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Introduction
The Oriental Republic of Uruguay borders the Federative Republic of Brazil to the north and northeast, the Republic of Argentina along the Rio Uruguay to the west and the Rio Plata to the south, and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. The country has approximately 450 km of coastline along the Rio Plata and 220 km of maritime coastline on the Atlantic Ocean. Rio Uruguay and Rio Negro, which flow into Rio de la Plata, and the Merín Lagoon form a dense fluvial network across the country.
The southeastern part of the country, known as Bañados del Este (BDE or 'Eastern Wetlands'), a UNESCO Biosphere Natural Reserve, includes various protected areas with extensive freshwater and coastal ecosystems. These include sand dunes and coastal lagoons (both freshwater and brackish including Black Lagoon, Castillos Lagoon, Garzon Lagoon - Rocha & Maldonado), mudflats, numerous rivers and streams, inland marshes, and palm swamps. The National Park Laguna de Rocha, part of the Bañados del Este, is both a Ramsar site and a part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN).
Uruguay has a major port at Montevideo and an oil terminal at Punta del Este.

At-risk wildife
In this section, some individual wildlife species are mentioned followed by a letter in parentheses. These are species included in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species within the top three categories of risk - Vulnerable to extinction (V), Endangered (E) or Critically Endangered (CR).

Avian species – a variety of waterbirds (shorebirds, waders, ducks, etc.) and seabirds (gulls, terns, albatross, etc.) inhabit the waters and shores of Uruguay. Magellanic penguins, which have Near Threatened IUCN status, migrating through Uruguay are exposed to chronic oiling in most years.
Of special concern are the Southern rockhopper penguin (V, rare to Uruguay), Tristan albatross (CR), Northern royal, grey-headed, Atlantic yellow-nosed, and sooty albatrosses (all E), wandering and Southern royal albatross (both V) white-chinned and spectacled petrel (V), Atlantic petrel (E), which are in the region during their migration. The resident dot-winged crake (V) is also a concern in tidal areas.

Areas of importance for wintering and nesting coastal species include Laguna de Rocha and Bañados del Este y Franja Costera, another Ramsar site just north and inland of Laguna de Rocha.

Marine mammals – while a number of species of whale and dolphin are found off the Uruguayan coast, the La Plata River dolphin or Franciscana (V) is the only species tending to remain in nearshore waters. Southern elephant seals, South American fur seals, South American sea lions, and neotropical otters are also found along the Atlantic coast.

Marine reptiles – green (E), leatherback (CR subpopulation) and loggerhead (E) turtles feed in the region although there are no nesting beaches in Uruguay. One area of importance for foraging juveniles is the Cerro Verde on the northeastern Atlantic coast (part of the Bañados del Este Biosphere Reserve and Ramsar site).

Regional Seas
South Atlantic Ocean

Past experience
There have been a number of spills in Uruguay.
In 1981 the ANGELINA sunk off Punta del Este and in 2007 the FRONT BRAVANT spilled between two and five thousand gallons of crude oil in the same area. In 1997 the SAN JORGE caused oiling of the Isla de Lobos wildlife sanctuary killing between five and six thousand South American fur seals and South American sea lions, mostly pups.
During 2001 (near Punta del Este) and 2002 (near) Maldonado approximately 150 penguins were found oiled. Wildlife rehabilitation groups from Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina responded to these incidents. No

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source was determined for these cases, and similar chronic oiling incidents continue to occur, with the majority of animals found between Punta del Este and Rocha from April to September.
In 2008, the SYROS lost approximately 140 tonnes of oil following a collision in the anchorage in Montevideo. Nearly 250 Magellanic penguins, along with a number of other seabirds of various species were rescued by national and international NGOs.

Response: the role of the authorities
The Dirección de Protección de Medio Ambiente (DIRMA), which is within the Armada Nacional del Uruguay's Prefectura Nacionnal Naval (PRENA), oversees oil spill planning and response. The Sistema Nacional de Control de Derrame de Contaminantes (DINCO) and its Advisory Council carries out response operations. The Navy (Armada Nacional del Uruguay), PRENA, Instituto Nacional de la Pesca within the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Ministry of Tourism and other agencies or organisations may be involved as well.

Oiled wildlife response
Formal guidelines?
There are no formal guidelines for oiled wildlife response within the National Contingency Plan, which was updated in 2011, nor in the supplementary regional plans for Rio Uruguay, Rio de la Plata, Rio Negro and the Atlantic Ocean.

Response objectives and strategy
N/A

Euthanasia or rehabilitation?
Rescue and rehabilitation of oiled wildlife is routinely carried out in Uruguay. Euthanasia is utilised based on welfare concerns.

Impact assessment
In the past the Facultad de Veterinaria, Universidad de la Republica Uruguay (Veterinary Faculty of the University of the Republic of Uruguay) has performed necropsies on oil affected marine mammals (fur seals and sea lions). It is likely that this faculty and the Facultad de Ciencias (Science Faculty) would be involved in impact assessment under the direction of DIRMA.

Notification and early response
While there is no detail regarding communication with oiled wildlife response organisations in the National Contingency Plan, based on previous experience, it is likely that NGOs would be contacted in events which impact wildlife.

Wildlife responders
Karumbé is a sea turtle conservation project that integrates research, education, public awareness and protection efforts, which manages a Sea Turtle Wildlife Centre in Canelones. Oiled sea turtles are seldom seen but some have been rehabilitated successfully. The Centre may also act as a forward holding centre for penguins, where stabilisation may be carried out before the animals are sent to another wildlife rescue centre. A 24/7 emergency hotline is in place. The Centre established a network for rescue of stranded sea turtles on the Rio de la Plata Estuary and Atlantic Ocean which might be of assistance for other species during a spill response.
SOS Rescate Fauna Marina is a small facility which cares for some seabirds and marine mammals and may also be able to assist in a spill response.
La SOciedad para la COnservacion de la BIOdiversidad y Medio Ambiente (SOCOBIOMA) no longer does wildlife rehabilitation but may be able to assist in other ways in a large incident.

Cooperation between stakeholders
Rehabilitators in Uruguay have worked closely with international wildlife response groups and rehabilitation facilities in Brazil and Argentina during previous oil spills and in response to the chronic pollution events which tend to occur each autumn and winter.

Uruguay is a signatory to the Operative Network of Regional Cooperation of Maritime Authorities of the

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Americas (ROCRAM) has has a bilateral agreement with Argentina for sharing equipment and expertise during any response on Rio Plata and Rio Uruguay.

Permanent facilities
Karumbé maintains a facility for rehabilitation of sea turtles and there are a few places which may have capacity to care for a small number of birds or mammals, however, the country relies on assistance from organisations in neighbouring countries during larger incidents.

Current processes
N/A

Documentation and references
General references
General References
ITOPF Country Profile
Birdlife International Country Profile

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