

# Global Shipping Companies Honored for Environmental Leadership at Port of Hueneme Event

*Shipping companies received awards for reducing speed to protect blue whales and blue skies during an ocean day celebration at California's Port of Hueneme.*

CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, June 21, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Port of Hueneme and [Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies](#) Program partners recognized the exemplary efforts of global shipping companies for their voluntary participation in the Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies Program during a recent World Ocean Day celebration.



Two blue whales in Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

The Port of Hueneme is an Ambassador for Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, a voluntary vessel speed reduction program that provides positive recognition to ocean shipping companies for reducing speed as they transit to and from California's ports and verifies the environmental benefits, including reduced impacts to marine mammals, ocean noise, climate change, and air quality.

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*Robert Mazurek, California Marine Sanctuary Foundation*

Thirty-three global shipping companies participated in the voluntary incentive-based VSR program in 2023. Companies reduced ship speeds off California, transiting at 10 knots or less in the San Francisco and Monterey Bay

region and the Southern California region.

Whale Tail Trophies

Top-performing shipping companies were awarded “Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies”

whale tail trophies at a recognition ceremony. Sean Hastings from the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary highlighted the significant impact of this partnership.

"By working with the shipping industry to slow ships May through December, we're reducing the potential of a fatal ship strike on blue, fin and humpback whales. We're also decreasing air pollution and ocean noise."

Thirteen companies reached the Sapphire level, the most in the top level category since the program began. They are CMA CGM, CSL Group, D'Amico Tankers DAC, Hapag-Lloyd, Mediterranean Shipping Company, NingBo Ocean Shipping Co, NYK Ro-Ro, Ocean Network Express, Orient Overseas Container Line, OSG Ship Management, Swire Shipping, Yang Ming, and Wallenius Wilhelmsen.

#### Keynote Panel

A keynote panel featured marine resource and air quality scientists and experts who noted the program's measurable strides in not only reducing ship strikes to endangered whales but also helping coastal counties meet air quality standards.

Panelist Holly Lohuis, Co-Director of Santa Barbara Channel Whale Heritage Area, emphasized the urgency of conservation efforts, calling the Santa Barbara Channel "a destination for the critically endangered blue whales."

Robert Mazurek of the [California Marine Sanctuary Foundation](#) further emphasized this point. "It is very exciting to partner with NOAA, the air quality agencies, and industry on a program where everyone can see such clear benefits. This collaboration is a win for clean air, endangered and threatened whales, and ocean conservation."

#### Port Commitment to Zero Emissions



Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies awards. Credit Garrett Raborg, Port of Hueneme



Panel at Port of Hueneme ocean event. Credit: Garrett Raborg, Port of Hueneme

In addition to celebrating ongoing conservation efforts, the Port of Hueneme and Oxnard Harbor District made a historic commitment to achieve zero emissions across all operations within the next six years. Kristin Decas, CEO and Port Director of Port of Hueneme, announced the port's vision for a cleaner, healthier future. The ambitious decarbonization project, slated for completion by 2030, positions Port Hueneme as a global leader in sustainable port management.

The Port of Hueneme's commitment to environmental stewardship, coupled with the voluntary participation of global shipping companies in the Protecting Blue Whales Blue Skies Program, exemplifies the collective effort needed to protect our ocean, air quality, and climate.

Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies is a collaborative effort by several air pollution control districts, [national marine sanctuaries](#) in California, the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation, and other non-profit organizations. For more information, visit [bluewhalesblueskies.org](http://bluewhalesblueskies.org).

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