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Marine Aggregate Dredging : The Alternative

Dear John,

Thank you for your correspondence of 27th October 2015, addressed to Stephen Eades.

We were somewhat surprised at the impersonal nature of the reply and its perfunctory tone. We hope that this was more of an oversight than where your current thinking lies.

We in Marinet are more than aware of your regulatory role and what your restrictions are in terms of what you can and cannot do. The purpose of sending you our paper on alternative sources of sand and gravel aggregates was to arm you with knowledge so that when the aggregate license applicant applies for a license to dredge, and has to show they have provided evidence that they have assessed the alternatives (as required by EIA Regulations), you are able to ensure that the alternatives have been considered and investigated.

Every part of the marine world is precious, and the sands and gravels are home to spawning fish species and provide the habitat for the nursery grounds. This is a responsibility your agency is, regrettably, not recognised for. Socio-economic factors have always trumped a balanced approach and this is why we have sought to address the thinking.

Your reply did not acknowledge this at all and was disappointing because it indicates that as the regulator you have a historic rubber stamping attitude, which you do not appear to want to change.

I hope that I am wrong in this observation, John. I was impressed by your ambition to want to review and, where necessary, change and improve how the MMO develops into the 21st Century. Marinet has wanted to assist you in a small way with this task but this reply was not encouraging.

Yours sincerely

D. Levy,
Marinet Limited.

cc. D. Howell