Dear President,

EIB – Renewed policy for EIB lending to the transport sector

As a follow up to the interesting exchange of views that we had with you in March together with EMEC we have analysed the EIB renewed policy on lending to the transport sector.

ECSA appreciates that the policy underlines the importance of shipping, particularly short sea shipping, within the policy of sustainable transport.

In this context ECSA would wish to make the following observations:

- With regard to Climate Change shipping is clearly the solution producing only 2 to 4 % of global CO2 whilst transporting up to 90 % of global trade. Shipping is the best performer per tonne/km and steps are taken to further improve this position.
- Within the policy of co-modality shipping services play a key role as logistic operators. This is true not only for over sea long distance services but also for short sea services. 40% of the EU’s internal trade is currently transported by short sea shipping and this mode of transport is growing at the same rate as road transport. However, in order to ensure its continued growth and increase co-modality, the promotion of short sea services should be further enhanced. This should be done by using and combining the most appropriate transport modes on al fronts e.g.: efficiency, environmental friendliness, and other external costs such as accidents, congestion and noise. The modal shift to shipping as the most sustainable transport mode is the logical consequence of such an approach.
- The development of ports and hinterland connections has a beneficial effect on the use of short sea shipping and should consequently be considered as part of the promotion of short sea shipping.
- Taking into account the key role of European shipping in the context of sustainable transport it should be realised that there should be a clear distinction between measures for shipbuilding and those for sustainable transport which is an issue in its own right.
- European shipping is controlling up to 41 % of the global merchant fleet and is de facto operating in a globally competitive market. Whist the vast majority of normal ships is built outside Europe the machinery and equipment is generally supplied by European controlled companies.
Regarding the point above, it should be noted that territorialisation clauses, making the acquisition of new vessels subject to the use of European yards is neither appropriate nor justified: while these clauses directly hinder the development of the European fleet to the benefit of third country competitors, they also fail in taking into account that - without regard to the yard involved - the equipment is largely coming from European marine equipment manufacturers and it weights for at least 70% of the value of a project. Denying funds on the basis of the location of the yards is thus detrimental to the position of the European industry.

We hope to have contributed to the updating of the transport lending policy of the EIB and are at your disposal for further information.

Yours sincerely,

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Secretary General

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