17 April 2016

SOMO and Both Ends sent the following statement, following responses by*[Atradius](http://business-humanrights.org/en/egypt-dredging-in-the-dark-report-calls-for-human-rights-due-diligence-from-firms-that-were-involved-in-suez-canal-project-companies-respond%22%20%5Cl%20%22c135271%22%20%5Ct%20%22_self)*,*[Boskalis and Van Oord](http://business-humanrights.org/en/egypt-dredging-in-the-dark-report-calls-for-human-rights-due-diligence-from-firms-that-were-involved-in-suez-canal-project-companies-respond%22%20%5Cl%20%22c135270)*to the report "[Dredging in the Dark](http://www.somo.nl/publications-en/Publication_4279)".

“Atradius DSB – operating on behalf of the Dutch Government – follows the principles of the OECD agreed Common Approaches for Officially Supported Export Credits and Environmental and Social Due Diligence, and applies these ‘Common Approaches’ in its own CSR policy for all transactions it provides an export credit insurance for. In accordance with this policy all high risk (Cat A) projects require a full Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be made publicly available at least 30 days before the final decision making. While the expansion of the Suez canal project was classified as a Cat A project, in this case Atradius DSB issued an export credit insurance policy without such an ESIA being made available.

Following the application for an export credit insurance it deserves indeed to be commended that both Atradius DSB and the Dutch dredging companies took additional steps to establish environmental and social impacts for the specific dredging project they were involved in. Unfortunately no information collected in these additional reviews was made publicly available, until a formal freedom of information request forced them to disclose this information. It emerged that the wider social, environmental and human right impacts of the overall Suez canal expansion project - of which this specific dredging project was a part – were not covered. Thus it is clear that neither Atradius nor the dredging companies acted in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human rights nor the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises that require active efforts for stakeholder engagement. Improved operational guidelines for Atradius DSB about the disclosure of the social, environmental and human rights assessments and reviews they undertake are necessary.

Atradius DSB and all of the dredging companies were given an opportunity and ample time to comment on a draft of our report and to correct factual inaccuracies or misunderstandings. Unfortunately none of them were willing to provide any specific comments or suggestions for improvement at that time.”