CLAIMS:

1. A cleaning head for cleaning a submerged surface, the cleaning head comprising:
a body portion;
a skirt portion extending around a periphery of the body portion, the skirt portion performing a sealing function between the body portion and a submerged surface desired to be cleaned when the cleaning head is disposed on the submerged surface during use;
at least one cleaning member for causing material on the submerged surface to separate from the submerged surface when the cleaning head is disposed on the submerged surface during use and the cleaning member moves relative to the submerged surface; and at least one suction aperture in fluid communication with a space defined between the body portion and the submerged surface during use;
wherein during use when the cleaning head is disposed on the submerged surface and the at least one suction aperture is connected in fluid communication with a device for generating a negative pressure, material separated from the submerged surface by the at least one cleaning member is drawn away from the cleaning head through the suction aperture;
wherein at least one cleaning member comprises at least one cleaning element arranged to generate a fluid current adjacent the submerged surface when the cleaning element moves relative to but substantially does not touch the submerged surface during use, the fluid current causing material to separate from the submerged surface.

2. The cleaning head according to claim 1, wherein the body portion comprises a plurality of body portion sections moveably connected together.

3. The cleaning head according to claim 1, wherein the

skirt portion has a bristle-like configuration.

4. The cleaning head according to claim 1, comprising a height adjustment system arranged to facilitate adjustment of the distance between the body portion and the submerged surface to be cleaned, and thereby adjustment of the degree of compression of the skirt portion during use, and adjustment of the efficacy of the seal formed between the skirt portion and the submerged surface.

5. The cleaning head according to claim 1, comprising a drive mechanism arranged to urge the cleaning head to move relative to the submerged surface during use.

6. The cleaning head according to claim 4, comprising a height adjustment system arranged to facilitate adjustment of the distance between the body portion and the submerged surface to be cleaned, and thereby adjustment of the degree of compression of the skirt portion during use, and adjustment of the efficacy of the seal formed between the skirt portion and the submerged surface, wherein the height adjustment system is arranged to facilitate adjustment of the distance between one or more of the drive shafts and the body portion.

7. The cleaning head according to claim 1, comprising a plurality of cleaning members.

8. The cleaning head according to claim 1, wherein at least one cleaning element includes a foot portion disposed at a first side of the cleaning element facing towards the direction of movement of the cleaning element during use, and a cut out portion disposed at a second side of the cleaning element facing away from the direction of movement of the cleaning element during use.

9. The cleaning head according to claim 8, wherein the

foot portion is substantially wedge shaped.

10. The cleaning head according to claim 9, wherein the wedge shape tapers at an angle of approximately 45°.

11. The cleaning head according to claim 8, wherein the shape of the cut out portion is substantially the same as the shape of the foot portion.

12. The cleaning head according to claim 8, wherein each cleaning element is arranged to rotate such that the cut out portion follows a rotational path defined by the foot portion.

13. The cleaning head according to claim 1, wherein the cleaning member comprises at least one rotatable disc portion, each disc portion including at least one cleaning element.

14. The cleaning head according to claim 1, wherein the cleaning head comprises at least one buoyancy member.

15. The cleaning head according to claim 1, comprising an impeller for reducing pressure at the cleaning head in a region between the cleaning head and a submerged surface during use.

16. The cleaning head according to claim 15, comprising a housing arranged to rotatably receive the impeller, the housing including a housing skirt portion arranged to perform a sealing function between the housing and the submerged surface desired to be cleaned when the cleaning head is disposed on the submerged surface during use.

17. The cleaning head according to claim 15, wherein the impeller comprises a hollow raised section having alternately circumferentially disposed wall portions and

wall apertures, and at least one impeller blade extending outwardly of a respective wall portion, the hollow raised section defining an impeller aperture in fluid communication with the wall apertures, wherein rotation of the impeller causes a reduction in pressure in the hollow raised section.

18. The cleaning head according to claim 17, wherein the disc portion includes a central aperture and the hollow raised section is disposed adjacent and in fluid communication with the central aperture.

19. The cleaning head according to claim 18, wherein the impeller is resiliently connected to the cleaning member.

20. A method of cleaning a submerged surface, the method comprising:

providing a cleaning head having:

a body portion;

a skirt portion extending around a periphery of the body portion; and

at least one cleaning member having at least one cleaning element for causing material on the submerged surface to separate from the submerged surface when the cleaning head is disposed on the submerged surface and the at least one cleaning element moves relative to the submerged surface;

disposing the cleaning head on the submerged surface such that the skirt portion contacts the submerged surface and performs a sealing function between the body portion and the submerged surface;

connecting a space defined between the body portion and the submerged surface in fluid communication with a device for generating a negative pressure; and

activating said device and the at least one cleaning member so that material is separated from the submerged surface and is drawn away from the cleaning head;

wherein the at least one cleaning element is arranged to generate a fluid current adjacent the submerged surface

when the cleaning element moves relative to but substantially does not touch the submerged surface during use, the fluid current causing material to separate from the submerged surface.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising rotating each cleaning member using one or more hydraulic motors.

22. A cleaning head as claimed in claim 20, comprising providing at least one cleaning element with a foot portion disposed at a first side of the cleaning element facing towards the direction of movement of the cleaning element during use, and a cut out portion disposed at a second side of the cleaning element facing away from the direction of movement of the cleaning element during use.