

WELCOME

Frits Gronsveld, President Board of Directors, STC-Group



It is an honour to welcome you in Rotterdam at STC-Group.

STC-Group provides training and knowledge for the navigation, transport and harbour industries. Our headquarters in Rotterdam provide training for thousands of students and professionals and has one of the largest simulator parks in the sector. Our organisation offers in-house training, vocational training, a master programme and a number of certified training courses. Our educational model adheres to the Chinese saying: what I hear, I forget; what I see, I remember and what I practice, I understand. That's why our students are practicing their skills in task simulators, full-mission simulators, in labs and on the school ships that are moored in front of the building.

STC BV also delivers consultancy and applied research for navigation, logistics and transport all over the world. STC-Group has offices in South-Africa, Brazil, Vietnam and the Philippines, but also has activities in Oman and Kazakhstan. We advise governments across the world to make efficient use of inland navigation.

STC-Group has an obvious interest of in Platina 2 because of its educational component. We are happy we can be part of a European project that aims to harmonise training and education standards for internal waterway transport across Europe. For us, it is important to keep education close to reality so that it serves the needs of the sector in the best possible way.

We are convinced that internal navigation can become a logistics service provider that is able to compete with road transport. But before that, we need to address a few challenges. An increased drive towards digitalisation is one of them, reducing our carbon footprint another. (Future) logistics decision makers need to be made aware of the possibilities and advantages of inland waterway transport. When we address these issues, the future of inland navigation will be promising.

And this conference is definitely looking to the future. A lot of work has been done within Platina 2, so now it is time to ensure its follow up and implementation. I wish you a pleasant day with fruitful discussion.

OPENING SPEECH

Dimitrios Theologitis, European Commission



I would like to thank STC-group for hosting us in this impressive theatre with a stunning view over Rotterdam harbour.

In order to look into the future, we need to be aware of the past. In 2006, the European Commission adopted the Naiades policy package. And even though it was considered a good policy frame, the industry was gnashing its teeth because initially, it did not come with money to implement the policies. Platina was the answer.

In 2008, Platina made the implementation of the Naiades programme possible. Platina 1 & 2 ran over 7 years, invested 11 million euro into 33 deliverables with the expertise of 24 project partners. Platina addressed the challenges for inland navigation in 60 actions, ranging from infrastructure, markets, RIS, human resources and more.

I would like to thank the whole team for contributing all their knowledge, wisdom, time and work. The work went far beyond the 33 deliverables. There was a need for cooperation, for factual information, consultation with the sector and networking between the stakeholders. Platina did all of that. In that sense, it has been a truly successful project that has really helped shape inland navigation and its future.

But what is next? The joined efforts should not stop here. I hope this final conference will give us and your ideas on how to continue to make inland waterway transport fully part of multi-modal transport solutions.