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SUBJECT

Bilateral/Regional Maritime Anti-Pollution Agreements

HIGHLIGHTS

The U.S. has been working with other nations and international organizations in the development and implementation of Bilateral/Regional Maritime Anti-Pollution Agreements. A working group of the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) has developed "Draft Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Regional Anti-Pollution Agreements." These guidelines provide an excellent basis for developing bilateral/regional anti-pollution agreements.

The U.S., specifically the Coast Guard, can respond to requests for assistance during actual spills providing certain criteria are met (see Recommendations).

DISCUSSION

The U.S. has been extensively involved with other nations and international organizations in pollution contingency planning and spill response. Several examples of development and implementation of regional anti-pollution agreements are:

o In 1978, an IMCO working group developed "Draft Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Regional Anti-Pollution Agreements." The working group consisted of delegations from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, France, Netherlands, Sweden, U.K., U.S., and Uruguay.

o The U.S. has participated, in concert with the Organization of American States (OAS), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), and IMCO, in meetings of the Caribbean governments for development of an "Emergency Plan for Coastal Pollution and Oil Spill Control in the Caribbean." Meetings were held in 1979 and 1980 with another scheduled late in 1980 viewing toward finalizing the framework plan.

o On 24 July 1980, the "United States - Mexico Joint Contingency Plan Regarding Pollution of the Marine Environment by Discharges of Hydrocarbons and other Hazardous Substances" was executed in Mexico City.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that Bilateral/Regional Anti-Pollution Agreements be developed in accordance with the IMCO draft guidelines and state that the U.S. can respond to requests for assistance providing that the following criteria are met:

o requests must be via diplomatic channels unless another arrangement is agreed on;

o out of pocket costs must be recovered by the providing agency; and

o personnel and/or equipment is not otherwise occupied.

State that requests to the U.S. for agreement or assistance for developing agreements should be made through diplomatic channels.

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