

SEA EUROPE WELCOMES THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON WATERBORNE TRANSPORT

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SEA Europe – the Shipyards' and Maritime Equipment Association – welcomes the Ministerial Declaration on Waterborne Transport, adopted during an Informal Transport Council in Opatia on 11 March 2020 (<https://eu2020.hr/Home/OneNews?id=210>).

The Ministerial Declaration entitled “EU Waterborne Transport sector – Future Outlook: Towards a carbon-neutral, zero accidents, automated and competitive EU Waterborne Transport sector”, has raised several issues, highlighted in SEA Europe’s LeaderSHIP White Paper as well as in the Waterborne Technology Platform’s Strategic Research Agenda.

The Ministerial Declaration, amongst others, underlines the need for a global level playing field and a world-leading waterborne transport sector in the EU. It raises the importance of a maritime safety culture, based on zero accidents by 2050. It highlights the need for initiatives to promote and improve the image of the waterborne transport sector, to attract youngsters to this sector and to develop measures for improving education, training and assessment to adjust to new technologies.

As regards a carbon-neutral and zero pollution waterborne transport sector, the Ministerial Declaration welcomes the European Green Deal aiming at a fully sustainable EU waterborne transport sector, acknowledges the need for flag neutral measures towards carbon-neutrality in order to ensure a level playing field and to avoid carbon leakage and recognises the importance of the work done at the IMO.

“I am very pleased to read that the Ministerial Declaration supports the envisaged Partnership “Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport” within Horizon Europe, as an instrument to ensure the development and deployment of alternative propulsion systems and alternative fuel systems for the waterborne transport and the decarbonisation of the shipping sector”, said Christophe Tytgat, SEA Europe’s Secretary General.

Equally, the Ministerial Declaration recognises the need to support the development of different alternative fuels for use in all segments of waterborne transport and the need to ensure adequate funding in support of research and development through public, private and EU financial instruments and grants with the aim to make available clean alternative fuels, including LNG as a transitional fuel, and the associated infrastructure, innovative technologies and sustainable ship designs. “This recognition is an important political signal of support for the work that the entire waterborne transport community is currently undertaking towards making waterborne transport a climate-neutral mode of transport. At the same time, it is also a recognition of the complexity of that work as well as of the necessity to keep all options open towards decarbonizing waterborne transport”, Mr. Tytgat concluded.

Background Note: 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.

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