



INTERNATIONAL WATERS RESULTS NOTES

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19-09-2011

Argentina: Coastal Contamination Prevention and Marine Management Project

GEFID#:459, IBRD Project ID: P049012, Project Status: Completed



1. Reduced ship based pollution by reducing navigational risks – By June, 2008, certified electronic nautical charts (ENCs) with new technology were developed for the five ports: Rio de la Plata; Mar del Plata; Ria de Bahia Blanca; Comodoro Rivadavia; and Caleta Paula. Additionally, the Naval Hydrographic Service (SHN) generated a hydrodynamic model using Qmap software, which provides input for the OilMap being operated by the Argentine Coast Guard (PNA). The PNA was capable of tracing contamination plumes; and the SHN was handling information on environmental sensitivity areas for priority setting.
2. Improved preparedness and response to oil spills – Institutional strengthening activities significantly improved capacities of the government. The Government of Argentina successfully responded to an oil spill that occurred at Caleta Cordova on December 27, 2007.
3. National and provincial government capacities to assess the effects of economic activity on the marine environment have been improved which significantly strengthen their ability to incorporate lessons from pilot projects in marine protection policies. The PNA is now capable of tracing contamination plumes.

Dinesh Aryal, daryal@worldbank.org
**Environment Unit, Sustainable Development Department, Latin
America and the Caribbean Region, World Bank**

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The project's Global Environment Objective was to support long-term protection of international waters and the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources. The project financed incremental activities aimed at improving the Government of Argentina's (GoA) capacity to protect marine biodiversity and safeguard Patagonia's marine ecosystem from coastal contamination. The Project Development Objective was to strengthen the GoA's efforts to reduce pollution of the Patagonia marine environment and improve sustainable management of marine biodiversity by: (i) improving oil spill prevention and response capacity and preventing ship-based pollution; (ii) improving the knowledge base about the Patagonia marine environment and its biodiversity; and (iii) building capacity and promoting regional knowledge sharing for sustainable management of marine resources.

RESULTS: PROCESS

The project allowed the GoA to break a situation of static inertia, generating a virtuous circle of inter-institutional actions. The project has also achieved collective awareness about the importance of preventing marine pollution and preserving biodiversity, as well as enhancing inter-institutional cooperation. The project successfully strengthened the government capacity to detect pollution stress, better monitor pollution from ships, and develop and implement a response measure to contain oil spills. For example, on December 27, 2007, an oil spill occurred at Caleta Cordova. After the oil was spotted reaching the coast, an "Emergency Commission" was formed. This Commission was chaired by the mayor of Comodoro Rivadavia with representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of the province of Chubut, the Secretariat of Hydrocarbons of the Province of Chubut, the PNA, and private oil companies (YPF, CAPSA, Tecpetrol, Pan-American Energy, Termap, OXY and Sipetrol). The personnel that were trained at the Puerto Madryn "Patagonian Training Center" funded by the project also participated in the clean up. The SHN and PNA used the software purchased under the project to identify the point of origin of the oil spill in the sea. Additionally, the GIS database funded under the project with the oil spill action plans and location of equipment was also used to help with clean up and containment. Given that the oil spill affected several birds and mammals, a rehabilitation center including specialists and volunteers from NGOs was established at Caleta Cordova. The response to this accident suggests that the project met at least 3 of the outcome indicators.

INDICATOR#1 – Fourteen PNA staff were trained in leading world centers.

INDICATOR#2 – A regional training center on oil spill prevention was established in Puerto Madryn. It has become a leading institution benefitting other countries in the region.

INDICATOR#3 – Different levels of training programs were developed including five hundred handbooks (first ever in Spanish) were printed and delivered for additional training. Over 130 participants received trainings.

RESULTS: STRESS REDUCTION

There was no baseline information on oil/waste spilled per ton transported and ballast water is not treated in ports. In some specific areas with protection status or special use, ships are not allowed to enter the port without replacing the ballast waters. In order to monitor pollution from ships, the project developed an electronic system (database) to collect data on waste discharges at local ports. This database is being continuously monitored and updated by the PNA. The above information is complemented by a surveillance system.

INDICATOR#1 – By June, 2008, certified electronic nautical charts (ENCs) with new technology were developed for the five ports: Rio de la Plata; Mar del Plata; Ria de Bahia Blanca; Comodoro Rivadavia; and Caleta Paula. By the end of the project, effectiveness of surveillance was estimated at 75%. This was achieved by implementing new software.

INDICATOR#2 – The Naval Hydrographic Service (SHN) generated a hydrodynamic model using Qmap software, which provides input for the OilMap being operated by the Argentine Coast Guard (PNA). The

PNA is now capable of tracing contamination plumes. The SHN is handling information on environmental sensitivity areas for priority setting. OilMap software has been upgraded and is operational.

RESULTS: WATER RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

The project developed a Sensitivity Atlas which establishes an important baseline for the different areas including the Patagonian coast and sea platform. This product is important because it is linked to other projects carried out by NGOs, and it allowed the local governments to establish clear objectives regarding Natural Protected Areas and to set bases to manage these areas more effectively. In particular, the extension of this Atlas towards the coast of Buenos Aires province (not originally envisaged) was an unintended but very positive impact which ensured the coverage of the entire maritime Argentina coast with this product.

INDICATOR#1 – Forty four marine protected areas (MPAs) identified for an assessment of effective implementation, and four workshops were conducted on 40 MPAs.

INDICATOR#2 – By the end of the project, four regional workshops had been conducted on methodologies and tools for effective management of coastal and marine protected areas.

INDICATOR#3 – A toolkit was developed and institutionalized procedures for effective management of MPA in accordance with standard international practices. This work complemented the UNDP/GEF project managed by Fundación Patagonia Natural and Fundación Vida Silvestre which aims at establishing natural areas under effective management schemes.

INDICATOR#4 – More than 240 teachers were trained and given manuals on environmental education by the dissemination of booklets, brochures and books prepared by the project.

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