



Scale effects

Dr Dafydd Lloyd Jones is one of the experts who represents CEDA and multi-association Marine Strategy Navigation Group, which it leads, at the European Commission to ensure dredging's voice is heard at the marine policy-making stage

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► **Tucked away in the Our Policy Work** tab on CEDA's dredging.org website is a section outlining the organisation's contribution to international policy-making work.

CEDA is well-known for its specialist knowledge within European dredging quarters, and its science- and experience-based input to the policy debate. Its attention to the dissimilation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) among its members is

an important part of its work.

The MSFD is a piece of European legislation, which according to the European Commission's website, aims to ensure that "biodiversity is maintained by 2020".

The MSFD provides a list of 11 descriptors (see page 15) that define the good environmental status (GES) that member states either must be working towards or have achieved by this year.

These descriptors do not offer a blueprint of how to meet

the criteria, rather it is up to each member state to create its own strategy on how it wants to achieve MSFD's aims.

The MSFD was adopted in 2008, and the criteria for GES was revised in 2017. It uses an adaptive management approach to achieving its goals and so allows for adjustments along the way as more information becomes available. Therefore, it follows a six-year cycle, during which the environmental status of a member state's marine

waters is assessed, and methods are reviewed.

Key to CEDA's work on the MSFD is marine environmental consultant, Dr Dafydd Lloyd Jones, a director at UK-based company MarineSpace. He represents CEDA via the Marine Strategy Navigation Group (NAVI) on the European Working Group on GES.

"I'm there to give the dredging perspective during EU MSFD discussions," said Dr Lloyd Jones, who represents CEDA on a voluntary basis. "I attend these meetings on behalf of CEDA and NAVI and report back to both."

Of the many different descriptors that the European Union signed up to for its waters, some are particularly relevant to dredging.



"There is so much overlap in information between the offshore renewables and dredging industries, and understanding and expertise are directly transferable between parties"

Dr Dafydd Lloyd Jones, director, MarineSpace

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“I do, however, believe that the scales of dredging effects are more understood at Commission level now than they were some years ago and much of that is down to the efforts made by CEDA in knowledge sharing.”

The work that he does for CEDA has also proved useful in his work for MarineSpace, which works with maritime industries such as dredging and offshore renewables, to help them licence their activities within their sustainable operations.

Dr Lloyd Jones used to work as a dredging contractor before moving into consultancy work. As such he has developed a strong understanding of the results that dredging has on the environment and how to mitigate many of those effects. “The work that I do for CEDA has enabled me to demonstrate further competence when talking to dredging companies and other sectors, both in and outside of the UK market,” he said.

“It corroborates our credentials,” he said. “It’s useful when talking to clients in other sectors, for example oil and gas, whose projects often include a significant proportion of dredging or seabed preparation, for instance, siting infrastructure or creating access channels for equipment.”

Expertise sharing

As a conduit for information between CEDA and the Commission, and in his capacity as consultant, Dr Lloyd Jones has first-hand experience in the benefits of information sharing. That said, he is realistic about when and how it should be done.

A number of wind farm installations are under way and the large European dredging contractors are currently gearing up for the UK Offshore Leasing Round Four for seabed licencing opportunities to develop wind farms. He notes this as an example of how each contractor

For example, descriptor number six is concerned with seafloor integrity.

Reinforcing benefits

An important part of Dr Lloyd Jones’s work has been around how descriptors for seabed integrity should be assessed and reported. This was challenging as it was necessary to ensure that the scale of the effects of dredging projects was fully understood at the European Commission, as well as regional and sub-regional levels.

“It’s important to keep pressing the message,” said Dr Lloyd Jones, “that the effects of individual dredging projects are relatively small when examined beside the assessment scale against which GES should be assessed.

Good environmental status

The European Commission’s Marine Strategy Framework Directive tabled 11 descriptors that outlined the terms for good environmental status. Each member state must have a strategy as to how they are meeting or will meet these descriptors:

- Biodiversity
- Non-indigenous species and populations of commercial species
- Food web structure
- Eutrophication
- Seafloor integrity
- Alterations to hydrography
- Contaminants
- Seafood contaminants
- Marine litter
- Energy and noise

will be developing its own data and information to apply for a licence. “There is so much overlap in information and expertise between the offshore renewables and dredging industries,” he said, but also acknowledged that much of the site-specific data is commercially sensitive.

Expertise sharing is one area where he believes companies and industries can collaborate.

“At MarineSpace we have been involved with assessing the effects of dredging and seabed preparation over the past 10–15 years, and the majority of that learning is directly applicable to other offshore sectors, such as cable laying and renewable constructions,” he explained.

“I have been involved in two CEDA working groups, and have seen how expertise sharing has benefited the industry. CEDA does a great job in encouraging such collaboration and it is something that it continues to drive forward,” he said. “I am very proud of my involvement with CEDA.”

Sustainable sand

Dr Lloyd Jones also sees scope for CEDA’s information-sharing ethics in the sand trade.

Dredging can play a significant role in this industry, since gravel

and sand can be excavated and sold for many uses. Most of his experience in this business is in northwest Europe, where the industry is well regulated and involves scientific advisers to ensure that licences are fit for purpose and robust.

However, he noted that in other parts of the world, where regulatory regimes are not so well-developed, illegal sand mining can be a problem.

“CEDA can play an important role in information sharing, through which regulatory regimes can be improved, to develop regulatory frameworks including licencing,” he said.

Illegal sand mining can have serious environment effects, and mining such a resource – that is finite in its volume or takes a long time to replenish itself – presents a sustainability question, he noted. Responsible companies want to work within a sustainable framework and, again, this information has been disseminated through CEDA.

“MSFD will also help to guide sustainable practices too,” he said. “While not a sector-specific requirement for assessment, sustainability is inherent within the descriptors of GES. I believe MSFD will drive sustainability across all sectors.” 