Greek government considers new mooring tax for visiting yachts

By **David Robinson**

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The move follows a ban on non-EU yachts visiting Greece for charter purposes

With Greece gradually improving its economy and state finances, there is still need to generate more income to maintain the recovery that has started. Currently under consideration by the Greek government is a new mooring tax for visiting yachts.

The move follows a ban on non-EU yachts visiting Greece for charter purposes. The Greek yachting community believes that the new tax under consideration would result in foreign-flagged yachts not visiting the country. The introduction of the non-EU yacht rule has already led to a significant fall in business, and was a subject of discussion at the MYBA Charter Show held in Barcelona last month.

The ban on foreign-flagged yachts has led to a potential boost for Turkey, which has suffered a fall in yacht chartering over the past couple of years. Many local vessels have relocated to Croatia to undertake charters there. However, the Greek ban appears to have brought Turkey to the fore again.

Stavros Katsikadis, president of the Greek Marinas Association (GMA), has strongly criticized the possible introduction of a new mooring tax. He said that if the tax is introduced, it poses the threat that the country will lose business from visiting foreign-flagged yachts.

According to yacht market sources, the new tax could result in a rise of as much as 60% on the annual cost of a marina berth. Katsikadis considers that if the new tax is implemented, its impact could affect jobs and tax returns from the marine sector in both direct and indirect ways.

He referred to Italy, where over 40,000 boats left the country for other locations when a new tax was introduced. Katsikadis is concerned yachts are seen as a target from which tax revenues can be increased and only recently the luxury tax was reintroduced on yachts, rising to 13% plus other charges related to marina services that have been brought in.

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