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Press release

EU Sustainable Transport Investment Plan: A welcome step for sustainable maritime fuels, but more resources are needed

Today, the European Commission unveiled its Sustainable Transport Investment Plan (STIP), designed to unlock investments and scale up the production of renewable and low-carbon fuels for waterborne transport.

The Shipyards & Maritime Equipment Association of Europe (SEA Europe), representing shipyards and maritime equipment manufacturers across 17 countries, welcomes this coherent initiative but highlights the insufficient resources to drive the energy transition in maritime transport effectively.

Christophe Tytgat, Secretary-General of SEA Europe, stated:
"The STIP correctly identifies the price gap between sustainable maritime fuels and conventional fuels, as well as the significant investments required to bridge that gap. However, the plan allocates only EUR 2.9 billion in public support for short- and medium-term measures – far from enough to trigger private investments at scale. More coordinated investment from Member States is urgently needed."

SEA Europe also expressed concern over the limited ambition regarding the use of revenues from the Emissions Trading System (ETS). Christophe Tytgat explained:
"The maritime sector now contributes to the ETS, yet receives little in return to support its energy transition. Decisions on revenue use are left to individual Member States, rather than being mandated. We urge the European Commission to ensure that a fair share of ETS revenues is reinvested in the maritime sector. This includes shipyards and maritime equipment manufacturers, who play a crucial role in the sector's decarbonisation. The STIP misses this opportunity, and we call on the Commission to propose an amendment to the ETS Directive to channel these investments appropriately."

Christophe Tytgat further emphasized the importance of aligning the STIP with the forthcoming EU Industrial Maritime Strategy:
"A comprehensive maritime investment roadmap is essential – one that coordinates shipowners, shipyards, equipment manufacturers, ports, and fuel fuel suppliers, and ensures a fair distribution of public investment across these sectors along strategic objectives. Therefore, EU policies should also support European shipyards and maritime equipment manufacturers in modernising their facilities and improving their efficiency, while providing concrete incentives for shipowners to choose European shipyards for the energy transition of their fleets. This is vital for the resilience of Europe's maritime cluster."

Background Note:

SEA Europe represents close to 100% of the European shipbuilding industry in 17 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. As an NGO observer at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), CESA represents the shipbuilding industry and its supply chain from EU Member States, Norway, and Turkey.

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