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## Terms of Reference for CEDA Working Group on Certification of Sustainable Marine and Freshwater Infrastructure Projects (WGC)

### Introduction

In the past decades sustainable development has become an important theme in marine and freshwater infrastructure. Marine and freshwater infrastructure is the collection of works at coastlines, rivers, canals and port areas to support navigation, flood protection and development of ports and cities. Conventional engineering solutions typically strongly contrast with the dynamic landscapes they occupy. In response, a variety of sustainable solutions has been developed over the past decade. In 2018 CEDA and IADC published the book "[Dredging for Sustainable Infrastructure](#)". This book gives the state of the art guidance on how to design, implement and manage sustainable marine and freshwater infrastructure projects. When promoting the book CEDA and IADC, thanks to Vital Ports, discovered that there is an interest of the financial sector to have a greater role in realising sustainable projects. There is an important role that private capital can play to support this ambition. However, barriers for the private financial sector include the lack of an investment track record and a lack of bankable projects due to lack of viable business cases, lack of standards and instruments to assess sustainable projects and risk due to general unfamiliarity with the concepts and sector. Given the size and attractiveness of the sustainable marine and freshwater works segment, and the growing appetite for sustainable infrastructure projects, it is expected that in due time more avenues will open up to pursue sustainable marine and freshwater infrastructure projects and more private capital can be put to work.

To realising these projects, an important element is to develop a kind of certification, to prove or certify that the project is sustainable. The partners of the financial sector suggested that perhaps CEDA could play a role in this. Certification is a way to prove in an independent way that a project is sustainable. The CEDA-IADC book could help to formulate objective criteria. CEDA is an independent organisation with experienced members from all parts of the public and private community. As CEDA, we are at the forefront of innovations and developments in the dredging industry and initiate analysis to several aspects of dredging. This makes CEDA well positioned to play a role in this.

To find out if and how CEDA could be involved in certification of sustainable marine and freshwater infrastructure projects the Strategy Commission of CEDA is setting up a Working Group to do a feasibility study on this topic and to come up with suggestions.

The [Strategy Commission of CEDA](#) (CSC) has decided to establish a Working Group to investigate if CEDA could be involved in certification of sustainable marine and freshwater infrastructure projects and if so how.

### Understanding Dredging

The CSC proposes the following Terms of Reference for the Working Group. The TOR will be formally established by the Working Group at their first meeting.

### **Objective**

The Working Group is tasked with conducting a feasibility study on the outlined topic and develop suggestions. Activities of this Working Group could involve:

- looking at existing certification activities in other fields;
- interviewing organisations involved in certification activities;
- investigating the nature of the demand expressed by the finance sector;
- developing suggestions on how this certification could work;
- develop a business model around this activity.

### **Timetable**

The Working Group will have their first meeting on **Wednesday, 11 August. 10:00-12:00 am** on MTeams, at which point the Draft Terms of Reference will be finalised and a Work Plan will be developed. The Working Group is expecting results in the course of 2022.

### **Membership**

It is envisaged that CEDA WGC will be an international group of experts, economists and engineers with knowledge and experience relating to sustainability, ecosystem services, social cost-benefit analysis, auditing, in the context of marine and/or freshwater infrastructure projects, and experience with certifications.

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