

Strategic Partnerships

It is the ambition of the ENMC to combine the interests of national maritime cluster organizations of European member states, with existing European maritime interest groups. This requires building strategic partnerships to find ENMC's place in the European area, and to introduce the organization to existing key partners, to work towards partnerships, and direct cooperation. Central is the creation of a profound relationship with the European Commission expressed in direct cooperation. Over the course of 2018, the ENMC presidium has made an introduction with numerous key partners. Among which Martin Dorsman of ECSA, Harrët Slager of DAMEN/NMT, Christophe Tytgat of SeaEurope, and Lamia Kerdjoudj-Belkaid of FEPORT, and contacts have been made with Captain Stein Inge Dahn of EMPA (European maritime pilots association) and Quentin Gutierrez of EBA (European boatmen association). The Presidium as also met with the members of the French, Dutch, Italian and Polish maritime cluster organizations.

It could be very helpful in order to strengthen ENMC role amongst EU institutions that national clusters liaise with their own national EU affairs agency to promote our European network (ENMC).

All parties see ENMC as an valuable addition to the way European maritime affairs are represented, and how existing parties in the maritime field cooperate and build partnerships. Central is the fact that maritime interests are represented by countless different interest groups of which only a few are effective; hence, the efficiency in which maritime interests are represented in the EU could be improved. A possible role of ENMC is in just that, as national maritime cluster organizations play a central role in combining all maritime interest at a national level, their nature is to do so as well on the European level. In addition, it was clearly expressed that the few effective interest groups seem to have no clear connection to each other, besides their overall "maritime" nature; ship owners and ship builders are only recently building ties. This results from the containerization of the European Commission in specific DG's, focusing on high specific policy fields.

Overall, there seems to be agreement amongst all interview parties, that ENMC has in their perspectives four key elements it should focus on;

- **ENMC is key in the representation of national maritime clusters of European member states as Blue Growth and the Blue Economy are central to European maritime policy making.** Over the past few years, the European Commission has put increasingly more emphasis on the Blue Economy as a key part of the overall European economy. It is the ambition of this Commission to invest in its development – i.e. Blue Growth. This focuses on this point in time solely on two elements; promotion of the Blue Economy, and on the study of the size of the Blue Economy (Annual Economic Review). In the ENMC's introduction to DG MARE on the latter element, the Commission expressed their interest in the knowledge and experience of ENMC's members in overviewing their national blue economies; the Commissions economic review on the size of the EU blue economy is highly incomplete, hence they are in search for partnerships to develop such an review with. ENMC is in this an overall preferable partner, leading up to European projects.
- **ENMC is a good third-party in the representation of maritime interest in the EU as existing interest groups are scattered and often too diverse.** As stated before, the presentation of maritime affairs in the EU are inefficient due to the large number of interest groups – ranging from professionally staffed and dedicated organizations to PA offices used for specific occasions. In addition, these groups experience no

overall connection to each other; they operate individually, whereas the Commission's focus on the concept of the Blue Economy increasingly more demands central coordination.

- **ENMC should focus on binding maritime affairs together; an European Maritime Forum and a once-organized Maritime Week is essential.** A returning argument is the existence of an European shipping week and forums in the past; an multi day event that brought all Brussels' maritime stakeholders together. One of the spin offs of the former Shipping Week are the innovation and technology platforms of which WaterBorne is the sole survivor to this day. The ENMC is called upon to re-organize such an event. As a first step, presidium is seeking to organize a launching event by beginning of 2019 in Brussels, inviting EU professional organisations, EU networks, members of EU institutions.
- **ENMC can build a strong basis by focusing on triple helix cooperation – member states, knowledge platforms, and businesses – as it is unique in European maritime affairs.** The concept of Blue Economy and its focus on both promotion, and an economic review to fuel interest implies a combination of relevant stakeholders that focus on the elements of technology and innovation, policy making, and the interest of relevant maritime businesses (ship owners, ship builders to maritime service providers).