



## N° 271 E – News from September 2018

### Emergency response

The duty team received an enquiry in relation to a leak of light crude oil at sea from an offshore loading terminal in the Gulf of Gabès (Tunisia) for advice and recommendations on response actions and to activate Météo-France for slick drift forecasting. Cedre was also consulted to help interpret photos taken from an aircraft in Corsica and during a pollution incident involving combustion residues in the roadstead of Brest.

### In short

#### Dates for the diary

- ▶ **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- and Micro-Litter**
- ▶ **The IOWater Days** on accidental surface water pollution, in Paris on 13th November
- ▶ **PetroEnvironment 2019** at the SEEF Center in Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia, from 19th to 21st February 2019

### European Researchers' Night 2018

The thirteenth European Researchers' Night, held on 28th September at **Océanopolis**, was once again a resounding success. The event was attended by 5,284 visitors who came to meet the researchers at the various pavilions plunged into an atmosphere inspired by the theme of "One Thousand and One Nights". Many of Cedre's team played their part, kitted out in fun handcrafted hats! The engineers explained their research work to visitors through three educational animations on **HNS**, oil and microplastics ([see the video here](#)).

### Presentation of the Transaid network

On 18th September, the Emergency Response Coordinator took part in a meeting in Rennes organised to present the Transaid network to the Defence Staff of the Western defence zone. This meeting was the opportunity to present the activities of the two Transaid support centres for Western France - Cedre and Total Gonfreville - to the fire and rescue departments.

### Bonn Agreement contracting parties meeting

On 26th and 27th, Cedre attended the 30th meeting of the **Bonn Agreement** contracting parties, held on the premises of France's General Secretariat for the Sea (SGMer) in Paris. Two of the main items on the agenda were the inclusion of Spain as a signatory country, where good progress has been made, and the official inclusion of MARPOL Annex VI within the work of the Bonn Agreement. The discussions also laid the groundwork for the ministerial meeting to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Bonn Agreement, scheduled for October 2019.

### New hydrophobic floating sorbent tested

At the request of Biosolvit Ltda, the loose hydrophobic floating sorbent Bioblue Natural Absorber, made from biopolymer, was tested by Cedre's laboratory. Based on its performance, it has been added to the list of approved hydrophobic floating sorbents published by Cedre, available at [www.cedre.fr](http://www.cedre.fr)

### Practical training for Perenco Cameroon

Two theory and practical courses on oil spill response at sea and on the shoreline were run by Cedre, from 28th to 30th August, then from 1st to 3rd September 2018, in Douala, Cameroon. The theory lectures for these two courses, which comprised a total of 25 trainees, were held on the premises of Perenco in Doula, and the practical exercises took place on the shoreline of Eboundja, south of Kribi. These courses provided the opportunity to train Perenco personnel as well as villagers on the deployment of a containment and recovery system.

## Tanger Med Port Authority

As in November 2017, an engineer and a technician from Cedre visited **Tanger Med Port**, from 17th to 20th September, to meet the TMPA Port Officers in charge of spill response and to assist the Safety Brigade during two equipment deployment exercises. The first, a spill simulation at the service wharf, required specific port response equipment to be deployed. The second involved boom deployment offshore in the waiting area outside the port and mobilised a Boluda port tug, a Marpol (Consulmar) spill response vessel acting as the moored leaking vessel as well as a pilot boat. All the port's response equipment was also checked during this visit.

## Spill response plan in Mauritania

An engineer from Cedre was in Nouakchott from 16th to 22nd September, as part of a spill contingency plan development project for the Mauritanian subsidiary of Total Exploration & Production. The aim of this mission was to meet representatives of the subsidiary as well as key contacts at State-level. Our engineer met with representatives of the Mauritanian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Equipment and Transport, Ministry of Petroleum, Energy and Mines, as well as representatives of the Mauritanian Navy and Air Force under the Ministry of National Defence. This visit was also the opportunity to hold discussions with the Directorate-General of Customs, the Nouakchott Port Authority, the National Meteorological Office and the Mauritanian Institute of Oceanographic Research and Fisheries. Finally, meetings were organised with private sector representatives, in particular **SOMELEC (Société Mauritanienne d'Electricité)**, SEBCO, **KOSMOS ENERGY** and **TULLOW OIL**. Thanks to the support received from TEPM, the collaboration of our contacts and the data collected, we were able to review the organisational and collaborative framework for any spill response actions and to pinpoint the strategies to be integrated in the contingency plan which is currently under development.

## Development of a bioremediation agent test protocol

As part of our response product testing activities, here at Cedre we are currently working to define a test protocol to assess the efficiency of bioremediation agents. Bioremediation is an oiled site restoration technique which draws on oil biodegradation phenomena. This approach, considered environmentally-friendly, can be an option for the final clean-up phase of an oiled site. Bioremediation relies on the capacity of so-called hydrocarbonoclastic bacteria to use hydrocarbon molecules as a source of carbon to develop. To overstep the experimental boundaries of pre-existing efficiency tests (in laboratory conditions which are not representative of real-life operational conditions), pilot-scale trials were launched in September on Cedre's man-made beach as well as in semi-open conditions using our **Shoreline Test Bench**. During the at least 3-month period of experimentation, the degradation of the oil and the evolution of the diversity of bacterial populations (collaboration with **Ifremer**) will be monitored. The long term aim of this project is to develop a test protocol to determine the efficiency of bioremediation agents as reliable as those we have for dispersants and sorbents.

## Oil & HNS training

From 10th to 14th September, Cedre organised the first session of the new standard course "**Oil & HNS spill response training**" for some ten public and private sector representatives from Germany, Angola, Brazil, Canada, Korea, Nigeria and Uganda. This 5-day theory and practical course, run in English at Cedre's premises in Brest, was designed for members of response teams and contingency planning/incident management teams. At the end of the course, the trainees were able to choose between modules and tutorials more specifically devoted to **HNS** or oil spills. Based on the success of this first session, the next session has already been scheduled in our 2019 programme: registration is now open for the course from 9th to 13th September 2019!

## Thisseas oil spill: public legal proceedings end

The bulk carrier *Thisseas* was spotted by a French Navy plane with an oil slick in its wake off Penmarc'h (Finistère, Brittany) in the French EEZ in February 2016 (**Newsletter 243**). The verdict was delivered on 17th January 2017: the court of Brest fined the shipowner €1 million for "aggravated pollution" and the captain €30,000 (**Newsletter 253**). However the case was ended definitively on 13th September 2018 when the Rennes Court of Appeal overturned the verdict of the court of Brest. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (**UNCLOS**) recognises Liberia's right to judge this case, as the *Thisseas* was under Liberian flag. France had the right to take action against the shipowner but according to this Convention "proceedings shall be suspended upon the taking of proceedings to impose penalties in respect of corresponding charges by the flag State within six months of the date on which proceedings were first instituted". On 6th April 2017, Liberia informed the French authorities of its decision to initiate legal proceedings and on 20th May 2018 the shipowner paid the \$160,000-fine (around €137,000) imposed by Liberia.

[Unsubscribe from the Cedre Newsletter](#)

Think green - don't print out your emails!

[Legal information](#)

[Contact us](#)