

OPRC

Official reference	International Convention on oil pollution preparedness, response and co-operation	
Official website	www.imo.org	
Relevant dates	Document	30/11/1990
	Entry into force	13/05/1995
	Document Protocol 2000 (OPRC-HNS)	15/03/2000
	Entry into force	14/06/2007
	Ratification by Flanders	10/02/2017
Policy level	International	
Type of instrument	Convention	
Geographical reach	World seas	
International contact point	International Maritime Organization (IMO)	
Flemish ratification	Decreet van 10 februari 2017 houdende instemming met het Internationaal Verdrag van 1990 inzake de voorbereiding op, de bestrijding van en de samenwerking bij olie-verontreiniging, gedaan te Londen op 30 november 1990, en het Protocol van 2000 inzake de voorbereiding op, de bestrijding van en de samenwerking bij de voorvallen van verontreiniging door schadelijke en potentieel gevaarlijke stoffen, gedaan te Londen op 15 maart 2000	

// abstract:

The convention offers a framework for international cooperation when dealing with incidents or threats of marine pollution. This convention applies to ships, offshore installations and structures, sea ports, and oil treatment facilities. All Contracting Parties have to create an emergency plan against oil pollution; and all Parties have to immediately report incidents where oil is discharged or could be discharged into the sea. Moreover, the Contracting Parties need to develop national and international strategies for the preparation and the fight against incidents of pollution. The convention calls for the establishment of stockpiles of oil spill combating equipment, the holding of oil spill combating exercises and the development of detailed plans for dealing with pollution incidents. The convention expects that the Contracting Parties provide assistance to the other States in case of an emergency situation, which also means that arrangements have been taken to be able to refund the costs of the assistance provided.

During the establishment of this convention, the IMO was invited to develop a legal instrument, that extended the application of the OPRC Convention to toxic and harmful substances. This resulted in the 'Protocol on preparedness, response and cooperation to pollution incidents by hazardous and noxious substances' (2000).

Belgium has not yet ratified these international conventions. This does not mean, however, that no regulation on this topic exists for the Belgian sea area. In case of incidents involving the discharge of oil or other noxious and potentially hazardous substances into the marine environment of the North Sea, the 'Bonn agreement for cooperation in dealing with pollution of the North Sea by oil and other harmful substances' (Bonn, 13 September 1983) (*Bonn agreement* p.16) applies.