

Metstrade Unveils 2026 Content Programme to Navigate the Market

Content programme addresses the trends, technologies and strategies shaping the future of marine business

Metstrade 2026 has announced its content programme to help leisure marine professionals navigate market change, discover emerging opportunities and drive future success.

As the leisure marine industry adapts to shifting market conditions, changing consumer expectations, digital transformation and increasing pressure to improve efficiency, Metstrade's content programme will help businesses identify opportunities, solve challenges and remain competitive. This will be spearheaded by a keynote speech at the Official Opening of Metstrade 2026 by Groupe Beneteau CEO, Bruno Thivoyon.

Metstrade is taking a targeted approach to conference content with an emphasis on impact and practical value. Networking opportunities will also be available, giving visitors and exhibitors the chance to continue conversations with speakers, peers and industry experts in an informal setting.

The programme comes at a pivotal time for the global boating industry. Recent market analysis from ICOMIA and Boats Group shows the volume market facing continued pressure, with average new boat prices declining by 6.9% year-on-year, while the premium segment remains resilient, including 10.6% volume growth in the 56-79ft yacht category. At the same time, boatbuilders and suppliers are increasingly focused on reducing costs, improving production efficiency, strengthening supply chains, embracing digitalisation and adopting new technologies.

Against this backdrop, Metstrade has curated a programme of expert-led discussions, practical case studies and networking opportunities, where visitors will gain insights into how to respond to a changing leisure marine market.

The full conference programme is now available in advance of the exhibition, enabling visitors to build personalised agendas and ensure dedicated time is made to attend relevant events.

As the CEO of the world's largest boatbuilder by number of projects delivered, Bruno Thivoyon of Groupe Beneteau will be the keynote speaker for the Metstrade Official Opening. He will be sharing his perspective on the future of recreational boating and the forces transforming the sector.

Patricia Becker, Exhibition Manager at Metstrade, said: "The leisure marine industry is evolving rapidly, presenting both new opportunities and complex challenges. Our 2026 content programme has been carefully curated to ensure attendees gain valuable insights, practical takeaways and access to the conversations that matter most. We want everyone to gain knowledge they can apply directly to their businesses."

"The opening keynote speech from Bruno Thivoyon will set the tone for the whole of Metstrade – addressing market conditions and finding the solutions to innovate and grow."

There are three district themes for the content programme: Accessibility & Inclusion; Sustainability; and Innovation. A full programme is available here: <https://www.metstrade.com/programme>

Accessibility & Inclusion

As workforce challenges remain across the industry, attracting and retaining talent has become a strategic priority.

Metstrade's accessibility and inclusion programme addresses these challenges through discussions focused on leadership development, workforce training, mentoring and creating more inclusive workplaces. Events such as the Women in the Marine Industry International Breakfast and Young Professionals Club will showcase initiatives helping to build the industry's future talent pipeline.

Sustainability

The sustainability programme will focus on turning ambition into action through practical solutions and collaborative industry initiatives.

As regulators and customers place greater emphasis on environmental performance, the industry is seeking practical pathways towards decarbonisation and environmental stewardship. Metstrade's sustainability content programme will explore how businesses can balance commercial priorities with environmental responsibility, covering topics including emissions reduction, circularity, marine ecosystem restoration and regulation.

Sessions including the Marine Impact Lab, sustainability discussions involving ICOMIA and other associations, and presentations from the Water Revolution Foundation will provide practical examples of how organisations are translating sustainability ambitions into measurable outcomes.

Emerging Technologies

Emerging technologies will be a major focus throughout Metstrade 2026, with sessions examining the innovations to transform boatbuilding.

Digitalisation, automation, artificial intelligence and advanced materials are reshaping how boats are designed and built. As manufacturers seek greater efficiency and stronger competitiveness, Metstrade will examine the technologies and business models driving the next phase of boat building.

Sessions will explore opportunities ranging from data utilisation and connected technologies through to startup innovation, advanced propulsion systems and technology transfer from elite sports into mainstream yachting applications.

Celebrating Industry Excellence

Alongside the content programme, Metstrade celebrates innovation through two of the industry's most prestigious awards events.

The internationally renowned DAME Design Awards will showcase the very best in marine equipment design and innovation, recognising products that set new benchmarks for functionality, sustainability, aesthetics and user experience.

The Boat Builder Awards will honour the companies, teams and individuals driving progress across the global boatbuilding industry, recognising excellence in areas including manufacturing, sustainability, customer experience and business leadership.

Visitor registration for Metstrade 2026 is open, inviting leisure marine professionals from around the world to secure their place at the industry's leading global B2B event, taking place at RAI Amsterdam from 17–19 November. Free registration for Metstrade is only available up to and including 31 October – secure your registration

here: https://metstrade.login.rai.eu/?survey=2cmxfxru7ruf2https://metstrade.login.rai.eu/?survey=2cmxfxru7ruf2&actioncode=&utm_source=Press_contacts&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=MET_bezoekers_campagne_2026&utm_content=pressrelease

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Notes for editors

About RAI Amsterdam

Founded in 1893, RAI Amsterdam is a leading international exhibition and convention centre, committed to creating platforms that facilitate industry collaboration and progress.

About Metstrade

Metstrade is the world's largest trade exhibition for marine equipment, technology and services for the global leisure marine industry. Organised by RAI Amsterdam in association with ICOMIA (International Council of Marine Industry Associations), Metstrade's target audience includes yacht builders, naval architects, refit yards, distributors, dealers, wholesalers, captains, marina owners and marine equipment manufacturers worldwide. It connects global marine professionals in a unique cluster of networking, knowledge exchange and business development activities.

Metstrade 2026: 17–19 November 2026, at RAI Convention Centre in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.