

Question for written answer E-005034/2025

to the Commission

Rule 144

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Subject: Circular economy – Scrap steel from end-of-life ships

The Circular Economy Act, due for adoption in 2026, aims to enhance the EU's economic security, resilience, competitiveness and decarbonisation efforts. The Steel and Metals Action Plan recognises that the metals industry represented 8.1 % of total EU greenhouse gas emissions in 2022.

Scrap steel from end-of-life ships represents an opportunity to put both initiatives into action while supporting the EU's ship dismantling sector, as well as its know-how and workers, which is currently facing unfair competition from non-EU countries.

A recent study from Shipbreaking Platform, Sandbag and the University of Tuscia illustrates the significant potential of scrap steel from end-of-life ships in the decarbonisation efforts of the EU's steel industry. Around 12 000 of the vessels owned by EU and European Free Trade Association countries are expected to become eligible for scrapping by 2035, generating about 12 Mt of scrap steel per year. Mandatory recycled-content requirements for steel could be a good way to stimulate a market for ship scrap.

Given the strategic importance of this sector, how is the Commission:

1. planning to ensure that EU-owned ships are not exported and that their materials are retained within the EU?
2. addressing the practice of re-flagging ships shortly before demolition?
3. considering the rapid introduction of strong circularity incentives, such as a ship recycling licence, in line with its study on the matter?

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