversification of uses (on the water and the river banks), the increased impact of climate change (which also brings new activities on the water), the cultural role that the river is playing in the inhabitant's life, the role that ports can play in improving the access to the water, but also on the logistics solutions they can support to help fight climate change.



**Benno Bultink**  
Program and Project Manager  
Rijkswaterstaat - Connected Rivers

Session sponsored by:

**Interreg**  
North Sea



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Connected River

We could then learn about the particular governance model of the Paris' canals, which is also in charge of the development and management of some waterways outside of the administrative borders of the city, deep into other localities, and how the shared governance takes place. The port of Strasbourg and the port of Sevilla presented their integrated strategies using the spatial territory of the port to improve the energy transition, while also developing solutions for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions thanks to the waterway transportation. From the other side of the world, the consulting company Hatch provided us with an interesting point of view regarding the cultural aspects and necessary trade-offs of urban planning along river mouths, where local authorities have to ensure that they have the social license to operate. In every presentation, the challenge of a proper water management was highlighted, given its impact on all urban and port activities especially on river cities.

In all those challenges and projects, we can observe the relevance of the Connected River project, as it acts at a very small scale (local experimentations) but can be replicable in larger environments. Its innovative methods can help starting new processes in some organizations and lead to bigger changes. It can help provide a mindset change necessary to deal with upcoming challenges and stakeholders. The Connected River project calls for a new balance on the water to promote the safe shared uses of the waterways.

Beatrice Moretti, a researcher from the University of Genoa (Italy) explained in a keynote the spatial impact of the process known as *clusterization* of ports. She presented her research focused on Italian ports and their strategy to create interconnectedness and capitalize on resources to use them more efficiently and improve port-city integration.



Port City Interface and Climate Change session in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant



Port City Interface and Climate Change session in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant

The second roundtable was dedicated to large-scale transformation projects along the waterfronts with presentations from the city-port of Tangier, Marrocco, the ports of Barcelona, Spain, and Valparaíso, Chile. All focused on the importance of dialogue with the local authorities for the proper concrection of the project. All of them also presented how they involved the local communities and local stakeholders to ensure a project that would benefit the most. Regarding this point, all agreed on staying humble and keeping an open ear for fruitful dialogue. They noted the difficulties of dealing with heritage cities as well as improving the image of the port by positive communication of its activities and realities. For this, the necessity of strategic planning is key to present a clear vision of what the port is and will be in the future.

To conclude, the inspiring presentations and lively discussions in the round tables made clear that to address the challenges related to climate change, the increasing shared use of the port city interface and all the other changes and transitions that we face, we really need to work together to create “a new balance” for the water and the port city area. For this we need to “be as water”: adaptive, flexible and fast moving. The excellent projects and studies presented in the Lisbon roundtables made clear that although it is not an easy process, but it can be done!



## CRUISE AND MOBILITY

PETER HALL

The AIVP conference group that visited the Lisbon Cruise Terminal at the Jardim do Tabaco were treated to a warm welcome from the General Manager, Mr. Duarte Cabral. The busses that took us to the terminal were required to follow an inland route around the old part of the city, reminding us that cruise terminals, like all other port terminals, have to live within and alongside their surrounding urban communities.

There are other similarities between cruise and other port terminals, including the fact they are most efficient when they have specialized facilities that can handle concentrated flows. We heard from CLIA and Wabtec about some interesting technological and systems innovations that allow large numbers of cruise passengers to be handled efficiently from an economic and environmental perspective, including through shore power and advanced waste handling. But as with cargo shipment, efficient passenger handling tends to come with increase scale, which means that cruise operations tend to have concentrated impacts in particular parts of the city and at particular times of the day and year.

The similarities between cruise and cargo soon end. The inner-city neighbourhoods surrounding cruise terminals are often wealthy and dense, and hence more organized and vocal when confronted with unwanted tourism impacts. Cruise terminals handle people, which is both a problem and an opportunity. It is a problem because flows of people are not as easily controlled as flows of goods. People wander, they are demanding, and they often all want to visit the same tourist attractions. We heard from Systematica, MAP-Oi and MedCruise about some new analytical tools, terminal designs and governance mechanisms that can help support the movement of passengers within urban areas in ways that minimize the impact on surrounding neighbourhoods.

Having people as the customers also represents an opportunity. Port centres for cruise tourists offer the potential to educate passengers about the cruise and port industry and their environmental and social impacts, so perhaps shifting them towards more sustainable behaviours. To mitigate the negative impacts of cruising tourism and offer benefits to the surrounding community, we also heard about how the Porto Leixões Cruise Terminal has become a major attraction for local residents as well as visitors. We got a sense of the potential for the Lisbon cruise terminal to play this role when we visited the rooftop and watched the sun setting over the mouth of the Tagus River.



**Peter Hall**  
Vice Provost and Associate  
Vice-President  
Simon Fraser University

Session sponsored by:

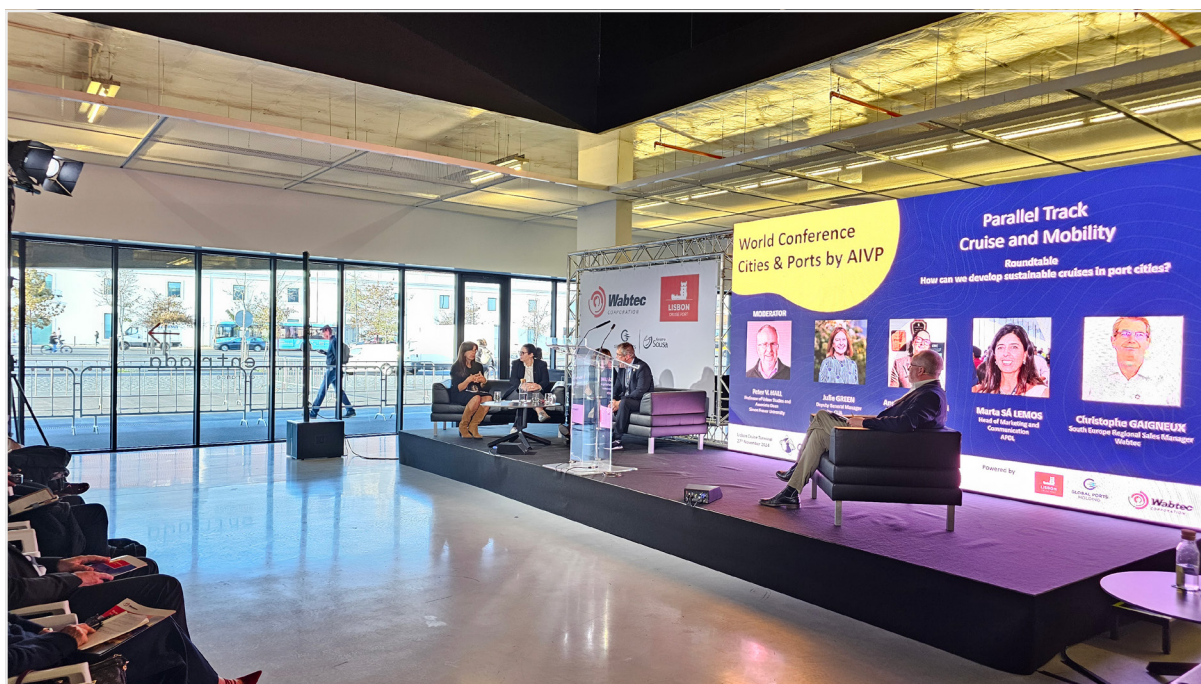




Finally, we often hear contradictory messages about cruise tourism, particularly when its impacts on urban communities is questioned. We hear that the cruise industry has major economic spinoff benefits, but we also hear that it only accounts for 5% of global tourism. The latter is an important point – except for island cruise destinations and similarly remote places, cruise passengers typically account for a small portion of the total tourism impact. Tourists arriving by plane, for example, have a huge carbon footprint, but this environmental impact is not directly experienced by local residents. The claims about the large size of the economic impact also need to be put in context, especially since cruise tourists mostly eat and sleep on their ships, so spending less in the local economy than land-based tourist.

All of this leads one to question whether ‘more is better’ when it comes to how the cruise industry communicates about its relationship to host communities. From the Port Authority of Balears we heard about some interesting initiatives to mitigate the impact of cruise tourism in Ibiza, including by controlling the number of vessels calling at any one time. This has the effect of saying to the local community, we will bring you the benefits of cruise tourism but we will limit the impact at peak flow. The aggregate number of passengers might still be big, but socially acceptable limits are put in place.

The debates that took place on November 27<sup>th</sup> in Lisbon’s Cruise Terminal show the need to continue the exchange of good practices and ideas at a global scale as AIVP and MedCruise with the shared working group.



Cruise and Mobility session in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant

## CULTURE AND GOVERNANCE

HILDA GHIARA

The “Culture and Governance” session addressed and discussed governance from a broad perspective. Instead of focusing solely on the formal or institutional definition of the term, it explored a wide interpretation involving various interactions among different actors that define decisions. This includes numerous participation practices. Within this context, four key points emerged from the intense discussion developed during the session.

### Multi-stakeholder and Multidimensional Vision of Port Ecosystem

The first point is the transition from focusing solely on infrastructural and economic planning in ports to adopting a multi-stakeholder vision of the port ecosystem. This vision includes economic development and infrastructure, aligned closely with sustainability, circular economy, digitalization, data analysis, security, and the strategic importance of ports from a geopolitical perspective. These aspects were well-illustrated by the experiences of the Philippines and Le Havre, where multidimensional governance processes have been implemented.



**Hilda Ghiara**  
Professor University of Genoa

### Governance Related to Power Dynamics and Resource Allocation

The second issue involves governance in relation to power dynamics and resource allocation. Inspiring initiatives of participation and involvement of local stakeholders were described in both Seattle and Riga, emphasizing the importance of power distribution and local context. The session presented experiences of reinforcing the roles of local actors, tracing pathways from institutional frameworks to mobilizing urban areas through sports events.

### The Role of Technical and Cultural Knowledge in Projects

A third noteworthy topic was the potential for enhancing projects not only through technical knowledge but also by integrating cultural and non-profit driven knowledge. Multistakeholder and multidimensional processes involve integrating previously compartmentalized issues, mobilizing new knowledge and expertise to reframe interpretations of port functions and address emerging conflicts, particularly regarding port space utilization.

### Coexistence Between Different Functions

The final key point discussed in the session revolves around the development and implementation of governance practices that facilitate and maintain the coexistence of diverse functions within port cities. These areas often have a complex makeup of stakeholders, including industrial operations, residential communities, environmental interests, and governmental bodies. The challenge lies in balancing these varied interests, especially when disputes over spatial utilization and access to resources emerge. An illustrative example of successful coexistence can be seen in Canada, in the Port of Baie-Comeau, where innovative governance strategies have enabled the simultaneous operation of a robust port industry alongside the Manicouagan-Uapishka UNESCO biosphere reserve. This coexistence wasn't achieved overnight; it resulted from deliberate planning and continuous dialogue among stakeholders aimed at ensuring that economic growth supported by port operations does not come at the expense of ecological sustainability and cultural heritage preservation. Such governance models acknowledge the intricate interdependencies between different land uses and seek to harmonize them. By establishing clear frameworks for stakeholder engagement, these models promote constructive collaboration and prevent conflicts. The insights gained from the Canadian scenario offer valuable lessons for other port cities grappling with similar challenges, also maybe those that are densely populated and have limited space for expansion.

A concluding remark brings the discussion back to governance as a means of managing economic planning. Recent studies indicate that the energy transition in Europe will require more than 80 billion euros over the next decade. Viewing the port as an ecosystem, with corresponding economic and decision-making mobilization at this ecosystem level, may be the only way to meet these future challenges.

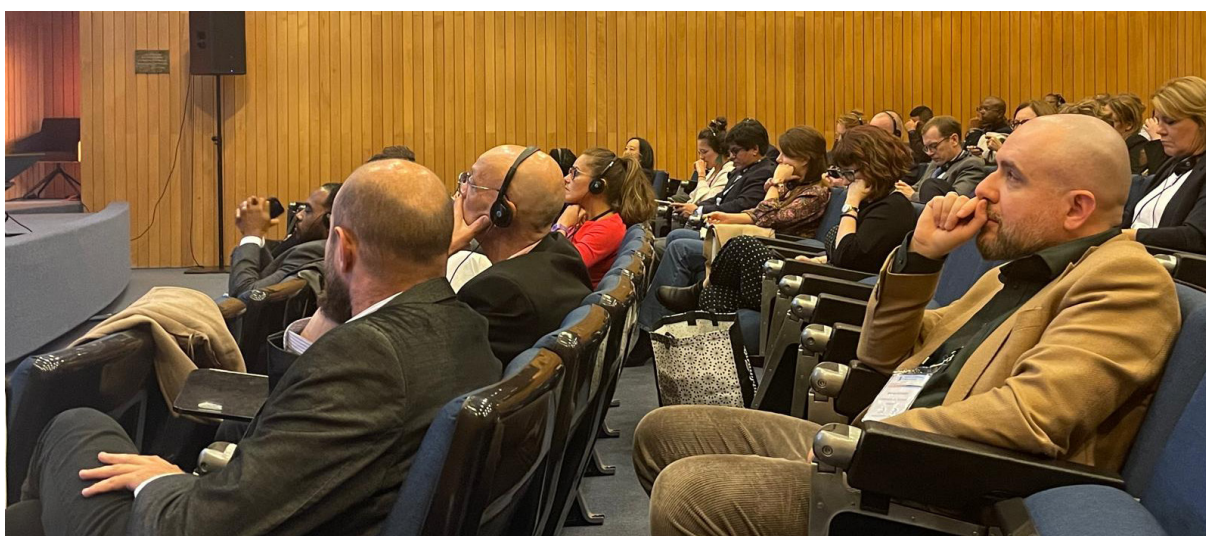


Culture and Governance session in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant



### Cultural and Heritage Integration

This new paradigm of coexistence plays a crucial role in the second part of the session focused on Cultural and Heritage Integration. It emphasizes the significance of intertwining cultural heritage with urban and maritime development in port cities. By incorporating museums dedicated to maritime history, hosting cultural festivals that celebrate the rich maritime traditions, and conducting meticulous historical preservation projects, port cities can greatly enhance their appeal and educational value. These efforts enable the tourist dimension of port cities to fully embrace and display their maritime cultural heritage. The session highlighted several fascinating examples. In Riga, initiatives have been taken to showcase the city's maritime past through interactive exhibits and waterfront festivals. Puerto Quequén has made strides in preserving historical port architecture, turning these sites into thriving cultural hubs. Lisbon offers a blend of historical tours and modern cultural events that attract visitors from around the world. These case studies underline a central theme: embracing maritime identity and its intrinsic values helps unify port activities with other creative urban ventures, enriching the overall city atmosphere. The Port Center of Genoa, through its 2008 slogan "Thank you for shipping!", had encapsulated the spirit of appreciating port/maritime industry and its continuous influence on modern-day port cities. This approach not only celebrates the economic significance of ports but also aligns with contemporary efforts to strengthen local economies through cultural tourism.



Culture and Governance session in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant

The discussions on governance and culture underscored the vital role of local institutions and governments. Their involvement in fortifying port ecosystems ensures that these regions address multidimensional challenges, that extend well beyond mere economic and infrastructure development. Effective governance now aims at building leadership in knowledge-intensive sectors, supported by comprehensive initiatives in training, education, and research. Such strategies are imperative for enhancing land use and mitigating environmental impacts, all while fostering community awareness of the invaluable role ports play. Port cities embracing this integrated approach can simultaneously preserve their cultural heritage and spearhead sustainable development efforts that benefit both local context and port users.



## ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

SÉBASTIEN DUPRAY

The estuarine, coastal, and river environments in which port cities are located are particularly rich in environmental issues, not only because of their unique habitats and particular biodiversity, but also because of the quality of life and amenities of these areas. The preservation, conservation, and restoration of the environment, and the ecological transition of the activities located there, are essential lines of action.

While there are regulatory or legal obligations in terms of the environment and biodiversity, it is clear from the experiences shared by the ports of Lisbon, Oslo, San Diego, and Açú and the cities of Luanda and Oeiras that the motivation is deeper. Indeed, these strategies and actions in favor of the environment are clear contributions to the resilience of territories, to the quality of life of local actors and residents, and also a factor of attractiveness.

The variety of examples presented clearly shows that each approach must be adapted to local needs and specificities. In this respect, action in favor of the environment is both a collective effort on the part of the territory and necessarily systemic in order to act on the various issues: water, air, waste, habitats, biodiversity, mobility, etc. depending on each individual's skills.

Action in favor of the environment cannot be decreed unilaterally: successful experiences are based on an established relationship of trust between the various players, notably through mobilization as early as possible and on an ongoing exchange to anticipate the expectations and contributions of the different stakeholders. Planning is also essential, both to give clarity and perspective to the commitments of the various actions over time. Measuring impact and evaluation are essential to ensure that initiatives are objective and credible, especially when independent or academic players are involved.

The work of Ecocéan, ETT and Cerema in ports, for example, demonstrates the wide range of solutions that can already be mobilized: rewilding of pockets of high environmental value, environmental reconnection, restoration of aquatic or wetland environments, cultivation and reintroduction of local aquatic or terrestrial species, nurseries set up even in highly anthropized environments, nature-inclusive engineering solutions, etc. Restoring water quality by combining the port city and its surroundings is also directly beneficial to the environment and quality of life, through action on sanitation and runoff management in the port and watershed, for example. As far as possible, levers will be combined and mobilized beyond the strict port area, by neighboring communities, businesses and citizens, for example for waste collection.



**Sébastien Dupray,**  
Managing director, Center for risks,  
waters and maritime, CEREMA



Environment and Biodiversity session in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant

However, there is still a strong need for innovation to develop tomorrow's solutions, adapted to climate change, that are low-carbon, digital and inclusive. In this respect, ports and port cities can help provide sites and opportunities for pilot work. Open source digital data offer great potential to be exploited more actively for environmental purposes. Accelerating the ecological transition of port cities also requires the sharing of experiences, not only to convince people where necessary that it is possible to act quickly, but also to exchange knowledge and gain in efficiency. The main challenges are scaling up to increase real impact, and consolidating business models that are still in their infancy (compensation banks, environmental credits, etc.).

Finally, the ongoing strengthening of links between citizens, in particular the younger generations, future residents or players in the port economy, is an ongoing task that is vital not only for the environment and biodiversity but also for the ecological transition of the areas in which port cities are located.

## ENERGY TRANSITION

MICHELE ACCIARO

The focus placed on energy transition during the Lisbon Conference, with an entire parallel session devoted to it, highlights just how central the energy transition is to AIVP's Agenda 2030 and in discussions port cities are currently having. It was held on the second day of the conference at the EDP Museum. The energy transition is deeply interconnected with everything we do. It is one of the most transformative developments happening today—globally, in ports, and in shipping. Thanos Pallis, in his keynote speech, referred to the technological transformation driven by containerization. Today, we are in the midst of two systemic technological transformations: the digital and the energy transition.

It is the people representing ports and cities, who are at the heart of these transformations. They are the enablers, the decision-makers with the power to shape and accelerate this change over the coming decades. AIVP helped us put the focus on the energy transition, and it is essential that we continue to discuss and engage with it.

During this session, we anchored the energy transition within the broader context of the climate crisis, recognizing that every port is addressing this challenge in some way. The energy transition touches on many areas: from power generation to the modernization of port equipment, from fostering closer interactions with cities to adopting alternative fuels.

Unfortunately, we also recognized that there is no silver bullet. We examined many excellent examples—from Antwerp to Rotterdam, Sines in Portugal, and the port of Itaquí in Brazil—that offered diverse and valuable insights. These examples, whether technological, organizational, or collaborative, provided concrete ideas on how we can accelerate the energy transition.

It is important to emphasize that while ports and cities can achieve a great deal, collaboration is essential. Regulators also play a critical role, whether at the city, state, federal, regional, or international level. Regulation has the power to accelerate the energy transition, and this is crucial because the climate crisis isn't waiting for us to discuss and negotiate. The clock is ticking, and time is running out.



**Michele Acciaro**  
Professor Copenhagen  
Business School

Session sponsored by:





In addition to regulation, there are other key enablers, including stakeholder engagement, expertise, and resources, including financial resources. Collaborating and leveraging on these enablers is essential for success. However, a point needs to be stressed. Let's be honest: we cannot achieve anything without adequate financial resources being allocated to the energy transition. This is a topic that has come up repeatedly, especially during the presentation by C40, and I always say to people, "It's easy to accomplish things with money; the real challenge is doing so with limited resources." If it is true, that is where the best managers and administrators stand out—by finding solutions even with limited financial resources, it is also true that adequate resources are necessary if we are taking the energy transition seriously.

There is a significant amount of money flowing around these days, much of it seeking investment opportunities. We need to channel this funding into what truly matters: supporting ports and cities in advancing the energy transition. Enormous resources are available, and often, it's just a matter of framing the issues correctly and exploring innovative funding models that can effectively drive the transition forward.

Another key issue is technology—how it can help us bridge uncertainty. This was a particularly important point raised during the session by EDP, Legendre, SolarinBlue, and Wattway. Technology needs to be part of the solution; it should be seen as a tool to overcome uncertainty, in conjunction with policy, leadership, and cooperation. Technology alone will not solve everything.

Finally, I want to stress that a just transition is non-negotiable. We cannot pursue an energy transition, globally or locally, without ensuring the inclusion of citizens, stakeholders, and the most vulnerable populations within the cities and regions where this transformation is taking place. This is not only a moral obligation—it is essential to the success of the transition. An unjust energy transition will ultimately fail, halting any progress we aim to achieve as was also discussed during the social acceptance and spatial impact workshop during the session. Ensuring fairness and inclusivity is therefore not just a priority but a fundamental requirement for making this transition work effectively.



Energy Transition y session in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant



## BLUE ECONOMY AND INNOVATION

ISABELLE VRIES, MERCÈ DE MIGUEL I CAPDEVILA

In literature and practice, there is a diversity of definitions for the *Blue Economy*. With the ambitions of the AIVP Agenda 2030 in mind, we like to work from the same framework. The definition we think is the most accurate comes from the World Bank: “Blue economy is the sustainable use of the ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs, while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem”.

Of course, blue economy activities are taking place on the oceans and rivers. However, we must consider that port cities are important places where activities are initiated and steered. We address port cities as ‘Blue Economy Hubs’, where innovation activities should be initiated and facilitated.

During the session, we discussed different approaches to build up blue economy strategies and innovation. With key actors, we explored several drivers of success. The discussion was enriched with the experiences of practitioners from the ports of Bahia Blanca, Bordeaux, Douala, Hamburg, and Vigo, but also from European-funded projects like the Blue Digital Hub and Hub Azul from Forum Oceano, the Blue Economy Hub in Portugal.

As outcomes of the session with this diverse set of stakeholders, we can highlight a set of drivers for success:

- Working on new collaborations, multilayer networks is generally understood as key to success. The complexity of the challenges port cities are confronted with (climate change, congestion, environmental pollution), urges us to think and act in complex networks.
- Digitalization is a driver of many innovations. Digital platforms facilitate community networks, engaging for sharing knowledge (“open innovation”) and communicating new initiatives and results.



**Isabelle Vries**

Senior advisor and program manager  
- Municipality of Rotterdam



**Mercè de Miguel i Capdevila**

Researcher, Eindhoven University of  
Technology

Session sponsored by:

**HUBAZUL**  
PORTUGAL

fundazul PRR REPÚBLICA PORTUGUESA

**PORTUGAL BLUE**  
**DIGITAL HUB**

PRR REPÚBLICA PORTUGUESA EUROPEAN UNION EDMA

- Digital platforms are supporting networks, but collaboration can't go without physical gatherings, from where one can build up trust. Communities are stimulated by vibrant places to meet, mingle, work together, and to show results to public and private partners.
- These places or 'hubs' are preferably located at port city interfaces, well visible and accessible for founders and employees of start-ups and scale-ups, corporates, investors, researchers, and citizens.
- Building networks takes place on local, regional, and national levels. There is a world to discover on an international level
- Specifically, for the development of start-ups, the participants presented a list of advice;
  - define common real/concrete problems with stakeholders
  - map the ecosystem of stakeholders in multilayer problems
  - build open digital platforms
  - engage private-public funders from the start
  - provide test areas for start-ups (in these port city interfaces)-
  - involve young citizens - students from the beginning; make it visible and tangible for them
- Using the opportunity of the PIN (Port Innovators Network) to connect with many port city initiatives on innovation globally.
- Monitoring results and data production is key. Without it, it is hard to keep track of the progress and the impact of the projects and initiatives. This is also a topic for regional and international exchange.



### Hurdles to overcome:

- Scale-ups: there are interesting start-ups in the blue economy. However, for some reason many initiatives do not yet reach the next level (scale-up). What are the obstacles to overcome? And how can communities learn from 'failures'?
- Funding: develop relations from the start with investors. Costs will arise before all the benefits can be reaped. With the active involvement of potential investors in projects, one builds up trust and commitment

- Availability of talent; initiatives that improve the image of the port should be undertaken, and should attract students and professionals to port innovation activities. Make them part of the community networks. Incorporate blue economy and innovation in studies at different levels (vocational and scientific).

#### Observations from the moderator:

The involvement of many Port Authorities (PAs) in the session showed that they are eager to play a leading role in the Blue Economy and innovation. They are in the position to develop overarching and inspiring strategies and develop communities around those strategies.

#### Further collaborations must be explored:

- Intensification of knowledge exchange and lobbying between ports, towards regulatory governments, despite the inevitable competition. Regarding innovation ports should work in a framework of “coopetition”.
- Development of vibrant port city interfaces – physical places or hubs, focusing on education, innovation, entrepreneurship, and an attractive mix of functions. This could be a joint strategy of PAs and municipalities
- Crossovers with key players in research, education, investments/funding, and with practitioners from other sectors (for example energy suppliers in cities, aviation, automotive, food industries).

From the perspective blue economy and innovation, port city networks can further grow!



Blue Economy and Innovation y session in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant



## PORT AND CITY WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE AGENDA 2030: THE CASE OF QUEBEC

SABAH ZRARI

In the introductory text to the Lisbon Conference, AIVP emphasized that quay accessibility is a key marker in the evolution of the port-city relationship. The example of Quebec City is a perfect illustration of this dynamic, as demonstrated by the round table discussion that brought together **Mario Girard**, President and CEO of the Port of Quebec, **Catherine Vallières-Roland**, City Councillor of Quebec City, and myself.

Using concrete images, the speakers presented several emblematic projects: the reopening of the river to swimming (figures 1 and 2), the organization of open-air shows (figure 3) and sporting competitions (figure 4), and the enhancement of the natural and port heritage (figure 5). A total of **26% of the port's territory** is dedicated to recreational and tourism activities.



**Sabah Zrari**  
Executive director International  
Institute of Ports and Cities



Port and City working together for the Agenda 2030: the case of Quebec session in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports.  
Photo by Mike Sergeant



However, as Mario Girard and Catherine Vallières-Roland pointed out, these advances would not have been possible without close collaboration with the city. It has played a key role by investing in wastewater treatment and improving the quality of the waterways, thus enabling access to the riverbanks and the development of aquatic activities.

Beyond the investments made, it is above all the **shared desire** of the players involved to provide pragmatic solutions that meet the expectations of citizens for better access to riverbanks that has made these achievements possible. This context is all the more remarkable given that the Port of Quebec is under federal, rather than municipal or provincial, authority, with no particular legal obligation to encourage this cooperation.

This success is based on several decisive factors: firstly, **the personal commitment** of the municipal and port authorities, both of whom are open to dialogue and citizen consultation (as evidenced by the co-creation workshops and good neighbor committees, see figure 6). Secondly, the **consistency of strategic orientations**, underpinned in particular by Mario Girard's stable leadership at the helm of the Port for the past 14 years. And finally, the shared understanding that, in the eyes of citizens, only concrete achievements count, regardless of administrative divisions.

Nevertheless, as Catherine Vallières-Roland pointed out, this success also rests on a delicate balance. While individual leadership is essential, it remains fragile in the absence of robust institutional mechanisms to sustainably coordinate players around shared objectives. Vallières-Roland's main challenges include **reconciling the interests** of the City and the Port, and maintaining **permanent channels of communication** to ensure an integrated and harmonious relationship.

# 1<sup>ST</sup> EDITION OF THE AIVP PRIZE ANTOINE RUFENACHT

LUCILE AUDIÈVRE, CAROLA HEIN, GERALDINE KNATZ

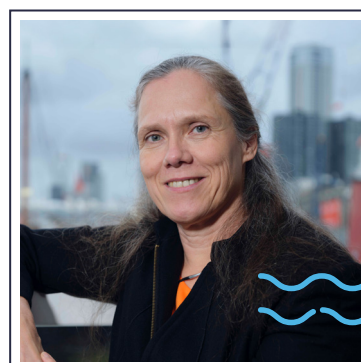
The AIVP has been advocating new strategies for port city territories for many decades. The model role of port cities in urban transformation is a key feature of the newly launched AIVP Prize Antoine Rufenacht, which highlighted the necessity of advanced attention to and new conceptualizations of the spaces that link ports to their neighboring urban and non-urban spaces. The topic of port city integration has found strong interest as 23 applications were submitted in the 2024 edition, reflecting the diversity of port cities around the world.

An Expert panel chaired by Carola Hein and composed of international experts from practice and academia assessed the submissions. The experts faced a difficult choice to make among all the submissions, given the different natural, political, economic, social, and cultural conditions and diverging temporalities. They finally identified 6 finalists, which were:

1. The “Paseo del Bajo Parks, Esplanade and Northern Portal project”. This project was presented by the Corporación Antiguo Puerto Madero S.A. from Buenos Aires, Argentina. It highlights the challenges of implementing a major port infrastructure near the city center.
2. The “Redevelopment of Javel Bas Port”, presented by HAROPA PORT, Paris, France, is a project that combines port and industrial uses, such as cargo handling with a public promenade along the Seine River.
3. The “Tangier City Port Area Reconversion”, concerns the transformation of Tangier’s waterfront, following the relocation of all industrial activities from the port of Tangier to the port of Tangier Med. It was presented by the Development Company for the Reconversion of Tangier City Port area (SAPT SA), Morocco.
4. The “Bekkelagsbadet – Buffer Zone”, presented by the Port of Oslo, Norway, is a project located in a former container terminal. It was designed to facilitate harmonious coexistence between the port and the community.



**Lucile Audièvre**  
Director, Network development,  
Marketing, AIVP Prize Antoine  
Rufenacht



**Carola Hein**  
Professor TU Delft, Erasmus University  
and Leiden University Co-Chair of the  
Prize Antoine Rufenacht



**Geraldine Knatz**  
Professor University of Southern  
California

5. The “Wilmington Waterfront project” was presented by the Port of Los Angeles, United States. It aims to create a buffer between the port and the city and provide an open space and waterfront access for the adjacent Wilmington community, classified in the US as an “environmental justice” community.
6. The “Duwamish River People’s Park and Shoreline Habitat”, is the largest restoration project on Seattle’s only river, transforming a significantly polluted 14-acre site into a vibrant park and habitat area in an “environmental justice” neighborhood. It was presented by the Port of Seattle, United States.



1<sup>st</sup> edition of the AIVP Prize Antoine Rufenacht in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant

A grand jury, chaired by Geraldine Knatz and including global leaders representing port and city professionals, architects, and urban planners, made the final decision following an in-person interview of the finalist applicants. In making its final decision, the Grand Jury considered the following criteria:

- The project applicants’ attitude toward sustainability
- How local community groups were engaged
- Climate resilience
- Replicability of the project to other port cities around the world
- Geography and local context
- The impact on the port-city relationship, i.e., was it a single case, or did the project establish a longer or deeper relationship
- How port/city history or heritage/cultural aspects were addressed
- Project scale



The first prize went to the Development Company for the Reconversion of Tangier City Port area (Morocco), for the comprehensive interventions that include the transformation of Tangier's port areas with urban revitalization, sustainable development, tourism attractiveness, and heritage preservation. The project brought together diverse communities through a public consultation process in a comprehensive plan, with people-oriented maritime activities. By improving public access to the seafront, and highlighting what made the core identity of the city: its heritage and its openness to the sea, it contributed to enhance inhabitants' involvement and Tangier's influence, making this project a winner.

The case of the Javel Bas Port project in Paris, developed by HAROPA Port, received a special mention as it demonstrated the opportunities of maintaining cargo handling, warehousing, and concrete production in the Center of a historic city and the vicinity of a world heritage site with a public promenade along the Seine River. Albeit small, the project gives a concrete example of port-city integration and community engagement that led to very pragmatic solutions to allow the continuity of port activities, without compromising the public use of the quay.

This first edition of the AIVP Prize Antoine Rufenacht showcased the multiple challenges and opportunities that port cities face such as the relationship between the port and the neighborhood, the acceptability of port activities, the improvement of living conditions and environmental well-being, etc. That's why, even if the Grand Jury's conclusions led to recognize the Tangier project as the winner, all the submitted projects had strong arguments and could serve as models for other port cities. Also, the jury concluded that it is not the cost or size that makes a project worthy but the process of developing the project, the innovative ways that the project solved challenges, how the port and city interfaces were handled, and the outcome of the completed project.



1<sup>st</sup> edition of the AIVP Prize Antoine Rufenacht in the 19<sup>th</sup> World Conference Cities and Ports. Photo by Mike Sergeant



OPEN PIERS 19<sup>TH</sup> AIVP WORLD CONFERENCE





OPEN PIERS 19<sup>TH</sup> AIVP WORLD CONFERENCE





**Tel:** +33(0) 235 427 884 | **aivp@aivp.org**

**AIVP.ORG**