

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

**FOREMAST: New Horizon Europe project transforming urban and coastal logistics**

**Tuesday, 30 January 2024, Brussels** - The new Horizon Europe project FOREMAST is officially kicking-off today in Brussels, Belgium with 30 participants representing the European inland waterway sector. Lead by Inlecom Group, the consortium of 16 partners from 9 countries will focus on **promoting sustainable transport solutions in urban and coastal areas** over the next 36 months.

FOREMAST stands for for Freight vOlumes transfer from Road to waterborne transport, using zeroEMission, Automated, Small, and flexible vessel protoTypes.

The physical kick-off meeting in Brussels is a valuable moment for all involved partners to meet in person and discuss and plan the next steps for the best outcome of the project and the future of inland waterways.

The new European project addresses the urgent need for cleaner logistics by developing automated, small, flexible, and zero-emission prototype vessels known as 'SFAZ'. The **'SFAZ' vessel**, to be created within the project, aims to **transform urban and coastal logistics, reducing road congestion, lowering emissions, and enhancing overall accessibility**.

FOREMAST solutions will be developed and validated in three regional Living Labs (LLs) utilising existing experimental vessels. Two physical Living Labs (LLs), representing coastal and inland congested urban regions, Ghent (BE) and Caen (FR), will be set up to guide, test and demonstrate the FOREMAST solutions of SFAZ Prototypes integrated through Automated Smart Terminals in optimised logistic networks. A third virtual LL in the Galati region will be used to demonstrate replicability of the FOREMAST solutions.

*“FOREMAST is a collaborative consortium of key stakeholders in waterborne transport, united by a steadfast commitment to pioneering a revolutionary concept. Our mission centers on the design and development of innovative Small, Flexible Automated, Zero-emission (SFAZ) vessels. These cutting-edge vessels are poised to usher in a new era of transportation efficiency, particularly in urban and coastal regions, where the movement of goods demands smarter and more sustainable solutions”* added Georgia Tsiochantari, Senior Project Manager at INLECOM Group.



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## About FOREMAST

FOREMAST is a Research and Innovation Action (RIA) answering to the call topic Developing small, flexible, zero-emission and automated vessels to support shifting cargo from road to sustainable Waterborne Transport of Horizon Europe. The project started on 1 January 2024 and will continue until 31.12.2026.

The FOREMAST consortium is lead by INLECOM Group and consists of 16 partners including Opleidingscentrum voor Hout en Bouw vzw, ABB Business Services sp. z o.o, ABB OY, ABB Marine & Ports Division, SEAFAR nv, CRITT T&L, NEAC Industry, PNO Innovation SL, Technological Institute of Aragon, Konnecta Systems, VLTN, P&E Lowlands, Universitatea Dunarea de Jos din Galati, Magellan Circle - European Affairs Consultancy, European Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) Platform and Ghent University.

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