



N° 270 E – News from July/August 2018

Emergency response

Over the summer, our duty team was contacted about a variety of issues. We provided support and advice to the engineers mobilised in Guadeloupe at the request of the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME), after vast quantities of Sargassum seaweed washed up on the shoreline (see article below). In response to another incident, the duty team, Cedre's laboratory and the French Navy LASEM laboratories in Toulon and Cherbourg were all mobilised to confirm the nature of balls found on several sections of coastline. First in Corsica, where detection at sea and drift forecasts helped to prevent a large proportion of what turned out to be paraffin from reaching the shoreline, with the mobilisation of Ceppol and French Navy vessels to implement trawling operations (over a tonne of paraffin balls recovered). In Calvados, around 3 km of beaches were affected, leading to them being closed to the public and clean-up operations being conducted to recover the paraffin balls (municipalities of Vierville-sur-mer and Saint-Laurent-sur-mer).

Sightings of a red-orange tinge to the seawater, due to high concentrations of phytoplanktonic algae (*Noctiluca scintillans*), promoted by the rise in water temperature, alerted MRCC Etel and several coastal municipalities in southern Finistère and in Morbihan. At the request of the civil protection service and in collaboration with the fire brigade, Cedre was called out to provide on-site advice after a refrigerated lorry fell into the river Aulne near Terenez bridge (Finistère), causing a slight leak of diesel. We were also called upon by civil protection (DGSCGC) and INERIS (CASU) for advice after a lorry transporting a hazardous substance (sodium chlorite) fell into a ravine of the Gave d'Aspe (Pyrénées-Atlantiques), leading to the release of around 10 m³ of this chemical. Enquiries were also received in relation to a barge in difficulty on the Seine (Seine-et-Marne) with 410 tonnes of fertiliser onboard, a motor yacht grounded near the port of Menton (Alpes-Maritimes) which resulted in a leak of 300 litres of diesel, sightings of several trails of sheen at sea off Cannes (Alpes-Maritimes), Sables-d'Olonne (Vendée), Batz Island (Finistère), and Cap d'Agde (Hérault), and a spill in Bouches-du-Rhône of 2 to 3 m³ of pyrolysis oil, a dense, viscous substance which partly washed up on the shore and partly sank to the seafloor.

Mass strandings of Sargassum seaweed in Guadeloupe

There are many similarities between the site survey protocols, the set-up and monitoring of clean-up operations and the different techniques involved in the collection, transport and storage chain implemented in the event of an oil spill, as defined by the French contingency plan, and those applicable to large-scale strandings of seaweed. Based on this observation, the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME) contracted Cedre to conduct a technical mission in Guadeloupe in relation to mass strandings of Sargassum seaweed. Two engineers were sent on-site in mid-July. Their mission was to provide support to the two civil protection agents in charge of incident management and to offer their expertise to the authorities (Prefect). Reconnaissance surveys were conducted, including in the islands of Les Saintes, La Désirade and Marie-Galante. The aim was to produce action sheets for the 70-odd sites affected by mass strandings of brown seaweed, by recommending appropriate collection techniques, with support from the Directorate for the Sea.

New universal sorbent tested

At the request of Green Keeper Africa, the universal loose sorbent GKSorb, made from water hyacinths, was tested by Cedre's laboratory. Based on its performance, it has been added to the list of universal sorbents published by Cedre, available at www.cedre.fr

In short

Dates for the diary

► European Researchers' Night 2018, at **Océanopolis**, Brest, on 28th September on the theme of "1001 stories"

► **Cedre Information Day 2019**, on 5th March, at the French Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition (MTES) in Paris La Défense, on the theme of **Marine Macro-Litter and Micro-Litter**.

Hot off the press

► **Cedre Information Bulletin** n° 37, English version

OSRL training

From 25th June to 6th July, Cedre ran two training sessions respectively for 13 and 12 members of the OSRL response team, with an additional participant invited from MCA. These 4-day practical courses were held at Cedre's technical facilities. This was the opportunity for both response teams to test their response and assessment procedures, as well as to perfect their knowledge of shoreline response techniques in real conditions. During these sessions, Cedre's training team put the trainees in real-life situations with the release of real oil: containment and recovery on the water and on a section of road, and clean-up of pebbles, riprap and sandy beaches. The course ended with a half-day exercise designed to give the trainees the chance to apply the knowledge acquired throughout the week based on an oil spill scenario. Various technical discussions were held between the trainers and trainees and interesting cooperation opportunities between our two organisations were broached once again.

HazRunoff project, Munich

The second coordination meeting for the European project HazRunoff was held on 11th and 12th July in Seefeld near Munich (Germany). Over these two days, the project partners reviewed the progress in each of the tasks and planned upcoming activities. This second project meeting was organised by the partner EOMAP, the leading global service provider of satellite-derived aquatic information in maritime and inland waters, notably in the fields of bathymetry and water quality monitoring. In this project, EOMAP is responsible for testing different remote sensing tools liable to allow early warning and detection of an emergency (water level/flooding, turbidity, slicks, chemicals, etc.)

Partnership with New Caledonia

Under the partnership established by New Caledonia's Directorate for Civil Protection and Risk Management (DSCGR) with Cedre, in the form of a multiannual agreement, two engineers from Cedre took part in an assignment in Nouméa from 20th to 24th August. Cedre provided technical assistance for the development of New Caledonia's onshore marine pollution contingency plan and reviewed the spill response equipment. A two-day training course was also run, on the premises of DSCGR, for 11 trainees, including the DSCGR duty managers, on crisis management in the event of shoreline pollution.

Balex Delta exercise in Sweden

The 29th Balex Delta exercise, for the contracting parties to the Helsinki Commission – Helcom, was held in Karlskrona (Sweden), from 27th to 30th August. The at-sea part of the exercise involved 18 vessels and 2 aircraft, as well as 220 crew members and was built on a scenario involving the grounding of a container ship and the subsequent loss of oil and containers of hazardous substances. The onshore part consisted in a tabletop exercise with over 70 participants. The exercise was followed by visitors and observers from 32 countries. In total, 550 people attended in the various events: exercises, workshops and seminars. An observer from Cedre took part in the at-sea exercise on the 28th, aboard the Finnish vessel *Turva*, which has oil recovery capacities as well as being able to respond to chemical spills in hazardous atmospheres. She also participated in a panel session during the seminar organised for observers on the 29th.

Sea-Education summer school visits Cedre

On 29th August, Cedre hosted a workshop as part of the 6th edition of the Sea-Education summer school organised by the cluster of excellence LabexMer coordinated by IUEM. This year's theme was "The Ocean in the face of change". The workshop was attended by 15 secondary school teachers, across all disciplines, accompanied by 5 scientific staff. The programme included a tour of Cedre's facilities and a conference on the evolution of response techniques and strategies since the *Amoco Cadiz* spill. This visit provided the opportunity for very interesting discussions between scientists and teachers and the chance to come up with ideas for collaboration in the field of scientific mediation.

Oil spill in Halifax Harbour (Nova Scotia - Canada)

On the evening of Friday 3rd August, Nova Scotia Power confirmed an oil spill at its Tufts Cove Generating Station, located on Halifax Harbour, near Dartmouth. Around 5,000 litres of Bunker C heavy fuel oil spilled out into the harbour through a thumb-sized hold in an exterior pipe that runs from a storage tank alongside the harbour to the generating station. The same day, Nova Scotia Power announced that it had controlled the leak after deploying containment booms, pumping off the fuel oil and using sorbents. Clean-up operations were supervised by ECRC (Eastern Canada Response Corporation). The reasons for this leak, detected on Thursday 2nd August by employees during a routine inspection, remain as yet unknown and clean-up, which began the same day, could last until mid-September. Up to 75 people are affected by clean-up operations. Nova Scotia Power has stated that there has been little impact on marine fauna (a dozen crabs and at least one seagull have died). Audible bird scarers were used to keep birds away from the spill. On 7th August, the firm announced that a larger quantity had been spilt than initially believed, totalling around 25,000 litres, some 5 times more than initial estimates.

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