



## 1<sup>st</sup> Environmental Symposium “La Belle Classe Superyachts”

### All the major players in the Yachting industry gathered at the Yacht Club de Monaco

Monaco, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010: Over 60 professionals from the yachting industry responded to an invitation by “La Belle Classe Superyachts”, a label initiated by the Yacht Club de Monaco to federate owners of superyachts (40 m +), for a dinner-debate on “the environmental link between Luxury Yachting and Harbours”. They had come from all sectors of the industry (shipyards, brokers, architects, captains, maritime experts and harbour masters) to discuss and exchange ideas at an event organised in collaboration with Only Yachts.

*“How can we be more responsible towards the environment? That is the question occupying the minds of superyacht owners today. Following January’s “La Belle Classe Superyachts” economy-oriented symposium, dealing with the financial situation in this sector, we wanted through this new initiative to assess the ecological implications of our activities”.* These were the words of Bernard d’Alessandri, General Secretary of the YCM, at the opening of this premiere event in the Yachting industry.

The dinner-debate took place just days before the release of a final report by the *Comité Opérationnel du Navire du Futur* (Yacht of the Future Operational Committee) to Jean-Louis Borloo, French Minister for Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and the Sea, initiator of the “*Grenelle de la Mer*”. In his introductory speech, Christophe Avellan, Head of Projects at Pôle Mer PACA presented the French initiative, the main aim of which is to slash fossil fuel consumption by 50% in the next ten years. It is a project that will demand significant financial input of 70 million Euros per year for R&D over the next ten years, aimed at the maritime sector be it shipping, military, fishing, science or pleasure. *“What a paradox it would be not to link it to Luxury Yachting when it generates so many jobs and is a sizeable source of income”.* It should be noted that many European countries, notably Germany and Italy have been working for years on *“cleaner and cheaper ways to run yachts in the future”*, a highly responsible attitude that represents a great asset as the industry faces increasing competition from emerging countries.

### **A need for dialogue...**

There is often friction between the harbour authorities and captains. As Jean-François Turret, Harbour Master of Saint-Tropez pointed out: *“Harbours can’t invest significant sums of money every year to satisfy the growing energy needs of the superyachts. Demand is greater than the offer!”* Sarah Castanié, Head of the Leisure Harbour section in Nice, agreed: *“Yachts are getting greedier and we will not be able to satisfy their needs indefinitely”.* Gianbattista Borea d’Olmo, SEPM Managing Director added that *“sometimes architects forget the harbour’s limits. What’s more, even if we did invest in new systems, quite often the problem is from above, that is from the town’s electricity supply or even that of the whole region”.*

Andrew Schofield, PYA President responded: *“As captain of a 65 metre yacht, I have to use my own generators because of the lack of supply points at moorings”.* Words supported by Dominique Dubois, Captain of an explorer yacht: *“No captain is happy with this situation. This is not how we like to consider yachting, and it is the same for our owners who are becoming more and more aware of the environmental issues”.*

The naval architect Espen Oeino confirmed that *“yachtsmen are indeed very concerned about this issue, as they live on their yachts. On the other hand we cannot reduce their comforts on board, nor can we stop human nature from wanting to go faster. This is why we need to find intelligent solutions, like for example producing our own electricity”*.

Jacques Conzales, GEPY President and Captain of a 58m yacht added that: *“We must avoid division as we are all responsible players. It is essential for politicians to realise the impact of Luxury Yachting, an industry employing hundreds of people and which has long been sensitive to the environmental issues at stake”*.

### **Technical solutions in progress for the future...**

Waste water treatment, fuel cells on board, hydrogen production, hybrid engines, solar panels, energy storage, lithium batteries, the Azipod system, oversized kites (40m kite clipper), new generation generators, etc. So many technical solutions to minimise consumption were mentioned during the dinner, most of them currently being trialled by shipyards, engineers and designers. *“This will take time as we are still in an experimental phase and will be for the next ten years. We might have to consider a mixed solution, but it also requires that we change our behaviour,”* concludes Christophe Fresson, Santandrea’s Captain.

### **...but only possible with the support of committed owners**

*“We are all affected, particularly here in the Principality of Monaco where preservation of the environment is a major issue and where Luxury Yachting is an international showcase. We are working on new technologies to produce a boat for the future, and very often ideas are brought by clients and owners,”* says Antoine Althaus of Fraser Yachts. Truly passionate owners do not hesitate to go as far as their convictions take them, like the American Michael Healey who launched his own eco-friendly shipyard so he could build his dream boat: *“I have been working for over seven years on this project but I still have a long way to go”*.

A debate picked up by Cyril Le Sourd, yacht product manager at the CMN shipyard: *“Owners are increasingly concerned and are eager to respect the regulations, and shipyards have to guide them through the process”*. Certifications are also being applied in harbours and shipyards, such as the ISO 14001 standard recently awarded to Monaco Marine in France and to Sanlorenzo in Italy. It is a *“true channel of communication among yachtsmen”*, according to Vincent Laroque, Monaco Marine Sales Manager.

*“In Luxury Yachting, the yacht stays 70% of the time moored in the harbour, 20% at anchor, and 5% to 10% at sea. Consequently comfort remains a major issue. Nevertheless, it is through us the owners that progress will be made. Formula 1 is a good example of how solutions are born out of research and innovation - unfortunately though, like everything in life, finance is key to progress,”* observes François Fiat, YCM member and ambassador of “La Belle Classe Superyachts”.

Bernard d’Alessandri concluded the session: *“An environmental thread truly exists: the proof is there in the quality of the content of our discussions and the will of each one of us to be involved and to work together. This first symposium demonstrates the breadth and force of the dialogue taking place. The mission of “La Belle Classe Superyachts” remains to unite all the players in the yachting industry. A positive note and most importantly a stepping stone and basis for further discussion. It is down to us to pursue and consolidate the achievements that have already been made”*.