



Speakers Jussi Tapio, Pia Meling, Mikael Ruhala, Jens Meier and Mikael Mäkinen.

Breaking Waves: Towards smart and emission-free shipping

The Breaking Waves conference 2019 at the Messukeskus Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre as part of the world-leading start-up event Slush. The famous buzz surrounding the event also extended to the maritime cluster's conference, as the top names and influencers in the sector met to discuss the future challenges facing maritime logistics.

TEXT MICHAEL HUNT PHOTO ANTERO AALTONEN

The themes of 2019 conference were ecosystems and optimising shipping's logistics chains. The main topic was how they can help us to develop more environmentally friendly and more efficient maritime logistics. Keynote speakers included international names such as

Emanuele Grimaldi from the Grimaldi Group, **Jens Meier** from the Port of Hamburg and **Pia Meling** from Massterly, who all approached the topic from their own perspectives.

Emanuele Grimaldi's speech emphasised ambitious targets, even going as far as zero-emission ships. "While shipping is already

today the most efficient method of moving goods and people around the world, its green bar will be set higher and higher," said Grimaldi in his speech.

The programme also included presentations from the best start-ups in Maritime Accelerator's corporate accelerator programme. In the spirit of Slush, the most interesting start-ups in the marine sector were paired with the industry's major operators. As in the previous year, a Think Tank was organised in conjunction with the conference. It was targeted at the maritime cluster's directors and key influencers from Finland and Europe.

A shared challenge for the maritime cluster

The day's speeches and panels discussed the shared challenge faced by the entire maritime cluster and expressed a willingness to reduce emissions. Cooperation, including knowledge and data sharing along the entire logistics chain, was considered an important area for development to ensure success. Communications was also held to be another challenge facing the entire field. The speakers called for openness and transparency, as well as more effective communications about the investments the sector is already making to cut emissions and in the general interests of the environment. In addition to ambitious targets, we need a wide range of new technologies and innovations to meet the challenge posed by climate change. Harnessing artificial intelligence and platforms to boost the efficiency of maritime logistics was seen as a future trend in the sector. Ecosystems were perceived as ways to promote knowledge sharing and enable innovation in maritime logistics.

At the end of the day, it was noted that from the perspective of the European maritime cluster, these challenges can also be seen as opportunities. The sector is forward-looking and innovative, and is always harnessing new technologies. The European maritime cluster has the potential to play a decisive role in attaining global environmental targets within the sector. ✖