



The South-east Pacific Region comprises Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama and Peru. The region stretches the entire length of the Pacific coast of South America from Colombia to Cape Horn, encompassing tropical, subtropical, temperate and sub Antarctic systems. As such, it supports an abundant diversity of habitats and species, not least on the Galapagos Islands, a unique archipelago rich in distinctive fauna and flora situated 800km from the Ecuadorian coast. The cold, nutrient-rich Humboldt Current also makes this one of the world's most productive fishing grounds.

THE RISK OF OIL SPILLS

Approximately 100,000 barrels per day of crude oil (0.3% of the world's seaborne oil) transit the coastal waters of the South-east Pacific region, whilst some 50,000 barrels per day pass through the Strait of Magellan. Increasing activity in the petroleum sector in recent years has seen a corresponding rise in the amount of oil and petroleum products being transported in this area. Over 1,000 tankers call annually at ports in the region.

There are relatively few navigational hazards in the region, the main exception being the Strait of Magellan. The volume of tanker traffic through the Strait is relatively low at present, but increasing steadily as oil exploration and production activity expands in the region. In addition, there is an increasing

number of modern vessels in transit that are too large to use the Panama Canal. There have been a number of spills here during the last 25 years, mainly as a result of groundings. The difficulties and dangers in navigating the Strait are exacerbated by the prevalence of bad weather, especially towards the western end of the Strait and by the generally foul and rocky character of the anchorages.

There have been a number of other major spills within the region; more than might be expected given the quantities of oil transported through the region's waters and relatively low traffic densities.

Major tanker spills of over 5,000 tonnes in the South East Pacific Region since 1974

Vessel Name	Quantity spilled		Country	Year	Cause
	(tonnes)	(Type)			
METULA	50000	CRUDE	CHILE	1974	GROUNDING
NAPIER	35300	CRUDE	CHILE	1973	GROUNDING
SAINT PETER	32800	CRUDE	COLOMBIA	1976	FIRE/EXPLOSION
CABO TAMAR	7700	CRUDE	CHILE	1978	GROUNDING
CABO PILAR	5200	CRUDE	CHILE	1987	GROUNDING

THE STATE OF PREPAREDNESS

All the countries in the region have developed national contingency plans and have response equipment to deal with Tier 1 spills. Chile, which has experienced more major spills than the other countries in the region, has also established a Tier 2 capability by means of a number of government-owned stockpiles located throughout the country. Ecuador and Colombia also have comprehensive spill response capabilities. The state oil companies of Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela have agreements for mutual cooperation in place.

In 1987 the Comision Permanente del Pacifico Sur (South Pacific Permanent Commission) adopted an agreement for assistance and cooperation in case of oil spills in Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Panama and a contingency plan was approved. ROCRAM (Operative Network for Regional Cooperation among Maritime Authorities of South America) is a co-operative agreement between the maritime nations of South America, Mexico, Panama & Cuba, designed to encourage development and operation in anti-pollution measures.

Most of the Latin American oil companies, including the state and privatised companies, are members of ARPEL, the Regional Association of Oil and Natural Gas Companies in Latin America and the Caribbean. In the event of a spill, member companies can call upon the organisation and fellow members for advice and resources. ARPEL has several ongoing initiatives concerning cooperative agreements and contingency planning. Although these are not legally binding, participation and adherence to these initiatives is encouraged.



SOUTH EAST PACIFIC

REGIONAL PROFILES

A Summary of the Risk of Oil Spills & State of Preparedness in UNEP Regional Seas Regions

STATUS OF CONTINGENCY PLANS, TIERED RESOURCES AND CONVENTIONS

	Competent National Authority	National Plan	Clean-up Resources		Subregional Agreement	MARPOL	OPRC '90	LLMC '76	CLC '69 CLC '92	FUND '92	Inter-vention '69/'73
			Tier 1	Tier 2							
Chile	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		'92		'73
Colombia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			'92	'92	
Ecuador	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		'69		'69
Panama	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes			'92	'92	'69
Peru	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes		'69		

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