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European Commission
Vice President Siim Kallas
Commissioner for Transport
200 Rue de la Loi
Berlaymont
B-1049 BRUSSELS

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Contactpersoon:

Gent 14/09/2010

TEN-T core ports network: concerns of port of Ghent

Dear Mr Kallas,

Concerning the development of the TEN-T network, port of Ghent has the following concerns.

The study by NEA on 'ports and their connections within TEN-T' makes a proposal to the European Commission concerning the choice of the ports that should still form part of the future 'Core ports network'.

According to us, it is unjust that port of Ghent is not on this 'core ports' list. Ghent Port Company gave its argumentation on the study and on the method that was used already in July to NEA. In this argumentation, we refer to among other things the economic importance of our port and our strategic location as against Northern France and the TEN-T priority project Seine-Nord.

In the Strategic Plan 2010-2020 Ghent Port Company's ambitions for the seaport of Ghent have been worked out. Besides the enlargement of the already present maritime-industrial clusters with very large industrial companies, Ghent Port Company also sees promising perspectives in the bio based economy. With an added value in 2008 of 7,090 million Euros and an employment of almost 70,000 jobs, the socio-economic importance of the existing industries for the Ghent and Flemish regions can hardly be overestimated.

Moreover, port of Ghent has the ambition to develop itself as a multimodal logistical platform that for the maritime part is to be a decongestion port to the large container ports of Rotterdam, Zeebrugge and Antwerp and for the inland part serves the Northern French regions and Paris by barge.

The improvement of the maritime access to port of Ghent is essential for the realization of these ambitions. If port of Ghent is not recognized as a 'core network port' then it can make no claim on the multi-annual budgets from the TEN-T subsidies. This could be a reason for the Flemish and Dutch authorities to pull out of this project as they jointly finance this lock because it is located on Dutch territory.

The present sealock is a bottleneck, now already used by seagoing and by inland navigation (both in transit and destined for Ghent). Consequently, preferably yesterday than today, a decision is necessary on the construction of a new and larger sealock in Terneuzen that has to solve the problems as to operational certainty, scale increase and congestion.

But there is more: also for the ports of Rotterdam, Antwerp and Zeeland Seaports, solving this bottleneck issue is of strategic importance. Rotterdam aims at an improved fairway connection north of the Terneuzen lock complex up to Rotterdam and is looking for a basis in Flanders to submit this project as a supplement to the priority TEN-T Seine-Scheldt project. On this occasion, I would like to point out to you the impossibility of deciding on the extension of the TEN-T project in the direction of the Netherlands before having improved the maritime access to Ghent.

In short, Ghent's ambition is and remains to fully stay a seaport having a high added value. Rotterdam, Zeeland Seaports, Antwerp, Zeebrugge and Ghent have a common interest in the improvement of the maritime access to Ghent and the amelioration of the inland navigation connection between Rotterdam and the Paris region. Without a new sealock in Terneuzen, port of Ghent can degrade to a 'transit port' for inland navigation and this is absolutely unacceptable to Ghent.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DS', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Daan Schalck
Executive director
Ghent Port Company ampc

Enclosure: strategic plan in English

**GROWING TOGETHER TOWARDS
SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY**

Strategic plan 2010 - 2020

Ghent Port Company ampc

INTRODUCTION

On January 1, 2010 Ghent Port Company wound up its first 10 years as an Autonomous Municipal Port Company. In those 10 years the company was systematically transformed from a municipal regie into an independently operating and financially sound company.

Today, the time has come to make a 'great leap forward'. For, the challenges for the future are not the least. Ghent Port Company wants to seize this opportunity to clearly define its ambition and role when approaching these challenges in an adequate way.

Hence this strategic plan 2010 - 2020.

A well-organized participatory and iterative process was opted for, in which the board of directors, the executive committee and a broad representation of the staff members were intensively involved. Moreover, the strategic plan was regularly tested against the opinion or criticism of representative stakeholders from trade and industry, the higher authorities, the academic world and social partners. Adjustments were carried out in order to obtain the largest possible basis.

The result of this process is written down in the present document that translates our mission, vision and ambition in a concise way into clearly measurable strategic objectives.

In order to actually realize these objectives, numerous action plans will be developed in cooperation with our staff members. The organization will also be continuously adapted so as to offer this diversity of actions a reasonable chance of success and also to be able to always better anticipate or adapt to changing external factors. Additional functional objectives will be formulated to steer this transition in the corporate culture.

For this purpose, Ghent Port Company will have to meet a number of requirements in the field of flexibility, readiness to adapt, initiative and innovative thinking. However, the board of directors and the executive committee are confident that all our co-workers, together with us, will successfully take this leap to the future.

Also our stakeholders, partners and clients will always take up a prominent position in the realization of this outlook on the future.

We want to grow together towards sustainable prosperity.

Finally, we wish to warmly thank everyone who contributed to the realization of this strategic plan 2010 - 2020 for their input.

Ghent, May 2010

Daan Schalck
Executive director

Christophe Peeters
President

THE CHALLENGE

Port of Ghent as a lasting source of prosperity

The socio-economic importance of Ghent port for the Ghent and Flemish regions can hardly be overestimated. Every year, the port yields an added value of over 7,000 million Euros and provides for 28,000 direct jobs. Moreover, 42,000 jobs indirectly depend on the good functioning of Ghent port.

The financial and subsequent economic crises at the end of 2008 and the beginning of 2009 sharply proved that our welfare situation is far from evident. Luckily, these crises did not fundamentally harm the essential tissue between industrial production, ancillary companies and distribution activities in the Ghent region. But nevertheless, it is a sign that should not be ignored.

The lesson we learn from this is that as a port, on the one hand, we continue to aim at a diversification of activities in order to be less 'crisis-sensitive' but that on the other hand, we have to offer the maritime-industrial sector all possible opportunities to stay competitive in the future. In this context, we not only have to decide in favour of the existing industries but also of those of the future. The bio-based economy offers a promising prospect and is an example of how industry can also be a basis for employment and added value in the future. But also the existing industrial activities deserve our support. Their functioning and further development are essential to Ghent's prosperity. This divide is fundamental for our strategy.

The absolute necessity of a good, safe and smooth maritime access

The capacity of the maritime access is insufficient to entirely fulfil the potential offered by Ghent port. The present access via the lock complex in Terneuzen is the smallest one on the entire Northwest-European port scene and is a real bottleneck. An intense process of talks between Flanders and the Netherlands has been started. This should result in a decision that considerably improves our maritime access in the future.

The present strategic plan starts from the assumption that by 2020 this nautical limitation will be solved through the realization of a second larger sealock. This is an absolute and necessary condition for realizing the ambitions of this strategic plan. Consequently, it constitutes a major point of departure for this strategic plan.

New chances of development through the Seine-Scheldt-North project

The realization of the European Seine-Scheldt-North project offers port of Ghent enormous opportunities to profile itself as a northern supply area for Northern France and the Paris region. A condition is that our port should develop itself as a central hub for this hinterland and as a 'decongestion port' that forms the hub for cargo flows that have to reach the Northern French region via Antwerp, Zeebrugge and Rotterdam. Both our commercial and infrastructural strategies have to anticipate this.

Living with boundaries

Economic growth is a necessary condition for the perpetuation of our prosperity. On the other hand, there is a pertinent social demand for more liveability, nature, protection of the environment, personal comfort etc.

Our port historically grew with canal villages that deeply cut into the port area and with a delicate interface between the port and the municipal tissue. We handle this with care. The much-needed growth of the economic activity has to be in harmony at all times with a suitable respect for other social needs in the direct vicinity. A good and sustained dialogue with public stakeholders can steer many potential conflicts in the right direction. The strategic plan for the Ghent canal zone¹, in which all stakeholders are involved, remains also for Ghent Port Company an important guideline in its plans for the future.

We equally want to pursue this philosophy with regard to the hinterland. Nowadays in Ghent, congestion problems and the pressure on the boundaries of the port area are substantially less than in other surrounding port areas. And we want to keep it this way. Initiatives will be taken to realize a maximum modal shift, from road transport to other modes, and to steer the inevitable traffic burden in the right direction by means of an optimum adequate infrastructure.

An organization that continually adapts to new circumstances

An organization that wants to take up all these challenges has to keep on moving. Ghent Port Company in the year 2020 will have to look fundamentally different from Ghent Port Company in the year 2000. New competences are necessary and company processes will again and again have to stand the litmus test of the topical relevance.

In order to make this transition successful, a thorough human resources management will be developed with lots of respect for our human potential today but also with a sharp eye on the challenges of the future.

¹ Well-faring canal zone – qualitative growth before the new sealock and gaining momentum afterwards

OUR MISSION AND VISION

Ghent Port Company's mission is expressed as follows:

Ghent Port Company creates prosperity and growth in a sustainable way by further developing the seaport into a multimodal logistics platform.

We approach our vision, our ambition and objectives starting from three perspectives: the **economic, zoning and social** perspectives. The economic perspective forms the most substantial ambition. Both other perspectives are inextricably bound up with it and function as a substructure for all the initiatives that are taken.

ECONOMIC

As an incubator, Ghent Port Company **initiates, develops, guides and facilitates** new multimodal concepts, projects and waterborne cargo flows.

ZONING

Ghent Port Company acts as a **sustainable designer**: within the port area as a policymaker and outside the port area (insofar as it is port-related) as a co-decision maker.

SOCIAL

Ghent Port Company turns **everyone into a port supporter** by making its vision on port development widely and actively known and by promoting it. Consequently, Ghent Port Company wishes to realize a large social basis and to achieve a maximum positive involvement from all stakeholders.

OUR VALUES

Ghent Port Company's co-workers want to realize this vision taking into account the following values:

Client-friendliness

- to guarantee a high degree of availability for the customer
- to show readiness to listen and empathy
- to have a proactive disposition towards solving problems
- to detect and elaborate win-win situations
- to maintain permanent communication with the customer

Readiness to cooperate

- to work in a cross-departmental way and by means of projects
- to promote team spirit, collegiality and openness
- to offer the customer an integral and coordinated answer
- to aim at a structured sharing of knowledge and to secure company knowledge
- to develop a transparent management reporting

Commitment

- to give, receive and take up responsibility
- to be proud of the company and its achievements
- to take up involvement in the organization
- to show enthusiasm in the execution of one's tasks

Innovative thinking and creativity

- to stimulate thinking outside the box
- to dare fail in order to achieve success
- to be ready for change and continuously adapt processes
- to bring about an active job rotation, among other things by working with projects

Efficiency

- to use the right knowledge and skill in the right place
- to make processes problem-solving
- inspiration instead of transpiration
- to be busy with the right organizational goals
- to focus on common goals

These values are essential when aiming at achieving the strategic objectives.

OUR AMBITION

'**Growth**'. This word forms the essence of this strategic plan. We have the explicit ambition to be 'more' port through growth in our sustainable maritime activity but just as much by further expanding our role as a port director. This ambition is translated into strategic objectives.

We are convinced of the fact that our ambition and our strategic objectives are feasible and realistic through hard work. Four elements are crucial here:

- the optimization of the maritime access
- the further development of the port as a logistics platform
- the deepening of Ghent Port Company's role as a director
- the development of Ghent Port Company as a service company

The realization of a **new larger sealoek** is an important condition for achieving different strategic objectives. Within this strategic plan we gear to the many possibilities this new lock will offer for the port's development.

Today, port of Ghent is still too much perceived as a purely industrial port. A conscious adjustment through the development of the port as a **multimodal logistical platform** stands for additional economic activities that constitute a surplus value for various stakeholders. The potential of present and future industrial activities is further strengthened for added value and employment.

The further development of the Ghent port area by very diverse activities is effective when it is carried out in a structured and coordinated way. This is why in the coming 10 years Ghent Port Company wants to focus on the deepening of its **role as a director** in order to maximize its surplus value. In this role we want to be a (pro)active initiator and coordinator of all activities within the port area as a centre of growth. We want to steer and guide all actors and stakeholders starting from one common vision for the entire port area.

This role as a director implies the development of Ghent Port Company itself into a fully-fledged **service company**. This means that we offer our customers a tailor-made professional service. This is why we invest in the further development and orientation of our co-workers and of our internal organization towards a client-oriented, commercial and professional organization. The development of knowledge and expertise are crucial aspects here.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Starting from our vision and ambition, proposals of strategic objectives are formulated. These strategic objectives often relate to more than one perspective. The strategic objectives that start from the economic perspective have the highest priority. We explicitly and fully opt for the growth of our economic activities.

The strategic objectives based on a zoning and social approach form a substructure, a 'conditio sine qua non' on which the realization of the economic objectives is founded.

The strategic objectives are classified on the following logic:

- 1. we opt for economic growth**
- 2. we support the economic objectives through initiatives in the field of space productivity**
- 3. we facilitate a sustained cooperation with all stakeholders**
- 4. we opt for applying the principles of corporate social responsibility**

The 23 strategic objectives are described in detail hereafter.

Strategic objective 1

By 2020 we want to grow to a yearly seaborne cargo traffic of 30 million tonnes and an inland navigation traffic of 20 million tonnes.

- **Port of Ghent is and remains the driving force behind the East Flemish economy: this is why a growth of the port activities is necessary.**
- **The ambition to develop into a major transit port with value added activities requires the presence of enough critical mass.**
- **In 2018 the new sealock will open new channels towards a substantial traffic increase.**
- **Ghent Port Company has to have sufficient financial means at its disposal to be able to further finance the construction and maintenance of the port infrastructure.**

Port of Ghent is the driving force behind the economy in East Flanders. We have the ambition to remain that way also in the future. For this purpose, economic growth and a cargo traffic increase are necessary.

Increasing the cargo traffic is equally important in order to generate the critical mass that is necessary to attract shipping lines and for the further development of Ghent as a multimodal logistics platform.

It is of the utmost importance that the capacity increase that is made possible from 2018 onwards by the new sealock in Terneuzen will be used in an optimum way. For years now, the seaborne cargo traffic stagnates around 24 million tonnes owing to a lock that has reached its maximum locking capacity for a long time already and where congestion is affecting the competitive position of Ghent port.

As an autonomous municipal company, Ghent Port Company is financially independent. Its main sources of income are the concession fees and the maritime and inland navigation dues. The objective of achieving more goods transshipment is consequently necessary for maintaining the financial health of the company and for realizing its ambitions. It has to be able to build up sufficient reserves to finance the planned investments, the necessary maintenance works and possible unexpected costs.

Strategic objective 2

We want to realize a growth in our economic activities on all markets, with a focus on markets that have a high growth potential.

- **Port of Ghent has to maintain and strengthen its position as a strong player in the Hamburg-Le Havre range: for this purpose, a growth of the port activities is necessary.**
- **A diversification of the port activities is required to facilitate this growth.**
- **In order to attract new seaborne traffics Ghent Port Company focuses on regions having a high growth potential.**
- **Ghent Port Company starts from the strong position Ghent port already has on shortsea and on certain overseas markets.**

A growth of the economic activities is necessary in order to stay a strong player in the Hamburg-Le Havre range and to be able to offer our customers a clear surplus value.

In order to realize this growth, a larger diversification of the port activities is necessary. This requires an active commercial policy that not only continuously pays attention to the developments in the markets that are already familiar to us, but that also focuses worldwide on regions having a high growth potential in order to be able to detect new possibilities for the further economic development of Ghent port.

In the meantime, for a further growth of the shortsea shipping activities, the Baltic, Black and Mediterranean sea areas and the East-Med are our points of particular interest. For newly to be attracted traffics from these regions we specifically aim at a 50% share.

For the growth of the remaining maritime activities we want to focus with priority on the strong growth regions of India, the Middle East and Brazil. For newly to be attracted traffics from these regions we particularly aim at a 30% share for India and the Middle East and at 20% for South America.

Strategic objective 3

We want to live up to our ambition in the field of container traffics. This implies a growth to 300,000 TEU in 2020 for shortsea shipping and inland navigation.

- **Ghent too has to respond to the further containerization of the maritime cargo flows.**
- **A substantial increase of the container supplies is a basic requirement for Ghent's development as a multimodal logistical hub where also value adding activities are carried out.**
- **With the new sealoock in 2018 larger container vessels will be able to call at port of Ghent.**

The rise of the container transshipment fits within the ambition to further diversify the port activities. Diversification and attracting additional regular shipping lines are important to Ghent port's appeal.

Ghent is centrally located in Western Europe, is very well opened up in a trimodal way and consequently has the justifiable ambition to develop into a major hub in the Western European logistical transport chain. This implies a substantial increase of container supplies. In order to be cost-efficient, a multimodal logistics hub needs strong cargo flows. Also, value adding activities in the logistical sector will only be possible when there is sufficient cargo traffic.

From 2018 onwards, because of the new sealoock larger container vessels will be able to call at Ghent port. At that moment, Ghent will be able to play its unique position as a fully-fledged sea and inland port to the full. Because of the good opening up to the European inland navigation network, Ghent is ideally situated for the further distribution via inland navigation and rail over the whole of Europe of containers that are supplied by shortsea shipping and inland navigation.

This objective connects with the ambition to improve the modal split through the realization of a modal shift from road transport to seagoing and inland navigation and to rail.

Strategic objective 4

We develop Ghent by 2018 as a distribution hub for the North till central France regions with a focus on inland navigation, for Eastern France and Europe with a focus on rail and for East and West Flanders with a focus on both inland navigation and rail.

- **Ghent has all the trumps to develop into the multimodal logistics platform from where preferably goods supplied by sea are distributed all over Europe after possible having undergone value adding activities here.**
- **Through the Seine-Scheldt-North connection, Ghent will be the first seaport for Paris and this for all goods categories.**
- **As a decongestion port for the container deepsea terminals Ghent contributes to the further sustainability of the intra-European goods transport.**

Port of Ghent has to play its unique position as a fully-fledged seagoing and inland navigation to a maximum. For, because of the good connections with the European inland navigation network, Ghent is ideally located for the further distribution by inland navigation and rail over the whole of Europe of goods that are supplied by seagoing and inland navigation.

The Seine-Scheldt-North project offers enormous opportunities for Ghent port to profile itself as the northern supply area of the Paris region and this for all kinds of goods. Moreover, in this context Ghent can specifically develop itself as a decongestion port for the ports of Rotterdam, Antwerp and Zeebrugge. Cargo flows that have to reach the Northern French region are quickly and unsorted conveyed Ghent, preferably by shortsea shipping and inland navigation. This reduces congestion at the terminals in these deepsea ports. Subsequently, these goods are sorted in Ghent and further distributed to France by inland navigation and rail.

As a central inland navigation and rail hub for the further European distribution of containers Ghent constitutes a relief for the deepsea ports and the improvement of their modal split without this requiring any additional infrastructure: consequently, this essentially contributes to the sustainability of the intra-European goods transport.

Strategic objective 5

We guarantee that in 2020 Ghent will still be the seaport having the largest bio fuels cluster in Europe: we stimulate and facilitate the biomass cluster that needs seagoing and inland navigation for its raw materials as an alternative to fossil fuels.

- **In order to remain a seaport of importance, we have to anticipate a changing world. This means that Ghent enlarges its position from a distribution centre for fossil fuels to a production and distribution centre for alternative fuels.**
- **Supported by the centres of knowledge that are present, port of Ghent becomes authoritative for the production of second generation bio fuels and in doing so, it acquires international recognition and appeal.**
- **Thanks to this 'industry of the new decade' Ghent remains also in 2020 a seaport having an especially great socio-economic importance.**

Ghent has always been a major distribution centre for fossil fuels. We want to remain that way but the use of fossil fuels is increasingly placed under pressure. The traffic tonnages in this goods category will probably decrease in the next decade. This loss can be compensated by fully going along with the market of alternative fuels. This means that on the one hand we aim at the waterborne supply and distribution of these fuels and that on the other the local production of alternative fuels is further developed.

The university and colleges with their research parks and spin-offs offer the perfect supporting framework for the further development of port of Ghent as a leading production centre for bio fuels. Thorough research into the production of second generation bio fuels (which makes use of botanical waste so that this sector no longer is in competition with that of food production) is made possible through a further concrete cooperation between the port, these knowledge centres and trade and industry. Spin-offs of these knowledge centres are given a place in the port and in this way, they can work as a catalyst.

This objective connects with the ambition to realize a growth of the economic activities, especially in the sectors having a large growth potential, to which the production of alternative fuels undoubtedly belongs in this changing world.

Strategic objective 6

By 2020 the distribution clusters concerning food, building materials and biomass will be further developed. Besides a number of regional distribution centres at least one new European distribution centre will be attracted.

- **With its congestion-free multimodal access, port of Ghent is an attractive location for the establishment of distribution activities with a European scope.**
- **In the Kluizendok complex space is provided for the establishment of distribution activities.**
- **Regional and European distribution centres generate employment and added value.**

Within the framework of the ambition to arrive at a wider diversification of activities in the port area we clearly make the choice of further developing the logistical pillar besides the industrial one. Especially in the Kluizendok complex there is space available for the establishment of logistical and distribution activities.

The access roads to port of Ghent still are relatively free of congestion. Within its possibilities, Ghent Port Company will do everything to keep the Ghent road network free of structural congestion also in the long term. These congestion-free roads together with the very good opening up by inland waterways and the rail connections with the European hinterland turn Ghent into an especially good location for the establishment of distribution activities with a European scope.

Both regional and European distribution centres are rather labour-intensive because of the value adding activities that are carried out previous to the distribution of the goods. Consequently, the attraction of additional distribution centres very well connects to the importance we attach to the realization of employment and added value in the port area.

Strategic objective 7

Besides the traditional clusters and the biomass cluster we will attract two new clusters in which inland and seagoing navigation are at the centre.

- **Clusters of similar or related activities contribute to a long-lasting anchoring, an economic use of space and a reduction of the ecological footprint of production processes.**
- **The attraction of new activities is necessary to have both seaborne and inland traffic grow substantially.**
- **The possibilities of the new sealock and the Seine-Scheldt-North connection have to be validated to a maximum.**

With the development of additional clusters Ghent Port Company aims at the long-term anchoring of its activities, which contributes to the strengthening of the socio-economic importance of Ghent port.

The clustering of similar or related activities equally contributes to the economic use of space and to a reduction of port-internal transport. Moreover, through this clustering we also want to stimulate the synergy between the port activities. These synergies can relate to the joint use of certain infrastructures but they can also take place within the production process. Consequently, the clustering of activities can to a major extent contribute to a reduction of the ecological footprint of production processes.

The objective to attract clusters in which seagoing and inland navigation are at the centre connects with the ambition to have maritime transshipment and transshipment by inland navigation grow substantially. This growth of cargo traffic will also have to be realized through new activities.

Not in the least important is that the improvement of the maritime access via a new sealock and the optimization of the inland navigation access via the Seine-Scheldt-North connection is validated to a maximum by attracting new businesses having a clear maritime and/or inland navigation component.

Strategic objective 8

We develop all possible initiatives in order to bring about the realization of the new sealock.

- **A new, additional sealock in Terneuzen has to be realized by 2018.**
- **This new lock will offer a solution to the issue of the scale increase in maritime shipping, will avoid a further congestion of seagoing and inland navigation and secure the maritime accessibility of Ghent port.**
- **Ghent Port Company facilitates the realization of this lock.**

The lock complex in Terneuzen, the gateway to Ghent port, is reaching its limits. In case of a further increase of the number of seagoing and inland vessels, congestion threatens to become inadmissibly heavy. Also, an answer must be given to the further scale increase in those segments of the world fleet that are relevant to Ghent. Moreover, Ghent port is very vulnerable because of its one single maritime access: when the lock cannot be used, not one seagoing vessel can enter or leave the port.

These problems can be solved by the construction of a new and larger sealock that can be realized inside the existing complex. The realization of this lock is fundamental for the further development of port of Ghent. The negotiations between Flanders and the Netherlands on the division of the costs of this project will be wound up in 2010.

Ghent Port Company will make sure that the further decision-making process passes off according to a timing that enables a realization by the end of 2018. We will facilitate this process as much as possible. Also the possibility of co-financing, within the boundaries of the financial capacity of our company, is not avoided.

Strategic objective 9

We take care that – when by 2018 the new lock will be realized – we will have the Kluizendok infrastructure entirely developed and operational by 2020.

- **The Kluizendok complex has the largest growth potential within the Ghent port area.**
- **The Kluizendok is a unique location for the realization of a multimodal platform and for the handling of shortsea container traffics.**
- **The quay infrastructure at the Kluizendok is calculated for a future depth of water of 16 m.**

The Kluizendok complex with its more than 300 hectares of available land is one of the largest maritime industrial sites in the Benelux. Today already, its state of development makes it possible to directly offer 150 hectares of land to investors. The remaining land will be further developed depending on the timing of the new sealock. One part will be further opened up to seagoing navigation through the construction of additional quays. Another part will be reserved for logistics projects and for the further development of the bio-based economy.

We will equip this site in a multifunctional way with space for shortsea container traffics, breakbulk activities and new maritime industrial activities but most of all as a large-scale multimodal platform. Facilities for rail and inland navigation will also further be developed.

When in 2018 the new sealock will be taken into use, the Kluizendok will offer space for new traffics that in time will also benefit from a larger depth of water. The dock can later be dredged further without fortifications at the existing quay walls being necessary.

Strategic objective 10

We fill in 80 hectares of non-waterfront space at the Kluizendok with priority for the bio-based chemical sector.

- **Following the successful bio fuels cluster, Ghent Port Company wants to further develop the bio-based chemical sector in cooperation with the business world and knowledge institutes.**
- **In doing so, priority is given to projects for which the basic raw materials are supplied as much as possible by sea; for exporting the final products mainly shortsea shipping and inland navigation are aimed at.**
- **The bio-based economy is a sector having a large growth potential.**

For a few years now, the cluster concerning production and distribution of bio fuels in port of Ghent has been developed strongly. 51% of the allocated Belgian quotas are produced in Ghent and together with Terneuzen, Bio Base Europe was started.

The presence of many chemical companies and a university that is authoritative in the field of biotechnological research offers possibilities to continue with this fervour and develop Ghent port as a trendsetter in the field of the bio-based economy. The cooperation between the port, the knowledge centres and the business world has to be intensified and must contribute to concrete commercial realizations. The establishment of spin-offs of these knowledge centres in the port can work as a catalyst here.

The further development of the bio-based chemical sector having an industrial basis, requiring the supply of specific raw materials, having a large growth potential and closely connecting to the already present bio fuels cluster, is important for the growth of the economic activities in port of Ghent.

We plan the space that is necessary for the development of the bio-based chemical sector at the Kluizendok where it can be linked to the maritime supply of the basic raw materials and the conveyance of the final products by inland navigation and shortsea shipping.

Strategic objective 11

We take care that by 2020, through a modification of the infrastructure or through relocation, 60 hectares of sites that are not waterfront sites today will become waterfront sites.

- **The ambition to grow in maritime activities necessitates a sufficient reserve of waterfront sites at any given moment.**
- **Wherever necessary, the usefulness and availability of waterfront sites is optimized by means of infrastructural interventions.**
- **For activities at waterfront sites that do not or do not make enough use of the quay infrastructure other locations are looked for.**

Space in the port area is a scarce item. As we have the ambition to considerably grow in maritime activities, it is necessary to have more waterfront sites at our disposal. Through investments in additional quays, new sites are opened up for seagoing navigation.

The possibilities to build additional docks in the short term are limited. This is why we will mainly focus on investments in existing sites that optimize their usefulness for maritime transshipment. We will also aim at again releasing waterfront sites that are not used for transshipment at present. This means that for certain current activities another location is sought within the port area.

These investments and actions will optimize the opportunities the new large sealock will offer.

Strategic objective 12

We want to steer the site management to a maximum by being able to give an extra 150 hectares in concession for port-related activities by 2020.

- **The instrument of the concession will be introduced to the full in order to accommodate the economic growth in a coordinated way.**
- **The additional yields from concessions will be used for supplementary investments in the development and opening up of new sites.**

In order to play our role as a territorial manager to the full we have to steer the zoning policy in an active way. We want to make the space that is needed to develop new economic activities or to extend existing activities available as much as possible through concessions. For this purpose, we aim at an average granting of sites of 15 hectares per year or 150 hectares by 2020. Essential here is that the new activities should be port-related as much as possible.

The concessions form a major source of income for Ghent Port Company. Additional earnings from new concessions will first of all be used to acquire new sites, to equip and develop them and to open them up. In this way, we equally want to guarantee a sufficient reserve of concession sites for the period after 2020.

Strategic objective 13

By 2015 we will have drawn up a validated strategic zoning master plan for the entire port area that among other things starts from a 25% increase of the space efficiency in the old port part, a logical clustering of activities and tackling the existing brownfield projects.

- **Historically grown inefficiencies in the old port part are being adjusted in view of increasing the space productivity.**
- **Through a well-considered and phased approach of brownfield projects among other things unused sites become available again for economic activities.**
- **Port-internal transport is minimized by clustering related activities.**

The available sites for port activities are limited because of the borders of the port area. In order to be able to develop more economic activities, we aim at considerably increasing the space productivity on the concession sites. Especially in the older port part historically grown inefficiencies will be adjusted. Land that today still lies fallow will be fitted up and equipped. In many cases it concerns land that because of one or other issue or soil pollution cannot be taken into operation in the short term. A systematic approach of these brownfields has to make these sites ready for use again in time.

Space productivity can also be increased by taking care that port-internal transport is avoided as much as possible. This can be done by clustering related activities in a judicious way.

Moreover, increasing attention will be paid to park management, collective facilities in related regions and a qualitative filling in of clearly visible locations for the establishment of a company.

In order to steer all these interventions in the right direction, a strategic zoning master plan is drawn up for the entire port area that will serve as a guideline for the execution of the separate projects. This zoning master plan will be well-founded and will be validated by 2015.

Strategic objective 14

By 2020 we aim at a modal split of 35% by road, 50% by inland navigation and 15% by rail and we develop a policy instrument for steering the modal shift.

- **In order to continue to operate a growth scenario, part of the transport has to be taken off the road.**
- **When stimulating the different transport modes, attention is paid to seagoing navigation, inland navigation, rail and finally road transport according to their degree of importance.**

A clear choice is made in favour of building up a logistical pillar in a sustainable way in addition to the existing industrial pillar. In order to avoid that this choice is automatically coupled to an increase of road transport, Ghent Port Company will actively work on a modal shift from road transport to the other modes. We want to stimulate as much as possible the use of inland navigation and rail as the most environment-friendly means.

This objective is in line with the vision and strategic choices of both the Flemish government and the European Commission. The realization of this modal shift moreover supports our aim to keep the road network in and around the port free of congestion.

Practically all waterfront concessions in the port are equipped for multimodal transport. Nevertheless, rail is insufficiently used and in the field of inland navigation, an even higher productivity can be reached.

Finally, also passenger transport in the port, and then mainly commuter traffic, can be organized in a more sustainable way.

Strategic objective 15

We take care that the growth of economic activities can be realized by keeping the infrastructure in the port area free of congestion and through a maximum traffic safety.

- **Proactive measures avoid congestion problems on the access roads as a consequence of additional port traffic.**
- **Ghent Port Company actively cooperates on a joint vision on the transport infrastructure outside the port area.**
- **Ghent Port Company pays attention to traffic safety, which we want to monitor based on our director's role.**

The growth in economic activities can only be realized when the port can always be reached in a smooth and safe way. We have a clear wish to take additional and proactive measures to prevent congestion problems on the access roads.

Within the port area and as a territorial manager we want to take care of an optimum arrangement of the public domain by realizing safe and smooth crossings and by reducing the possible conflict places between the different modes to an absolute minimum. We watch over traffic safety as part of our director's role. For this purpose, we also develop a monitoring instrument.

In cooperation with our administrative stakeholders we also have an eye for the infrastructure located outside the port area. For this purpose, we cooperate on a joint vision, without however taking the lead.

Ghent Port Company wants to have a strong impact on the development of plans and the decision process of other ports and actors concerning mobility when they can have consequences for the larger Ghent region.

Strategic objective 16

Through sustained maintenance and a well-considered construction policy we take care that by 2020 the infrastructure's life span in the port area is prolonged.

- **A maintenance plan that starts from a clear vision and that is carried out in a systematic way enables an efficient use of all infrastructure.**
- **This kind of long-term maintenance plan leads to a more efficient putting into action of people and means.**
- **For the construction of new infrastructure, from the design onwards, attention is paid to its future maintenance.**

A well functioning port has to be able to have the disposal at any given moment of a well-equipped and maintained infrastructure. The condition of our infrastructure will continuously be mapped out in order to use this as a starting point and guarantee an optimum maintenance in the short and in the long term.

A clear vision on the added value of preventive maintenance, and its systematic application, will enable a correct estimate of the need of people and financial means for maintenance, even in the long term.

Strategic objective 17

By 2020 all stakeholders will back the same strategy and the long-term development of port of Ghent.

- **Ghent Port Company follows a stakeholder management in order to create a broad social basis for the assumed economic development of the port.**
- **Ghent Port Company aims at a shared commitment in the port's further development.**
- **Everyone has to be a port supporter.**

The development of the port is a matter of quite some partners in the economic and the political world as well as in that of the protection of interests. If the port wants to preserve its socio-economic importance in and outside the region then a broad social basis for the assumed economic development of the port is required.

This supposes a structured and well-organized cooperation. For this purpose, we make use of an active stakeholder management. Moreover, the different groups of stakeholders have to identify themselves with the port: everyone has to be turned into a port supporter.

By 2013, Ghent Port Company develops a communications and cooperation plan for all relevant groups of stakeholders. By 2020 it will be completely operational.

Strategic objective 18

On the lines of the strategic objectives we create a logistical platform that will have led by 2020 to a participation or cooperation with partners inside and outside the port area of Ghent.

- **In order to be able to realize the assumed economic development of Ghent port, Ghent Port Company enters into partnerships that support the vision, values and economic and commercial objectives of Ghent Port Company.**
- **Partnerships contribute to the structural anchoring of the activities.**
- **Ghent Port Company also invests outside the seaport area in view of developing a network of seaport-supporting activities.**

As territorial manager, Ghent Port Company takes up a directing and facilitating role in order to contribute to the intended economic development of port of Ghent. However, the port is made up of many actors. Consequently, a good cooperation between all stakeholders, both authorities and private companies, is crucial for the realization of the objectives of this strategic plan.

In practice, we aim at concluding cooperation agreements with other authorities, centres of knowledge, interest groups, inland ports and other seaports among others. This is necessary more specifically in the ambition to have Ghent function as a decongestion port for the seaports of Rotterdam, Antwerp and Zeebrugge.

Also within the framework of the ambition to have port of Ghent develop into a multimodal logistics hub, Ghent Port Company enters into participations or it invests in (inland navigation) terminals that are located outside the seaport area. In this way, a network of seaport-supporting activities can be set up. The execution of seaport-supporting activities outside the port area can contribute to a more efficient use of the sites located in the port area and corresponds to the 'Extended Gateway' concept that is promoted by the Flemish government.

Strategic objective 19

As an organization and as port of Ghent in general, we want to become a reference by 2020 in the field of corporate social responsibility within the European port world.

- **When managing and further developing the port, Ghent Port Company bears in mind the principles of corporate social responsibility.**
- **Corporate social responsibility is equally applied in the internal functioning of Ghent Port Company.**

In and around the seaport area, in which the economic function has priority, there still are various functions of use: living, agriculture, landscape, nature and recreation. Consequently, the economic development of port of Ghent has to be carried out with respect for the environment. In order to have all the functions that are present in the Ghent canal zone function in a balanced way, a policy is necessary in which the different fields of policy are geared to one another. Ghent Port Company wants to contribute to this as a director and facilitator and for years now, it has been working in a concrete way on a strong integration with its environment. We have the ambition to strengthen this policy into a corporate social responsibility.

This corporate social responsibility is not only necessary in connection with the management and the further development of port of Ghent. We also wish to apply these principles of corporate social responsibility in our in-house operation.

Strategic objective 20

By 2012 we develop a concession policy and concession conditions that besides the economic and zoning approach also stimulate sustainability among the concessionaires. By the year 2020 we will have realized this policy in phases.

- **Besides being a major source of income, the concession contracts are also a means with which Ghent Port Company can steer on a territorial level.**
- **A well-considered concession policy contributes to the sustainable development of Ghent port.**
- **Sustainability criteria in the concession contracts stimulate the concessionaires to a more sustainable operation.**

First of all, concession contracts have an economic value: the concession fees are an important source of income for Ghent Port Company.

As the party that is granting the concessions, Ghent Port Company can also steer the operational conditions of the concessionaires through the concession contracts within certain margins and for certain aspects. Consequently, from this point of view, the concession policy is also an instrument with which Ghent Port Company can steer on a territorial level.

A well thought-out concession policy that starts from more than merely economic criteria can contribute to a large extent to the realization of the strategic objectives in connection with among other things the improvement of the modal split, the increase of space productivity and the improvement of the energy efficiency of the port activities. It is a powerful means to equally stimulate a more sustainable operation among the concessionaires.

Strategic objective 21

We want to continue to realize the liveability of the entire port zone and of the canal villages.

- **The economic development of port of Ghent has to go hand in hand with attention for the function of living and the landscaping and ecological values of the Ghent canal zone.**
- **Ghent Port Company pursues a well-considered concession policy and actively cooperates in the layout of the coupling areas and the realization of the 'green framework' covenant.**
- **Through a strong integration with its environment, Ghent Port Company develops a broad social basis for the further economic development of Ghent port.**

The economic development of the port has to be carried out with respect for the liveability of the surrounding residential areas, paying attention to the ecological values in and around the port and starting from a qualitative zoning policy. In this respect, as territorial manager, Ghent Port Company wants to play a directing and facilitating role. A well-considered granting policy with attention for an economical use of space, a well thought-out localization of port activities and aiming at clustering of activities is important in this context.

Moreover, Ghent Port Company takes up important financial commitments in connection with the layout of the coupling areas – transition areas between the port activities and the residential centres - that when they are built in an attractive way can create a large added value for the quality of living and the landscaping and ecological values in the Ghent canal zone.

We equally cooperate in an active way in the execution of the 'green framework' covenant. This is a voluntary initiative that also contributes to the improvement of the scenic quality and the ecological basic quality in the port area. This will be done in practice through the realization of green links along pipeline, railway, road and waterway routes and on remaining land, among other things.

Strategic objective 22

We develop our director's role to the full in view of realizing the 205 hectares of nature conservation objectives by 2014.

- **In and around the seaport area an ecological network of 205 hectares has to be realized. This comprises large base areas of nature outside the port area supplemented with steppingstones and corridors in the port.**
- **Ghent Port Company fully takes up its role as a director of the port area in order to realize these 205 hectares of nature values as soon as possible.**
- **Ghent Port Company financially contributes to the construction costs of these nature zones.**

In 2003 a study was carried out that mapped the nature values of Ghent port. This study aimed at on the one hand drawing up an inventory of the nature values within the seaport area that were affected or will be affected as a consequence of the port development and which consequently have to be 'compensated'. This study on the other hand also calculated how many and which habitats are necessary for the preservation of the policy relevant varieties of international or of Flemish importance.

The study concluded that in the Ghent canal zone an ecological network of 205 hectares is required. This nature development has to be realized in large basic areas that are situated outside the seaport area and complemented with steppingstones and corridors in the port.

The Flemish government is authorized to delineate the search zones for this nature development and is responsible for its realization. However, Ghent Port Company will here as well fully take up its directing and facilitating competences as territorial manager in order to realize these 205 hectares as fast as possible. In addition, we will also contribute financially in the build-up of these nature areas.

Strategic objective 23

We aim at a 20% improvement of the energy efficiency of the economic activities (within the port area) by 2020.

- **Port activities have to be energy-efficient and make more use of alternative sources of energy.**
- **As territorial manager and concession provider, Ghent Port Company can also stimulate the transition to more energy efficiency and to an alternative use of energy in the port area.**
- **For its own activities, Ghent Port Company is also going to handle energy in a sustainable way.**

A lot of port activities are energy intensive. The assumed economic growth will even have this need of energy increase. In a world in which the energy consumption finds itself under increasing pressure, it is important to use energy as efficiently as possible.

This means in practice that on the one hand companies try to limit their energy consumption and that on the other they make use as much as possible of alternative sources of energy. As territorial manager and concession provider Ghent Port Company can help to stimulate this evolution.

Ghent Port Company also tries to serve as an example to others by paying attention also in its own operations to an efficient and sustainable use of energy. For example, the administrative wing that was taken into use in 2005 is completely built according to the 'passive house' concept. This passive office building was something entirely new for Belgium. Also the new visitors centre with adjoining accommodation for the barges department will be built with attention for sustainable techniques and materials including a rational energy consumption.

