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Newsletter from NOWPAP MERRAC

Northwest Pacific Action Plan
Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response
Regional Activity Centre

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Greetings from the Director of MERRAC



On behalf of MERRAC, I am very pleased to inform you on MERRAC activities of 2011-2012 through our 7th MERRAC newsletter.

In recent years, oil spill incidents have become more frequent in the NOWPAP region. A couple that most people are familiar with are the *Hebei Spirit oil spill incident*, which took place in Korea, December 2007 and the

Dalian crude oil pipeline explosion incident, which occurred in China, July 2010. As oil or HNS spills from ships and both on/offshore oil handling and storage facilities are most likely to cause tremendous spills and bring irreparable disaster to the marine environment, it is essential to enhance co-operation among members in the NOWPAP region for oil and HNS spill preparedness and response.

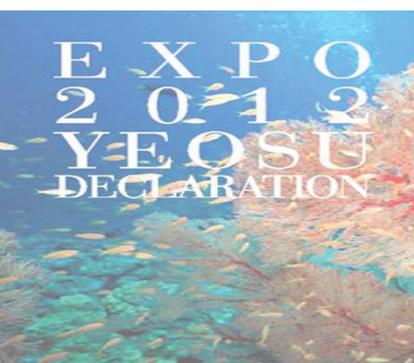
In recognition of the potential risk presented by oil spill incidents, based upon the decision of the NOWPAP MERRAC Focal Points Meeting, MERRAC has regularly conducted oil spill exercises such as NOWPAP DELTA, BRAVO and Table-Top exercises in order to increase the NOWPAP members' level of joint response to major marine pollution incidents. In 2012, MERRAC organized the 4th NOWPAP DELTA Joint Oil Spill Exercise on 15 May, in Yeosu, Korea. It was led by Korea Coast Guard (KCG) and China Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) during the period of "Expo 2012 Yeosu Korea" in conjunction with the 15th NOWPAP MERRAC FPM and the 7th CNA Meeting. I am sure that this kind of exercise reminds us of the importance of preparedness and response to marine pollution incidents, and contributes to the enhancement of prevention systems and ability to respond to future incidents in this region.

With increasing importance of co-operation between government and industry for effective response, in addition to MERRAC routine tasks and Specific Projects regarding oil and HNS spill preparedness and response, and marine litter activities, MERRAC is currently preparing to launch the IMO Global Initiative (GI) Programme in the NOWPAP region to build oil spill response capacity at a national and regional level, and to improve co-operation between NOWPAP members under the framework of "IMO/IPIECA GI Programme".

As you may be aware, "Expo 2012 Yeosu Korea" was held from 12 May to 12 August 2012 under the theme 'The Living Ocean and Coast'. Over 8 million people from 104 states around the world participated in this Expo. NOWPAP was exhibited in the Ocean and Coast Best Practice Area (OCBPA), in the field of regional co-operation under the main theme of oil spill preparedness and response (by MERRAC) and Marine litter management (by NOWPAP RCU and MERRAC). I expect that it reminded people about the importance of the ocean, and that regional and international cooperation activities have become essential for marine pollution preparedness and response to spill incidents, which exceed the response capability of an individual state. It was also a great opportunity to inform visitors from around the world of NOWPAP and its activities.

Finally, taking this opportunity, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all NOWPAP members, NOWPAP RCU and IMO for their constructive support and contributions to MERRAC activities, and look forward to your continuous co-operation on MERRAC activities. Thank you very much.

Seong-Gil Kang
Director of MERRAC



The 15th NOWPAP MERRAC Focal Points Meeting and the 7th Competent National Authorities Meeting

According to the decision of the 14th NOWPAP MERRAC Focal Points Meeting (FPM) and the 6th Competent National Authorities (CNA) Meeting (7-10 June 2011), the 15th NOWPAP MERRAC FPM and the 7th CNA Meeting was held in Yeosu, Korea from 14 to 18 May 2012, with support from NOWPAP Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) and International Maritime Organization (IMO). 27 participants from the four NOWPAP members, International Maritime Organization (IMO), NOWPAP Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU), and 7 observers from Regional Activity Centres (RACs), International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Limited (ITOPF), International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA) and Oil Spill Response Limited (OSRL) attended the meetings.

The meeting reviewed progress on MERRAC Routine Tasks, and agreed to continue to collect and update relevant information on Focal Points, information system on oil spill response equipment, institution and experts, national performance standards and/or regulations on the application of non-mechanical methods, and oil and HNS spill incidents.

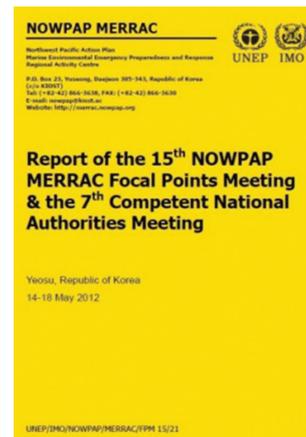
Regarding MERRAC Specific Projects, the projects on Legislation and Practice on Marine Pollution Damage, Development of the Practical Assistance Procedure and System under the NOWPAP Regional Contingency Plan (RCP), and Launching the Global Initiative (GI) Programme were agreed to be continued. In addition to these ongoing projects, a new manual on oil spill response exercise, and pamphlet on HNS database and response in the NOWPAP region were agreed to be implemented as new MERRAC Specific Projects for 2012-2013.

The 4th NOWAP DELTA Joint Oil Spill Exercise was

conducted in conjunction with the 15th NOWPAP MERRAC FPM and the 7th CNA Meeting, providing an opportunity for the representatives to participate in an exercise with actual response equipment mobilized in preparedness against major marine pollution incidents.

The participants also took part in the IMO-IPIECA GI Introductory Workshop for oil spill preparedness and response, which was organized under the auspices of NOWPAP MERRAC by IMO, IPIECA and ITOPF. Co-operating with IMO-IPIECA through the GI programme will hopefully encourage the ratification of relevant conventions and the implementation of oil spill contingency plans. Following the workshop, the meeting participants agreed to establish a correspondence group to discuss future activities for GI in the NOWPAP region.

Regarding MERRAC RAP MALI activities, the meeting noted that the updated Regional Report on Port Reception Facilities in the NOWPAP region had been published in PDF format, and that the Case Study Report on Negative Impacts of Marine Litter was also in its final stages, and would be published after the 15th NOWPAP MERRAC FPM. Regarding RAP MALI activities for 2012/2013, the implementing plan on the compilation of best practices in dealing with marine litter in fisheries, aquaculture and shipping was accepted by the meeting.



▼ The 15th NOWPAP MERRAC FPM & the 7th CNA Meeting



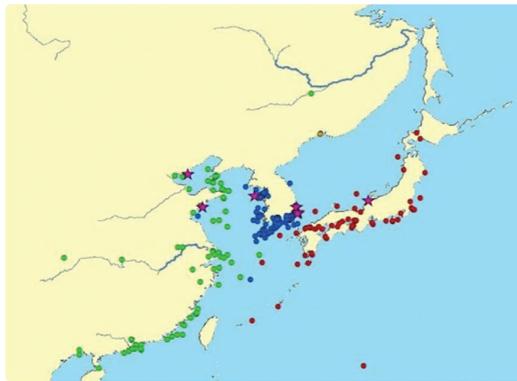
▼ Representatives of NOWPAP members, NOWPAP RCU, RACs, IMO, ITOPF, IPIECA and OSRL



Oil and HNS Spill Statistics in the NOWPAP region from 1990 to 2011

Number of oil and HNS spills

MERRAC annually collects and updates information on oil and HNS spill accidents including additional information on the fates and effects of spills with spillage over 10 tons. From 1990 to 2011, 273 oil spills and 56 HNS spills occurred in the NOWPAP region, of which 7 oil spills and 4 HNS spills occurred in 2011. The majority of spill incidents occur along the coast.



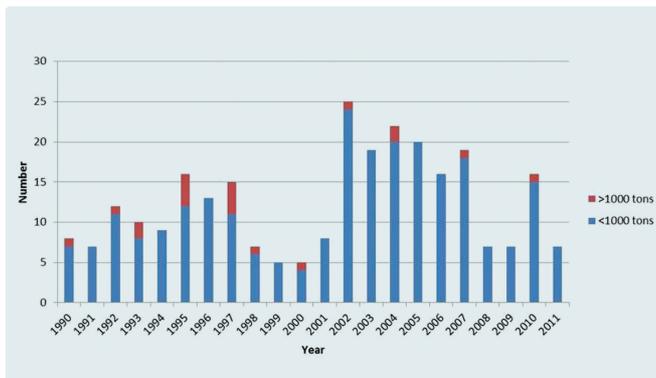
▲ 273 Oil spills over 10 tons



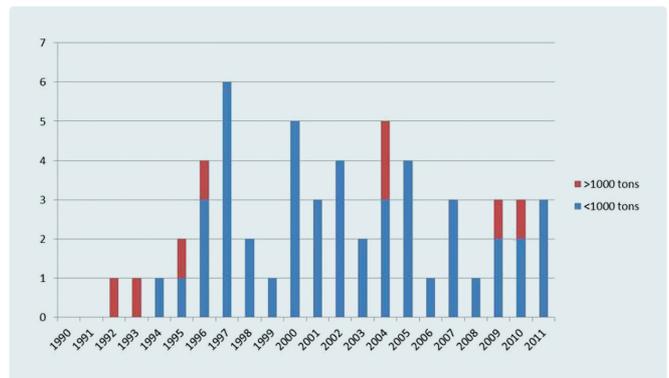
▲ 56 HNS spills over 10 tons

Location of oil and HNS Spill incidents from 1990 to 2011 in the NOWPAP Region
(note: Stars mark the spill incidents that occurred in 2011).

19 major oil spills and 8 HNS spills over 1,000 tons have occurred since 1990. The number of large spill incidents over 1,000 tons, for either oil or HNS is relatively low to smaller ones that occur more frequently. An average of 8.0 oil spills and 2.2 HNS spills occurred each year.



▲ Oil spills in the NOWPAP region (number)



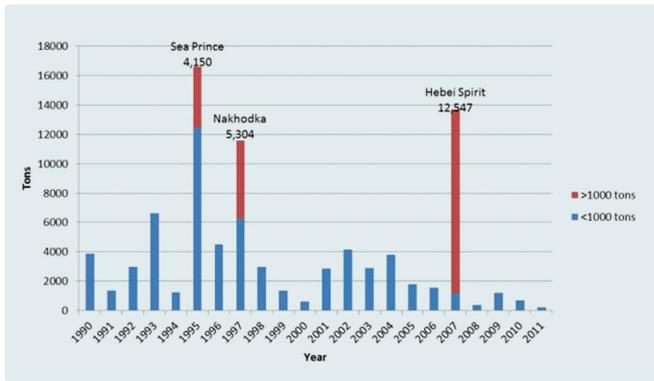
▲ HNS spills in the NOWPAP region

Number of oil and HNS spills in the NOWPAP region from 1990 to 2011

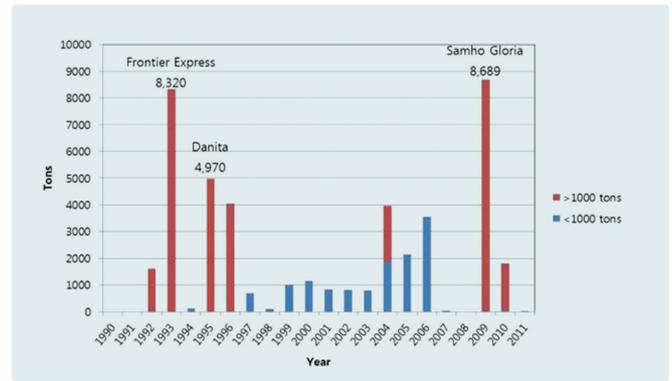
(Note: cases of unknown oil and HNS spills with spilled amount unknown are included in the category of <1000 tons).

Quantity of oil and HNS spills

Only 6.96% of oil spills and 14.29% of HNS spills that occurred had spillage of over 1,000 tons, which shows that most oil and HNS spills tend to be smaller than 1,000 tons. From 1990 to 2011, 64,776 tons of oil and 40,379 tons of HNS (not including unknown amounts) were released from spill incidents. 30,091 tons of the total amount of oil released, and 32,554 tons of the total amount of HNS released was spillage from spills larger than 1,000 tons. This amounts to 46.5% and 80.6% of the total amount of oil and HNS spilled, respectively. Though large-scale accidents like this do not occur very often, the consequences are immense when they do. Therefore it is important to be prepared for such accidents at all times, and respond quickly and efficiently when they occur.



▲ Quantity of oil spilled in the NOWPAP region

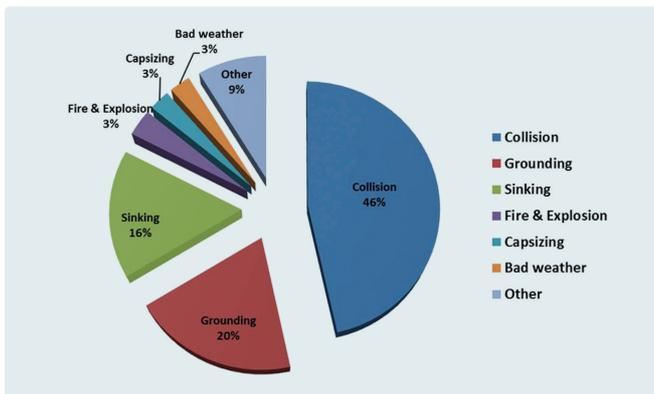


▲ Quantity of HNS spilled in the NOWPAP region

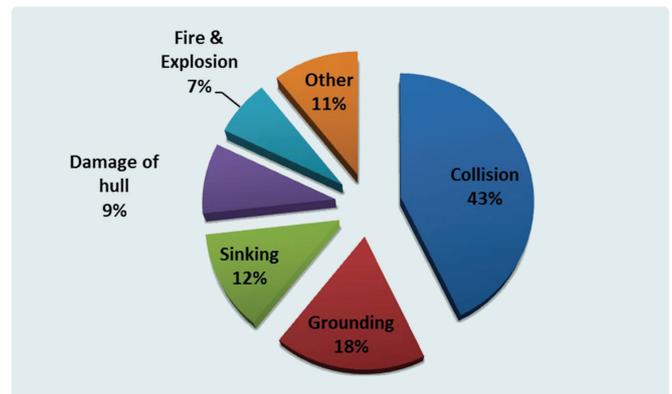
(Note: cases with unknown amount of oil and HNS spilled are not included into the total tons)

Causes of oil and HNS spills

In the NOWPAP region, collision represents the highest percentage for causes of oil and HNS spills, followed by grounding and sinking. Other than these main causes are fire and explosion, capsizing, bad weather, damage to hull or other parts of vessels, and for ships carrying HNS, chemical reactions.



▲ Causes of oil spills in the NOWPAP region (1990-2011)



▲ Causes of HNS spills in the NOWPAP region (1990-2011)

The lists and other relevant information on oil and HNS spill incidents are available on the MERRAC website (<http://merrac.nowpap.org>).

The 8th and 9th NOWPAP BRAVO-Communication Exercises

In order to test the functioning of the communication system of reporting, requesting and providing assistance between NOWPAP members in the event of large-scale oil and HNS spills, the NOWPAP BRAVO-Communication Exercises have been conducted twice a year using fax and e-mail, without involvement of real oil spill response equipment.

The 8th NOWPAP BRAVO exercise was conducted on 8 December 2011 with China as the leading country, and Russia was the leading country of the 9th NOWPAP BRAVO exercise on 18 April 2012. These BRAVO exercises will contribute to improving the practical implementation of the NOWPAP RCP through further cooperation with NOWPAP members.

The results of these two NOWPAP BRAVO exercises were reported at the 15th MERRAC FPM and the 7th CNA Meeting. The meeting reviewed the exercises and evaluated that they were very meaningful and successful despite a few technical issues regarding contact information and the e-mail communication system. According to the decision by the 15th MERRAC FPM, the 10th and 11th NOWPAP BRAVO exercises will be conducted during the intersessional period in the second half of 2012 and the first half of 2013, under the leading role of Japan and Korea, respectively.

NOWPAP DELTA-Joint



Oil Spill Exercise



The 4th NOWPAP DELTA-Joint Oil Spill Exercise

According to the decision by the 14th MERRAC FPM, the 4th NOWPAP DELTA-Joint Oil Spill Response Exercise was conducted in Yeosu, Korea on 18 May 2012 in conjunction with the 15th NOWPAP MERRAC FPM and the 7th CNA Meeting (Yeosu, 14-18 May 2012), which was held during the period of “Expo 2012 Yeosu Korea”. This exercise is carried out in order to improve the NOWPAP members' level of preparedness in joint response to major pollution incidents within the framework of NOWPAP RCP.

The exercise was co-organized by Korea Coast Guard (KCG) and China Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) in cooperation with NOWPAP MERRAC, with support from Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM) and other relevant parties including Yeosu Regional Maritime Affairs & Port Office, Yeosu City, and oil

transportation companies in Yeosu. Japan and Russia took part in the exercise as observers, and all the meeting participants were invited to board a command vessel.

A total of 32 vessels, 3 helicopters, 449 personnel, 6 oil skimmers and 2,500 meters of oil booms were mobilized by participating organizations including one response vessel and 16 crew members from China MSA for the three scenarios of counter terror exercise, search & rescue exercise, and joint oil spill response exercise (blockading, oil transferring and oil spill response).

NOWPAP DELTA is expected to contribute to the enhancement of oil spill response capabilities of governments and private sectors, and to reinforce collaboration for prompt and effective response among NOWPAP members.



Implementation of MERRAC Specific Projects

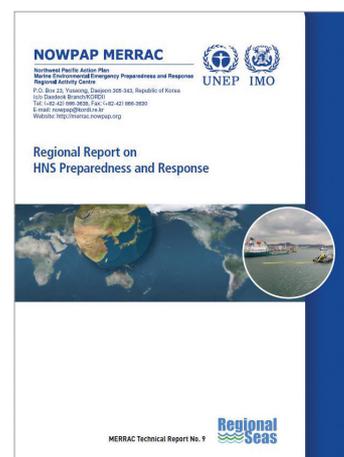
For efficient implementation of tasks regarding regional co-operation on marine pollution preparedness and response, several specific projects have been organized and implemented as 'MERRAC Specific Projects'. Through MERRAC Specific Projects, experts of the NOWPAP members have provided technical advice on issues related to marine pollution preparedness and response.

During the intersessional period, the Regional Report on HNS Preparedness and Response was conclusively published in PDF format as MERRAC Technical Report No.9. This report consists of the contents of laws and regulations related to preparedness and response for chemical incidents at sea, institutional arrangements related to preparedness and response for chemical incidents at sea, and response resources and technologies in the NOWPAP region. It can be viewed on the MERRAC website (<http://merrac.nowpap.org>) under Technical Reports.

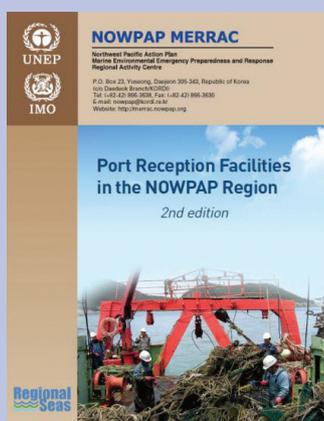
There are two ongoing projects; the Legislation and Practice on Marine Pollution Damage Civil Liability and Compensation has been conducted in order to find solutions and suggestions for better implementation of the NOWPAP RCP. This is accomplished by collecting and comparing the information on legislations and practice related to civil liability and compensation for marine pollution damage among NOWPAP members. The final report will be submitted to the 16th MERRAC FPM. The Development of Practical Assistance Procedure and System under the NOWPAP RCP will enable NOWPAP members to assess the applicability of the RCP for the assistance procedures and systems, and develop a review report

including suggestions for the improvement of the assistance procedure and system.

For more practical and effective response to oil and HNS pollution incidents, new MERRAC Specific Projects for 2012-2013 on oil and HNS issues will be also carried out in cooperation with experts nominated by NOWPAP members. The Development of the Manual on Conduction of Oil Spill Response Operational Exercise will contribute to harmonizing and unifying the process of preparing and conducting NOWPAP DELTA Exercises based on the experience of NOWPAP members, as well as to facilitating the management of oil spill response forces and equipment of participating countries during the exercise. In order to make better practical and operational use for the relevant operators who are dealing with HNS on-situ as well as to promote easy understanding of the public on HNS, MERRAC will develop the Pamphlet on HNS Database and Spill Response in the NOWPAP Region.



Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) implementation



As outlined in RAP MALI 2010-2011, MERRAC has been making efforts in the management and reduction of sea-based marine litter. Under RAP MALI, the Regional Report on Port Reception Facilities in the NOWPAP region was published after compiling updated information from China and Russia, and information from the IMO Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS, <http://gisis.imo.org/Public/>). Also, the Case Study Report on Negative Impacts of Marine Litter was also finalized in May 2012, and will be published after review by experts. Using the information of the Case Study Report, MERRAC has developed a web database on the negative impacts of marine litter in the NOWPAP region for

The 16th NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting in Beijing

The 16th NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) was held in Beijing, China on 20-22 December 2011 with participation of representatives from NOWPAP members, NOWPAP RCU, Regional Activity Centres (RACs), UNEP Headquarters and other partners. Discussions were held on the NOWPAP workplan and budget for 2012/2013, implementation of NOWPAP Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and NOWPAP Mid-term Strategy 2012-2017, etc.

The report on MERRAC activities carried out during the period of 2010-2011 including the results of the 14th NOWPAP MERRAC FPM, the plan for the 4th NOWPAP DELTA - Joint Oil Spill Exercise, and the proposed MERRAC workplan and budget for 2012/2013 biennium were presented by the Director of MERRAC, and approved by NOWPAP IGM.

Under the RAP MALI workplan and budget for 2012/2013

biennium approved by NOWPAP IGM, MERRAC was designated to develop a case study report on best practices in dealing with marine litter from fisheries, aquaculture, and shipping.

The NOWPAP Medium-term Strategy (MTS) 2012-2017 and NOWPAP Programme of Work 2012-2013 were approved by NOWPAP IGM after thorough discussion. New projects related to global and cross-cutting issues such as climate change, biodiversity conservation, and invasive species are suggested as major themes of the NOWPAP MTS 2012-2017. MERRAC will participate in regular assessments of the state of the marine environment in order to provide NOWPAP members with reliable information and analysis of the state of marine and coastal environment in the NOWPAP region, including (but not limited to) chemical pollution, marine litter, oil and HNS spills, invasive alien species, and climate change impacts.

OCBPA Exhibition in Expo 2012 Yeosu Korea

“Expo 2012 Yeosu Korea” was held from 12 May to 12 August 2012. It is estimated that about 8 million people from 104 states around the world participated in this Exhibition. Under the theme ‘The Living Ocean and Coast’, NOWPAP was selected to be an exhibitor in the Ocean & Coast Best Practice Area (OCBPA), in the field of regional co-operation and participated in the exhibition to promote NOWPAP activities such as oil spill preparedness and response and marine litter management. MERRAC co-operated closely with NOWPAP RCU to prepare contents

public awareness, with financial support from the Korean Government. MERRAC will continuously collect and update information on marine litter on the MERRAC website (<http://merrac.nowpap.org>).

Regarding RAP MALI activities for 2012/2013 approved at the 16th NOWPAP IGM, MERRAC will develop a report on the compilation of best practices in dealing with marine litter in fisheries, aquaculture and shipping, in co-operation with experts nominated by MERRAC Focal Points and Marine Litter Focal Points.

for the exhibition, which were also provided by Korea Coast Guard, and also participated in the communication lab, in which experts enlightened the public through sessions on the damage caused by oil spills, response measures against oil spills, and the great impacts of marine litter.



MERRAC Workplan for 2012/13 biennium

Date	Activities
14-17 May 2012	15 th NOWPAP MERRAC Focal Points Meeting & 7 th Competent National Authorities Meeting
18 May 2012	4 th NOWPAP DELTA-Joint Oil Spill Exercise (led by Korea and China)
First half of 2012	9 th NOWPAP BRAVO exercise (led by Russia)
12 May-12 Aug. 2012	Participation in the Expo 2012 Yeosu Korea and OCBPA exhibition
Throughout the biennium	Implementation of specific projects - Legislation and Practice on Marine Pollution Damage Civil Liability and Compensation (led by China) - Development of Practical Assistance Procedure and System under the RCP (led by MERRAC) - Manual of Conduction on Oil Spill Response Operational Exercise (led by Russia and China) - Pamphlet on HNS Database and Spill Response in the NOWPAP Region (led by MERRAC) - GI Programme in the NOWPAP region (led by MERRAC)
Throughout the biennium	MERRAC activities on RAP MALI
Second half of 2012	10 th NOWPAP BRAVO exercise (led by Japan)
First half of 2013	11 th NOWPAP BRAVO exercise (led by Korea)
May-June 2013	16 th NOWPAP MERRAC Focal Points Meeting & 8 th Competent National Authorities Meeting
2013	NOWPAP Expert Meeting (to be hosted by China) - Technical issues regarding the marine pollution preparedness and response in the NOWPAP region (e.g. HNS training)

MERRAC Focal Points

MERRAC warmly welcomes new MERRAC Focal Points of Japan (Mr. Hidehiro NANAŌ), Korea (Mr. Sang Eun LEE), and Russia (Ms. Natalia KUTAEVA), and also expresses our sincere thanks to their predecessors, Mr. Toshinobu KAWAMURA, Mr. Sang Woon KIM, and Mr. Evgeny BARYSHEV for their invaluable support and many contributions to MERRAC activities. The updated information on the MERRAC Focal Points is as follows:

People's Republic of China	Japan	Republic of Korea	Russian Federation
Mr. Hailiang E	Mr. Hidehiro NANAŌ	Mr. Sang Eun LEE	Ms. Natalia KUTAEVA
Director Department of Ship Safety and Pollution Prevention, China Maritime Safety Administration, People's Republic of China	Director Marine Environment Protection & Disaster Prevention Division, Guard and Rescue Department, Japan Coast Guard, Japan	Director Division of Marine Pollution Response Planning, Korea Coast Guard, Republic of Korea	Head Maritime Environment Protection Division, State Marine Pollution Control, Salvage & Rescue Administration (SMPCSA), Russian Federation

MERRAC Newsletter

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