

N° 298 E – News from February 2021

Emergency response

Cedre's emergency team received a call in relation to a bitumen spill into the rainwater system, caused by a leak from a bitumen spreader on a road in Royan. Advice was provided remotely for an oil company following a crude oil spill in a mangrove in Western Africa. Following large-scale strandings of tarballs on the coast of Israel, the authorities called upon REMPEC (Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea) and in particular the Mediterranean Assistance Unit (MAU), a network of experts from ISPRA and Cedre, activated to provide advice on issues relating to shoreline clean-up and waste management. Cedre's laboratory continues to conduct analysis tests on oiled feathers taken from birds washed up on the Breton shoreline, in order to compare the oil to known sources of contamination (of 18 samples analysed, 3 show a signature resembling the oil from the *Grande America*, 7 that of the *Tanio* and 8 are of unknown origin). Finally, Cedre, as the French focal point for the ICE Network, was contacted as part of an exercise run by Sweden on the hazards and first response measures in the event of a spill of acetic acid (UN 2798).

Training for Rouen sea port

Following a request from the repair and dredging department of the Grand Port Maritime de Rouen, Cedre ran a spill response training course and equipment deployment exercise, simulating spills of hydraulic oil and diesel from the *Bigue Brotonne*, from 1st to 3rd February. This was the opportunity to raise awareness and advise seafarers, coasting pilots and the port authority.

MANIFESTS project kick-off meeting

The kick-off meeting for the MANIFESTS project, on *MANaging risks and Impacts From Evaporating and gaseous Substances To population Safety*, was held virtually on 19th February. The discussions, chaired by Cedre as project leader, mainly focused on planning the different activities for 2021 and 2022. This project brings together 9 partners from 5 European countries as well as England, and is funded by the EU's DG-ECHO; it enjoys strong support from the French Navy through CEPPOL which will be in charge of organising practical sessions at sea. The primary aim of the MANIFESTS project is to provide pragmatic solutions in order to characterise the risks generated by the evaporation of a chemical from a slick at the water surface. The ultimate goal is to protect both response operators and local inhabitants.

European Coast Guard Functions Forum

On 11th February, within the framework of the European Coast Guard Functions Forum (ECGFF), Cedre took part in a workshop organised jointly by ECGFF and the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), devoted to improving operational cooperation. Presentations were given by CEPPOL (French Navy Centre of Practical Expertise in Pollution Response) and Cedre to provide feedback from the most recent spills affecting the French coastline. The pollution caused by the *CSL Virginia*, *Grande America*, *Rhodanus* and *MV Wakashio* were thus addressed, with a particular focus on the benefits of cross-functional skills to enhance response capabilities.

Animal fat in the Polludrome®

As part of Cedre's work on the behaviour of different substances spilled in water, an experiment was conducted on animal fat in the Polludrome®. This trial follows on from the study launched in 2020 on bio-feedstocks that are now used in new generation refineries to produce biofuels such as HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil). The behaviour trial consisted in releasing 20 litres of fat heated to 60°C (its transport temperature) and monitoring the evolution of its physical and chemical properties over a 7-day period. Visually, this substance showed a behaviour close to that of vegetable oil, i.e. solidification of the slick which rapidly fragments to form balls less than 10 cm in diameter that continue to float with low emulsification. Biodegradability and ecotoxicity trials on marine bacteria will supplement the physico-chemical tests. The conclusions of this study will lay the groundwork for recommendations to define the most appropriate response strategies.

Cedre Information Day: Thursday 23rd March 2021

“Containers”
Virtual event
Free

See the full programme,
and download the registration form.
Only a few days left
to register!

In short

Dates for the diary

- ▶ On 10th March: Cedre will be taking part in the REMPEC Regional Meeting of National Experts
- ▶ 1st to 4th March: IMAROS project virtual workshop

Training

- ▶ 22nd to 25th March 2021, “Aerial observation of pollution at sea” training course, at Cedre

Visits and presentations

- ▶ 3rd March: visit to Cedre by the Maritime Prefect for the Atlantic

Quasimeme interlaboratory study

On 28th February, the Quasimeme interlaboratory trial – a calibration exercise for microplastics analysis methods – on which Cedre had been working for several weeks, came to an end. The aim of this trial was to establish the current state of the art for the analysis of microplastics in samples of environmental matrices (sand, soil, animal tissues, etc.). To do so, participating laboratories received several samples containing known quantities of plastic particles to be analysed in order to test and verify the efficacy of their methods. Cedre extracted the microplastics and counted them using stereomicroscopy followed by pyrolysis-GC-MS analysis. The results of the exercise are due to be released by Quasimeme in mid-March. In this way, Cedre continues to develop its analytical capacities for studying microplastics, in particular as the leader of the French national monitoring network for microplastics in beach sediment (RNS-mP-P).

Field mission in Plonévez-Porzay, Finistère

On 5th February, Cedre visited Kervel beach (Plonévez-Porzay, Finistère), where a large quantity of nurdles and plastic fragments had been washed up, to take samples. Several protocols were implemented on site to quantify the number of plastic fragments and pellets at the sediment surface and the number of microplastics buried in the sediment. Cedre's visit was much anticipated and many discussions were held with local stakeholders on the pollution of this site by this form of marine debris.

Polymers and Oceans research group 2nd session

From 8th to 11th February, Cedre participated in the 2nd session of the French research group on the fate of plastics in the aquatic environment, "GdR Polymères et Océans". With over 100 registered participants, the event rose to the challenge of an entirely virtual set-up while allowing for discussions between participants. Cedre presented the results of the shoreline pollution study it is conducting on a national scale, as well as the results obtained through the [CleanAtlantic project](#) on the impacts of cigarette butts in the marine environment.

Cedre/OFB days

As part of its partnership with the [French Biodiversity Agency \(OFB\)](#), Cedre jointly organised a meeting on the issue of marine litter in mid-February. This meeting, held virtually, involved over 25 participants: Marine Protected Area (MPA) managers, together with staff from Cedre, OFB, as well as [Ifremer](#), in particular the unit in charge of the [data banking system DALI](#). This meeting was the opportunity to strengthen collaboration in the field of aquatic litter and to discuss potential synergies for litter response actions in MPAs. Part of the meeting was also devoted to spills, with a presentation by Cedre of an analysis of POLREPs (Pollution Reports) recorded in MPAs as well as collaborative initiatives and training actions implemented over recent years for agents and users of the [Iroise Marine Natural Park \(PNMI\)](#), within the framework of the "partner ports" and "partner fishers" charters.

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