



Press release: For release on 18 April 2011

NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR A BLUE FUTURE

Marine Board Forum highlights Innovation hotspots for the European marine sector

Technology has transformed the way humans interact with the seas and oceans. But what are the next big ideas that will drive growth in marine and maritime sectors into the future? On 18 April 2012, leading experts from academia, industry and policy will gather at the 3rd Marine Board Forum in Brussels to discuss future and emerging “blue technologies.” The Marine Board has convened this flagship event on the understanding that technology is the key to unlocking the secrets of the oceans which will allow us to manage, protect and sustainably benefit from their vast resources.

“...Combining emergent technologies will fundamentally transform our understanding of the innate complexity of our planetary life support system – the global ocean,” explains Professor John R. Delaney, University of Washington and keynote speaker at the Marine Board-ESF Forum.

Technology will drive progress, not just in ocean science, but in a range of maritime sectors. Using the Irish SmartBay initiative¹ as a case study, IBM Distinguished Engineer, Dr Harry Kolar explains: *“Advancements in areas such as high performance analytics and modeling, real-time event-driven approaches, data management, sensor design, communications technology and data transport are benefiting a diverse range of marine and maritime sectors from flood condition monitoring to commercial fishing, aquaculture and public health.”*

But which technologies should society invest in and how can we fast-track the process from concept to production? The Forum will discuss how blue technology development, whether in a university lab, a small start-up or a big multi-national company, can be supported and fostered to ensure Europe maintains its role as one of the world’s leading maritime regions.

“In the coming decade, innovation will be essential to underpin scientific discoveries, drive a thriving maritime economy and offer new tools to assess and sustainably manage the marine environment. Multi-sector collaboration will be key to achieving these goals” says Kostas Nittis, Marine Board Chair, Hellenic Centre for Marine Research, Greece.

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¹ www.marine.ie/home/services/operational/SmartBay/

Notes to editors

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A full programme and further information can be viewed on the event website:

<http://www.marineboard.eu/fora/3rd-marine-board-forum>

Founded in 1995, The Marine Board provides a pan-European platform for its member organizations to develop common priorities, to advance marine research and to bridge the gap between science and policy, in order to meet future marine science challenges and opportunities. www.marineboard.eu

The Marine Board works in association with the European Science Foundation (ESF), an independent, non-governmental organization that promotes collaboration in scientific research, funding of research and science policy across Europe. www.esf.org

The Marine Board Forum series brings together a wide range of marine science stakeholders (scientists, European and national policymakers, pan-European and regional networks, etc) to discuss and develop a common position on a marine science topic of common concern. The forum bridges the gap between the scientific community, policymakers and other stakeholders to advance the issue at hand.