



TRIPARTITE FORUM 2019

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SEA EUROPE – Welcome Keynote Speech / Content

SEA Europe represents the interest of European shipyards and maritime equipment manufacturers and suppliers, who are specialised the building of complex ship types but also in ship repair, maintenance, conversion or retrofitting of ships.

SEA Europe is deeply involved in efforts to make shipping a more sustainable mode of transport.

Within SEA Europe, sustainability is addressed in two ways. On the one hand, SEA Europe is involved in all regulatory developments with regard to a safe and sustainable shipping industry. On the other hand, SEA Europe addresses sustainability from the perspective of research, development and innovation (RDI). SEA Europe has paved the way for a new Strategic Research Agenda of the Waterborne Technology Platform. This technology platform consists of all relevant maritime stakeholders and acts as the recognised industry forum towards the European Commission on RD&I matters.

In its new Strategic Research Agenda, SEA Europe and the Waterborne Technology Platform, by 2050, aim at building ships that completely eliminate all harmful environmental emissions (including pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions), as well as water pollution, waste and noise - The aim is thus to go beyond the IMO's Initial GHG Reduction Strategy.

Since a lot of RDI investments are still necessary, it is time being premature to choose one sustainable option over another. This is also valid for alternative fuels, despite the fact that many people, including politicians, seems already to have a preference, for instance for electricity, hydrogen or fuel cells.

SEA Europe is also of the view that there is a clear need for legal certainty, for any maritime stakeholders. Without legal certainty, politicians cannot expect the entire waterborne sector to be a frontrunner. This is particularly relevant for shipowners since they need to make significant investments in sustainable technologies.

Whilst the sustainability of shipping is of primarily importance, we also see that current and future developments regarding automated and connected waterborne transport is redefining shipping. Becoming part of the interconnected mobility system, waterborne transport has the potential to increase safety, operational efficiency as well as reduce its environmental footprint. But before achieving fully autonomous shipping there is a long development pathway to go in terms of sensorisation and integration in which, an extremely important point is the prevention and control of cybersecurity threats.

Some words about the maritime industry market situation in Europe:

Europe together with the rest of the world shipbuilding industry is facing today severe challenges. While some European shipyards continue to harvest the benefits of their specialisation on high tech niche markets, others continue to struggle due to persistently weak ordering levels in other markets, e.g. offshore.

Moreover, the low level of global contracting for new ships affect negatively also the European supply chain serving the global markets. Finally, overcapacity in both the production as well as the operation of ships deprives the shipping industry of its capacity to invest in innovative and sustainable maritime technologies.

Regarding BWMTS, SEA Europe believes that there is a need to have a common understanding and categorization of the reported failures in order to ensure a consistent input to the IMO Experience building Phase.

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