

Environment/ Cruises

Cruises and climate protection do not yet come together

NABU presents cruise ranking 2023

Berlin – Rising greenhouse gas emissions and severe air pollution continue to be the cruise industry's biggest problems. This is shown by this year's cruise ranking, which NABU presented in Hamburg on June 28th. Even though there are initial announcements that promise more climate-friendly operations, even the frontrunners Hurtigruten and Havila from Norway with 9 out of 14 possible points in the ranking are still far away environmentally-friendly cruises. On the positive side, no company can afford not to take measures to reduce emissions – the midfield of the ranking is moving closer together. However, there are still major differences between the companies, but also within the fleets of the companies. In particular, existing ships are hardly getting any cleaner. Unfortunately, this also applies to German brands such as AIDA and TUI. Improvements are implemented almost exclusively on new ships. However, these innovations secure AIDA's top position among shipping companies with large ships.

Leif Miller, NABU CEO: "It seems out of step with the times that the majority of large ships continue to sail with the particularly toxic but cheap heavy fuel oil. The industry must finally phase it out. This is also demanded by more than 20,000 people who have signed our appeal to abandon heavy fuel oil. Continuing to expose people and nature to the dangers of this toxic fuel for profit does not fit with the clean image that the companies claim for themselves."

Suppliers of smaller cruise ships are becoming pioneers in climate and environmental protection. In addition to technical solutions, ambitious and at the same time clear political regulation in Norway is particularly responsible here. There, strict requirements have triggered a surge in innovation, the result of which could soon be climate-neutral cruises. Shore power, batteries and e-fuels based on green hydrogen will also form the basis for this elsewhere. The targets recently adopted as part of the EU Green Deal set a good framework for this across the shipping industry. For cruise ships, green methanol in particular offers an opportunity for climate-neutral operation. TUI Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Lines have ordered ships that rely on this option.

Sönke Diesener, NABU shipping expert: "It is very welcome that the first companies have finally found a way towards more climate neutrality. Now the pace must pick up and find many imitators. However, in order to play its part in achieving the Paris climate targets, the industry must drastically reduce emissions in the short term. In fact, however, they continue to rise. Of particular concern is the sharp rise in methane emissions from LNG use. These are over 80 times more harmful to the climate than CO₂. Those who speak of a bridging technology here are turning a blind

eye to the manifold problems of LNG, to fracking that is harmful to nature, and to methane as a climate killer."

Both investments of the shipping companies and political guidelines should be clearly oriented towards climate neutrality. However, this process cannot include climate-damaging substitute fuels. In addition to LNG, biofuels are also not suitable. At most, they must remain a niche solution in exceptional local cases. In addition, it must be ensured that they are exclusively waste products and that no palm oil or other product from our fields ends up in the ships' tanks.

At least in some ports, where cruise ships are docked 40 percent of the time, a climate- and environmentally-friendly energy supply is finally available in the form of shore power connections. The EU's decided requirements for the use of shore power are most welcome. The cruise industry and German ports are playing a positive pioneering role here.

Malte Siegert, Chairman of NABU Hamburg: "Now it is important to also use this option to protect residents from air pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We welcome the new facilities in Hamburg, Rostock and Kiel. There is no excuse anymore for those who keep their engines running in the port. These ships must be denied entry."

More information: www.NABU.de/Kreuzfahrtranking2023

More photos: www.NABU.de/pressebilder_Kreuzfahrtschiff

With more than 900,000 members and supporters, NABU, founded in 1899, is Germany's oldest environmental association with the largest number of members. NABU is committed to preserving habitat and species diversity, climate protection and the sustainability of agriculture, forestry and water management. NABU inspires enthusiasm for nature and promotes natural history knowledge for an active experience of nature. More info: www.NABU.de/wir-ueber-uns