

Introduction

Negara Brunei Darussalam is located on the northwest coast of the island of Borneo, bordered by Malaysia and the South China Sea. Brunei's landmass exists in two areas separated by the Limbang Valley of Malaysia. The country's 161 km of coastline include sandy beaches, coastal plains and mangrove swamps with multiple rivers and estuaries. The Seria Estuary, Sungai and Brunei Bay are important marine wildlife habitats.

At Risk Wildlife

Avian Species – migratory marine and coastal species are found in Brunei between August and April. Species of concern include the great knot, Chinese egret, Asian dowitcher, black-tailed godwit, lesser adjutant stork, and Eurasian and Far Eastern curlew. Other species of concern include the Christmas Island frigate, Oriental darter, Malaysian plover and beach thick-knee.

Marine mammals - Fraser's, Risso's, and bottlenose dolphins; pilot, pygmy sperm, Brydes and minke whales have been recorded off the Brunei coast. Irrawaddy and Indo-Pacific humpbacked dolphins and finless porpoise tend to inhabit nearshore or estuarine environments, putting them at higher risk of contact with oil and subsequent stranding. Dugongs, also coastal dwellers, are common in Brunei Bay, foraging in seagrass beds. Oriental (Asian) small-clawed otter and smooth-coated otter may be found in some mangrove swamps and tidal areas but the majority of their populations will be in freshwater systems.

Marine Reptiles – four species of sea turtle have been recorded in Brunei waters. Olive Ridley, hawksbill and green sea turtles nest on Brunei beaches, generally between November and June. Leatherbacks are the fourth species found in the area but there are no records of nesting. Estuarine crocodiles and false gharial are also found in Brunei waters.

Regional Seas

East Asian Seas (South China Sea)

Past experience

There have been no major oil spills in Brunei waters. A small spill occurred in a coastal pond in June 2014, but no wildlife was affected.

Response: the role of the authorities

The Marine Department of the Ministry of Communications coordinates the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCOP). The Marine Department handles Tier 1 incidents with the National Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Task Force-Agency Management Committee (MC) and Incident Management Team (IMT) being brought in for Tier 2/3 situations. In addition the NOSCOP requires oil companies operating in Brunei to have their own contingency plans or emergency response procedures in place.

Oiled wildlife responseFormal guidelines?

There are no formal guidelines for wildlife response.

Response objectives and strategy

N/A

Euthanasia or rehabilitation?

Rehabilitation will require official approval but will likely be accepted as part of any oiled wildlife response. Euthanasia for humane reasons will also require approval but likely to be accepted as well.

Impact assessment

The Department of Environment, Parks and Recreation oversees environmental impact assessment as part of Brunei's membership in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), thus may play a key role in this area during an oil spill incident.

The Department of Fisheries may also be involved in marine impact assessment.

A comprehensive Coastal Environment Sensitivity Map, which includes clean-up strategies based on coastal type and dispersant sensitivity of specific areas is available for the country.

Notification and early response

There are no processes in place regarding notification of oil-affected wildlife.

Wildlife responders

There are no wildlife rehabilitation or oiled wildlife response capabilities in Brunei, however, both the Brunei Nature Society and the Pagana NHS have a core of volunteers who may be able to assist during a response. The Brunei Department of Fisheries runs the National Turtle Conservation Programme, which includes nest monitoring, tracking and some artificial rearing at their hatchery. They would likely take the lead in any sea turtle response.

Cooperation between stakeholders

Brunei is a member of ASEAN-OSRAP (ASEAN countries and Japan), the Regional Programme for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pollution in the East Asian Seas (ASEAN countries, China, Cambodia and Vietnam) and shares SOPs for joint spill combat in the South China Sea (including Brunei Bay) with Malaysia.

Permanent facilities

There are no permanent wildlife care facilities in Brunei and no expertise in wildlife rehabilitation or oiled wildlife response.

Current processes

Individual oil companies working in Brunei have begun to develop in-house oil spill response plans as required (see above under Response: Role of the Authorities), which include response to oiled wildlife in some cases.

Documentation and references

General references

General references

ITOPF Country Profile

Birdlife International

The Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Government of Brunei)

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