

## LISBON DECLARATION ON A EUROPEAN NETWORK OF HERITAGE HARBOURS

On 13 January 2024, European Maritime Heritage (EMH) carried out a Seminar in Lisbon aimed at assessing the need to launch a European Network of Heritage Harbours.

Discussions showed that this event constitutes a milestone towards the urgent establishment of such a network.

Consequently, in the spirit of the 2003 EMH Barcelona Charter, and the presentations given at the Lisbon Seminar, with the commitment to preserving Europe's rich maritime legacy, the stakeholders consider it necessary to issue the following:

### DECLARATION

**What:** Heritage Harbours - places of exchange between sea and land--serve as living museums, community centers, interactive hubs, and stand as custodians of Europe's nautical past, present, and future. They are symbols of Europe's historical engagement with waterways, shipping on rivers and coasts both locally and globally. They have shaped settlements and cultural life along seas and other water bodies through time and led to the emergence of water and maritime based values. They can serve as models for preservation and sustainable urban development in line with the UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape approach and help activate the UN SDGs to address climate related water urgencies.

**Why:** A united network dedicated to the analysis, knowledge sharing, preservation and activation of Heritage Harbours is a step towards safeguarding these treasures for future generation. This network will promote sustainable urban development, encourage the sharing of best practices in heritage preservation, and enhance the role of harbours as dynamic centres of cultural and economic activity.

**Who:** Such a network of Heritage Harbours requires broad support from multiple stakeholders including traditional boats owners and users, practice, governments, academia, NGO and citizens. Together the members of the network commit to promoting Heritage Harbours as sites of historical authenticity, places of active community engagement, and sustainable and inclusive development. This network will preserve and activate the shared history of Europe and its global partners, and ensure that Heritage Harbours contribute positively to the environmental, social, and economic well-being of communities in which they are located.

**How:** Consequently, this Lisbon Declaration on Heritage Harbours issues a strong Call to Action to international, national, regional, and local authorities, as well as civil society maritime organizations across Europe to join EMH. Taking joint action, we can protect and promote our shared maritime heritage and ensure that it remains a vibrant and sustainable part of our urban landscapes. It is a commitment to Europe's shared history, a promise for a sustainable future, and a celebration of our enduring maritime identity. Let us therefore unite in this cause: In Europe's harbours lies the heart of our maritime identity, bridging our past with a sustainable future.