

A Stable Traffic Level in a Difficult Worldwide Economic Context

The external traffic volume at the Port of Nantes – Saint Nazaire amounts to 30.6 million tonnes in 2011. At a comparable level to 2010, it is characterized by a disparity between the movement in imports (- 4.1 %) and in exports (+ 5 %), with the latter representing nearly a third of the total traffic volume. The growth in container, ro-ro and grain and cereal traffic has served to make up overall for the downturn in the liquefied natural gas, coal and cattle feed traffic sectors.

Due to the competition from the trans-Siberian gas pipelines and in the face of markets destabilized by strong levels of demand in Asia, liquefied natural gas traffic fell by over 20 % compared to 2010. Supplies of coal are down nearly 8 %, with the winter temperatures having been mild and the power station at Cordemais having sought more to reduce its stocks of fuel after 2010, a year in which that facility was much called upon to offset the difficulties of supply in the French nuclear power sector.

Crude oil is up, as are exports of refined hydrocarbons, despite the closure of certain markets including the USA, which has been made up for in part by demand-led traffic bound for Africa. Driven by chemicals and agri-foodstuffs, the other liquid bulk cargo sectors rise by more than 10 %. This result stems from the joint development of the Cargill and Diester facilities at Montoir de Bretagne.

Grain and cereal traffic amounts to 1.6 million tonnes. This record level at the Port of Nantes – Saint Nazaire for the second consecutive year is one of the consequences of the natural disasters that have impacted the world's principal producers, including Australia and Russia. Owing to the difficult economic situation in the farming sector, fertilizer traffic is down, as are soya cakes, which have come up against direct competition from less expensive, domestically produced sunflower cakes and rapeseed cakes. In correlation with prevailing trends in the building and civil engineering market, marine sand traffic shows a slight downturn. This is also the case for exports of recyclable scrap metals bound mainly for steelworks in Spain and North Africa.

General Cargo Progresses by over 17 %

In spite of the changes to CMA-CGM's West Indies service in January 2011 and of the reorganization of MSC's Indian Ocean – Australia – New Zealand service in September, container traffic grows by more than 6 %. The recent addition of feeder services out of Montoir de Bretagne to Northern European Ports contributes to this favourable development.

Finally, thanks to the expansion of the maritime motorway service between Montoir de Bretagne and Gijón in Spain, ro-ro traffic has more than doubled, exceeding the one-million-tonne mark. Results for the first year of operation bettered the initial projections of shipping company LD Lines by 75 %. Over 18 000 HGVs used the service in 2011. This service provision has also furthered the development of operations at Montoir de Bretagne by the CAT Group, which receives, stores and organizes the distribution of new vehicles imported from Spain and Turkey.

Principal External Traffic Results
(provisional data as of 2nd January 2012)

	2010 (tonnes)	2011 (tonnes)	2011/2010 (%)
Total External Traffic	31 091 933	30 576 000	- 1.7 %
Energy-Related Traffic including:	21 144 416	20 341 000	- 3.8 %
▪ crude oil	7 959 699	8 365 000	+ 5.1 %
▪ refined petroleum products	6 315 431	6 308 000	- 0.1 %
▪ liquefied natural gas	4 907 441	3 854 000	- 21.5 %
▪ coal and petroleum coke	1 961 845	1 814 000	- 7.6 %
Non-Energy-Related Traffic including:	9 947 517	10 235 000	+ 2.9 %
▪ cattle feed	2 050 529	1 763 000	- 14.0 %
▪ grain and cereals	1 541 922	1 581 000	+ 2.5 %
▪ fertilizers	208 179	169 000	- 18.8 %
▪ marine sand	1 578 471	1 550 000	- 1.8 %
▪ scrap metal	403 642	389 000	- 3.6 %
▪ containers*	1 752 323	1 860 000	+ 6.1 %
▪ ro-ro	487 235	1 029 000	+ 111.3 %

* container traffic expressed in TEUs (20-foot equivalent units)	166 266	175 000	+ 5.3 %
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**The results for 2011, including the detailed traffic development data,
will be presented at a press conference to be held later in January
at the Headquarters of the Nantes – Saint Nazaire Port Authority in Nantes.**