



MEMORANDUM

FOR : **USEC. MARILOU G. ERNI**
Chief of Staff and Supervising Undersecretary for
Strategic Communications
Task Force Commander, Task Force Naujan Oil Spill

FROM : **THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR**
EMB – MIMAROPA Region

SUBJECT : **SITUATIONAL REPORT RE OIL SPILL IN NAUJAN, ORIENTAL MINDORO**

DATE : 05 March 2023

This is to apprise the Undersecretary’s on the situation regarding the oil spill due to capsized vessel in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro and the actions taken by the DENR – EMB MIMAROPA Region:

I. SITUATIONAL OVERVIEW

On 28 February 2023, it was reported by various media outlets that MT Princess Empress, an oil tanker, carrying more or less 800,000 liters of industrial oil, sank off along the coast of Tablas Strait in Balingwan Point, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro.

Based on the preliminary reports from the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) situated in Oriental Mindoro, the vessel came from Bataan and on its way to Iloilo when it encountered engine trouble due to overheating until it drifted towards the coast of Balingawan Point and eventually submerged.

On 01 March 2023, Governor Humerlito Dolor of the Province of Oriental Mindoro has officially reported through his Facebook account that the MT Princess Empress has sunk.

Relative thereto, the Department, through its various social media platforms, posted an official statement announcing the creation of “Task Force Naujan Oil Spill” which will be headed by Undersecretary and Chief of Staff Marilou Erni as Task Force Commander.

The Philippine Coast Guard, particularly its Marine Environmental Protection Command, is designated as the lead agency tasked with response operations in its affected area.

In response to the reports that the capsizing of the vessel resulted to an oil spill from the diesel fuel of the ship, this Office has immediately deployed personnel from the

Provincial Environmental Management Unit – Oriental Mindoro to conduct water sampling in areas which have been identified to have been potentially affected by the oil spill.

On 03 March 2023, Mayor Jennifer Cruz of LGU – Pola, Oriental Mindoro has declared a state of calamity, due to the massive extent of the impact of the oil spill in the Municipality of Pola, Oriental Mindoro.

Later that day, Petron Philippines issued a statement wherein it has clarified that the 800,0000 liters of industrial fuel oil carried by MT Princess Empress was not sourced from the Petron Bataan Refinery nor does the company own the fuel oil cargo carried by the vessel. Petron adds that the company has stopped producing fuel oil since 2016.

Petron also announced that their Waterborne Industry Oil Spill Equipment (WISE) has already been deployed to assist in the containment of the oil spill. The WISE vessel reached the incident site at 3:20 AM of March 1, 2023 and is now in coordination with the Philippine Coast Guard.

Furthermore, Petron's Bataan Refinery and Mabini Terminal have also extended assistance by making their oil spill boom teams and equipment available to further aid in the containment and clearing operations.

On the evening of 03 March 2023, RDC REIELD MARINE SERVICES (RDC), the registered owner of MT Princess Empress, issued a statement through various media outlets.

In their statement, RDC announced that they have already deployed technical experts on the ground, air, and sea to conduct an assessment of the affected areas and come up with an effective dispatch strategy for containing and mitigating the oil spill on the shoreline.

Further, RDC also stated that they have been assisting the PCG in procuring oil spill collection equipment, such as disposable PPEs, open-ended drums, gas masks, and diesel allocation, among others.

Lastly, RDC ensured the concerned local government units of their commitment in providing support despite limited resources and that the company will continue to work closely with the authorities and affected communities until the matter is fully resolved.

At 6:48 PM of 03 March 2023, PCG Region 6 posted an update through the official social media platform, regarding the presence of an undetermined quantity of oil slick within the shorelines of Semirara Island and Liwagao Island in Caluya, Antique.

As of 04 March 2023, the PCG, through their official social media accounts, has confirmed that the impact of the oil spill has reached the shorelines of Caluya, Antique.

Specifically, oil slicks were found in the following barangays of Caluya, Antique, to wit:

1. Sitio Sabang, Brgy. Tinogboc (1 kilometer);
2. Liwagao Island, Brgy. Sibolo (2 kilometers);
3. Sitio Tambak, Brgy. Semirara (2 kilometers)

On the same day, Governor Dolor of the Province of Oriental Mindoro has issued a letter addressed to the Embassy of Japan, through Sec. Enrique Manalo of the Department of Foreign Affairs, requesting for assistance and provision of Oil Containment Booms and other equipment that will help contain the oil spill and mitigate the damage to the waterbodies of Oriental Mindoro.

Furthermore, the Provincial Health Office – Oriental Mindoro directed the local residents to temporarily cease from participating in coastal clean-up operations due to lack of protective gears.

II. EFFECTS

As of date, reports of fish kill and seeping of industrial fuel oil has reached the surrounding water bodies of Oriental Mindoro, including mangrove areas and marine protected areas as a result of the oil spill.

III. ACTIONS TAKEN BY DENR

Since 01 March 2023, this Office continues to monitor the all the water bodies and protected areas potentially affected by the oil spill. Our teams from the Provincial Environmental Management Unit (PEMU) – Oriental Mindoro and Environmental Management Services (EMS) – Marinduque continuously conducts water quality sampling on the areas potentially affected by the oil spill and closely coordinates with various government agencies to assess the extent of the impact of the oil spill and assist in the coastal clean-up operations.

In addition, private establishments have also been generous in sharing their technical resources and manpower to assist our Office in addressing the impact of the oil spill.

Optimal Laboratories, one of our partners in conducting Pollution Control Officer Training, have deployed their personnel to assist our Office in conducting ambient air sampling in Oriental Mindoro. Furthermore, DMCI Power Corporation and Power One Corporation, have sent volunteers to assist in the clean-up operations and provided open drums to help in the collection of oil slicks in Pola, Oriental Mindoro. Meanwhile, Ormin Power Incorporated also committed in providing additional ten (10) drums for the collection of oil slicks in various areas in Oriental Mindoro which have been affected by the oil spill.

On 03 March 2023, the undersigned, together with other personnel of EMB MIMAROPA Region, conducted ocular inspection of coastal barangays affected by the oil spill in Pola, Oriental Mindoro.



Also present during the visit are Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer-Oriental Mindoro Alan L. Valle, Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer-Socorro Rodol M. Boyles, personnel of PENRO-Oriental Mindoro, representatives from CENRO-Socorro, and local government personnel of Pola.

The inspection was conducted to assess the extent of environmental damage caused by the oil spill from the sunken oil tanker at Balingawan Point in the municipal waters of Naujan, Oriental Mindoro. During the inspection, it was confirmed that the shorelines of nine coastal barangays of Pola including Misong, Tagumpay, Puting Cacao, Tiguihan, Bayanan, Batuhan, Calima, Buhay na Tubig, and Bacawan have already been affected by the oil spill.



Traces of oil slick and film were observed during the inspection of the waterbodies of Pola, Oriental Mindoro

Later that afternoon, the undersigned paid courtesy visit to Pola Municipal Mayor Hon. Jennifer M. Cruz wherein discussion of additional measures to address and prevent further contamination of waterbodies in the municipality of Pola and other coastal areas in the province of Oriental Mindoro were discussed.



The undersigned gave its commitment to the local government of Pola that continuous technical assistance will be provided by EMB MIMAROPA Region during the duration of the oil spill crisis.

On 04 March 2023, the undersigned participated in the Online Emergency Coordination Meeting of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) on the Naujan Oil Spill Incident.

On 05 March 2023, the undersigned, together with DENR MIMAROPA Regional Executive Director Lormelyn Claudio, PEMU-Oriental Mindoro Chief Ederlita U. Labre, CENRO-Socorro Rodel M. Boyles, and other DENR and EMB personnel, welcomed Usec. Marilou G. Erni, Task Force Commander, Task Force Naujan Oil Spill and Usec. Jonas Leones, Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and International Affairs at the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office, Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro.



Usec. Erni and Usec. Leones is currently in Calapan City to help develop a localized plan of action, in cooperation with local government officials and other responders, to address the impact of the oil spill in the province.

As of this time, this Office continues to assist in the cleanup operations by using locally available oil-absorbent materials and installation of provisional spill booms made of cogon and sawali. These barriers shall serve as precautionary measures to prevent the oil spill from reaching the beach and mangrove areas of Pola, Oriental Mindoro.



We will be providing additional updates as soon as verified information becomes available.

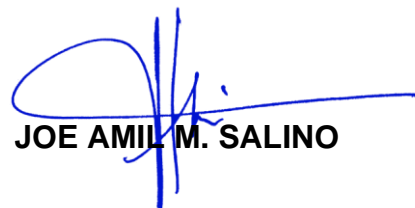
IV. WAYS AHEAD

This Office will also be conducting water quality sampling in certain locations within the Province of Romblon to determine the extent of the oil spill to the water bodies in the said province. Likewise, continuous coordination is being made by the Environmental

Management Services – Coron, Palawan with PCG, LGU, private entities for any possible sightings of oil slicks within the Cuyo and Calamian Group of Islands.

This Office shall continue to monitor the situation and apprise the Director on all the latest situation development.

For the Undersecretary's information, reference, and further instructions, if any.


JOE AMIL M. SALINO

Copy furnished:

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