



## ***Fit for the Future – An ambitious Research and Development Agenda for the European Waterborne Sector***

**Brussels, 24 January 2019**

Today, the Waterborne Technology Platform (TP) released its new Strategic Research Agenda to the European Commission. This agenda provides a long-term vision and missions for a climate neutral economy, an innovative and competitive high-tech sector and a prosperous European society. The Waterborne TP firmly believes that this agenda will address the global and societal challenges of the waterborne sector and the sector's needs and opportunities. This agenda will also contribute to fulfilling COP21 objectives.

In concrete, the new Strategic Research Agenda of the Waterborne TP will transform waterborne transport in Europe and worldwide into a clean, green, safe and more secure mode of transport through the development of dedicated technologies and concepts that will eliminate all harmful emissions from the sector by 2050.

The agenda will also help the waterborne sector to further develop Europe's leadership in blue growth activities and will contribute to untapping the great potential of the oceans, seas and inland waters as a source of natural resources, in a sustainable manner. In addition, the agenda will pave the way for the creation of new business models for the Blue Economy in Europe.

Finally, the agenda will enable the waterborne sector to better integrate shipping and inland navigation into seamless port and logistic operations. By doing so, it will contribute to enhancing the overall European transport and mobility systems.

To fulfil these objectives, Europe's waterborne industry will need to invest significantly in research and development activities, whilst the European Commission and Member States of the EU will need to back the industry with sufficient financial incentives. To that end, the Waterborne TP calls upon the European Commission and the Member States for a proper inclusion of the Waterborne sector in Horizon Europe as well as in other financial programmes. Furthermore, the fulfilment of these objectives will also require supporting policies from the European Commission.

In a first reaction, the Chairman of the Waterborne Board, Henk Prins, said:

*"The ambitious Research and Innovation Agenda as presented today during a session in European Parliament, hosted by the SEARICA Intergroup, clearly shows the commitment of the Waterborne Community to solving global and societal challenges in a sustainable and social manner".* He added: *"To implement its ambitious vision and missions, Europe's Waterborne industry is fully committed to make significant investments in research, development and innovation (RDI), as well as in education and training. These investments have to be underpinned by an integrated, holistic and coordinated policy and strategy, across all parts of EU framework programmes and other relevant EU funding programmes. Only in this way and through collaborative research, the Waterborne sector in Europe will be able to fully implement its agenda, help Europe to addressing its challenges and maintain its global maritime leadership position".*



**Background Note:** *The WATERBORNE Technology Platform ([www.waterborne.eu](http://www.waterborne.eu)) has been set up as an industry-oriented Technology Platform to establish a continuous dialogue between all waterborne stakeholders, such as classification societies, energy companies, infrastructural companies, environmental non-profit organisations, manufacturers, research institutes, shipyards, ship-owners, waterway and port operators, universities, fisheries and citizen associations, as well as European Institutions and Member States.*

For further information please visit [www.waterborne.eu](http://www.waterborne.eu) or contact:  
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