



The future of the European waterborne transport sector

Brussels, 29 November 2019

Today, key stakeholders from the waterborne transport sector, i.e. the Waterborne Technology Platform, SEA Europe, ECSA, CLECAT, ALICE, FEPORT and the IWT Platform, organised a conference on the future of Europe's waterborne transport sector. The conference brought together representatives from the European Commission, the European Parliament, Member States, the waterborne transport sector, academia, research organisations and other relevant stakeholders.

The Waterborne Technology Platform, SEA Europe, ECSA, CLECAT, ALICE, FEPORT and the IWT Platform joined forces to discuss the innovation needs of the sector in view of contributing to societal challenges such as climate change and at finding tools to enhance the global competitiveness of Europe's waterborne transport sector.

The first topic focused on the transformation of waterborne transport to a zero-emission mode of transport and the vision of the Waterborne Technology Platform to eliminate any type of emission from waterborne transport by latest 2050. On this point, the conference has clearly shown a need for coordination and for looking at different solutions for the diversified waterborne transport sector. In this respect, the co-programmed partnership on zero-emission waterborne transport – recently selected in the framework of Horizon Europe – will be a perfect tool to achieve zero-emission waterborne transport in Europe.

The panel debate on transforming port operations towards 2050 concentrated both on the decarbonisation of port activities and the integration of shipping and inland navigation into the logistics' chain, as part of shifting cargo off the road to waterborne transport.

The final debate focused on connected and automated waterborne transport, as a means to reduce emissions from waterborne transport as well as a tool to increase maritime safety and to better integrate waterborne transport into the logistics' chain.

At the end of the conference, the Waterborne Technology Platform presented its technical research agenda, which presents technical pathways towards zero-emission, connected and automated as well as safe and secure waterborne transport, whilst boosting the global competitiveness of the maritime technology sector.

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

“Today's conference showed the importance of cooperation between all stakeholders of the waterborne transport sector. This coordination will be key in addressing important societal challenges, such as climate change. The conference has also shown a clear commitment from the waterborne transport sector in meeting the expectations of European citizens. For the Waterborne Technology Platform, the conference has highlighted the importance of cooperation of all key stakeholders needed to transform the waterborne transport sector towards a future-proof sector. The co-programmed partnership on zero-emission waterborne transport will thereby be instrumental to achieve the objective of eliminating any type of emission from waterborne transport by 2050 latest”.



Background Note: 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 12 Member States. In addition, the Associations member of SEA Europe represent the broader waterborne sector throughout the entire EU.

For further information please visit www.waterborne.eu or contact:

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