

SedNet Special Session

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Sustainable dredging of Mediterranean Ports: the future for sediment management

Keywords: policy harmonization, sustainability, co-operation

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Main outcomes

Wide consensus on open issues and directions to take to tackle them (not obvious).

Main problem is then not

WHAT TO DO

but

HOW TO DO IT.



Main outcomes

- Sediment management is important/crucial for port activities and development. “Dredge or die”. Nevertheless, there could be solutions (see Venice Port Authority proposal for Northern Adriatic Sea) that reduce the need for dredging and reduce environmental footprint.
- Development and harmonization of regulatory framework is very important, also to guarantee fair competition among member (and non-member) countries. There is a general consensus on having a (better harmonized) EU/Intl. high level legislation (harmonization among EU Directives, update of International Conventions,..), leaving to the MS the definition of more specific rules.
- Basin or regional scale analysis and solutions (SM within RBMP, RSM, SM within ICZM) should be favoured, taking into account local circumstances and needs. Differences between North European and Mediterranean countries: Big Ports/Big Basin vs Medium and small ports/ small Basins / coastal transport process; Huge amount of DM/yr vs Smaller amount; Lower unit prices (economies of scale) in NEC; Large vs reduced use of open sea disposal.



Main outcomes

- Environmental and economical / infrastructural aspects should be integrated: the sustainability concept provides the ideal framework for such integration. Risk assessment approaches, but also objectives-based environmental management, rather than simple standards, in a systemic/holistic view.
- An important part of the “sustainability” paradigm is the reuse of dredged sediment, not adequately and sufficiently addressed up to now. It may be not strictly be a problem of considering DM as wastes or not, but a question of how you manage them and how you promote (technical solutions, regulation, incentives,..) the reuse (with or without treatment).
- Participatory approaches and stakeholder involvement are important issues. All stakeholders (Port Authority, Administrative bodies, Research Institute, Environmental Agency, NGO, Operators, Consultants,..) should be involved, at different levels, in regulation development and Regional / RB scale SM planning. Proposal from the Italian Port Association to establish a Working Group to promote harmonization of SM legislation in Italy, agreed from all participants.
- Innovative solutions need to be supported by knowledge and research, but still transfer of good science into rules and practices remains a difficult process. Associations as SedNet, PIANC, CEDA can support the process through their guidances and networking activities.

