

GREENING TRANSPORT & INLAND NAVIGATION

“The actual discussion regarding Greening Transport, the TEN-T policy as well as energy efficiency and adaptation to climate change in Europe asks for additional steps towards a sustainable transport system. Inland navigation as the most environmentally friendly mode of transport is committed to support decision makers in their efforts to reach sustainable solutions. The sector is committed to move forward on emission low concepts and takes initiatives in that field” stressed EBU’s president Dr. Grulois during his opening speech at the annual EBU-Seminar on 25 February 2009 in Brussels.

The seminar was officially addressed by the **Deputy Minister of Transport of the Czech Republic, Mr. Pavel Škvára**, on behalf of the Czech Presidency.

Inland Shipping is the most environmentally friendly mode of transport and will keep its great advantage. The sector is committed to move forward on emission-low concepts in order to maintain and improve its environmentally friendly image. The benefits from inland shipping however have to be considered not only referred to emissions. They are a result of the overall concept and advantages of inland shipping in terms of congestion, maintenance and use of infrastructure, accidents and other relevant elements.

The European Commission last summer released its Communications on Greening Transport and Strategy for the internalisation of external costs. The communications intend to introduce initiatives to keep mobility sustainable and to encourage transport users to switch to cleaner vehicles or modes and to use less congested infrastructure in order to avoid the negative effects of transport.

The Commission therefore intends to put forward two different types of initiatives to redouble its effort to make transport greener and more sustainable. The first type intends “getting the prices right” through internalisation of external costs of transport in a tailor made approach by mode of transport. This type of measure should be accompanied by regulatory instruments, infrastructure measures and research and development measures.

Three weeks ago the European Commission came up with its Green Paper on the TEN-T policy, setting out the future challenges of its policy for a trans-European transport network (TEN-T). The Commission expresses the ambitious aim to contribute more effectively to objectives aimed at combating climate change and to support Europe's increasing international role through better infrastructure connections with its neighbors and the wider world, for which .

According to the Commission the integration of all transport modes and intelligent transport systems can be strengthened if TEN-T policy provided a basis guaranteeing efficient and safe transport services reflecting the future demands of citizens and economic operators.

A number of high level **speakers and panelists** focused on the different aspects of the European transport policy and proved the possibilities of inland navigation within this concept.

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Finally the **Secretary General** draw the most important conclusions out of the seminar and the discussions:

1. Inland navigation as part of the transport chain has a positive impact on the environmental performance of transport. The low CO2 emission of inland vessels compared to other modes of transport together with the recent measures to further improve the environmental performance in terms of emissions and lowering the sulphur content in fuel contribute considerably to mitigation.
2. The aim of the European policy is to keep Europe moving and to support cleaner modes and the use of less congested infrastructure. Therefore a stimulation policy is needed in favour of modes that contribute most to the realization of this policy, mainly inland navigation. The waterways in Europe, which mostly are existing natural rivers, dispose over capacity to absorb a much higher volume of transports. In connection with the positive effects in terms of external costs a switch to inland navigation offers a double advantage.
3. It is thus crucial to acknowledge in the discussion regarding the TEN-T policy review to support waterborne transport with substantial infrastructural measures and financial means to remove the existing bottlenecks and to realise missing links in the European waterway system.

Modal shift towards inland shipping therefore does not only contribute to an improvement of the environmental performance of the transport chain but to developing a sustainable transport system in general.

All speeches and contributions as well as the pictures of the seminar are available on www.ebu-uenf.org

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The European Barge Union EBU was founded on 14 December 2001 with seat in Brussels and in Rotterdam.

EBU represents the interest of inland navigation on a pan European level and deals with all questions, arising out of the future development of the inland navigation industry and inland waterway transport.

To realise this aim EBU is active in the field of

- the development of the European transport policy
- the improvement of the economic position of inland navigation
- the structured cooperation with national and international institutions
- the exchange of information and experience between the parties involved

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