



PRESS RELEASE

ICOMIA WORLD MARINAS CONFERENCE 2018 A SUCCESS

Last week the ICOMIA World Marinas Conference 2018 was held in Athens, hosted by the Greek Marinas Association. The 10th Conference of its kind, the event was a great success thanks to the hard work of hosts and event organisers, as well as the sponsors and speakers that made the event possible. The hosts, Greek Marinas Association, provided a stimulating programme of topics, speakers and events under the theme: “Cross Sea Challenge for Marinas – Setting the Scene for Collective Development and Growth”.

Marina managers of the world met at the World Marina Conference in Athens to discuss the importance of marinas and waterfront redevelopment for economies, with a particular emphasis on how marina development can support the growth of boating, tourism and manufacturing markets. The conference is the only one of its kind, focusing in-depth on the marina industry on a global scale.

A conference for marina managers

The ICOMIA Marinas Group works hard to allow and encourage the exchange of technical, environmental and marketing information; educate government on the economic importance and environmental compatibility of boating facilities and creating a network so that information can be pooled for the common good. Additionally, the group organises the biennial ICOMIA Marinas Conference. Attendance at the World Marinas Conference is essential for marina managers that wish to stay up-to-date on the latest developments in the industry.

Through the work of IMG, and collaboration during the ICOMIA Marinas Conference, marinas from across the world work towards a less bureaucratic industry, and a more straightforward approach to the expansion and improvement of boating infrastructure. With international pressures on boating and associated industry, from steel tariffs to environmental legislation, it has never been more important to develop an international forum, and have a unified body to allow the industry to speak with one voice.

A conference for investors

Marinas are very long-term businesses, and it is common for investors to expect a long and slow payback period. It is important that governments understand this, otherwise there is a great risk that short-term leases will affect the viability of the industry. That is why the advocacy work of ICOMIA is so important, and the attendance of those working in government and politics at the World Marinas Conference is sure to have a positive impact on the industry.



A key topic of the ICOMIA World Marinas Conference 2018 was marina design and operation, and in particular looking at how trends in boating and boat ownership patterns impact on this. The growth of superyacht charter is an industry trend set to have large impacts on the boating industry. Appropriate infrastructure development, which takes these trends into consideration, is essential for a healthy marina industry, and this applies to both developed and emerging markets.

The conference being held in Athens gave delegates a chance to learn about the new marina investments that can be developed in Greece, thanks to privatisation programmes, urban waterfront rejuvenation projects and the increased importance of tourism economy. A full day of marina tours, traditionally part of WMCs, allowed delegates to learn about the particulars of the Greek marina market and how common issues have been solved there.

The conference showcased how to connect a global audience with national and local entrepreneurs, whilst the high turnout from authorities, including high-profile ministers, from Greece as well as from abroad, set the stage for important, progressive discussions.

Experts share their knowledge

The conference was the perfect opportunity for experts in marina development, infrastructure and equipment to share their knowledge and expertise with delegates. Hot topics included electric boat propulsion, solar piers, floating houses and floating infrastructures. There were also insightful presentations on current issues such as security issues at ports and marinas, oil pollution crisis management and marina marketing.

Key recurring themes included the impact of changing boat sizes and ownership patterns of marinas; the growth of shared ownership and its impact on perceptions, security and marina facilities and the symbiotic relationship between boat owners, marinas and the environment.

Delegates heard from industry leaders from around the world, who described and explained the state of play in their respective regions. Speakers also gave insights in to future developments and investment opportunities, and there was an excellent and thought-provoking presentation from industry expert Oscar Siches, on the need for different countries to take individual approaches to the marina and waterfront development.

A truly global event

414 delegates from 40 countries attended the conference. This is a great success and Greek Marinas Association are to be commended on the great number of delegates. That said, the worldwide interest in the contents of the conference is not surprising, given that the marina industry has never been so economically significant, with marinas in developing markets impacting on the local economies, whilst globally marina markets grow, indicating a promising future for the industry. In emerging markets, boating and waterfront development is having a significant positive impact on local economies and job creation. The ICOMIA World Marinas Conference 2018 delved deep in to this topic, drawing data and perspectives from Europe, Asia, the Americas and beyond.



Martinho Fortunato CMM, is the Chair of the ICOMIA Marinas Group, as well as the CEO of Marlagos, which owns Marina de Lagos, a 462 berth marina in Algarve, Portugal. He said:

“Greek Marinas Association did a wonderful job as hosts of the World Marinas Conference. It was wonderful to meet fellow marina managers and investors from around the world, and the discussions were very insightful. The conference has provided many opportunities for in-depth discussion of key issues and future trends, and demonstrated that it is up to us as an industry to take a proactive approach in leading and facilitating change in our industry over time. This forum has provided each of us the opportunity to realise that our issues, challenges, opportunities and futures are shared across the globe. We have been inspired by the innovations and ideas presented. I look forward to discussing and learning about the global progress and visions of the industry at the next World Marinas Conference”

For more information about ICOMIA, visit <https://www.icomia.com/>
For more information about Greek Marinas Association, visit <https://greek-marinas.gr/en/>

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