Matson

Many of Matson’s routes have exceptional natural beauty and the company is cognizant of the ocean environment in which it operates. Matson endeavors to be a good environmental steward in the communities it serves, and assists in the development of technological solutions to environmental problems.

Since 1993, Matson has maintained a zero waste discharge policy that means no solid waste, other than food scraps, is discharged overboard. The program was developed with the Center for Marine Conservation (now known as the Ocean Conservancy). The solid waste is segregated to facilitate recycling and placed in a special “green container,” which occupies one of the cargo slots onboard a vessel. The green container is unloaded at one of Matson’s terminals, and the recyclables and trash are sent to approved disposal facilities. To date, Matson remains the only container vessel operating company that maintains such a program.

In an effort to further protect the coastlines of the communities Matson serves, the company established the “Matson Environmental Protection Zone” (MEPZ) in 2002. The MEPZ, which must be recognized by all Matson vessels, is the sea area within 50 miles from the nearest land. When a Matson vessel is within the MEPZ, procedures prohibit any discharges through the oil water separator, even though they are legally permitted to do so. The operation of incinerators is also prohibited while in the MEPZ.

When it comes to invasive species and ballast water, Matson has as a policy that 100 percent of the ballast water on its ships is exchanged before the vessels arrive in port. This ensures the company has the cleanest possible ballast water and that no invasive species are released while a ship is in port. Matson has actively participated in ballast water/invasive species committees in California, Hawai’i and Washington, as well as at a national level.

One of the most significant improvements made to the Matson fleet in recent years has been the addition of four newly built, diesel-powered containerships—an investment of over $500 million. These new ships are the company’s most fuel-efficient vessels and are equipped with new technologies that reduce air emissions and comply with international environmental standards. Matson’s newest vessel, the MV Maunalei, has a state-of-the-art oil-water separator, equipped with GPS technology and filters, which minimize the oil content to a degree that makes the water almost drinkable.

The company is also moving forward with a number of initiatives that involve applying new technologies to some of its older ships in order to reduce air emissions and support Matson’s overall green objectives and targets.

Matson’s commitment to the environment also extends to land-based initiatives. In 2006, Matson and SSA Marine signed a new “green port” lease with the Port of Long Beach, setting a new environmental standard for terminal leases. As part of the new agreement, Matson will retrofit five vessels in its current fleet to use shore side electricity, which is known as cold-ironing. In addition, a class of older vessels will be retrofitted with technology that is similar.

Begun in 2001, the Ka Ipu ‘Aina “Container for the Land” program helps to keep Hawaiian lands clean by providing a container for area cleanups conducted by 501c3 non-profit organizations and donating $1,000 to the group for their work. For the past three years, Matson and Alexander & Baldwin employees have participated in annual coastal cleanups sponsored by the Ocean Conservancy.

In 2005, approximately 170 employees participated and collected over 4,500 pounds of trash. In 2005, Matson also began working with the Hawai’i Wildlife Fund to sponsor monthly beach cleanups on the Big Island to remove trash, particularly derelict fishing nets, from shorelines. Once removed, the nets are transported to Honolulu’s H-Power to be recycled to generate electricity for the island.

Through its innovative environmental practices, outreach programs and partnerships with various organizations, Matson continually strives to protect the environment of the communities it serves. This commitment has been recognized with the American Bureau of Shipping’s SQE certification and the U.S. Coast Guard’s prestigious Benkert Environmental Award. Beyond the honors it has received, Matson’s primary intention for undertaking various environmental initiatives is to ensure that waters and coastlines remain pristine and protected for generations to come.