

ScienceDIVER is going ahead, reaching new “depths”

ScienceDIVER is addressed to the needs of the European scientific diving (SD) community, supporting specialists in various fields of the marine science, who perform diving activities related to their researches. All these highly skilled scientists meet difficulties caused by lack or significant fluctuations in terms of legislation, common training standards and professional acknowledgment of scientific divers. The expert’s team is joining efforts to overcome these gaps enabling scientific diving as a discipline to perform underwater researches in all European countries, facilitating their mobility on the basis of common rules and recognition of their qualifications. ***The starting point towards highlighting the existing issues and discrepancies is to present an overall picture of the status of the above issues concerning the legal and training situation of scientific diving in Europe and all over the world, to define any gaps and weakness as well as existing best practices.***

The team has examined the above mentioned topics following on desk research and opinions expressed by numerous key experts across Europe and all over the world. The results are presented in several studies, that could pave the way for fruitful conversations with all relevant stakeholders, development of adequate training courses for students and scientists and elaboration of a common framework towards an initiative for EU Directive in the field of “Scientific diving”.

Main findings:

- **Definition** of the term “Scientific diving” and its place within all types of diving activities has been studied thoroughly. On the basis of the scheme below, leading specialists recommend ***that Scientific Diving should be considered and dealt as a different category and not to be part of professional diving.***



- **Legislation** - a profound difference has been recorded. The map presents three main groups of countries: countries with mature legal framework, (orange color); countries following national rules and codes of practice (blue color) and countries that have no laws and/or regulations for Scientific Diving (purple color).



- **Training** - the relevant organizations in the mature countries such as American Academy of Underwater Sciences (AAUS), Canadian Association for Underwater Science (CAUS), Australian Diver Accreditation Scheme), (ADAS) develop standards that should be followed by the training providers. At European level, there is no official national SD training, although a tendency to conform with the European Scientific Diving Panel (ESDP) standards and clear distinction between SD and Commercial diving. Gaps in the existing qualification systems are observed, covered by courses provided by training organizations.
- **Professional acknowledgment** - the difference between EU countries is significant - in some cases it comes through the diver’s employer, while in others through the certification agency.
- **Insurance** - various scenarios are possible - a lot of countries recognize DAN insurance, as well as some others accept national occupational accident insurance.

All relevant stakeholders are welcome on board of ScienceDIVER project, to discuss the future of the scientific diving in Europe and develop a common framework, including legislation, training courses, acknowledgment, insurance, payroll and free mobility. These efforts and a EU directive could contribute to a global harmonization of the existing “scientific diving” frameworks in near future.