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EU-Funded Project Hercules-2 Launched

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The Hercules-2 project — or Hercules-B — is Phase 2 of the original Hercules R&D program for large-engine technologies originally conceived in 2004 by Wärtsilä and MAN Diesel & Turbo. The same two companies, together with Winterthur Gas & Diesel, collaborate now on this cross-industry initiative, to develop basic technologies for use in two- and four-stroke marine engines.

Hercules-2 aims at fostering environmentally sustainable and more efficient shipping and is partly funded by the European Union. Altogether, 32 marine industry partners from 11 different companies, 16 universities, and five research organizations are cooperating in this project, with the National Technical University of Athens in Greece as coordinator.

R&D efforts focus on four main areas: the application of alternative fuels and the optimization of fuel flexibility to facilitate seamless switching between different fuels; the development of new materials to support high-temperature component applications; the development of adaptive control methodologies to significantly improve an engine's performance throughout its life span; and to achieve near-zero emissions via combined, integrated, after-treatment of exhaust gases.

Winterthur Gas & Diesel's vice president, R&D, Rien Hoogerbrugge, sees Hercules-2 as an important opportunity. "This project enables the partners to combine know-how by

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gate concepts, engines."

development

of new technologies that have a positive impact on our customers' profitability. Another is the significant contribution this project will make to more environmentally sustainable shipping," said Ilari Kallio, vice president, R&D, Engines, speaking on behalf of Wärtsilä.

"Hercules-2 is a strong platform that will create a basis for the development of technologies applicable to ship engines in four to five years time," said Søren H. Jensen, vice president and head of R&D at MAN Diesel & Turbo. "We have, therefore, positive expectations and look forward to collaborating with so many cross-industry partners."

The Hercules-2 project is scheduled to run for three years, and its technologies are eventually expected to be employed aboard large ships.

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