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Your Ref. PO388103/FW

Dear Minister, Marine Aggregate Dredging : The Alternative.

Thank you for your letter of 19<sup>th</sup> November which replied to ours of 16<sup>th</sup> October concerning marine aggregate extraction and the use of 'manufactured sand' from quarry waste as an alternative source of supply.

The problem of a Ministry (DEFRA) relying for its information on the industry's professional body (British Marine Aggregate Producers Association) is that the Ministry is unable to sift out from the complexity of the professional body's definitions the true figures of what is actually happening.

If anything was designed for confusion, then your reply to Marinet was certainly up there with the best of them. Unfortunately we expect the bureaucrats in your Ministry, DEFRA, would congratulate you. You are so much like Jim Hacker MP satisfying Sir Humphrey Appleby. I wonder whether they consider you house trained? I expect they do.

The simple fact is that almost all building in London is sourced from marine aggregates which are the habitat of endangered fish spawning and nursery grounds. Our question to you was one of perception. Do you believe that this practice is morally correct?

What every person who we sent our aggregate paper failed to engage with was the fact that the quarry waste we highlighted as an alternative to virgin marine aggregates is just sitting in the quarry useless. Not used and not likely to be used. We surmise that this myopia by the people we aimed to assist with our paper and its suggestions is due to the fact that the industry has invested its finances and infrastructure into marine aggregates, and not that there is an alternative, and not that this alternative helps preserve virgin sands and gravels. Heaven forbid that you can provide conservation at the same time as commercial growth.

The figures provided by the industry professional body, BMAPA, were 6% for marine aggregates. The figures provided are open to challenge – consider the reality in London – and we will be looking more carefully at the paper provided by BMAPA. However for the sake of this letter, 6% is a target that should be achievable from alternative sources.

We would also like to challenge BMAPA over their advice to you on the results about 'manufactured sand' from quarry waste which has been undertaken by Cardiff University (referenced in our paper supplied to you on 16<sup>th</sup> October). These results showed that the alternative product

(manufactured sand) was produced economically and competitively to marine aggregate. Has your Ministry investigated this, or once again do you take the industry word ?

The role of the NGO is to take you to task, and to insist that conservation has a role at your table. At present it does not.

Yours sincerely

David Levy, Marinet Chair

Stephen Eades, Marinet Director