

Abstract

The Structure of a Large Scale Oiled Bird Response Plan Involving Government and the Oil-Spill Response Centres in the Netherlands

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In 2005 the Government was working on the capacity plan for the protection of vulnerable areas of the North Sea and delta areas. In that time Sea-Alarm asked attention for the position and the fate of the oiled birds that arrive at the Dutch coasts in case of an oil spill. In the Netherlands there are five bird coast rehabilitation centers (r.c.) that are well prepared for small quantities of oiled birds. The Waterstate Department consulted the Minister and the answer was that the position of the oiled birds was of great public interest. The answer was simple: get it done!

The starting points for the plans were: 1. To minimize animal suffering, 2. The protocols should be of high quality with high success of rehabilitation of the seabirds, 3. There should be a scientific research plan on the impact on the population. The plan describes a co-operation in case of an oil spill during the cleanup of the beaches.

The parties involved are

- the Government: including the Waterstate Department of the Ministry of Transport and Watermanagement, the Ministry of Agriculture, the municipalities at the coast and the local watermanagement organizations for the polders,
- the NGO's: including the 5 rehabilitation centers and Sea-Alarm
- other organizations like Rotterdam Zoo, NOIVBD, and NIOZ

The Challenge was to develop a response organization with respect of existing responsibilities, qualities and possibilities.

The Solution was to build a temporary bird rehabilitation centre in case of an overflow of the capacity of the rehabilitation centers.

The presentation will discuss the tactical and operational organization, important negotiation points, who will pay the bill, responsibilities, assistance from municipalities, mobilization of volunteers, worst case scenario, and the status of the process.