

# Mannheim Declaration

## “150 years of the Mannheim Act – the driving force behind dynamic Rhine and inland navigation”

Congress of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine  
on 17 October 2018

The inland navigation ministers of the Kingdom of Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, the French Republic, the Netherlands and the Swiss Confederation met in Mannheim on 17 October 2018 to mark the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Revised Rhine Navigation Act (“Mannheim Act”) and adopted the following declaration relating to the “Basel Declaration” of 16 May 2006 and the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine’s Strategy dating from 2017:

1. WE acknowledge the Mannheim Act and the principles enshrined therein and emphasise the fundamental importance of the Act to the prosperity of the economy and of inland navigation in the Rhine river basin.

WE affirm the central role of the Mannheim Act in the fruitful collaboration on Rhine and inland navigation matters between the Riparian states and Belgium within the framework of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) and are prepared to furnish the CCNR with the appropriate financial resources.

WE welcome the CCNR’s leading and pioneering role as a centre of excellence for Rhine and inland navigation in Europe and wish to build on this.

2. WE support constructive collaboration between the CCNR and the European Union (EU), the other river commissions, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the associations recognised by the CCNR and all other inland navigation players.

WE commend the valuable contributions all participants have made to the sustainable ecological, social and economic development of inland navigation.

3. WE emphasise the central role of the European Committee for drawing up standards in the field of inland navigation (CESNI) as an innovative, efficient and practical body, and welcome the sought-after extension of its remit.

WE are endeavouring to achieve a lasting partnership between CESNI and the EU based on long-term joint financing.

4. WE emphasise the need for up-to-date, workable and harmonised environmental and safety regulations in Rhine and inland navigation.

To further improve the ecological sustainability of inland navigation, we task the CCNR to develop a roadmap in order to

- reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 35% compared with 2015 by 2035,
- reduce pollutant emissions by at least 35% compared with 2015 by 2035,
- largely eliminate greenhouse gases and other pollutants by 2050.

WE point to the need for new financial instruments to achieve these environmental objectives and entrust the CCNR with the task of leading this development.

5. WE call on the CCNR to press ahead with development of digitalisation, automation and other modern technologies, thereby contributing to the competitiveness, safety and sustainability of inland navigation.

6. WE wish to reinforce the role of inland navigation as an economically relevant means of transport with a high potential for development and innovation.

WE therefore request the CCNR,

- in conjunction with the member states, to ensure faster and more efficient inland vessel cargo handling in seaports,
- to accelerate the integration of inland navigation into digital and multimodal logistic chains,
- to work towards better coordination between national development programmes and provide transparent information about them.

7. WE are aware of the importance of well-trained shipboard personnel and the challenge of having to replace increased age-related departures in the near future.

WE task the CCNR

- with developing up-to-date and flexible crew regulations that also take account of social issues and rapidly changing working conditions aboard and ashore as a result of new technologies,
- with contributing yet further to enhancing the attractiveness of careers in inland navigation, for example through targeted advertising campaigns.

8. WE request the CCNR to report on progress with implementation of these goals in 2023.

This Joint Declaration was signed in Mannheim on 17 October 2018 in five copies in German, English, French and Dutch, all language versions being equally valid.

---

For the Minister  
of the Federal Republic of Germany

---

For the Minister  
of the French Republic

---

For the Minister  
of the Kingdom of Belgium

---

For the Minister  
of the Netherlands

---

For the Federal Councillor  
of the Swiss Confederation

