

## **Waterborne transport sector presents innovative solutions to the benefit of future generations**

During a waterborne transport workshop organised on 07 February 2022, the European waterborne transport sector presented the key results of 7 years of investments in Research, Development and Innovation in the framework of Horizon 2020

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Almost 90% of everything around us is moved by waterborne transport and the European waterborne transport sector is responsible for approximately 4.2 million direct jobs in the EU. The European Union, being well aware of the sector's strategic importance, has been investing in Research, Development and Innovation towards smart, green and integrated waterborne transport in the framework of the Horizon 2020 programme. During the programme period 2014 - 2020, the European Commission has helped improve waterborne transport through more than 70 Horizon 2020 projects in three main areas: the transition towards zero-emission waterborne transport; competitive, connected and automated as well as safe and secure waterborne transport. The key results of a number of projects, as well as concrete examples of deployment of the innovative solutions developed, have been presented during the workshop. In addition, various European Commission Services have provided a future outlook of policy and regulatory efforts. Finally, the European waterborne transport sector has re-emphasized its commitment, including a significant amount of investments foreseen, to jointly deliver solutions to the benefit of future generations.

Dirk Beckers, Director of the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) said: *"The project results presented today testify to the joint efforts made by the European Union and the European waterborne transport sector in developing concrete solutions for carbon-neutral, zero-accidents, automated and competitive waterborne transport. Over the past seven years, these projects have significantly contributed to the research, development and innovation capacity of the sector, with many results already deployed. A number of solutions have been demonstrated on board vessels, thus clearly showing technological readiness. Together with the waterborne transport sector, CINEA will continue to play a key role in further stimulating deployment by supporting first movers and by fostering synergies with other EU funding programmes"*.

Rosalinde van der Vlies, Director Clean Planet, DG RTD of the European Commission said: *"With the objectives laid down in the European Green Deal, and specifically the objective to cut emissions by 55% by 2030, we have significantly increased the investments in research, development and innovation in the framework of Horizon Europe to accelerate the transition towards a zero-emission waterborne transport sector. The European Union has a unique waterborne transport sector, which is committed to develop and demonstrate disruptive solutions to eliminate CO2 emissions, and water pollution. A coordinated and joined up approach on research, innovation and deployment is needed to maintain and reinforce Europe's global leadership in innovative, and green transport solutions"*

Asa Burman, Vice-chair of the Board of Directors, Waterborne TP, concluded: *there is an ever increasing commitment towards realising solutions to continuously improve the footprint of our sector. The projects co-funded in the framework of Horizon 2020, have been essential to make the next steps regarding any transition. In addition, it facilitated the European waterborne transport sector to jointly work on a vision and mission towards 2050, which resulted in the Co-Programmed Partnership on Zero-*



*Emission Waterborne Transport in the framework of Horizon Europe. Building upon the foundations laid over the past couple of years, the sector will be able to collectively provide policy guidance regarding research, development and innovation. However, in order to realise our high ambitions, deployment and competitiveness are key elements to be properly reflected upon as well. As shown today, with almost 500 participants present in the conference, there is a momentum to continue the cooperation between all public and private waterborne transport stakeholders, to ensure a beneficial future of the European waterborne transport sector. Thereby, we will significantly contribute to a bright future for everyone”.*

**STEERER** (Structuring Towards Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport), an Horizon 2020 project, coordinates the establishment and communication of a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda and an Implementation Plan towards zero-emission waterborne transport, in cooperation with all key stakeholders needed to facilitate the transformation to clean waterborne transport. In the definition of STEERER, as well as cutting greenhouse gas emissions, all harmful environmental emissions, water pollution and noise emissions have to be eliminated. STEERER's mission is to bring the various initiatives and sectors' stakeholders together to join forces for a combined effort with the maximum impact for the climate, people's health and Europe's economy.

**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](http://www.waterborne.eu)). The members of Waterborne TP comprise members as well as associated members from both maritime and inland navigation countries, representing about 19 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 or other activities of the Waterborne TP can be sent to: Jaap Gebraad, Secretary General Waterborne TP, [jaap.gebraad@waterborne.eu](mailto:jaap.gebraad@waterborne.eu), tel: +32 493 835 626