

## The Value of Dispersant Use – Keeping Awareness Alive Since 2010

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Dispersant use in the event of an oil spill in the marine environment is a widely researched topic in spill response. Nevertheless, the use of dispersants during an oil spill still remains a contentious topic owing to misconceptions and perceived risks. During the Macondo blowout response, it became evident that the available scientific information on the appropriate use of dispersants and stakeholder perceptions was lacking. Additionally, there were few educational materials suitable for use to the wider group of stakeholders including the public, media and regulatory authorities, all with varying levels of technical knowledge.

Multiple collaborative projects were undertaken by the spill response community following the Macondo incident in an attempt to address key communication issues related to the use of dispersants in an oil spill incident. One of the main objectives of these projects was to develop communications materials that would help increase understanding and allay communities' fears related to dispersant use, all with a goal of building upon the technical basis upon which dispersants, and their potential as a response option, were developed.

This presentation will summarize dispersant communication efforts undertaken following the Macondo release to ensure that complex technical information can be conveyed in an accessible, simple and effective manner to a wide range of stakeholders. The presentation will highlight the various dispersant communication products and tools providing general technical information helpful in addressing specific issues and how these materials can be used to tackle the diverse communication needs of a response.