



UK's waterborne sector committed to the transition to zero-emission waterborne transport

Waterborne Technology Platform met with representatives of the waterborne transport sector in the United Kingdom, to discuss the needs for research, development and innovation, and next steps towards competitive, safe, digital and zero-emission waterborne transport

Brussels, 06 November 2023

As the United Kingdom is an island nation, shipping and the maritime sectors are among the most important industries to the UK economy. Every single person in the UK, every single day, will touch, use and eat goods that have been brought to the UK by ship. That is because 95% of all imports and exports are moved by sea. According to Maritime UK, *“shipping is an overwhelming success story for the UK and is renowned for its leadership across the world. The country relies on the £10bn the shipping industry contributes in GDP and it supports 240,000 jobs.”* To discuss the transition to a competitive, safe, digital and zero-emission waterborne transport sector, representatives of the country's waterborne transport sector met with a delegation of the Waterborne Technology Platform on 06 November 2023.

The Waterborne Technology Platform (TP) is the European research and innovation platform for the waterborne industries, providing policy guidance to the European institutions regarding research, development and innovation, as well as the deployment of these innovations.

The discussions are of particular importance for the Partnership on Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport, a co-operation between the European Commission and the Waterborne Technology Platform. This Partnership aims to develop and demonstrate zero-emission solutions for all main ship types and services before 2030. The European Commission has committed to investing up to EUR 530 million from Horizon Europe towards the Partnership, and the industry has committed to over EUR three billion of investments for the period 2021 – 2030.

Eero Lehtovaara, Chair of the Board of Directors, Waterborne TP, said: *“Our meeting with the UK waterborne transport sector representatives served to deepen our understanding of the opportunities and challenges in the shift toward competitive, safe, digital, and zero-emission waterborne transport. The UK's maritime industry leads the way in pioneering innovative shipboard solutions and these discussions have highlighted the importance of research, development, and innovation, providing valuable insights for shaping Waterborne TP's agenda.”*

Louise Mothersole, Horizon Europe UK National Contact Point for Mobility, Global Innovation Lead for Transport Innovate UK added: *“On 7th September, the UK Prime Minister announced a new UK-EU agreement on the UK's association to Horizon Europe and Copernicus. As set out in the EU/UK Joint Statement of 7 September, all projects within the Horizon Europe work programme for 2024 and beyond will be funded by the UK's association to Horizon Europe. This is a fantastic opportunity for the UK maritime sector to develop deep collaborative relationships with the European waterborne sector to solve some of the most significant challenges around decarbonising shipping whilst working together to maintain competitive advantage for the whole European supply chain.”*



Diane Gilpin, founder and CEO of Smart Green Shipping, concluded: *“The climate and nature crises we face now are the greatest threat to our civilisation whilst at the same time offering great opportunities to create new, valuable clean solutions. It is my view that we can only work at the scale and speed we need through deep and authentic collaboration. This is why Smart Green Shipping works across the entire shipping eco-system, from naval architects to cargo-owners. Working with InnovateUK support and colleagues at Waterborne we benefit from a wider pool of knowledge, connections, and experience to help us solve challenges as they arise. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build a better future, to regenerate European shipping and shipbuilding and to reap the financial rewards from being ambitious and courageous.”*

WATERBORNE TP has been set up as an industry-oriented Technology Platform to establish a continuous dialogue between all waterborne stakeholders, such as classification societies, shipbuilders, shipowners, maritime equipment manufacturers, infrastructure and service providers, universities or research institutes, and with the EU Institutions, including Member States (www.waterborne.eu). The members of Waterborne TP comprise members as well as associated members from both maritime and inland navigation countries, representing about 19 Member States. In addition, the Associations member of the Waterborne Technology Platform represent the broader waterborne sector throughout the entire EU.

Enquiries concerning how to join and become more closely involved in the “Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport” partnership or other activities of the Waterborne TP can be sent to: Jaap Gebraad, Secretary General Waterborne TP, jaap.gebraad@waterborne.eu, tel: +32 493 835 626

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Enquiries about the mobility part of Horizon Europe can be sent to: Louise Mothersole, Horizon Europe UK National Contact Point for Mobility, louise.mothersole@iuk.ukri.org, tel: +44 7584 154 679

Smart Green Shipping (SGS), is a purpose-driven for-profit systems design house working to drive immediate, scalable, positive change in the global shipping fleet. SGS works collaboratively across the shipping eco-system and brings-in adjacent technologies and industries. We develop technical, commercially viable, digitally enabled wind-powered solutions to accelerate shipping’s green transition. SGS is supported by InnovateUK and the Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition Fund created by the Department for Transport’s UK SHORE initiative.