

Joint Research, Development and Innovation Strategy towards Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport

Open Consultation confirms Strategic Research and Innovation Approach of the European Partnership on Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport

Brussels, 21 October 2020

A partnership with key players from the European waterborne transport sector, working together within the Waterborne Technology Platform¹, conducted over summer an open consultation on the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda to transform waterborne transport into a zero-emission mode of transport. The Research and Innovation Partnership will implement RD&I over a period of seven years, starting from 2021, and demonstrate the feasibility of zero-emission waterborne transport for all main services and ship types by 2030.

The candidate Horizon Europe² Partnership “Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport” proposal was [published](#) by the European Commission on 27 May 2020, representing an important first achievement. As a next step, a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) is being developed and nearing finalisation. This Agenda lays down the research and innovation strategy, the implementation pathways for different segments of the waterborne transport sector, and the activities foreseen to be able to achieve the Partnerships objectives. The draft SRIA was published for an open consultation in July/August and invited all interested stakeholders to contribute with comments. This feedback ([the report from the open public consultation](#)) and the [revised draft SRIA](#), which incorporates comments from this consultation, are now available online. Subsequent updates will address the monitoring regime and alignment with Horizon Europe with finalisation by the end of the year.

The partnership “Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport” is strongly aligned with the European Green Deal strategy³ and will contribute to maintaining and reinforcing Europe’s global leadership in innovative, green waterborne transport solutions. **The Partnership’s central objective is to provide and demonstrate zero-emission solutions for all main ship types and services before 2030, which will enable zero-emission waterborne transport before 2050.**

In a first reaction, the Chairman of the Waterborne Technology Platform, Henk Prins, said “*The Partnership will be essential to realise zero-emission waterborne transport to the benefit of future generations. The Partnership will deliver solutions for the transport of cargo as well as passengers, at sea, oceans and inland waterways. It will focus both on solutions for newbuilt vessels and for retrofitting existing fleets. The results of the Open Consultation conducted show that there is a joint view on the necessary Research, Development and Innovation to achieving climate neutrality and eliminating all harmful emissions, whilst taking into account that every segment of the waterborne transport sector has different needs and challenges. The Partnership will thereby not only be essential to develop solutions for societal challenges, but will contribute to maintaining and reinforcing Europe’s global leadership in innovative, green waterborne transport solutions. The Waterborne Technology Platform is eager to start this Partnership on 1 January 2021 as the road to zero-emission waterborne transport remains long and challenging. We hope for a positive formal decision, which will be depending on the outcomes of the MFF negotiations*”

¹ www.waterborne.eu

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/horizon-europe-next-research-and-innovation-framework-programme_en

³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en



WATERBORNE TP 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 17 Member States. In addition, the Associations member of the Waterborne Technology Platform represent the broader waterborne sector throughout the entire EU.

Enquiries concerning how to join and become more closely involved in the “Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport” partnership can be sent to: Jaap Gebraad, Executive-director Waterborne TP, jaap.gebraad@waterborne.eu, tel: +32 493 835 626