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Smart Ports: Piers of the Future and Tomorrow.Blue Economy consolidate Barcelona's leadership in the blue economy

- **With the motto “Creating ports that inspire”, the sixth Smart Ports: Piers of the Future will bring the most influential ports together in Barcelona to discuss the blue economy, innovation and sustainability.**
- **The conference is part of the Tomorrow.Blue Economy event within the Smart City Expo World Congress.**

Port managers and experts in innovation, sustainability and the blue economy from around the world will meet in Barcelona from 5 to 7 November for the sixth Smart Ports: Piers of the Future to define strategies to drive the blue economy, and discuss the future of the port sector and the responsible use of resources and the opportunities offered by the marine ecosystem.

For the second year running, Smart Ports: Piers of the Future is part of the Tomorrow.Blue Economy congress of the Smart City Expo World Congress (SCEWC). This blue economy-focused event is organised by Fira de Barcelona in cooperation with the Port of Barcelona; Barcelona City Council, through Barcelona Activa; and the World Ocean Council (WOC), an international business organisation working in the field of the sustainable maritime economy. Led by the Port of Barcelona, Smart Ports: Piers of the Future will bring together representatives and innovation experts from member ports of the initiative such as Antwerp-Bruges, Busan, Gothenburg, Hamburg, Los Angeles and Rotterdam, joined by special guests Shanghai, Ningbo, Seattle and Quebec, and the Port of Long Beach (United States). Combining both congresses consolidates Barcelona's leadership in the blue economy area worldwide.

Under the motto “Creating ports that inspire”, the benchmark international meeting will have a clear focus on the ports of the future, the port-city relationship, the blue economy, innovation and sustainability. To this end, there will be sessions on the incorporation of disruptive technologies and start-ups in the port area; opening up areas to the public; boosting the blue economy; and changes to the port business model in an unpredictable context, with sustainability as a goal to be achieved.

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Among this year's key new elements is collaboration with C40 Cities, a global network of cities to combat climate change, and the participants of its C40 Green Ports Forum, an event running from 6 to 8 November, also in Barcelona, to foster knowledge exchange and sustainable solutions among the participating ports.

Tomorrow.Blue Economy

In addition to Smart Ports: Piers of the Future, the Tomorrow.Blue Economy World Congress (TBEWC) encompasses the Sustainable Ocean Summit (SOS) and the Global Blue Finance Summit (BlueFIN), both of which forums are organised by the World Ocean Council (WOC) to foster business collaboration and develop innovative financial solutions to facilitate the growth of the blue economy. The TBEWC seeks to respond to one of the greatest current challenges: sustainably and responsibly harnessing the resources offered by the marine ecosystem, which covers 71% of the earth's surface, as a source of wealth for the well-being of society in the 21st century.

Port of Barcelona President Lluís Salvadó highlighted the potential of Barcelona, in particular its port, to become an innovation hub in the blue economy with a global reach. "The combination of talent, organisations and infrastructure makes the Port of Barcelona a unique platform for fostering the blue economy, sustainability and maritime innovation."

Ugo Valenti, director of TBEWC and the Smart City Expo World Congress, underlined that "it is essential for completing the reflection on the unescapable green transition of cities and putting the focus on managing our coasts, seas and oceans, and on the great opportunities they can offer if we know how to take care of them."

Lorenzo di Pietro, general manager of Barcelona Activa, explained that "Barcelona will witness a more ambitious Tomorrow.Blue Economy event, now integrated into the Smart City Congress, and with the WOC as an international partner. The city maintains its commitment to this sector as a driving force for a more competitive, sustainable and innovative Barcelona, as shown by the strategic investment of €142 million recently announced by the mayor to promote cutting-edge facilities in the blue economy, such as the Maritime Technology Park, the Barcelona Mar de Ciència centre and the Port of Barcelona BlueTechPort."

Stewart Sarkozy-Banoczy, managing director of the WOC, stated that "WOC's ongoing collaboration with the city and the Port of Barcelona, as well as our alignment with the Smart City Expo World Congress and Fira Barcelona, are examples of the cooperation and partnership that brought our headquarters to Barcelona. We are very pleased to begin this multi-year Sustainable Ocean Summit and Global Blue Finance Summit alliance with our partners to drive global private sector leadership, collaboration and action in support of sustainable cities and seas."

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According to the United Nations, the blue economy contributes \$1.5 trillion in added value to the global economy, generates more than 30 million jobs and supplies a vital source of protein to more than 3 billion people. For its part, the EU Blue Economy Report states that the blue economy generates over 1.6% of the GDP of the twenty-seven countries of the European Union, employing over 3.6 million people across Europe.

More information on Smart Ports: Piers of the Future at:

<https://www.portdebarcelona.cat/ca/comunicacio/agenda/smart-ports>

More information on Tomorrow.Blue Economy at: <https://www.tomorrowblueconomy.com/>

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Photo: From left to right, Stewart Sarkozy-Banoczy, managing director of the WOC, Ugo Valenti, director of TBEWC and of the Smart City Expo World Congress, Lluís Salvadó, president of the Port of Barcelona, Emma Cobos, Director of Innovation of the Port of Barcelona, and Lorenzo di Pietro, general manager of Barcelona Activa.



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