

Hamburg, 6th April 2017

Tenth National Maritime Conference supports sustainable shipping: “The LNG funding programme will come.”

The German Maritime LNG Platform assumed a prominent position at the 10th National Maritime Conference that took place on 4th April in Hamburg, under the aegis of the Chancellor. More than 740 representatives from business, politics, academia and administration attended the event. The focus of one-day event was on the digitalisation of the maritime sector but also the maritime energy transition featured on the agenda. Georg Ehrmann, Managing Director of the German Maritime LNG Platform, hosted two national panels that mostly discussed how to achieve a more sustainable shipping sector.

During the first panel representatives from EnBW, Hapag-Lloyd, MAN, Meyer Werft, HHLA and KfW-IPEX Bank discussed the contribution of the maritime sector to climate protection and to the energy transition and what specific framework conditions are needed. In addition, panelists identified their political demands and stated how political decision-makers could support them effectively.

In turn, these demands were taken up by the panelists of the next panel which were State Secretary Uwe Beckmeyer (SPD), State Secretary Enak Ferlemann (CDU), Hamburg Senator Frank (no party affiliation) as well as the parliamentarians Rüdiger Kruse (CDU), Johannes Kahrs (SPD), Dr Valerie Wilms (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) and Herbert Behrens (Die Linke). The Maritime Co-ordinator of the Federal Government, State Secretary Uwe Beckmeyer, stressed that the shipping sector needed to tackle the energy transition and that his ministry, the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, had already provided additional funding for R&D activities. He pointed out that co-operation with all key stakeholders and at international level, e.g. for extending the SECA Zone, was essential. State Secretary Enak Ferlemann, Department for Transport and Digital Infrastructure, made clear that “LNG was the fuel of the future” for him and therefore needed appropriate funding. In this regard, he stressed that the funding programme for building new ships with LNG-fuelled engines or retro-fitting them “will come”: “We will get this done swiftly”, i.e. before the parliamentary recess in the summer. He also highlighted that the public sector would extend its role as a “First Mover” equipping more state-owned ships with LNG-fuelled engines.

Georg Ehrmann, Managing Director of the German Maritime LNG Platform, counts on the swift implementation of these announcements:

„The German Maritime LNG Platform as a broad interest coalition of nearly 100 members and partners from the maritime sector welcomes State Secretary Ferlemann’s clear words about the LNG funding programme. The sector has been waiting for such a signal – specific projects could start immediately. This funding will be a key driving factor for establishing LNG as a marine fuel enabling shipping to become less pollutant and more sustainable. It now falls to the Federal Ministry for Transport and Digital Infrastructure and the members of the Budget

Committee of the German Bundestag to overcome the last hurdles so that the funding programme can finally come into force.”

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