

World Organization of Dredging Associations Statement on the Decarbonization of Dredging

Dredging is essential to maintaining and improving our quality of life, economic well-being, and ecosystem health. This is achieved through creating and maintaining marine and freshwater infrastructure, contributing to climate mitigation and adaptation/resilience, ensuring the reliability of water-based supply chains, providing minerals and construction materials, supporting sustainable offshore energy production and enhancing the environment.

The World Organization of Dredging Associations (WODA)¹ endorses the significance and necessity of the 2015 UN Paris Climate Change Agreement and the 2015 UN Sustainability Goals to achieve a better and more sustainable future. This statement builds on and furthers earlier WODA statements on Sustainable Dredging (2013), on Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change (2016) and the Shanghai Consensus for Promoting Sustainable Dredging Development (2019).

Decarbonization², i.e. reducing the emissions of CO₂, and other greenhouse gases by all sectors is central to achieving the objectives of both UN agreements. The dredging community recognizes that this includes immediate action by all those involved in dredging and marine construction.

Given its broad membership covering a wide range of stakeholders, including project owners, dredging companies, designers and builders of dredging vessels and their suppliers, as well as consultants and academia, small and large, WODA will leverage its unique position to expedite decarbonization of dredging. WODA's ambition is to contribute to dredging decarbonization through enhanced communication, mutual trust, and cooperation within the dredging community.

Members of WODA recognize that:

1. A combination of measures is needed since there is no single action that leads to achieving UN greenhouse gas emission goals.
2. An integrated, holistic approach to carbon management should be sought that includes:
 - Design and implementation of dredging projects;
 - Optimization of dredging processes;
 - Innovations in the design of dredging vessels, and equipment, and;
 - Use of sediment to support carbon sequestration opportunities.

¹ WODA provides an independent forum for improving communication and technology transfer and promoting integration and understanding of knowledge and experiences among all interested stakeholders to facilitate the economic, social, and ecological sustainability of dredging and navigation projects and environmental clean-up of contaminated sediments. www.woda.org

² For the purpose of this document, the term decarbonization encompasses the reduction of all green-house gases.




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3. An effective way to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases is to reduce the use of fossil fuel consumption. A switch to low-carbon alternative fuels will be an important component of any reduction goals.
4. The Life-Cycle approach to assessing both the short-term and long-term impacts of dredging projects should be used to develop realistic methodology for dredging decarbonization.
5. Flexible, evidence-based, science-informed and globally aligned frameworks are crucial for the timely and efficient implementation of innovative solutions to the reduction of global climate change.

Members of WODA are committed to:

1. Increasing dredging project energy efficiency, reducing fossil carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Leveraging technology and dredging knowledge to promote the transition from fossil fuels to sustainable energy sources.
3. Advancing and promoting innovation, dredging knowledge, and best practices and sharing these within and outside the dredging community.
4. Engaging with stakeholders and partners to find optimal efficiency for effective solutions considering economic, societal, and environment conditions.
5. Providing objective sources of relevant knowledge and experience to ensure that decision making pertaining to decarbonization of dredging projects is based on sound technical and scientific knowledge.



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Copenhagen, Denmark