

## Blue Innovation Dock: Driving the future of sustainable, innovative and competitive boating industry

Brussels/Düsseldorf, 25/11/2025 – The blue innovation dock (bid) will be presented at boot Düsseldorf from 17 to 25 January 2026 as the leading European platform for political decision-makers, industry, innovators and water sports enthusiasts to shape the future of the maritime industry. Jointly organised by boot Düsseldorf and the European Boating Industry (EBI), bid will once again bring high-level political engagement, cutting-edge technology and forward-looking discussions to Hall 10, reflecting the growing strategic importance of the sector within Europe's climate, industry and tourism policies.

Building on the great success of last year's edition, the 2026 program will focus on the important and far-reaching issues in the water sports industry. Key topics include sustainability and decarbonization, innovations in marinas and nautical tourism, circular materials and composite recycling, design and retrofitting, digitalization and AI, as well as high-performance and competitive sailing. A mix of panel discussions, keynotes, interviews and innovation presentations will showcase how industry, academia, politics and the next generation of changemakers are working together to create a sustainable, competitive and future-proof #MadelnEurope sector.



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boot Düsseldorf's commitment to innovation is underpinned by its strategic partners and sponsors, whose involvement further expands the international reach and impact of the blue innovation dock. This year's **main partners** are the **Beneteau Group**, **Brunswick Corporation** and **San Lorenzo**. Industry leaders and technology pioneers will once again support the events throughout the 9 days of boot Düsseldorf, highlighting advances in sustainable propulsion, materials research, digital solutions and marina development. Their support helps to create a unique environment in which the transformation of the industry becomes visible, accessible and actionable.

The 2026 edition of the bid offers a wide-ranging presentation platform for an exceptional line-up of speakers from EU institutions, industry, academia and sport. **High-level political participants** include Members of the European Parliament Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann and Andreas Schwab, representatives of the European Commission, including the Head of the Tourism Sector, Andreea Staicu, and senior national politicians. The opening address will be given by David Foulkes, CEO of Brunswick Corporation, who will be interviewed on stage by Marcus Krall.

Other expected speakers include Dr. Prof. Phil Klaus (International University of Monaco), Prof. Felix Leach (University of Oxford), Lea Jordan (travel and hospitality industry) and Julia Minici (Afterwind). The B2C programme will feature influential personalities and marine activists such as Emily Penn, Lukas Haitzmann, Boris Herrmann and André Wirsig, as well as leading organisations such as SailGP and GEOMAR, which stand out for their impressive storytelling, marine expertise and commitment.

### European Boating Industry



*"The blue innovation dock is the established presentation and networking platform for the maritime industry. It shows that boot brings together all the trades responsible for a functioning economy and an agile water sports industry at one time and in one place. This is where demands on European politics are manifested, visions are presented and exciting technologies are showcased. We can look forward to nine days of intensive knowledge and expertise transfer in Hall 10", says **boot Director Petros Michelidakis**.*

**EBI President Robert Marx** adds: *"The blue innovation dock has become a strategic platform where the most important discussions in our industry take place. Together with boot Düsseldorf, we are strengthening the bridge between industry and politics and helping to lead the European boat industry on a more sustainable, competitive and future-proof path. This collaboration enables us to showcase innovations, strengthen the industry's priorities at European level and ensure that the voices of businesses, marinas, manufacturers, water sports enthusiasts and environmental leaders are heard. By bringing all these players together under one roof, we are shaping concrete solutions that will shape the development of the boating ecosystem for years to come."*

The blue innovation dock 2026 program will be published in early December at [www.boot.com](http://www.boot.com).

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### **The world's largest yacht and water sports fair**

With more than 200,000 visitors from over 100 countries and 1,500 exhibitors on 220,000 square meters in Halls 1 to 17, boot Düsseldorf is the world's largest yacht and water sports fair. Both sailors and motor boaters will find a wide variety of boats, dinghies, super boats or luxury yachts. The popular water sports of diving, surfing, kite surfing, stand up paddling, skimboarding or canoeing are available at boot in all facets and with the appropriate equipment. Attractive stage programs with the stars of the scene, the latest trends and a high-caliber mix of workshops and hands-on activities, both for leisure sports enthusiasts and experts, make the fair unique worldwide. But marine conservation and innovative, sustainable technologies will also be in focus at boot 2026. In cooperation with the European Boating Industry (EBI), for example, the blue innovation dock offers a unique dialogue format with political, economic, technological and media expertise. The next edition of boot Düsseldorf will open its doors from 17 to 25 January 2026. [www.boot.com](http://www.boot.com)

### **About European Boating Industry (EBI)**

EBI represents the recreational boating industry in Europe. It encompasses all related sectors, such as boatbuilding, equipment manufacturing, marinas and service providers. The industry is a significant contributor to the European economy, representing 32,000 companies, predominantly SMEs that employ over 280,000 people directly. The mission of EBI is to advance and represent a sustainable boating and nautical tourism industry #MadeInEurope. More information on EBI's website: [www.europeanboatingindustry.eu](http://www.europeanboatingindustry.eu)

### **European Boating Industry**

Square de Meeûs 35 | B-1000 Brussels  
[www.europeanboatingindustry.eu](http://www.europeanboatingindustry.eu) | [office@europeanboatingindustry.eu](mailto:office@europeanboatingindustry.eu)  
Transparency Register #74989093163-18