



Partnership evaluation report: Zero-emission waterborne transport partnership targets highly relevant objectives

Waterborne Technology Platform welcomes independent expert report evaluating the success factors of the zero-emission waterborne transport partnership

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The [zero-emission waterborne transport partnership](#) (ZEWT), a partnership between the European Commission and the Waterborne Technology Platform (TP), established in June 2021, provides and demonstrates zero-emission solutions for all main ship types and services before 2030. Thereby, the partnership is essential to enable zero-emission waterborne transport before 2050. Today, an [independent evaluation report](#) was published by the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission, as part of the interim evaluation of Horizon Europe activities related to the Green Transition.

The report highlights the timely establishment of the ZEWT partnership, given the relevance of international waterborne transport including the mitigation of global climate change and reducing GHG emissions as well as pollution to air and water. In addition, the partnership is described as new, lean and well-managed, putting much emphasis on outreach, transparency and openness. Progress of this partnership in attracting new members and regional reach towards South-Eastern Europe, has been pointed out in the report. Furthermore, the industrial embeddedness of the partnership is strongly related to its effectiveness. The perceived high level of trust and relevant networks of partners, especially those from progressive regions in the areas of sustainability and technical efficiency, results in higher engagement, steering coherence, and easier consensus for strategic development. According to interviewees, a major outcome has been achieved in the coordination, collaboration, and capacity-building across combined sectors with often contrasting needs, objectives, and strategies.

According to several interlocutors, the EU-added value stems from bringing a highly fragmented sector with diverging strategic ambitions to the table. Addressing key sectors through integrated and holistic ZEWT perspectives crystallises as a central node for EU transformations – and potentially worldwide. The added value of the ZEWT partnership is the alignment of agendas, resources, and efforts among sectors and businesses, including SMEs that dominate in the field, in addition to pledges of additional resources for research, dissemination, capacity building, and general sensibilisation. One major achievement of the partnership is seen in the capacity-building of all actors through knowledge, technological solutions, and co-creation. ZEWT aims to engage people in transitions and enable them to further participate knowledgeably and actively. Overall, in the light of global challenges and the green transition, the new ZEWT partnership targets highly relevant objectives in line with its strategic implementation plan, put forward by a lean management and governance structure, which envisages ample synergies across relevant other partnerships, and European programmes and initiatives as well as international initiatives and arenas, especially the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).



Eero Lehtovaara, Chair of the Board of Directors, Waterborne TP, said: *“We warmly welcome the report published by independent evaluators on the mission, vision and functioning of the ZEWT partnership. The report clearly shows the benefits of the clear governance structure of the Waterborne Technology Platform, which has been our key focus since the start of the Partnership. Bringing together a diversified, highly interdependent ecosystem of the waterborne transport sector, and jointly setting the research, development and innovation roadmap, has been a major step forward. Only together we can pave the way for a sustainable, competitive and resilient future of the European waterborne transport sector”*

Pieter Huyskens, Chair of the Delegates Group and Co-chair of the Partnership Board added: *“Meaningful progress in sustainability and the advancement of global waterborne transport—and, by extension, our world—requires an ecosystem approach. This philosophy is at the heart of the Waterborne Technology Platform. By fostering a culture of openness and collaboration, we can achieve shared goals and drive forward positive change. Let us continue to innovate and collaborate for a sustainable waterborne sector and continue the discussion with all stakeholders during the Waterborne Days 2025.”*

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