

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG



DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY
CENTRE OF URBAN PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL ENGINEERING

are pleased to present a seminar by

Prof. Claude Comtois

University of Montréal, Canada

On

Environmental Capacity and Corporate Strategies of the Maritime Industry

Time: 7:00 p.m., Friday, 25 February, 2005

Venue: Room 222, Hui Oi Chow Science Building, HKU

About the Speaker

Prof. Claude Comtois is professor of transport geography at the Université de Montréal, Canada. His visiting professorships outside Canada include France, China and Australia. His most important works address issues of maritime and intermodal transport mostly in East Asia. Apart from serving as a consultant to municipal and provincial agencies, he has also served as a project director for the Canadian International Development Agency. He is the author of over 100 scientific publications in French, English, German and Chinese. His latest publications focus on the strategies of the international corporate transport sector. He currently supervises a project on the elaboration of blueprints for sustainable port and water transport systems.

Seminar Abstract

It is recognised in the literature that environmental legislation plays a key role in sustainable development applicable to port development and maritime transport. Environmental legislation imposes limits and constraints on port terminal operators and shipping lines. However, little attention has been given to the strategies of shipping lines and port authorities as they respond to the evolving environmental legislation. A series of critical issues is raised about these concerns. How are port authorities and maritime carriers assessing environmental conditions? How is the industry responding to the challenges of sustainable development? Above all, how does environmental performance affect corporate strategies and competitiveness?

First, we consider the kinds of environmental issues that are confronting the maritime industry. Evidence is drawn from an analysis of the environmental statements of 800 ports and 120 shipping lines. Second, a detailed examination is made on the operating designs in terms of elements, mechanisms and constraints. A key finding is the importance of governance. Third, the seminar examines the competitive factors underpinning sustainable development strategies. Implications for further research are outlined.

All interested are welcome