



## **PRESS RELEASE - BLUE PAPER ON A MARITIME POLICY FOR THE UNION**

ECSA appreciates the unique consultation process that has taken place on the Green Paper on a Future Maritime Policy and has actively contributed to it through various submissions. The Blue Paper that has been presented today needs of course detailed analysis particularly taking into account the many action points that have been proposed.

One of the key action points for the shipping industry is the announced White Paper on Maritime Transport Policy 2008-2018. ECSA appreciates this initiative since long term planning is essential for investments in shipping. It is evident that many of the views and suggestions brought forward by ECSA in its submissions to the Green Paper are also valid for the White Paper on a Maritime Transport Policy.

In this respect the de facto global character of shipping is the main theme that should be taken into account on all fronts particularly on safety and environment issues, the global labour market in which shipping operates and the competitive position of European shipping in the global market. ECSA appreciates that this philosophy has been acknowledged in the Blue Paper.

ECSA will of course contribute to the development of the White Paper on Maritime Transport Policy and hopes that it will create an appropriate framework attracting further investments in shipping and contributing to further enhance the global leadership of European shipping and its catalyst role for the whole maritime cluster.

Whilst the different action points brought forward in the Blue Paper will need further analysis and discussion, ECSA notes that some of its practical suggestions have been taken on board such as the enhancement of ratification of IMO Conventions by EU Member States as well as internationally. The vital role of European shipping for European and international trade has also been recognised. This should be a key theme in the further development of a sustainable overall maritime policy.

During the consultation process all stakeholders expressed support for an integrated approach to maritime policy. ECSA believes that the Blue Paper offers the basis towards such a policy. It is also encouraging that the Lisbon Policy – making Europe the most competitive and knowledge based economy – has been taken into account in this process.

ECSA wishes to reiterate the five underlying themes for a Future Maritime Policy that were brought forward in its first submission in 2005:

- Ensuring the potential for growth in Europe through adequate transport capacity.
- Ensuring a stable and competitive environment for EU shipping.
- Keeping regulation global.
- Supporting a positive development of shipping in the EU.
- Taking an environmental approach with a global perspective.

*If you would have any questions regarding this press release, please contact Alfons Guinier on the following number: +32 475 28 40 89 or per e-mail: [Guinier@ecsa.eu](mailto:Guinier@ecsa.eu)*