



Mr. John Richardson  
Head of the Maritime Policy Task Force  
The European Commission  
Directorate-General for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs  
J-99 07/12  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium

Rotterdam, 30 March 2006

Dear Mr. Richardson, dear John,

Pursuant to our earlier discussions and to the Conference on European Maritime Policy - Brussels, 17th November 2005 - we have discussed within the European Network of Maritime Clusters the need and the necessity for a better and more comprehensive statistical survey of the European Maritime Cluster.

We have asked prof.dr. Chris Peeters of Policy Research Corporation of Antwerp, Belgium to draft an outline of the work that has to be done to achieve such investigation. As you are aware prof. Peeters has been previously involved in economic impact studies on the Dutch and European Maritime Cluster.

His suggestion to have a phased approach - establish first European standards for maritime cluster and sector definitions and assess availability and quality of relevant economical and statistical studies and data before embarking on a major study - has been well received by the members of the European Network of Maritime Clusters. Some comments have reflected the differences in perspectives in the various countries on cluster definitions, which - by nature - is an indication of the encountered problems. The European Network of Maritime Clusters however fully supports this approach.

Therefore, on behalf of the European Maritime Cluster Organisations we kindly recommend the Maritime Policy Task Force to underline the necessity of good statistical information on the various sectors of the European Maritime Cluster and to state in the Green Paper that adequate funds should be made available for proper statistical research on the Cluster.

The European Network of Maritime Clusters is in a position and prepared to use their networks in support of such an investigation.

With kind regards,  
European Network of Maritime Clusters

Niko Wijnolst  
Chairman

Francis Vallat  
Vice-Chairman

Henk Janssens  
Secretary