



**EuDA  
2024**

## **Annual General Meeting Conference Programme**

**Thursday 21 November 2024  
Stanhope Hotel Brussels**

*“Making Waterborne Infrastructure Projects Sustainable”*



### **Welcome**

**&**

### **Keynote Addresses**

*starting at 10.00*



### **AGM Conference**

*“Making Waterborne Infrastructure  
Projects Sustainable”*

*until 12.00*



### **AGM Networking**

*Cocktail & Lunch*

*from 12.00 to 14.00*



**European Dredging Association**

*Venue: Stanhope Hotel Brussels – rue du Commerce 9 – 1000 Brussels + 32 2 5069111.*



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Following the global commitments taken in 2015 in Paris and the increased awareness of the need to take immediate action, many initiatives have been taken by International Organizations and Institutions to tackle the most pressing negative externalities<sup>1</sup> from economic activities around the world. Among these externalities, we find the various forms of pollution in the air, water or soil including noise pollution. If left untackled in the medium to long term, these pollutions can further harm nature and degrade its systems, through eutrophication, acidification, climate change.

Besides these environmental aspects, sustainable development approaches integrate social and societal as well as economic dimensions. In the EU, on the one hand, major disruptions in supply chains were caused by the COVID pandemic and highlighted the crucial role played by waterborne transport system and the strategic necessity to keep it fully functional. On the other hand, the war in Ukraine emphasised the danger of overdependence on too few energy suppliers. Offshore energy infrastructures are therefore considered more and more strategic for Europe’s energy independence as well as for the greening of its energy blend.

The OECD and the European Commission have taken key initiatives that aim at improving the sustainability of waterborne (transport and energy) infrastructure projects. At global level, the **OECD Blue Dot Network** proposes a voluntary framework to promote quality infrastructure projects around the world. Under the Green Deal, the EU has developed a regulatory framework for sustainable finance targeting the ‘green transition’ of industrial activities and companies towards sustainability. In this framework the EU imposes mandatory annual reporting on the sustainability performance of companies. Under the **Green Taxonomy**, the EU also specifies criteria for classifying the level of sustainability of economic activities as well as the progress in their green transitioning. As these initiatives target the financing of infrastructure projects, key players in the financial markets will be asked to present their views.

In the 2024 EuDA Annual Conference, representatives from the OECD and the European Commission will make keynote addresses in which they will present their initiatives to improve the sustainability of waterborne infrastructure projects as well as their state of play. Representatives from the Banking and the Financial Audit Industries, as well as from the Dredging Industry present their views, current experience and future expectations regarding the economic activities involved in waterborne infrastructure projects. The floor will then be opened for meaningful exchanges with the audience.

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<sup>1</sup> **Externalities** are *initially unforeseen side effects or consequences of industrial (e.g. production) or commercial (e.g. consumption) activities that positively (creating a benefit) or negatively (creating a cost/damage) affect other unrelated third parties (including natural habitats) without this being reflected in the cost of the goods or services produced by these activities.*





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## Welcome by EuDA Chairman

**Mr Marc Van den Broeck**  
*EuDA Chairman*

## Conference Opening

**Mr Paris Sansoglou**  
*EuDA, Secretary General*  
**Short introduction of the conference theme and speakers.**

## Keynotes Addresses

- ⇒ Keynote on a *Voluntary Global Framework*  
**OECD Blue Dot Network (functioning and state of play),**  
**Mr Edwin Lau**  
*OECD Head of Blue Dot Network Secretariat*
  
- ⇒ Keynote on a *EU Mandatory Framework*  
**Green Taxonomy in the context of Sustainable Finance (functioning and state of play),**  
**Ms Claudia Olazábal**  
*European Commission Head of Unit on Sustainable Freshwater Management*

## Experience from key Financial Actors

*on the Green Taxonomy/Blue Dot Network in the context of making waterborne infrastructure projects more sustainable.*

- ⇒ **Banks' Views and Experience**  
**Ms Ann-Christin Stucke**  
*Sustainability Expert in Sustainability Team of ABN AMRO Corporate Bank*
  
- ⇒ **Financial Auditors' Views and Experience**  
**Mr Gijs de Graaff**  
*KPMG Partner Sustainability Reporting & Accounting Advisory Services*

## Views and Experience from the Dredging Contractors

- ⇒ **Dredging Contractors' Views and Experience**  
**Ms Jiska Verhulst**  
*DEME, Sustainability Director*

## Open Floor Discussion

**European Dredging Association**

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### **Conference Moderator**



#### **Paris Sansoglou**

**European Dredging Association  
Secretary General**

**Paris Sansoglou** holds a degree of Commercial Engineer from the Solvay Business School (ULB) that he has complemented with degrees in Environmental Studies (ULB), Business Informatics (VUB) and Financial Analysis (CIAF).

His professional experience is varied and includes academic research (in ULB on sustainable development), statistics (Business Statistics for Eurostat), knowledge management, economic, environmental & financial consulting activities (for Ernst & Young). He has spent most of his career on the ‘European scene’ working in the European Commission (Eurostat) and in trade associations (representing successively the European manufacturers of synthetic fibres, the European shipyards and now the European dredgers).

Paris developed his strong kinship with maritime policies and technologies since he joined the Community of European Shipyards’ Associations and he now pursues his passion for the sea and related issues with the European Dredging Association (EuDA). He has been managing maritime strategic activities covering research projects (incl. H2020 ThinkNature), trade issues, social aspects, technical and environmental issues, statistics, market monitoring.

Paris joined the European Dredging Association (EuDA) in April 2009 as Secretary General and has been part of various European teams advocating and actively working towards improving market access worldwide, global level playing field and sustainability. As EuDA representative, he has been promoting sustainable approaches like Building with Nature and was involved in the first EU Platform on Sustainable Finance (advising on the implementation of the Green Taxonomy).







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### Speaker



**Edwin Lau**

**OECD  
Head of Blue Dot Network Secretariat**

**Edwin Lau** holds a Master's degree from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and a “*Diplôme d'Études Approfondies*” from Science Po, Paris.

Edwin is the current Head of the newly-created Blue Dot Network Secretariat, hosted at the OECD.

*The [Blue Dot Network](#) is a voluntary, private-sector-focused and government-supported infrastructure project certification scheme to assist in attracting quality infrastructure investments, in particular in emerging economies where it is most needed. It does so by providing a trusted signal to investors and other stakeholders that projects are environmentally and socially sustainable, resilient, inclusive, open and transparent, and economically efficient.*

Before joining the Blue Dot Network, Edwin led the OECD Infrastructure and Public Procurement Division to look at how governments can plan and deploy public expenditures and investment to deliver value for money, attract sustainable investment, and shape market supply for a greener and more social future. Among other activities, his team has organized the OECD Infrastructure Forum and delivered reviews on public infrastructure investment in Argentina, Bulgaria, Chile, Czechia, Ireland, and Morocco.

Edwin has been responsible for developing and monitoring OECD Recommendations on [Infrastructure Governance](#), [Public-Private Partnerships](#) and [Public Procurement](#), leveraging over 25 years of experience in public sector modernisation with a focus on budgeting, digital transformation, and performance management. He previously led OECD divisions on Budgeting and Public Expenditures and Reform of the Public Sector and worked in the Office of Management and Budget in the U.S. White House.









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### **Speaker**



#### **Claudia Olazábal**

**European Commission  
DG ENV Head of Unit on  
Sustainable Freshwater Management**

**Claudia Olazábal** holds a Bachelor’s degree in Chemistry and Radiochemistry from the University of Strasbourg and a Master’s degree in Science from the University of Texas at Austin.

For the past 18 years, Claudia has held different positions in the Directorate General for the Environment of the European Commission. She worked for 3 years in the *Sustainable Resources - Consumption and Waste* Unit, then became Head of the Soil Sector in the *Agriculture, Forests and Soil* Unit. She was for 4 years the Deputy Head of the *Biodiversity* Unit and 9 years Head of the *Land Use & Management* Unit. In 2022 she took up the position of Head of the Sustainable Freshwater Management unit.





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### **Speaker**



### **Ann-Christin Stucke**

**ABN AMRO  
Sustainability Expert for the Corporate Bank**

Ann-Christin Stucke studied *Environmental Change and Policy* at the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam.

She joined ABN AMRO 2 years ago and works as Sustainability Expert for the Corporate Bank, focusing on the Corporate and Institutional Clients. Her responsibilities include to promote ABN AMRO's sustainable finance services, working on Sustainability-Linked Loans, Green Loans, Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and target setting. Further, her work involves assessing and advising clients on Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) and sustainability related risks and helping in conducting environmental and social due diligence on the bank's clients.

Within her team she is the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the shipping sector, helping amongst others to decarbonize the shipping portfolio, and representing the bank as one of the founding members in the Responsible Ship Recycling Standard Initiative (RSRS). She is further part of the Poseidon Principles "Future Principles Committee".





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### **Speaker**



### **Gijs de Graaff**

**KPMG Partner  
Sustainability Reporting - Accounting Advisory Services  
& EU Taxonomy advisory lead**

Gijs de Graaff is Partner Sustainability Reporting at KPMG Netherlands and leads KPMG’s global EU Taxonomy taskforce.

Gijs has over 25 years of experience in finance, with roles in valuation, business control, financial and non-financial reporting. Gijs joined KPMG in 2016, after having held various financial positions within Shell for over a decade. He supports a range of multinational companies at senior management level, providing implementation oversight, and leading sustainability (reporting) change in the context of the CSRD and EU Taxonomy.







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### **Speaker**



**Jiska Verhulst**

**DEME, Sustainability Director**

Jiska Verhulst holds a Master's degree in *Bioscience Engineering: Environmental Technology* from KULeuven. She quickly had the opportunity to enhance her skills in both the public and nonprofit sectors, as well as in the research industry.

Over the years, she developed a unique expertise in sustainability, with a particular focus on energy and climate change, circular economy, and sustainable soil management. In her various roles, she has successfully managed teams and engaged with multiple stakeholders.

In her own words:

“How can I make a positive impact and inspire people to do the same? This question has driven my entire career, leading to my current position as Sustainability Director at DEME. And my journey is far from over, because sustainability is never a done deal.

I firmly believe that we can always do better. That's why I keep reading, listening and researching to discover new ways to build a better, more liveable world for all.”





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### **ABOUT EuDA**

The European Dredging Association (“EuDA”), which celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2023, was founded in 1993 as a non-profit industry organisation for European dredging companies and related organisations to interface with the various European Union’s Institutions, including the European Parliament. EuDA is registered in the EU transparency register as Interest Representative Nr. 2492574893-58.

Dredging activities are not well known by the wider public, but as a matter of fact, the European dredging companies, members of EuDA, are world market leaders with about 80% share of the (open) world dredging market and a turnover of 13.2 bn Euro in 2023. Although 70% of operations take place outside Europe, 90% of the returns flow back to Europe. EuDA members employ approximately 30,000 European employees directly “on board of the ships and on land” and more than 60,000 people indirectly (through the suppliers and services companies). The combined fleet of EuDA’s members counts approximately 750 seaworthy EU flagged ships.

The Association assists its members with all kinds of requests related to dredging issues, presently strongly focusing on Social, Environmental, Technical, Tax and Trade issues. These issues are coordinated by the Secretariat and executed by its specialised working groups composed of experts from the member companies.

The Association will pursue its goals by endorsing policies to create fair and equitable conditions for competition; commits to respecting applicable national, European and international rules and regulations; commits to operating its fleet safely, effectively and responsibly.

