

Editorial

This special issue of *SULA* is a collection of abstracts of contributions to an international workshop on marine oil pollution, Beached Bird Surveys and policy. The workshop was convened and organized by the working group Beached Bird Surveys of the Dutch Seabird Group (NZG/NSO) and took place on 19th April 1991 in Rijswijk, the Netherlands. We would like to acknowledge the help of Seabird Group members Henk Baptist, Jelle van Dijk, Mardik Leopold, Jan den Ouden, Theo Postma, Andre Sterk, Andy Webb and Pim Wolf. The workshop and these proceedings were generously supported by the (Dutch) Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management. We would like to thank the Minister Mrs. J.R.H. Maij-Weggen, the Directorate-General of Shipping and Maritime Affairs with K.J. Bolt and P. Bergmeijer in particular, and the North Sea Directorate. We are convinced that the workshop has been of benefit to all involved and the Seabird Group looks forward to similar co-operative projects in future.

The workshop was a gathering of an international group of people from governmental bodies, research institutes and volunteer organisations. The aim was to stimulate exchange of information and co-operation between specialists from widely different disciplines. Such are basic requirements if ever the problem of marine oil pollution is to be solved. The workshop highlighted the potential use of seabird studies as a tool in the combat of marine pollution. There were four sessions on the following topics:

- the use of analysis of samples of oil or other pollutants
- the value of beached bird surveys as a monitor of oil pollution
- measures to reduce pollution or risks for seabirds
- coordination of beached bird surveys at incidents.

Presentations and discussions were very lively and have definitely contributed to an increased knowledge and understanding among all participants. The proceedings, now presented to you, can only give summaries of presentations and discussions during the four workshop sessions. Inevitably, detailed information will sometimes be lacking. However, addresses given in the proceedings should allow access to relevant information for anyone with special requirements. As such, the proceedings can further contribute to the aim of information exchange and co-operation.

Oiled seabirds have littered our coasts since the beginning of this century. They visualize the much wider impact that oil pollution has on the complete North Sea ecosystem. We sincerely hope that the workshop and its proceedings will contribute to a more effective policy to eliminate this old problem.

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