



Marine Ecological Surveys Limited

Over 30 years of experience in Environmental Impact Assessment, Site Appraisals, Eco-Audit & monitoring programmes and research in the marine environment

Find out all the news at MESL this Summer....

Wind takes a firm grip at MESL

The Department of Energy and Climate Change have awarded MESL, leading a consortium with the Gardline Group, to provide high level technical advice and research studies in the Offshore Renewable Research Framework, awarded May 2010. This contract will provide much needed investment into research of the environmental impacts of offshore marine renewables infrastructure. The consortium welcomes the opportunity to provide services relating to birds, mammals, fish, benthic fauna, sediment, hydrography and oceanography, geophysical and geotechnical disciplines as well as data gathering and advisory services in fisheries, oil and gas, and aggregates.



Further extending their renewables remit, MESL are also happy to be contracted to ERM for work on the East Anglia Offshore Windfarm Zone for Scottish Power Renewables and Vattenfall Vindkraft. This extensive site will be the second largest Round 3 windfarm (6000 km²) with a capacity of 7.2 GW. This large scale project will occupy MESL staff at sea for over 100 staff days with subsequent analysis of benthic and epibenthic fauna and sediments. MESL look forward to starting survey work this summer.



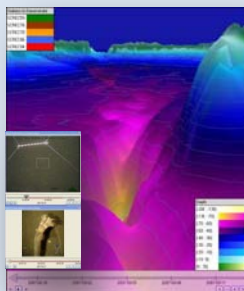
Major developments

Also awarded to MESL are investigative surveys for the nuclear industry, under subcontract to CEFAS. Here, MESL will be carrying out a number of surveys to characterize the benthic habitats with a specific study on *Sabellaria* reefs.

After 10 years of MESL providing crucial support to the London Gateway development project, construction has now begun in the lower Thames Estuary. MESL have been involved in this project since its inception and have completed over 50 surveys relating to the marine environment on behalf of DP World. MESL will continue to monitor the impacts of this prestigious development as it progresses towards its operational phase.

Seabed research

Building on 3 years of research for the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund, MESL continue their key role in the collaborative Regional Environmental Characterisation (REC) projects. MESL have now completed the final report for the South Coast REC which was presented to stakeholders at the Southampton dissemination in February 2010. Following this, MESL was awarded the Eastern English Channel Synthesis which amalgamates both the South Coast and East English Channel projects. Work also continues on the East Coast and Humber RECs in collaboration with, BGS, Cefas, Wessex Archaeology, Birmingham University, Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee, Envision and Gardline Environmental.



MESL get mapping in 4D

A growing number of project outputs at MESL have been communicated using maps of the marine environment in 4 dimensions. Our map videos, embedded in reports or displayed for presentations, help the audience to quickly understand the complex seabed relief and focus on changes through time, e.g. fish predator-prey population by season in the Thames estuary. The software, Eonfusion, is also used in analyses to rapidly associate stations with video or photo media in a geographic context. With Eonfusion now adding to the suite of GIS tools used at MESL (ArcGIS, MapInfo, Spatial Analyst, CODA, Olex) the GIS team continue to grow and expand its services.

'Marine Protected Areas' Contract with Natural England

The Marine and Coastal Access Act received Royal Assent on 12 November 2009, putting in place a new framework for managing the demands we put on our seas. The design and implementation of a UK wide network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is one of the commitments of the new Act. Several design principles are employed to ensure the MPA network is ecologically coherent. MESL was contracted to investigate how the MPA network could meet the design principle of viability, that MPA sites should be of sufficient size to ensure species and habitats persistence through natural cycles of variation. MESL undertook significant research into the 37 species and 25 habitats of conservation importance requiring recommendations. The findings are being used by Natural England and JNCC to inform the Ecological Network Guidance for the Marine Conservation Zone Project. *Hill, J.M., Pearce, B.P., Georgiou, L., Pinnion, J. & Gallyot, J. (2010). Meeting the MPA Network Principle of Viability: Feature specific recommendations for species and habitats of conservation importance. NE Report No. NECR043*

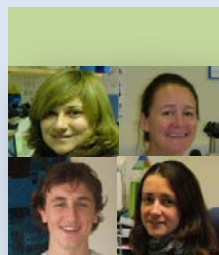


Laboratory Updates

MESL are pleased to report very good results in both of this years NMBAQC ring tests for benthic invertebrate identification. Also, internal training continues with NMBAQC cascades and taxonomy workshops using specimens from in-house faunal voucher collections. MESL participated in the UK Taxonomy and Systematics Review: Community Consultation Workshop at UCL in April (23rd), a meeting aimed at developing a strategy for taxonomy in the UK. And finally, MESL have a vacancy for a senior marine benthic taxonomist, who will undertake analysis and identification of benthic samples and training of junior staff - please see our website for further details.

No driving to work for MESL!

With a commitment to reduce their carbon footprint, MESL have compiled their 2009/2010 Environmental Report. Ultimately MESL's aim is to submit an entry into the Green Business Awards next year. "Our current objective is to maximise our recycling including composting and ensure our staff are not only carbon footprint aware, but also act on their awareness" reports MESL's Business Administrator. This is evident in the fact that all staff either cycle, walk or take public transport to work. We also participate in the cycle to work scheme.

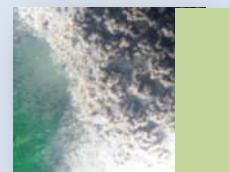


New staff in marine biology, policy and GIS

MESL's continued expansion sees the arrival of three new marine ecology staff: Dr Jackie Hill, PhD on carbon pathways in the western Irish Sea *Nephrops norvegicus* fishery (Queen Mary, University of London); Dr Sara Marzioletti from Italy's "Environmental Protection and Research Institute" and Ross Griffin a Plymouth University Masters graduate. In addition, Caroline Chambers joins MESL bringing skills in marine policy & planning, GIS and hydrodynamics from the commercial and public sectors.

Can you tell us what this is...? Prize for winner!

We do a lot of research on this at MESL.... Do you know what it is? Answers by email to marine@seasurvey.co.uk and the first correct respondent wins a new sports bag in red and black!



Get a cuppa, sit back and watch us do the work...!

A new demo video is available to view showing MESL and our Gardline group of companies on our daily work at sea, in the office, see how we go about it all on: <http://www.gardlinemarinesciences.com/media-centre/video-clip/id/6>