



ARTICLES

FINALLY A COORDINATOR FOR MOTORWAYS OF THE SEA!

1/ Mr Oliveira, you have been nominated the coordinator for Motorways of the sea. What will be your tasks?

The main task will be to contribute to redirecting freight traffic from the road to the sea, which is currently congesting many European motorways and roads. The latter is not only more “environmentally friendly” but also has a broad capacity, which is mostly limited only by the size of the ports and management efficacy. The focal points of action will be the boards of administration of the ports themselves, as well as road and shipping companies. It’s the cargo that has to occupy the central position of the means of transport; there must be a continuous guarantee for transport at suitable prices and whose attributes are as close as possible to the door-to-door connection. The road freight company must be aware of the advantages of introducing a “sea arch” to their route without reducing the quality of road transport. It is really a question of solving a complex logistics problem which, therefore, must be attacked from several different fronts.

2/Why Motorways of the sea are so important for Europe?

Because Europe has many congested roads, which is negative not only for transport itself and its costs but also for the environment. There are many sections that are oversaturated and impossible to expand or reduce the polluting freight imposed around them. The maritime method is less polluting and can be safer than using roads. Therefore, in favour are the quantitative aspects (prices) and others linked to the quality of life.

3/ How CPMR could contribute to the implementation of a maritime transport policy in Europe?

The CPMR is very prestigious in European regions that are its members because it has known how to defend its multiple interests. It so happens that many peripheral maritime regions have ports that can be mooring points for many stretches of maritime motorways. They will then cease to be peripheral and become central. On the other hand, neighbouring regions may communicate with them or by means of uncongested surface transport because they are not in the centre nor are they radial with regard to the centre or, better still, with short sea shipping. If we act on these different fronts, we will help to unblock current centres and liven up the peripheries. The CRPM is currently well aware of the problems of the latter and knows the politicians responsible for their development.

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JEAN TRESTOUR: THE CPMR IS A COMMITTED ALLY IN TRANSPORT POLICY

Jean Trestour is head of the maritime transport policy unit at the European Commission’s Transport Directorate General, dealing with the internal market, ports, short-sea shipping, and inland waterways. One of the most knowledgeable experts on European maritime transport policy, Mr Trestour has always followed our activities with close attention, and been open to our proposals.

EM: Do you think that the Regions can encourage maritime transport in Europe, and if so, how?

JT: I think they certainly can. The Regions, especially the maritime and peripheral Regions, are almost by definition interested in maritime transport, for four reasons: their closeness to the sea, the growth in world container transport, interregional trade, and developments in the fisheries sector all offer obvious opportunities for geographical, technical, economic, and social development. How can the regions encourage maritime transport? By promoting it, that is to say not only through campaigns of active support aimed at transport contractors, but also for example in less costly ways such as inciting greater port competitiveness or by getting

rid of administrative procedures for short-sea shipping or intra-EU transport.

EM: What community instruments are available in this field, and how are they likely to be affected by the 2008/2009 financial review?

JT: In the field of support for public infrastructure investment there is the TEN-T fund, and for business support for transport services involving modal shift there is the Marco Polo programme. These programmes currently respond in a satisfactory manner to demands from the public and private sector, of which we would like to see more.

EM: Do you think that Marco Polo could be modified to better integrate the "improvement of accessibility" dimension, in particular for the benefit of the islands and the outermost regions?

JT: As I said, Marco Polo provides support for modal shift; it is not intended to be a substitute for regional or cohesion funds.

EM: What do you expect of the Sea Motorways, and can you give any precise indications as to the timetable for their implementation?

JT: That they should provide an economic and profitable, rapid, safe and frequent, high quality alternative to congested roads, to which they should provide a partial substitute along with inland waterways and rail transport. They are being gradually put in place, thanks to public initiatives following calls for tender by the Member States and private initiatives taken by intelligent players in the transport chain who have understood the economic advantages in a substitute market for traffic congestion, social obligations and delays involved in crossing natural or other frontiers. In the Mediterranean, on the Atlantic seaboard and in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, examples and experiments are flowering and bearing fruit. We can only welcome this.

EM: Do you see the CPMR as an ally or as an obstacle in the delivery of the EU's transport policy?

JT: Of course the CPMR has been and still is a committed ally in transport policy. We measure its degree of commitment and success in the light of operations of active support and encouragement that the CPMR is able to initiate at grass roots level in the peripheral and maritime Regions.

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CLIMATE CHANGE AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF CPMR

Pierre SCHELLEKENS, Deputy Head of Cabinet of the Commissioner Stavros Dimas has been interviewed on Climate Change during the General Assembly of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CRPM/CPMR) held in Florence (IT) on 18-19 October 2007.

Please click here to watch the video

<http://fr.youtube.com/watch?v=UkW0YDr4KXA>

THE CPMR THANKS THE TUSCANY REGION FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Agriculture, climate change, the EU Budget, economic and social cohesion, as well as maritime policy and globalisation were the main themes of the 35th General Assembly of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) which was held on 18 and 19 October 2007 in Florence.

Among the participants were the Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Mr Joe Borg, who presented the Blue Paper on the sea which was published on 10 October 2007 to the 156 Member Regions of the CPMR, and the Portuguese State Secretary for Defence and Maritime Affairs, Mr João Mira Gomes, who invited the CPMR to Lisbon on 22 October to participate in the European Ministerial Conference on Maritime Policy for the European Union, which is being organised by the six-month Portuguese Presidency.

Many regional leaders took part in the General Assembly. Mrs Ségolène Royal, President of Poitou-Charentes Region and former French presidential candidate discussed climate change and Mr Jean-Yves Le Drian, President of the Region of Brittany and Vice-President of the CPMR expressed the CPMR's satisfaction with the publication of the Blue Paper.

For further information:

http://www.crpm.org/pub/presse/92_fr-com_presse_crpm_3-def.pdf

EVENTS

22 October, Portuguese Presidency Conference on Maritime Governance, Lisbon (PT)

<http://www.presidencia.pt/>

1 November, the FOGAR (Regions from all continents) will be received at different UN agencies, New York (US)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=4,7,2#organisation>

6-9 November, Europort Maritime 2007, Rotterdam (NL)

<http://www.europortmaritime.nl/intro-eng.html>

8-9 November CPMR Seminar "How to promote sustainable energy at a regional level", Opatija (HR)

<http://www.crpm.org/en/index.php?act=6,1,2,59>

12-15 November, European Parliament Plenary Session, Strasbourg (FR)

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/public/plenSession.do;jsessionid=758B06461084CBB831EBC1AAEC260454.node1?language=EN>

19 November, CPMR Seminar "Maritime Ports and transports", Asturias (ES)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6>

22 November, The European Commission's New Ports Policy: Opening the Dialogue, Brussels (BE)

http://www.thewaterfront.co.uk/conferences/conf_calendar.php

22-23 November, Agrosresource Business Convention, Picardie (FR)

<http://www.p2i.picardie.fr/>

27-29 November, Blue Planet Forum, CoR Brussels (BE)

http://www.cor.europa.eu/document/Highlight/2821_forum_BluePlanetFINAL.pdf

3-4 December CPMR Scientific Council "Regional Development and globalisation", Lisboa (PT)

<http://www.crpm.org/index.php?act=6,1,2,56>

13-14 December, 3^{èmes} Assises de l'Economie Maritime et du Littoral, Marseille (FR)

http://www.lesechos-conferences.fr/co/catalogue/conferences/energie-environnement-de/economie_mer_littoral/presentation.html?PHPSESSID=sdqe015n5k2ma0saf5po39ovk5

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