

## **HIGH-LEVEL MEETING WITH MEMBER STATES PLACES THE MARITIME TECHNOLOGY SECTOR BACK ON THE POLITICAL AGENDA**

**Brussels, 31 January 2019**

On 22 January, the Romanian EU Presidency and SEA Europe co-organised a meeting with high-level representatives from EU Member States with interests in shipbuilding and maritime equipment manufacturing. The meeting was also attended by representatives from DG GROW.

*“This meeting allowed the maritime technology sector to raise political awareness of EU and national decision-makers on the challenges, needs, threats and opportunities of Europe’s shipyards and maritime equipment manufacturers. The meeting also enabled the participants to reflect on possible future political actions and policies in support of the maritime technology sector”,* said Christophe Tytgat, SEA Europe’s Secretary General.



*“The maritime technology sector is strategic for Europe in terms of value chain, value creation, job creation, security and defence”,* Mr. Tytgat added. *“Europe’s shipyards are global leaders in the building of complex ship types and structures and Europe’s maritime equipment manufacturers are global leaders in the production of (advanced) maritime equipment, systems and technologies. Europe, therefore, has a keen interest to recognize the economic and strategic importance of its maritime technology industry and to take actions in support of the sector to cope with its many global and societal challenges.”*

*“Global challenges include a serious threat to the global leadership position of Europe’s shipyards and maritime equipment manufacturers from China’s “Made in China 2025” strategy and from growing protectionism worldwide. Societal challenges include the need for Europe’s shipping industry as well as for Europe’s shipbuilding and maritime equipment industries to cope with decarbonization, digitalization and automation of the sectors. In these challenges, Europe’s maritime technology sector can play a crucial role to enable shipping in Europe and worldwide to become greener, safer, more secure, better connected, more digital and automated or autonomous.*

*Europe’s shipyards and maritime equipment manufacturers can furthermore play a key role in implementing Europe’s Blue Economy agenda. To do so, Europe’s maritime technology sector will need to make significant investments in research, development and innovation and with the financial support from EU programmes like Horizon Europe and others, the sector will not only be able to cope with its societal challenges but also be able to remain at the forefront of innovative shipbuilding and maritime equipment manufacturing.*

*Europe's maritime technology sector will also be able to maintain its global leadership position and continue to grow. SEA Europe, therefore, calls on the EU and national decision-makers to adopt and support an ambitious sectoral strategy for Europe's maritime technology sector", Mr. Tytgat concluded.*



*"Europe cannot afford not to support its shipyards and maritime equipment manufacturers. This time, another political failure to support the maritime technology sector in Europe will no doubt result in significant economic and job losses and may ultimately lead to a disappearance of a strategic industry for Europe", Mr. Tytgat warned.*

**Background Note:** SEA Europe represents close to 100% of the European shipbuilding industry in 16 nations, encompassing the production, maintenance, repair and conversion of all types of ships and floating structures, commercial as well as naval, including the full supply chain with the various producers of maritime systems, equipment material, and services.

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**