



**20 July 2018, Press Release**

## **European Commission Officials visit Dutch Maritime Technology Sector**

On Thursday July 19, a delegation of the European Commission (EC) from DG RTD and DG GROW visited the Dutch Maritime Technology sector. The sector demonstrated the importance of Research, Development and Innovation for its global competitiveness and underlined the importance of the financial support from the EU H2020 Research & Innovation Programme. The visit was a combined effort of the Dutch Maritime Technology Sector represented by the Netherlands Maritime Technology Association in cooperation with the Waterborne Technology Platform and SEA Europe.

The EC delegation started with a visit to the Damen Shipyards Reverse Stern Drive Tug 2513 in Rotterdam where they were welcomed by Damen CEO Rene Berkvens. The RSD Tug is an important milestone in the H2020 transport project LeanShips, supporting developments for more efficient and less polluting ships. Afterwards the delegation continued to the Damen Shipyards headquarters in Gorinchem where they were informed about H2020 transport project RAMSSES on advanced material solutions and blue growth project VAMOS which develops a viable alternative mine operating system. Henk Prins, R&D Manager for Marin and Chairman of the Waterborne Technology Platform presented the R&D cooperation in the Dutch maritime cluster and the important link with Waterborne. After a real-life tour on the Damen explorer superyacht support vessel 'the Game Changer' the delegation paid a visit to Dutch Shipyard Royal IHC at Kinderdijk where they were welcomed by the Executive Director Shipbuilding Ubald Nienhuis. At Royal IHC they were briefed on the H2020 transport project NOVIMAR, the vessel train and the Blue Nodules project on a highly-automated and sustainable deep sea mining system. Marine equipment company Pon Power explained the role of marine equipment manufacturers in producing innovative solutions for the EU's societal challenges. The day was concluded with a tour at the shipyard of Royal IHC.

Roel de Graaf, Managing Director of Netherlands Maritime Technology (NMT) said, *"Innovation is the reason we still exist. Our members develop the key technologies that are essential for the implementation of the EU's societal agenda. We constantly work towards cleaner, safer, and more secure, sustainable and efficient vessels and platforms used in maritime transport, inland navigation and the Blue economy. The EU's RD&I funds enable the maritime technology sector in Europe, including in the Netherlands, to reach the ambitious goals set by the EC or set internationally (for instance the*

*International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in London's goal to cut total greenhouse gas emissions from shipping by at least 50% by 2050)".*

Jean-Francois Aguinaga, Head of Unit Surface Transport, DG RTD European Commission said: *"Netherlands maritime industries are an excellent example of a global competitive advantage achieved by European high technology underpinned by research and innovation. There has never been a more important time to invest in research and innovation with our global competitors becoming increasingly sophisticated and new technologies are offering potential solutions to the global challenge of decarbonising shipping by at least 50% by 2050. Such an integrated approach, bringing together different key stakeholders, is an important innovation within Horizon Europe, the €100 billion research and innovation proposed programme to succeed Horizon 2020. Horizon Europe will tackle the challenges facing transport, including waterborne transport, within a single cluster combining mobility, climate and energy. This combination will facilitate new partnerships which are very relevant to shipping, for example ship power demands are similar to those from some onshore power generation facilities. I know that Europe's marine industries and the wider waterborne community have an inspirational vision which they are eager to communicate. I very much support this and welcome our close dialogue. Certainly, widening awareness of the waterborne sectors challenges, vision, key R&I needs and past successes is an essential prerequisite to public investment".*

"It is very encouraging to see that the Dutch Maritime Technology Sector welcomed the decision of the Marine Environment Protection Committee of the IMO of April this year to at least cut in half the CO2 emissions from shipping in line with the Paris Climate Agreement". *"We have a global industry, which is competing globally and has developed the best environmental technology. Environmental agreements within IMO are therefore a very important steppingstone towards the decarbonization of the shipping industry and the development of new environmental-friendly and sustainable technologies. The research and innovation supported by Europe plays an important role in maintaining this technological lead"*, said Christophe Tytgat, Secretary General of SEA Europe.

Henk Prins, the Chairman of the European Technology Platform Waterborne said: *"It is very important for Europe and its Maritime Technology Sector to have a solid financial framework that stimulates research, development and innovation which is fundamental to Europe's technology based competitive advantage. The EU support also helps the European maritime technology sector, including the Dutch, to produce the key technologies that will enable the sector to sustainably untap the economic potential from the Blue Economy. There needs to be more awareness of Europe's waterborne sector as a high skilled technology industry founded upon RD&I. Within the European Waterborne Technology platform, we are determined to communicate how research and innovation enables us to reach these goals"*, he concluded.

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## **Netherlands Maritime Technology**

The Netherlands Maritime Technology (NMT) trade association is the first port of call for and primary representative of the Dutch maritime technology sector. Our 400+ members include shipyards, marine equipment suppliers and service providers, all united within a close and highly successful network. Welcome aboard as you explore what NMT and its members can mean for you.

## **SEA Europe**

SEA Europe represents close to 100% of the European shipbuilding industry in 16 nations, encompassing the production, maintenance, repair and conversion of all types of ships and floating structures, commercial as well

as naval, including the full supply chain with the various producers of maritime systems, equipment material, and services.

### **Waterborne Technology Platform**

WATERBORNE<sup>TP</sup> was founded in 2005 as an evolution of the Maritime Industries Forum (MIF) R&D committee in 2005. Waterborne TP bring together leading industry, academic actors and associations from across the entire waterborne transport domain to jointly establish a European vision, strategic research agenda and implementation plan for competitive, safe and clean waterborne transport. This includes addressing environmental and safety regulation, deep and short sea shipping, inland waterways, yards, equipment manufacturers, marine leisure industry, research and university institutions, classification societies etc. The so-called stakeholder Support Group is matched by a Mirror Group of government appointed delegates.

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#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT**

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