Novarium and the Port of Barcelona partner to build a vision for the blue economy

- **Lluís Salvadó, president of the Port of Barcelona, and Martin Beaulieu, CEO La Zone Bleue, signed a collaboration agreement today at BlueTechPort headquarters.**

- **The Bureau du Québec à Barcelone has played a key role in facilitating this partnership, thanks to its extensive connections with Barcelona's entrepreneurial ecosystem.**

The Port of Barcelona and Novarium, the Quebec-based innovation hub dedicated to the blue economy, signed a collaboration agreement today. Along with strengthening the relationship between Quebec and Barcelona, this partnership will provide startups supported by Novarium with access to the Port of Barcelona's Blue Sandbox. In addition, the relationship has been structured to serve as a catalyst for non-dilutive investment funding from Spain's Ports 4.0 Fund, the largest capital pool in Europe dedicated to port-based open innovation challenges.

The parties signed the agreement today in Barcelona, at Smart Ports: Piers of the Future 2023. This event is focussed on port infrastructure innovation. It brings together representatives from some 20 international ports making significant advances in the blue economy sector – integrating artificial intelligence and sustainable solutions to optimise their supply-chain management processes.

Barcelona has developed an ambitious blue economy strategy

With its ambitious blue economy strategy, the City of Barcelona and its Port are demonstrating their leadership in this promising economic sector. Last July, the Port of Barcelona and Tech Barcelona launched BlueTechPort, a new innovation space for companies conceived to foster innovation in all sectors related to the blue economy. Through this collaborative approach, BlueTechPort expects that participating start-ups will be positioned to benefit from all the advantages available through this ecosystem. This provides a further example of the network of alliances on which the Port of Barcelona is building its open innovation strategy.

This vision of the future, reinforced by the highly collaborative support of the blue economy sector adopted by Barcelona and the whole of Catalonia, serves as inspiration for Quebec as it pursues its own promising blue economy vision.

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A beneficial partnership for Quebec internationally

The Bureau du Québec à Barcelone played a key role in fostering and facilitating this partnership, through its deep connections with Barcelona's entrepreneurial ecosystem. For more than a year, Novarium and the Bureau collaborated with CENIT-CIMNE, a high-profile player in logistics and port research which has played an important long-term role with the innovation department of the Port of Barcelona. This relationship, in turn, laid the foundation for this promising partnership centred on development of the blue economy in Quebec and internationally.

Thanks to this collaboration agreement, Quebec will forge closer ties with the Catalan capital, given that the startups supported by Novarium will be able to operate from Barcelona and benefit from that city's assets. These include connections with investors in the region and access to a network of research and development infrastructures. As well, this deepened relationship provides Catalan startups with opportunities to link with the North American ecosystem and thus enlarge their market reach and take advantage of the infrastructure available in Quebec.

Quotes

- Lluís Salvadó Tenesa, president of the Port of Barcelona:
"The Port of Barcelona has maintained an excellent relationship with Quebec for many years. Beyond promoting the efficient transportation of goods between ports, this relationship promotes issues of common interest linked to innovation and logistics. The Bureau du Québec à Barcelone financed, in 2021, a project to develop avenues of collaboration between the innovation ecosystems linked to the port sector of each party. This identified technological solutions in an environment of increasing digitalization and transition towards a sustainable development model. Today, the collaboration bears fruit. This agreement with Novarium should help us move forward and become international leaders in maritime and port sustainability".

- Maël Solen Picard, director and head of the Bureau du Québec a Barcelona:
"This partnership between Novarium and the Port of Barcelona provides an exceptional opportunity for Quebec to strengthen its footprint in the blue economy. The entrepreneurial vigour and visionary leadership in Barcelona demonstrates that this region of the world can serve as a springboard for our Quebec-based companies. This collaboration further strengthens Québec's role as a gateway to the North American market for European companies".

- Martin Beaulieu, CEO La Zone Bleue:
"This collaboration, and the efforts of the Quebec government to ensure it happens, will help all players involved in research and economic development across the maritime sector deploy effective international marketing strategies. Step by step, we are building a transatlantic blue bridge for the

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soft landing of Quebec and European companies. Together, we can shape the future of the maritime industry and contribute to a transition toward a more sustainable and responsible economy".

PHOTOS:

Martin Beaulieu, CEO La Zone Bleue, and Lluís Salvadó, president of the Port of Barcelona.



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Emma Cobos, Innovation and Business Strategy director of the Port of Barcelona; Maël Solen Picard, director of the Bureau du Québec à Barcelona; Lluís Salvadó, president of the Port of Barcelona; Martin Beaulieu, CEO La Zone Bleue, and Sergi Tudela, general director of Maritime Policy and Sustainable Fishing Generalitat de Catalunya.



About Port of Barcelona

The Port of Barcelona is the main transport and services infrastructure in Catalonia and a port of reference in the Euro-Mediterranean region, consisting of more than 500 companies with more than 38,000 people on staff. Its almost 100 direct shipping links connect nearly 200 ports on five continents. The different facilities and activities of the port are grouped into four major segments: commercial port, logistics port, old port, and outer port. This diversification has made it the main logistics hub for southern Europe and the Mediterranean.

About Novarium

Novarium is an innovation hub dedicated to the blue economy. It generates synergies between Quebec entrepreneurs, research centres, investors, and industry. Its vertically-integrated accelerator, called FLOTS, supports startups and industrial partners in the development and commercialization of sustainable solutions that tackle the most pressing climate challenges, such as ocean preservation. Founded by Martin Beaulieu, PhD, entrepreneur and CEO of La Zone Bleue, Novarium is also a player in an international blue economy innovation network. It acts as a catalyst for maritime knowledge, with more than 100 researchers and specialists involved in the fields of oceanography, marine biotechnology, marine engineering, data management, and marine biology. For more information, visit novarium.com

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