

Introduction

Romania, situated on the northern Balkan Peninsula, is bordered on the east by the Black Sea, on the south by Bulgaria, on the southwest by Serbia, on the west by Hungary and on the north and northeast by Ukraine and Moldova. The country's approximately 245 km of coastline consists of sandy beaches and rocky shorelines, some with steep cliffs.

The Danube Delta, the Romanian portion of which is a RAMSAR site, World Heritage site and UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, is one of the world's largest wetlands. Its sandy and forested levees, lakes, reed swamps and marine zone provide a critical breeding habitat for hundreds of bird species including white and Dalmatian pelicans, as well as six species of sturgeon and the endangered Danube salmon. It is also a resting//feeding site for many migratory species.

At Risk Wildlife

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 – more than 330 avian species have been recorded in Romania, many of which are found along the Black Sea coast and within the Danube Delta. Much of the Black Sea coastline is important resting and feeding habitat for wintering waterfowl.

Species of special concern include slender-billed curlew (CR) the white-headed duck (E) and red-breasted goose(V), lesser white-fronted goose (V), long-tailed duck (V), velvet scoter, common pochard(V), horned grebe (V) and Yelkouan shearwater(V). The aquatic warbler (V) is found in coastal reedbeds and the Saker falcon (E) forages in the intertidal zone.

Marine mammals – three locally endemic species, the Black Sea bottlenose dolphin (E), the Black Sea harbour porpoise (E), and the Black Sea common dolphin, which is more rare, are found in Romanian waters. All tend to be found nearshore.

Although not a marine mammal, the European otter, in addition to its presence in the Danube Delta, often forages in the intertidal zone.

Marine reptiles – there are no marine reptiles in the Black Sea.

Regional Seas

Black Sea

Past experience

There have been no major oil spills in Romanian waters.

Response: the role of the authorities

Under Romania's National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (2003, updated in 2006) the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Communication is the competent national authority, whose Autoritatea Navala Romana (Romanian Naval Authority) responds to oil spill incidents. The National Administration Romanian Waters-Bucharest and Civil Protection Command-Bucharest would be involved in prevention measures both at sea and onshore.

The Ministry of Environment, Water and Forests (Ministerul Mediului, Apelor și Pădurilor, MMAP), which developed the country's National Contingency Plan, is responsible for implementing and enforcing laws related to marine environmental protection.

The Constanta County Civil Protection Inspectorate is the agency responsible for onshore operations coordination, with the cooperation of the Constanta Prefecture, the Constanta and Tulcea County Councils and various oil companies, shipyards, research institutes and fire brigades.

The Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Administration would be involved in both prevention and response within the Biosphere Reserve.

Oiled wildlife response

Formal guidelines?

There is no oiled wildlife response plan in place.

Response objectives and strategy

N/A

Euthanasia or rehabilitation?

In the case of an oiled wildlife incident, authorities would allow the rehabilitation of wildlife, with euthanasia employed on welfare grounds as needed.

Impact assessment

RMRI would likely be the lead institute, under the direction of the MMAP, with other institutes and groups also contributing.

The Oceanic Club has drone imaging, speed boat and ROV survey capabilities and a mobile laboratory, and is willing to assist in impact assessment as consultants/evaluators. Mare Nostrum, which has been monitoring marine pollution and cetacean activity for some time, is willing to assist with assessment as well, and has a task force trained in Passive Acoustic Monitoring and Marine Mammal Observation via the Marine Mammal Observer Association. The Romanian Ornithological Society (SOR) would be willing to contribute to monitoring activities of avian species. Greenpeace Romania may also be able to help.

Notification and early response

There is no formal system for notification of and response to oil-impacted wildlife, however, it is likely that the MMAP would contact the National Institute for Marine Research and Development "Grigore Antipa" (RMRI). RMRI's Department of Ecology and Marine Environment would likely be the primary department involved. NGOs and other interested parties might then be contacted by RMRI.

Wildlife responders

Mare Nostrum maintains an experienced task force for responding to stranded cetaceans and would be able to assist with response to these species. The Oceanic Club would be able to offer support for avian cleaning and care. There are, however, no experienced oiled wildlife responders in the country.

Cooperation between stakeholders

Various NGOs at work in Romania share information and cooperate on projects.

Romania is a signatory to the Strategic Action Plan for the Rehabilitation and Protection of the Black Sea, the Black Sea Regional Contingency Plan and the Bucharest Convention, with other countries bordering the Black Sea, as well as the Odessa Declaration for coordinated action on restoring and protecting the Black Sea environment.

Permanent facilities

There are no permanent oiled wildlife facilities and no wildlife rehabilitation centres dealing with marine wildlife. The Oceanic Club may be able to provide housing for a limited number of birds.

Current processes

In 2018, Romania and Bulgaria held training exercises on oil spill response as part of a joint rapid alert and emergency response project.

Documentation and references

General references

IOPF Country Profile (2009)

Black Sea Regional Contingency Plan

Birdlife International Country Profile

Sea Alarm Black Sea Regional Response Profile v.7 2020

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ROMANIA

Country Wildlife Response Profiles
A Summary of oiled wildlife response
arrangements and resources worldwide

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