



Norwegian waterborne transport sector underlines importance of a coordinated approach for research, development and innovation

Waterborne Technology Platform met with representatives of the Norwegian waterborne transport sector, to discuss the transition towards zero-emission, digital and competitive waterborne transport

Brussels, 04 July 2024

Norway is one of the world's largest maritime offshore nations and is a major player in shipping and shipbuilding. The Norwegian coastline is the world's second longest, and measures over 20,000 km. Most urban settlements are on the coast, and sea travel has been a travel mode of choice for centuries. Norway is controlling the world's 4th largest merchant fleet, by value. Norwegian ship owners are especially active within shipping areas like offshore service/specialty vessels, oil tankers, bulk carriers, chemical tankers, gas (LNG/LPG) tankers, car carriers, and cruise operations.

The Norwegian maritime cluster includes ship owners, brokers, insurance and financial services, classification institutions, shipyards, ship's gear manufacturers, maritime education, maritime research and development, a very comprehensive aquaculture ecosystem, maritime authorities, employer organizations, and NGOs.

Cooperation is key to achieve the objectives of a competitive, digital and zero-emission waterborne transport sector. Bringing together the experience and expertise from different European countries and aligning the research needs is thereby of utmost importance. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to step up a common approach towards digitalization. These were some of the main conclusions of the meeting between the Waterborne Technology Platform (TP) and the Norwegian representatives of the waterborne transport sector in Høvik on 04 July 2024. The discussions are of particular importance for the implementation of the Long-term strategy of the Waterborne Technology Platform, which is centred around Technology Leadership.

Eero Lehtovaara, Chair of the Board of Directors, Waterborne TP, said: *"Our meeting with the representatives of the Norwegian waterborne transport sector provided insights into the opportunities and challenges of this important maritime nation. While there are numerous opportunities for the Norwegian waterborne transport sector in the transition towards competitive, digital, and zero-emission waterborne transport, it became clear that a coordinated approach regarding digitalisation is urgently required to be able to fully exploit its potential."*

Astrid Rusås Kristoffersen, Group Director Research & Development, DNV, and member of the Board of Directors of the Waterborne TP added: *"I'm grateful for today's inspiring meeting with Waterborne TP and our Norwegian partners. Through a multipronged approach involving low- and zero-carbon fuels, efficiency improvements, and digitalization, we can and will overcome the challenges of decarbonizing the waterborne sector. To do so quickly yet safely and securely, we must collaborate in bold, creative, and clever ways. As one speaker succinctly put it, 'even the wrong action is better than inaction'."*



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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