

Specific Report Indicators

The following specific indicators were established by the UAC to define the presence or absence of potentially actionable oil:

- Qualitative observations of oil.
- Environmental risks associated with oil-related organic compounds.
- Human health risks from exposure to oil-contaminated water.
- Environmental risks related to dispersant component chemicals.
- Fishery closures.
- Toxicity to benthic invertebrates.
- Comparison of analytical chemistry measurements to reference stations and measurements from earlier in the year.
- Indicators of hypoxia in deep water seaward of the continental shelf.

A discussion of uncertainties associated with applying these indicators across the entire response dataset is presented in relevant sections throughout the document and is described in detail in Appendix C.

Key Findings

4. Since 3 August 2010, <1% of water samples and ~1% of sediment samples exceeded EPA's Aquatic Life benchmarks for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). Analysis of individual samples indicated that none of the water sample exceedances were consistent with MC252. Of the sediment exceedances, only those within 3 km of the wellhead were consistent with MC252.

¹ The presence of liquid-phase oil is highlighted here (as contrasted to oil in the form of tar mats or sediment-entrained oil) for its relevance to decisions regarding recovering oil from the environment.