

## **TOWARDS A FUTURE MARITIME POLICY FOR THE UNION**

### **A STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN BOATING ASSOCIATION**

Boating in Europe takes a variety of forms, including personal water craft, windsurfers and small dinghies, coastal cruising, both power and sail, cruising on the inland canals and rivers, and coastal, offshore and oceanic racing.

These activities support a substantial industry sector and the European Boating Association (EBA) works in close co-operation with EURMIG on a wide range of issues of mutual importance. (See EURMIG statement to Task Force, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2005).

Although recreational boatowners come from a wide variety of backgrounds, countries and economic circumstances, they are united by a common interest in the water and the challenges of safe navigation and seamanship. There is no other form of participative recreation which covers such a diversity of ages, interests and locations. This is a part of the wider cultural community of sports, recreation and tourism that has been bringing together the people of all the states in the Union for many years.

The EBA is the representative body for all leisure boat users in Europe, under power and sail, on inland and maritime waters, having in its membership over 20 national federations in European states, and supporting the interests of the 30 million plus boat users across the whole continent (estimated at 10 million users of inland waters and 20 million who go to sea).

The EBA, which was founded in 1982, exists to provide a link for boat users to be informed and consulted about EU legislation, and to make their views known to the European Institutions. We discuss and work out a wide range of boating issues within Europe, and make proposals to national and European governmental organisations. The work of the EBA covers Environmental, Technical and Regulatory issues, and we support the work of the UN/ECE Inland Transport Committee, for the leisure use of the inland waterways of Europe, and the promotion of the International Certificate of Competence.

The aims of the EBA are to promote the enjoyment of leisure boating throughout the EU, to keep rules, regulations and access restrictions to the minimum and, from now on, to ensure that the voice of the leisure sector is at the forefront of the development of the European Maritime Policy.

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