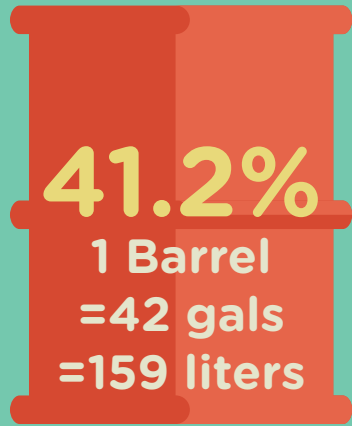




OIL SPILLS: Did you know?

FACTSHEET JULY 2016

The Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) is one of the largest oil producing areas in the world, producing approx. 20,000,000 barrels per day in 2012, of which the USA produces:



Approx. 5,000,000 ships frequent Caribbean waters every year.



Oil tankers transport an average of 5,000,000 barrels of crude oil per day in the Wider Caribbean Region.



[3]

Even though the risk for open sea collisions may be elevated in congested waterways, there have been very few open sea collisions in high traffic density passage such as Yucatan Channel, the Bahamas Channel and the Florida Strait due to the advent of ARPA radars and other collision avoidance mechanisms.



[4]



Deepwater Horizon was the largest marine spill in the Gulf of Mexico and it occurred over a period of 87 days starting on April 20th 2010. Approximately 49,000,000 barrels or 778.9 million liters of oil was spilt.

Oil pollution has been shown to have detrimental effects, both physically and chemically, on a wide range of marine life. [6]

Coastal and Marine Environments can take several decades to recover from oil pollution. [7]



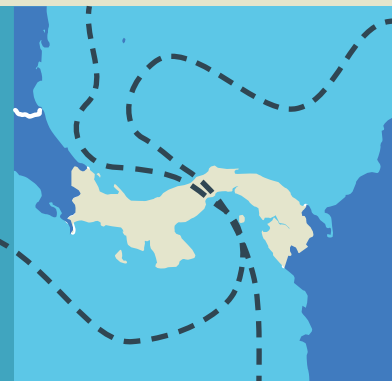
The total annual release of petroleum (oils) from all known sources to the sea is estimated at 1.3 million tons globally. Of this amount, 46% is from natural seeps. [7]



Approx. 14,000 ships and 70 million tons of oil pass through the Panama Canal annually.



[8]



Oil spills spread rapidly especially in rough sea conditions allowing only a fraction to be recovered.

[9]



Chemical dispersants are used to reduce potential shoreline impacts. Even though they are NOT toxic in themselves, they can affect marine species.

[10]



In the four year period 2010-2014 there have been 35 spills of 7 tonnes and over occurring throughout the world. [11]



Pipeline sabotage has resulted in a near continuous succession of oil spills in the Catatumbo River Basin (Colombia/Venezuela). [8]

More than 75% of the Caribbean's coral reefs are threatened by land-based and marine-based pollution and damage after "land" and also after "marine" (e.g. Nutrients and sediment runoff, coastal development, overfishing and water discharges from cruise ships and vessels, leaks and spills from oil infrastructure). [12]



The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) developed a Regional Used Oil Strategy and work continues on oil spill contingency planning at the national and regional levels. [13]

The Oil Spills Protocol of the Cartagena Convention provides a regional framework for cooperation in combating spills in the Wider Caribbean Region. All Caribbean countries, except Haiti, Honduras, and Suriname have ratified this Protocol. [14]

The Regional Activity Centre for the Oil Spills Protocol, RAC/REMPEITC Caribe in Curaçao provides training in oil spill response and contingency planning.



References:

- [1] CIA. 2013. The World Factbook. [Online] Available from: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-worldfactbook. [Accessed: 22nd June 2013]
- [2] UNEP. 1999. Global Environment Outlook 2000. London: Earths and Publications Ltd.
- [3] Botello, Alfonso Vázquez. 2000. Diagnósis de la Industria Petrolera en Tabasco. Informe Final IV Etapa. Instituto de Ciencias del Mar y Limnología (UNAM) Mexico.
- [4] International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Limited (ITOPF). 2003. Wider Caribbean Regional Profiles - A Summary of the Risk of Oil Spills & State of Preparedness in UNEP Regional Seas Regions. [Online] Available from: http://www.cep.unep.org/publications-and-resources/databases/document-database/other/itopf-oil-info-caribbean.doc/at_download/file [Accessed: 27th July 2014]
- [5] United States Coast Guards. 2011. On Scene Coordinator Report on Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. [Online] Available from: http://www.uscg.mil/foia/docs/dwh/fosc_dwh_report.pdf [Accessed: 27th July 2014]
- [6] International Maritime Organisation (IMO). 2009. IMO/UNEP Guidance Manual on the Assessment and Restoration of Environmental Damage following Marine Oil Spills. UNEP, Regional Seas Programme. IMO: London, UK (p.104).
- [7] Global Marine Oil Pollution Information Gateway (GPA). 2008. Effects of oil pollution on coastal habitats. [Online] Available from: <http://oils.gpa.unep.org/facts/habitats.htm> [Accessed: 27th July 2014]
- [8] Isaza, C.F.A. et al.. 2006. Global International Water Assessment (GIWA), Caribbean Sea/Colombia & Venezuela, Central America & Mexico GIWA Regional Assessment 3b, 3c. University of Kalmar on behalf of United Nations Environment Programme [Online] Available from: http://www.unep.org/dewa/giwa/areas/reports/r3bc/giwa_regional_assessment_3bc.pdf [Accessed: 27th July 2014]
- [9] International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation (ITOPF). 2014. Technical Information Paper TIP 02: Fate of marine oil spills. [Online] Available from: <http://www.itopf.com/knowledgeresources/documents-guides/document/tip-2-fate-of-marine-oil-spills/> [Accessed: 27th July 2014]
- [10] International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation (ITOPF). 2014. Technical Information TIP 04: Use of dispersants to treat oil spills. [Online] Available from: <http://www.itopf.com/knowledgeresources/documents-guides/document/tip-4-use-of-dispersants-to-treat-oil-spills/> [Accessed 27th July 2014]
- [11] International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation (ITOPF). Oil Tanker Spill Statistics 2013. [Online] Available from: <http://www.itopf.com/knowledge-resources/data-statistics/statistics/> [Accessed 27th July 2014]
- [12] Burke, Laretta et al.. 2011. Reefs at Risk in the Caribbean Revisited. World Resources Institute Washington DC. [Online] Available from: <http://www.wri.org/publication/reefs-risk-revisited> [Accessed 27th July 2014]
- [13] VanderPol, Michael. 2006, Regional Strategy for the Environmentally Sound Management of Used oils in the Caribbean Island States Phase II- Strategy Development, Environment Canada, National Office of Pollution Prevention on assignment to UNEP-Secretariat of the Basel Convention [Online] Available from: http://archive.basel.int/centers/proj_activ/stp_projects/uoc/esm%20draft%20050207.pdf [Accessed: 27th July 2014]
- [14] UNEP CEP. 2014. About the Cartagena Convention. [Online] Available from: <http://cep.unep.org/cartagena-convention>. [Accessed: 27th July 2014].
- [15] Villasol, Antonio and Beltrán, Jesus .2004. Global International Waters Assessment Caribbean Islands: GIWA Regional assessment 4. University of Kalmar on behalf of United Nations Environment Programme [Online] Available from: <http://www.unep.org/dewa/giwa/publications/r4.asp> [Accessed: 27th July 2014]
- [16] Bernal, M.C. et al.. 2004. Caribbean Sea/ Small Islands GIWA Regional assessment 3a. University of Kalmar on behalf of United Nations Environment Programme [Online] Available from: <http://www.unep.org/dewa/giwa/publications/r3a.asp> [Accessed: 27th July 2013]