



National Oil Spill Preparedness Status for Seychelles

Cooperation in Preparedness & Response to Marine Pollution Incidents Workshop
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Key Authorities

As part of the preparedness for and response to marine pollution incidents in the Seychelles, a National Competent Authority have been identified for shoreline and at sea oil spill. The Authority identified is the Department of Risk and Disaster Management (DRDM).

However, because oil spill incidents are so rare, Seychelles have found it efficient as to leave it to the Environment Department and the Seychelles Coastguard to act as independent oil spill response departments with fully manned teams of dedicated employees with basically tier one level equipments.

The Environment Department response to shoreline oil spill incidents and The Seychelles Coastguard response to at sea oil spill incidents. Only in a major, tier two or tier three incident, shall the DRDM take over.

For reporting of an incident, both Departments have an emergency hotline for receiving complaints.

In cases, where overseas assistance is required, DRDM shall take the lead.



National Oil Spill Contingency Plan

The Seychelles National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCP) has been drafted but not yet approved. It has however, been worked upon several times during the last five years and amendments have been made to it, to better suit Seychelles. But with continuous change in personnel in the relevant field, it keeps being the major challenge to date. That is why a committee has been recently set up as to start looking into that matter as it still remains one of the Government's priority.

Protection of the environment is possible only if adequate legal authority and enforcement regulations exist. In Seychelles, as in most other countries, legal authority for some aspects of environmental problems is found in several Acts. The need to establish oil pollution control legislation has been felt throughout the world since the 1950s. By now, several countries, including the Seychelles have enacted legislation to control general environmental problems, and oil pollution in particular.

Marine Spill Risks

More than 10,000 tankers and other vessels travel through the Seychelles territorial waters annually, which means that Seychelles is always at risk.

With more than half of its territory, protected as nature reserves, Seychelles is not the only island state concerned with the conservation of its terrestrial and marine resources.

When it comes to sensitive mapping, an atlas of environmentally sensitive areas and a detailed map of sensitive areas in Seychelles, have already been compiled. 5 types of maps have been developed, namely;

- ***Baseline maps, Environmental maps, Socio-economic maps, Strategic maps, Operational and logistics maps (for specific sensitive sites, not for all the coast)***

With the minimum equipment that is currently available, it is still very much a big challenge. During most of the 'Tier one' incidents, improvisation of what there are locally have been used to deal with the spills effectively and efficiently as to avoid damaging the environment and using the limited in-stock equipment.

National plus other small scale oil spill exercises are also regularly being conducted.

Response Policy / Strategy

In the event of a minor/Tier one oil spill incident, the National Command Center might be alerted but does not necessarily activate.

Environment Department (DOE) and Seychelles Coastguard (SCG) normally response to such incidents.

DOE is mandated to oversee any spillage at the shoreline.

SCG is mandated to oversee any spillage at sea.

As in many countries, Seychelles goes by the “polluter pays principle”. It is enacted to make the party responsible for producing the pollution responsible for paying for the damage done to the natural environment.

The typical response shall be;

- First Response/Assess/Evaluate
- Containment/Recovery
- Protect sensitive area
- Clean up
- Waste Management
- Compensation



Response Resources

The Environment Department has ownership on all the oil spill equipments.

However, the equipments are currently being stored at and managed by the Seychelles Coastguard due to storage space and accessibility, especially for an effective and efficient response, it is more ideal to be located at a more easily accessible location, which in this case is at the Coastguard base/harbor.

The equipments stocks are somehow limited to tier one level only. That is why in most cases, improvisation of what there are locally, are often used as not to exhaust the in-stock equipments.

In stock, there are equipments like, booms, skimmers, pump, generators, fast tanks, PPE, loose fibres, hand tools, mats, health & safety equipments, chains etc.....

Responders and other key personnel are well trained and regular exercises are being organised to enhance capacity and to ensure that every personnel is on par with their roles and responsibilities.

Trans-boundary Aspects

It is required to have a regional cooperation in preparedness and response to marine pollution incidents as it will benefit Seychelles at a national level. Greater coordination means greater preparedness and response to marine pollution.

Seychelles have multilateral agreements and is party to the Basel Convention.

Challenges are;

- Relates to capacity especially with regards to technical capacity.
- Budget to implement the actions on the ground.
- Outstanding laws and regulations

How to overcome;

- Review existing laws
- Build capacity of different personnel
- Initiate cooperation under different agreements

Thank you for your attention
