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Online Oil Spill Advisory Version launched

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

With ecosystems and marine habitats getting affected by oil spills time and again, an Online Oil Spill Advisory (OOSA) that will predict the trajectory, the areas likely to be affected and the time it takes to hit the coast, has been launched on Thursday.

The advisory developed by the Hyderabad-based Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) was launched by its director, S S C Shenoi at the 20th National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan meeting held at Goa.

The system was built exclusively with high resolution trajectory prediction for the Indian West Coast.

According to Dr. Balakrishnan Nair, Head, Ocean Science and Information Group, INCOIS, the system predicts the trajectory of the pollutants such as gasoline, kerosene/ jet fuels, diesel and other fuels.

He said once the user feeds the details of the oil spilled, location, date and time of the spill, the system would predict the trajectory and other details.

The advisory was launched in the presence of Director-General, Coast Guard, H.C.S. Bisht.

The meeting was also attended by officials from minor and major ports from across the country, State Pollution Control Boards and Maritime Boards.

Contamination

An INCOIS release said that oil spills can harm birds and mammals by direct physical contact, toxic contamination and destruction of food sources. When fur or feathers come in contact with oil, they get matted down, lose insulating properties and the animals face the risk of freezing to death.

The oil spill will also be harmful for mangroves and affects the symbiotic process of corals with algae.

It said the entire reef ecosystem can suffer from an oil spill, affecting many species of fish, crabs and other marine invertebrates that live in and around coral reefs.

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