

***Progress with the integration of oiled wildlife response into  
response planning by 2013***

This document was a background document for the  
2013 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting



## **PROGRESS WITH THE INTEGRATION OF OILED WILDLIFE RESPONSE INTO RESPONSE PLANNING BY 2013**

The HELCOM Recommendation 31/6E “Integrated wildlife response planning in the Baltic Sea Area”, adopted at the HELCOM Moscow Ministerial Meeting in 2010, provides guidance for the development of integrated wildlife response plans in the Baltic Sea Area at national or subnational levels. See Table 1 for an overview of Progress with the integration of oiled wildlife response into response planning in the region by 2013.

A few Contracting Parties have demonstrated concrete progress over the last three years in implementing Recommendation 31/6E. An increased level of preparedness has been achieved in Finland, Estonia and Germany (Schleswig Holstein) since the Recommendation was adopted. Also Sweden has been active in developing authority-NGO relationships as part of the ENSACO project.

The Baltic region demonstrates a full range of attitudes to the treatment of live oiled animals. Whereas Finland and Estonia are preparing to facilitate efforts to rescue and rehabilitate oiled animals, Denmark and Schleswig Holstein (Germany) have stipulated that all oiled animals will be euthanised.

Other examples are available outside the Baltic (c.f. Table 2), among these the Netherlands, where the authorities have adopted an integrated wildlife response plan that includes a multi-year exercise programme. This programme includes annual meetings with the wildlife response community, and a range of exercises held regularly in different parts of the country, including notification drills, table tops, field exercises, and facility mobilisation exercises. Table 2 also shows that in most European countries oiled wildlife response is at its infancy.

It should be noted that NGOs who are interested in developing oiled wildlife skills and preparedness in many countries have to do that in relative isolation, especially when

- their own authorities are not interested, supportive, or unaware and
- they do not have the financial means to connect with international NGO activities (meetings, training events)

See Table 3 for information on the current status of oiled wildlife response in the HELCOM, BONN and REMPEC frameworks.

## Tables

The data provided in table 1 below has been assembled based on information shared at the 2012 Baltic Wildlife Responders Workshop (Poland), personal communications and internal resources (Country Wildlife Response Profiles – [www.sea-alarm.org](http://www.sea-alarm.org) ).

Table 2 provides an overview of the assessed situation with regards to authority preparedness in wider Europe, based on criteria set by the 2007 EU report *A European Oiled Wildlife Response Plan – Proposal* (downloadable via <http://www.oiledwildlife.eu/publications>). In that report the development of wildlife response preparedness was defined in three stages:

Phase 1: Initiation of preparedness (identify responsible authorities, key actors, risk assessment, discussions)

Phase 2: Development of preparedness (write and implement a wildlife response plan, create budgets, facilitate training of key actors)

Phase 3: Maintenance of preparedness (integrated exercises and continued training, maintaining and developing good practice, international sharing)

Table 3 provides a similar assessment of the preparedness with regards to the European regional agreements, again according to criteria set by the abovementioned report.

*Table 1: Assessment of the current level of wildlife response preparedness in the HELCOM area.*

Country	Wildlife authority responsible	Other national actors	Authority – NGO cooperation in the field of oiled wildlife response	Level of preparedness	Plan in place
Denmark	Danish Forest and Nature Agency	Police Municipalities Danish Center for Environment and Energy BirdLife Denmark  Environmental Protection Agency Admiral Danish Fleet	There is good understanding between authorities and NGO	The Forest and Nature Agency has the viewpoint that cleaning live oiled animals inflicts the animals with a substantial amount of stress and that it doesn't help conserve the populations.. The practice is therefore to euthanize oiled animals.	There is a contingency plan describing roles and responsibilities of the different actors as well as guidelines for handling oiled animals. The plan is going to be revised in the coming years.
Estonia	The Ministry of Environment (State Nature Conservation Agency)	Estonian Fund for Nature (ELF)	There has been a close cooperation between the authorities and the Estonian Fund for Nature	ELF has been training hundreds of volunteers. Meetings between ELF and the authorities have resulted in a good understanding of roles and responsibilities.	National wildlife response contingency plan is in place.

Finland	Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)	WWF Finland Rescue services	For many years there has been a close cooperation between the authorities (SYKE, Rescue Services) and WWF. SYKE and WWF Finland have signed a cooperation agreement regarding the OWR	Cooperation between the key actors has resulted in the development of the Bird Cleaning Unit (BCU) and the training of hundreds of volunteers by WWF. At BALEX DELTA '12 this system has been tested as part of the overall exercise.	The preparedness has been developed for the Helsinki region, and will now be extended into other coastal areas of Finland. Efforts are taking place to consolidate preparedness in the form of a national wildlife response plan, based on a tiered response system.
Germany	S-H: Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Areas M-V: unclear	ProBird Deutsche Tierschutzbund	S-H: Not existing. The authorities do not support NGOs in their efforts to meet criteria set out in the published guidelines. M-V: not applicable	S-H: A training course has been organised for authority approved personnel on the collection of oiled animals from the beach. The S-H authorities will hire personnel that can euthanasia according to one the approved methods: -hunting -beheading -head punch -lethal injection M-V: Not prepared	S-H: The authorities have published a guideline for the treatment of live oiled animals <sup>1</sup> . The guideline states that from an animal welfare perspective, euthanasia is the only ethical and legally justified approach. Rehabilitation may be allowed in the future on the condition that the interested parties can prove they can meet certain strict criteria that are provided by the guidelines. M-V: No plan
Latvia	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (State Environmental Service)  Ministry of Defence	Municipalities, Food and Veterinary Service, Latvian Association of Veterinarians, Latvian Ornithological Society	Latvian Ornithological Society is one of NGOs involved in oiled wildlife response	A training course has been organised for authorities approved personnel in 2009.	Cooperation scheme of responsible authorities on oiled wildlife response is included in National Civil Protection Plan. Guidelines for Oiled Wildlife Care at Marine and Inland Water Oil Spills have been prepared in cooperation with NGO and national authorities

<sup>1</sup> Leitlinie für den Umgang mit verölten Vögeln an den Küsten Schleswig-Holsteins (2009). Ministerium für Landwirtschaft, Umwelt und ländliche Räume des Landes

Lithuania	Ministry of Environment (Marine Environment Protection Agency)	Lithuanian Fund for Nature Lithuanian Society for the Protection of Animals	Not existing	The Lithuanian Sea Museum is responsible for aid, care and rehabilitation of oiled sea wildlife	Requirements for pollution response have been adopted by the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior. The oiled wildlife response is being taken into account in the planning process.
Poland	Ministry of Environment	WWF Poland "Albatros" Foundation Hel Marine Station University of Gdansk Warsaw Zoological Garden	Not existing	NGOs are interested in developing skills but so far training or preparedness activities have not taken place.	No plan
Russia	Ministry of Natural Resources (Supervisory Natural Resources Management Service of the of the Russian Federation)	WWF Russia Baltic Fund for Nature	Not existing	NGOs are interested in developing skills but so far training or preparedness activities have not taken place	No formal plan
Sweden	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency/Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management? (via Local municipalities)	Katastrofhjälp Fåglar och Vilt (KFV)	There is good understanding between the authorities and KFV, resulting from the ENSACO project (2010-2012)	KFV is allowed to take care of live oiled animals. KFV has members mainly in the southern area of Sweden.	No formal plan



*Table 3: An assessment of the level of wildlife preparedness in the different European regional Agreement*

		HELCOM	Bonn	REMPEC	Bucharest
Phase 1	Include wildlife response as a priority in cooperative programmes	Wildlife response integrated as a chapter in Response Manual and activities have been defined in HELCOM RESPONSE work programme	Wildlife response has been included as a chapter in the Response Manual; Activities on wildlife response and preparedness are reported on by CPs	Wildlife response has been discussed; CP have asked REMPEC to take measures in the interest of CPs	Wildlife response has been discussed (2011); no follow-up action as yet.
	Encourage national wildlife response planning	Recommendation 31/6 requires the development of an integrated oiled wildlife response plan			
	Create one or more task groups at the appropriate level to identify and prioritise activities and monitor international progress	Estonia, WWF Finland and Sea Alarm have been acting as a task group (Estonia resigned in 2013)		REMPEC has signed an MoU with Sea Alarm for preparedness and response	
Phase 2	Develop regional perspectives on oiled wildlife response and planning	POLREP includes wildlife	POLREP includes wildlife		
	Facilitate regional training events	Secretariat has assisted with communications			
	Organise workshops and conferences	Secretariat has assisted with communications	Secretariat has assisted with communications		
Phase 3	Make available centralised information sources				
	Directory of authorities, responders and mobile units				
	Informative websites				
	Facilitate (budgets for) conferences and workshops				
	Provide structural funding of maintenance activities				
	Commission the evaluation of responses				