

NEW FRENCH PRESIDENCY AND ITS PRIORITIES FOR 2022 AND BEYOND

Ref: CC/CP (22)1

France assumed the Presidency of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) for a two-year term with effect from 1st January 2022. The office of President is held by

Mr François Alabrune

**Director of legal affairs at the Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs
and head of the French delegation to the CCNR.**

The Vice Presidency of the CCNR is assumed by the Netherlands and the office of Vice President has been entrusted to

Mrs Brigit Gijsbers

**Director of maritime affairs at the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management
and head of the Dutch delegation to the CCNR.**

The new Presidency's priorities were presented at the CCNR's last plenary session in December 2021. They encompass the following themes:

ENHANCED COOPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

During its presidency, the French delegation will continue the efforts made to ensure the proper functioning of the [CESNI](#), the European Committee for drawing up Standards in the field of Inland Navigation. The objective is to improve the flexibility and efficiency of this joint body whose task it is to coordinate and standardise European inland navigation, and within which the CCNR's and EU's member states cooperate.

ENERGY TRANSITION OF INLAND NAVIGATION

The French delegation will commit itself to continuing to implement the undertakings of the [Mannheim Declaration](#) signed in 2018, an essential focus of which is the energy transition of inland navigation. It is incumbent on the CCNR, as an international organisation, to play a leading role in this area.

Based on the emissions reduction roadmap adopted by the CCNR, rapid progress is to be anticipated over the next two years. One example is innovative vessels using fuels other than diesel, the use of which would require derogations or changes to CCNR regulations. The question of a financial instrument capable of supporting the energy transition will also be centre stage of the discussions. Achieving this objective requires a narrow regulatory course to be charted between the revised draft directive on energy taxation on the one hand and the Rhine's own peculiar constraints on the other.

DIGITALISATION OF INLAND NAVIGATION

In essence, a legal framework already exists in the digitalisation arena with the RIS directive and the ES-RIS standard. The challenge now therefore is to enable the emergence of various services, facilitating the modal shift to inland navigation, and helping to optimise traffic management both from an economic and environmental perspective, with particular use being made of artificial intelligence.

With this in view, the CCNR seems to be the natural forum to exchange perspectives on various specific subjects. These include the transit management and managing waiting times at hydraulic structures, energy-efficient navigation by means of speed optimisation – what is known as “eco-navigation” – and forecasting transit times.

IMPROVEMENT OF MOORINGS ON THE UPPER RHINE

Moorings are an important issue for sailors on the Upper Rhine. In this regard, Voies navigables de France (VNF) launched a study with Électricité de France (EDF) into building work for moorings for merchant vessels. With this in view, the French presidency suggests that there be a study into the possibility of standardising facilities of this type on the Rhine, especially at locks, in consultation with navigation personnel.

ABOUT THE CCNR

The Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) is an international organisation that exercises an essential regulatory role in the navigation of the Rhine. It is active in the technical, legal, economic and environmental fields. In all its areas of action, its work is guided by the efficiency of transport on the Rhine, safety, social considerations, and respect for the environment. Many of the CCNR's activities now reach beyond the Rhine and are directly concerned with European navigable waterways more generally. The CCNR works closely with the European Commission as well as with the other river commissions and international organisations.



ABOUT FRANÇOIS ALABRUNE

A graduate of Sciences Po in Paris, the holder of a law degree, and a former student at the École nationale d'administration, he began his career at the directorate of legal affairs at the Ministry of foreign affairs (1988-1992). He was then an adviser to the French Permanent Representation to the European Union in Brussels (1992-1996), then legal counsellor of the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations in New York (1996-2000). He was subsequently appointed successively as the deputy director of legal affairs (2001-2004), France's consul general in Quebec (2004-2009) and ambassador, Permanent Representative of France to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (2009-2013). He has been the director of legal affairs, legal adviser of the Ministry of foreign affairs since 2014, and member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration since 2016.



CCNR

CENTRAL COMMISSION
FOR THE NAVIGATION OF THE RHINE

Palais du Rhin

2, place de la République - CS10023
F - 67082 Strasbourg Cedex

Tel. +33 (0)3 88 52 20 10

Fax +33 (0)3 88 32 10 72

ccnr@ccr-zkr.org

www.ccr-zkr.org