

## SEA EUROPE TOP EXECUTIVES MEET COMMISSIONER VELLA

18 May 2016

Today, top executives from European shipyards and European maritime equipment manufactories met Karmenu Vella, Commissioner responsible for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries.

The meeting took place in Turku (Finland) in the margin of the annual European Maritime Days and was organised jointly by SEA Europe – the association representing the interests of European shipyards and maritime equipment manufacturers – and its Finnish member – Finnish Maritime Industries.

The meeting focused on various topics of common interest, including the economic and strategic importance of the European maritime technology industry for Europe, its economy and globally; the challenges and threats of the European maritime technology sector and the means to stay ahead of global competition.

Attention was also drawn to the contribution of the European maritime technology sector to DG MARE's plans for international ocean governance and reference was made to the EU's plans to recycle ships in accordance with the EU Ship Recycling Regulation and the role that European ship recycling facilities could play. Also the possible contribution of European shipyards to a circular economy, i.e. building environmental neutral ships, was referred to.

Finally, both Commissioner Vella and the industry's top executives acknowledged the need for Europe to continue developing a highly skilled workforce. This allows the European maritime technology sector to stay ahead in terms of innovation and competition globally.

*"The EU's blue economy is amongst the most competitive in the world while meeting some of the highest environmental standards", said Commissioner Vella. "The European shipyards sector builds some of the most sophisticated vessels in the world. European maritime equipment manufacturers are global leaders. We also have an emerging marine renewable energy industry with great potential for further growth. Today's meeting highlighted that the EU's blue economy can make a major contribution to jobs and growth", he added.*

Kjeld Dittmann, Chairman of SEA Europe and CEO of Wärtsilä Lyngsø Marine A/S in Denmark said: *"I firmly believe that today's meeting helped us to place SEA Europe and our industry on the map and the European Commission to better understand the difficulties and challenges of our industry. At the same time, it assisted us to have a better understanding of the Commission's political challenges and enabled us to identify how we can contribute to the Commission's ambitious agenda".*

\*\*\*\*\*

### Background Note

SEA Europe is the European Association for Ships and Maritime Equipment and is the voice of the European maritime technology industry in the European Union. The association represents close to 100% of the European shipbuilding industry in 18 nations, an industry which generates more than €91 billion turnover annually and offers employment in high profile jobs for more than 500 000 Europeans.

For further information please visit: [www.seaeurope.eu](http://www.seaeurope.eu) or contact:

Christophe Tytgat, Secretary General - [ct@seaeurope.eu](mailto:ct@seaeurope.eu) Tel: +32 (0)2.230.32.87