

# Disposal-to-sea Fact Sheet: Frequently Asked Questions



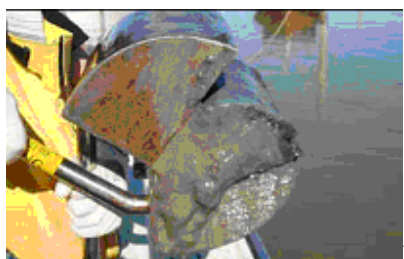
## Why is disposal-to-sea allowed?

The UK is an established maritime nation, and dredging and the disposal of dredged material are vital to keep UK ports, harbours and marinas open for business. Each year some 25-50 million tonnes (wet weight) are deposited, in allocated disposal sites, in UK waters alone.



## What is disposed of at sea?

Only marine sediment (mainly sand, silt, clays) dredged from dock sites and navigation channels and small amounts of fish waste. Industrial waste has been banned from sea disposal since 1992 and sewage sludge since 1998.



## Who manages this activity?

The objective in controlling sea disposal is to protect human health, the marine environment and other legitimate uses of the sea.

Control of these activities is guided by agreements between governments through international and regional-sea conventions (OSPAR and London Protocol). Nationally, control of disposal is exercised through the Food and Environment Protection Act, 1985, (FEPA), while the assessment of the activity of dredging itself is controlled via a variety of national and local legislation.

In England, the Marine and Fisheries Agency (MFA) is the regulator for the disposal of materials to sea. However, under the Marine & Coastal Access Act 2009, these powers will be transferred to the newly formed MMO. In Wales, these powers are held by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). The final decision on an application for sea disposal is based on a weight-of-evidence approach, which includes, but is not limited to, the following information:

- current policy input, set in the context of international conventions,
- socio-economic information,
- scientific and technical advice from Cefas,
- advice from nature conservation representatives,
- other appropriate consultees (e.g. Marine Fisheries Agency District Offices, statutory nature conservation agencies),
- mitigation measures, and
- previous monitoring data and results.

Compliance and enforcement of these licence conditions are managed by the MFA, with scientific support from Cefas. Also, Cefas conduct a National Monitoring Programme at disposal sites, which provides information to answer queries and underpins current and future decision-making.

- 1 Research vessel Cefas Endeavour.
- 2 Dredging in Lowestoft Harbour.
- 3 Grab sample of harbour sediment.

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#### Further assistance and information

[www.cefas.co.uk](http://www.cefas.co.uk)

[www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

[www.environment-agency.gov.uk/contactus/](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/contactus/)

[www.thegreenblue.org.uk](http://www.thegreenblue.org.uk)

[www.oilbank.org](http://www.oilbank.org)

• Call free to find the nearest oil recycling bank.  
Oil Bank Line 0800 66 33 66

[www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)

• Shipping and Ports > Ports >  
Port Environmental Information >  
Environmental Issues

[www.britishmarine.co.uk](http://www.britishmarine.co.uk)

• Environment and Boating Facilities >  
Environmental Code of Practice

[www.royal-navy.mod.uk](http://www.royal-navy.mod.uk)

• Navy Life > Environment > on board ship  
> protecting the environment

[www.mcga.gov.uk](http://www.mcga.gov.uk)

• Environmental >  
Counter Pollution & Response

[www.abports.co.uk](http://www.abports.co.uk)

[www.britishports.org.uk](http://www.britishports.org.uk)

[www.ukmajorports.org.uk](http://www.ukmajorports.org.uk)

[www.seafish.org](http://www.seafish.org)

#### What can I do to help?

All of us who play, work or use shipyards, marinas and ports should take steps to reduce accidental leaks or spills near drains, storm-water pipes and/or water courses, because they may end up in our rivers, estuaries and ocean. Paints, cleaning products (chemicals), oil, petrol and diesel are of particular concern.

Most marinas and port operators have some equipment for dealing with minor oil spills. If you are concerned about how you can reduce your impact in the marine environment, find out about clean boating and ask your marina or yacht club to look at ways to improve its environmental performance. This includes having access to pump-out facilities and oil collection units, as well as signs on docks showing how and where to dispose of waste products.

If you see an oil spill or illegal dumping of hazardous waste, then please contact the Environment Agency on the Incident Hotline 0800 80 70 60 Call free, 24 hours, 7 days a week.

#### About us

Cefas is a multidisciplinary scientific research and consultancy centre providing a comprehensive range of services in fisheries management, environmental monitoring and assessment, and aquaculture to a large number of clients worldwide. We have more than 500 staff based in 3 laboratories, our own ocean-going research vessel and over 100 years of fisheries experience. We have a long and successful track record in delivering high-quality services to clients in a confidential and impartial manner. ([www.cefas.co.uk](http://www.cefas.co.uk))

Cefas Technology Limited (CTL) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Cefas specialising in the application of Cefas technology to specific customer needs in a cost-effective and focused manner. CTL systems are developed by teams that are experienced in fisheries and environmental management and in working closely with clients to ensure that their needs are fully met. ([www.cefastechnology.co.uk](http://www.cefastechnology.co.uk))

