

News Item, Hamburg 28 April 2016 General Assembly

European Research Association 'Vessels for the Future' held its 3rd General Assembly in the Hamburg office of DNV-GL on 28th April 2016.

The session was chaired by Dr Pierre Sames, the current Chairman of the Association, and progress reports on the 2015/16 activities were presented by the Executive Director Chris Campbell. Forty-one members of the Association attended the General Assembly and votes were called by the Chairman on a number of proposals, including confirmation of new members of the Association and replacement of Board Members, where vacancies had arisen during the year.

The RDI Road Map developed since the last General Assembly, and an abridged version highlighting the Research Priorities for the final phase of the European Commission's Horizon 2020 work programme, were outlined before being offered for final technical review on the following day. The General Assembly agreed that the Road Map should form the basis for future communication with the European Commission relating to the 2018-20 work programme. Pierre Sames acknowledged the sterling work done by the Technology Groups in bringing the Road Map to fruition. Chris Campbell highlighted however, that this would not have been possible without the significant input and editorial work carried out by the Chairman. This latest edition of the Road Map and the Priorities Document take account of feedback received from the Commission.

Looking to the future, the Chairman of Waterborne Willem Laros was invited to give a presentation on his proposals for a new Waterborne structure that embraces Vessels for the Future and strengthens the relationship between the two organizations. Members debated the effect that the revised organizational arrangement would have on Vessels for the Future goals. The Board of Directors was tasked to explore this in more detail and to come back to the General Assembly with clear proposals about the best way forward.

Whilst it was recognized by the General Assembly that achieving a cPPP in a timeframe that would have a bearing on H2020 looks unlikely, there was strong support for the management to step up its efforts to influence the European Commission in its setting of Research Priorities and budget allocations for the benefit of future maritime research.