

Companies Join Initiative to Make Maritime Shipping More Sustainable

Shipping choices for vessel speed reduction protect Blue Whales and Blue Skies, and show commitment to sustainable shipping

CALIFORNIA, USA, July 12, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The "[Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies](#) Program" welcomes the first three companies to join its [Brand Ambassador](#) Initiative. Launched in March of this year, the initiative is a new effort from the voluntary California-based Vessel Speed Reduction program to continue to reduce the environmental impacts of maritime shipping along the West Coast.



Two blue whales in Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

Historically, brands that rely on ocean freight have little information about the regional environmental impacts of the ships carrying their products. The Brand Ambassador Initiative addresses this knowledge gap by providing brands with data pertaining to vessel speeds and the resulting environmental benefits as they transit along the California coast.

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Just like cars, vessels traveling at reduced speeds are more efficient, emitting fewer greenhouse gasses and harmful air pollutants. Slower vessels also reduce ocean noise and the risk of fatal ship strikes, which threaten whales globally and especially endangered blue, fin, and humpback whales in California waters.

The Blue Whales and Blue Skies program works closely with ship operators along the California coast where reduced speed efforts are most impactful, thereby maximizing environmental

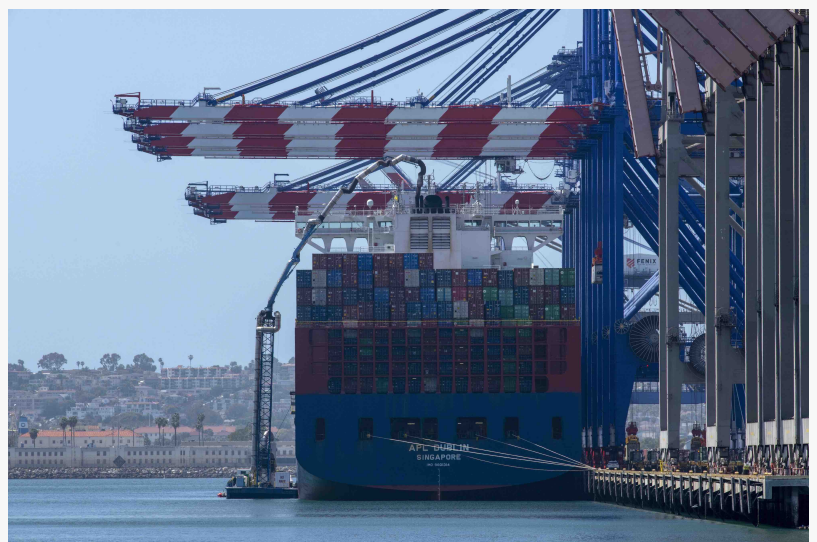
benefits with minimal impacts on shipping schedules. Despite unprecedented global supply chain challenges, in 2021 vessels in the Blue Whales and Blue Skies program on average reduced speeds for approximately 60% of their voyages, indicating vessel operators' continued commitment to ship more sustainably.

Eighteen shipping companies participated in 2021, transiting at 10 knots or less in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Southern California region. The voluntary incentive program ran May 15, 2021 through November 15, 2021. Top performing participants included Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) in the large fleet category and Swire Shipping in the small fleet category.

Through the Brand Ambassador Initiative, brands interested in reducing the impact of their global supply chain receive data on the reduced speed efforts of their shipping companies and the resulting decrease in air pollutants, greenhouse gasses, ship strikes and ocean noise. This information can then be used to inform consumers purchasing their products and help these brands make more sustainable shipping choices.

The cargo owners that have joined the new Brand Ambassador Initiative come from three different industries, united by their commitment to protecting natural resources: Nomad, a consumer electronics and lifestyle products company; Summit Coffee Roasting Company, a subsidiary of Summit Coffee; and Peak Designs, a gear and accessories company.

Together these three brands ship with seven different shipping companies in the Blue Whales and Blue Skies program. In 2021 these seven shipping companies voluntarily reduced their speeds for over 124,000 miles, resulting in an estimated 16,000 ton reduction in regional greenhouse gas emissions.



A Container Ship unloads at the Port of LA. Credit: Robert Schwemmer.



Slower ships reduce the risk of fatal whale strikes. Credit: John Calambokidis

“Through this partnership, we remain committed to exclusively booking freight companies that participate in vessel speed reduction,” said Scott Beatty, Nomad Procurement Manager. “Our hope is that this regional initiative will develop at a global scale. We strongly encourage other companies that ship along the California coast to become ambassadors, raise awareness, and encourage their freight companies to participate in the program,” he said.

“Our coffee roasting business has a larger impact than anything else we do, so being intentional about every aspect of our roasting is imperative,” said Brett Dioguardi, Director of Sustainability and Supply Chain for Summit Coffee. “Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies is a great example and opportunity for us to help share the great work being done, and to encourage other companies to get involved too.”

“Being a brand ambassador was a no-brainer for us: it’s a low lift opportunity for brands to grow awareness and concretely move the dial in shaping freight industry practices,” said Annie Nyborg, Sustainability Director at Peak Design. “Joining the initiative costs nothing aside from using our voices to advocate for more sustainable transportation. It’s something all responsible brands should join.”

To get involved, interested brands should visit www.bluewhalesblueskies.org/cargo or contact info@bluewhalesblueskies.org. Enrollment is free, does not require any changes to your shipping schedule, and takes just a few minutes.

“Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies” is a collaborative effort by the Air Pollution Control Districts of Santa Barbara, Ventura and Bay Area; the Channel Islands, Cordell Bank, and Greater Farallones [National Marine Sanctuaries](#); The Volgenau Foundation; California Marine Sanctuary Foundation; National Marine Sanctuary Foundation; Greater Farallones Association; Environmental Defense Center; Point Blue Conservation Science; Starcrest Consulting; and Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

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