Conquering Long Idle Periods

Keeping Your Hull Biofouling-Free without hull cleaning

In the dynamic maritime industry, vessels frequently face longer idle periods during which biofouling can develop on the hull. When biofouling accumulates in-water hull cleaning is needed to maintain vessels' performance, however, it is a costly and time consuming process.

Due to its ability to battle biofouling, high-performance hull coatings can have a significant impact on the operating costs of ocean-going vessels.

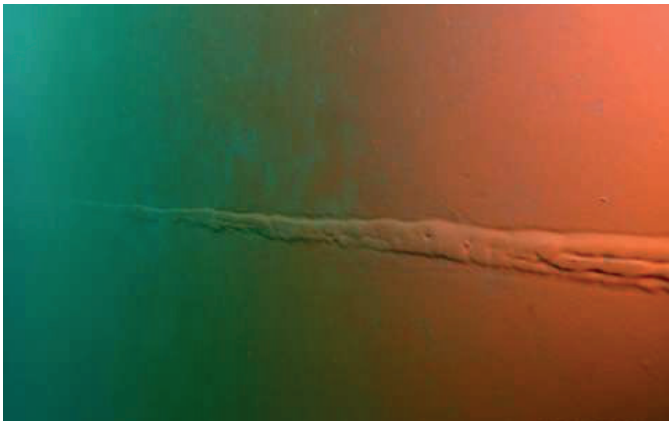
If owners choose the right coating system during drydocking, they will see benefits throughout the entire service period: fuel consumption and carbon emissions will be lower; the vessel will be able to call ports with strict biofouling regulation; and the need for time-consuming and expensive hull cleaning will be significantly reduced.

5 Months Idle, Zero Biofouling
How One VLCC Stayed Biofouling-Free in Tropical Waters

When a VLCC entered dry dock in February 2022, and was coated with Hempaguard X7, the owner at the same time began negotiations to sell the vessel. Due to a prolonged legal process, it re-mained idle for an additional five months in tropical waters—prime conditions for biofouling. Typically, such an extended idle period would lead to extensive biofouling growth, no-doubt a costly and time-consuming process to get rid of for the new shipowner before commencing operation.

Instead, an in-water inspection revealed a remarkable outcome: the hull was in excellent condition. The application of Hempaguard X7 played a critical role in this outcome resulting no need of cleaning of the underwater hull saving time and money for both the vessel seller and buyer.

VLCC after five months idle in tropical waters



At a glance	
Vessel type:	VLCC
Built:	2006
Last drydock:	February 2022
Inspection data*:	Performance since last drydock: •Activity level: 3.7% •Average speed: 8.2 kn •Average water temperature: Warm (27.3°C) •Water depth: Shallow

*Inspection data collected 7 months after drydocking and after 5-month idle period

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Four years of clean sailing
The MR Tanker that beat biofouling even after 327 idle days

In the ever-evolving maritime industry, vessels often find themselves idle for unexpected stretches, which traditionally raises concerns about biofouling and its effect on operational efficiency. Take the case of a MR tanker coated with Hempaguard X7 and monitored with Hempel's SHAPE monitoring platform. In between two dry-dockings, this vessel faced 327 idle days—nearly 10 months of inactivity.

If the vessel had been coated with a conventional antifouling, this would most likely have required frequent hull cleanings to maintain operational efficiency, typically ranging from three to five times between drydockings. However, thanks to the tanker being coated with the high-performance silicone, Hempaguard X7, the hull was completely free of any biofouling four years after application – with no hull cleanings during the period at all.

For the owner, this did not only reduce operating costs related to fuel and hull cleaning, but also ensured a faster and cheaper recoating process at the next drydocking.

The Advantages of Hempel's Hull Performance Offering
Combined, Hempaguard's innovative Actiguard® silicone-hydrogel technology and Hempel's, SHAPE monitoring services, reduces the need for cleaning and sustains performance in most trad-ing scenarios, offering:

- Lower direct operational costs: By avoiding in-water hull cleaning interventions, costs are minimised.
- Less downtime at port: The absence of hull cleaning procedures allowed for quicker turnarounds.
- Lower biosecurity and chemical contamination risks: Avoiding hull cleaning activities reduces the environmental impact.
- Faster and cheaper recoating process: Since hull cleaning can increase re-coating costs due to additional surface preparation and materials, avoiding this step simplifies future drydocking.

At a glance	
Vessel type:	MR Tanker
Built:	2009
Last drydock:	March 2015-2019
Inspection data*:	During the 4-year drydock period: • Activity level: 52% • Average speed: 11.7 kn • Water depth: Shallow • Total idle days: 327

*Data collected in-dock following 50 months of trading

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