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Engine builders prepare for Hercules sequel

👤 Written by [Kevin Tester](#)

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A major cross-industry initiative led by Wärtsilä, MAN Diesel & Turbo and Winterthur Gas & Diesel to basic technologies for use in two- and four-stroke marine engines has been officially launched. Part of the EU, the Hercules-2 project is aimed at fostering environmentally sustainable and more efficient

Altogether, 32 marine industry partners from 11 different companies, 16 universities, and five research organisations are cooperating in this project, with NTU Athens as coordinator. The R&D efforts focus on four areas: 1) the use of alternative fuels and optimisation to allow seamless switching between different fuels; 2) the development of new materials to support high-temperature component applications; 3) the development of adaptive control methodologies to boost lifetime engine; and 4) to achieve near-zero emissions via treatment of exhaust gases.

The project is expected to deliver benefits in terms of both the environmental performance of ships and the vessel owner's bottom line, said Ilari Kallio, Vice President, R&D, Engines, speaking on behalf of Wärtsilä.

According to Søren H. Jensen, head of R&D at MAN Diesel & Turbo, technical innovations emerging from the research will be found in ship engines in four to five years time.

Rien Hoogerbrugge, VP of R&D at Winterthur Gas & Diesel (Wärtsilä's joint venture with CSSC of China), said: "This initiative enables the partners to combine their know-how by bringing together scientists and engineers from various fields."

The Hercules-2 project is scheduled to run for three years. It represents the follow-up phase of the R&D programme for large engine technologies, which was originally conceived in 2004 by Wärtsilä and MAN Diesel & Turbo.

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