



INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Using Spaceborne Radar

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Outline

- Overview of spaceborne radar
- Spaceborne radar for emergency preparedness and response
- Summary

Overview of Spaceborne Radar

Slick Detection

- Good understanding of slick detection which depends on:
 - Radar parameters
 - Environmental conditions
 - Oil characteristics
- Semi-automatic approaches give effective results
- Skilled analysts improve information:
 - Mitigate false positives
 - Apply contextual information (platforms, ships, etc.)
 - Assign confidence / classification levels



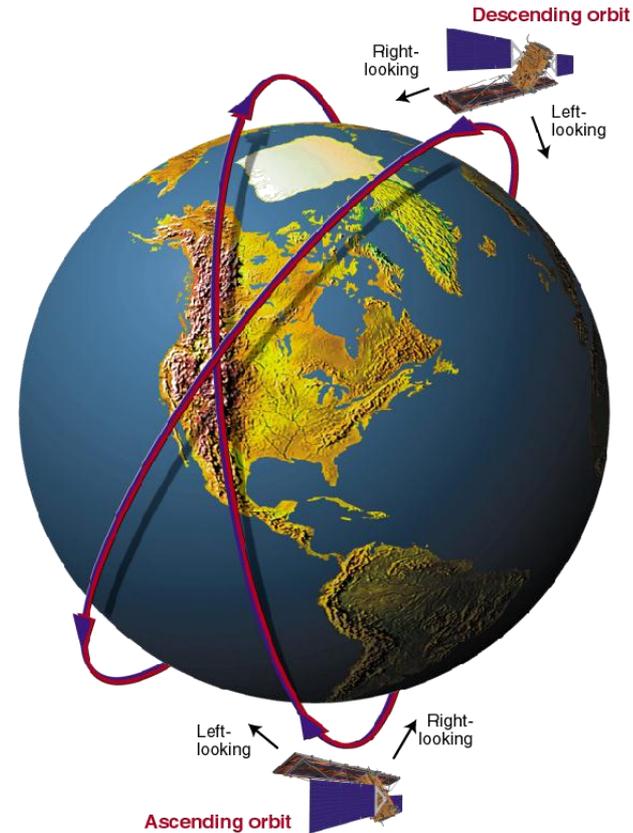
RADARSAT-2 image showing oil from offshore drilling platform. The oil appears as a dark tone, and the offshore platforms appear as bright white targets.

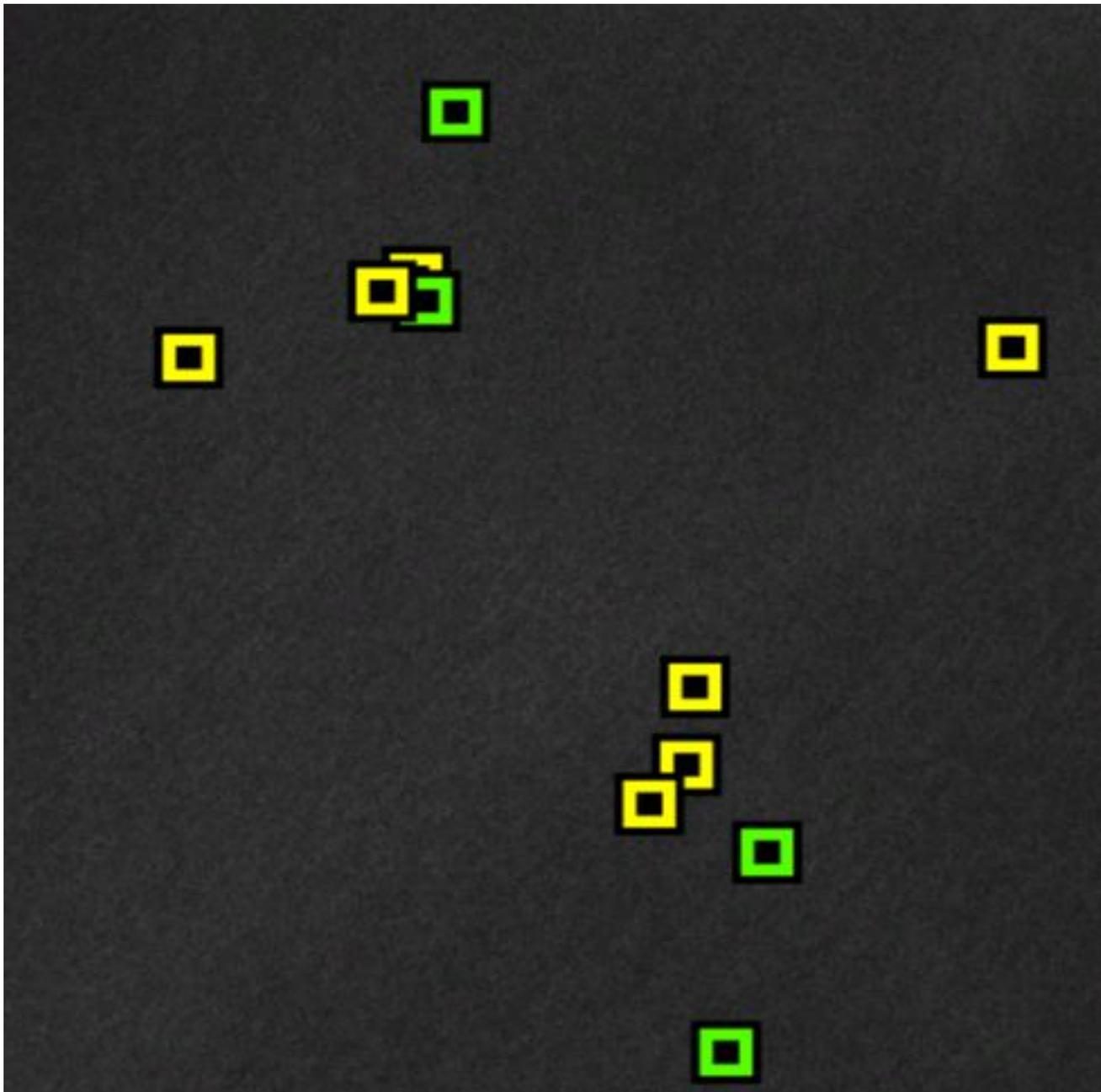
Information from Radar

- Size of the spill (surface area)
- Wind speed and direction (directly derived from the satellite imagery)
- Locations of vessels and other local/regional infrastructure to aid in response management
- Oil slick characteristics
 - *Sheen vs. emulsion*
 - *Oil types*

Satellite Imaging Times

- Satellites typically image on an ascending (northward) and descending orbit (southward)
- The imaging times vary by satellite, but depend on the orbit and the number of satellites
- For example, the times for RADARSAT-2 vary somewhat, but are approximately (local time):
 - Ascending ~ 6 PM
 - Descending ~ 6 AM
- Once an region-of-interest has been defined, the time from acquisition to data delivery is well-known





RADARSAT-2 ScanSAR image

Wind Speed

Wind Direction

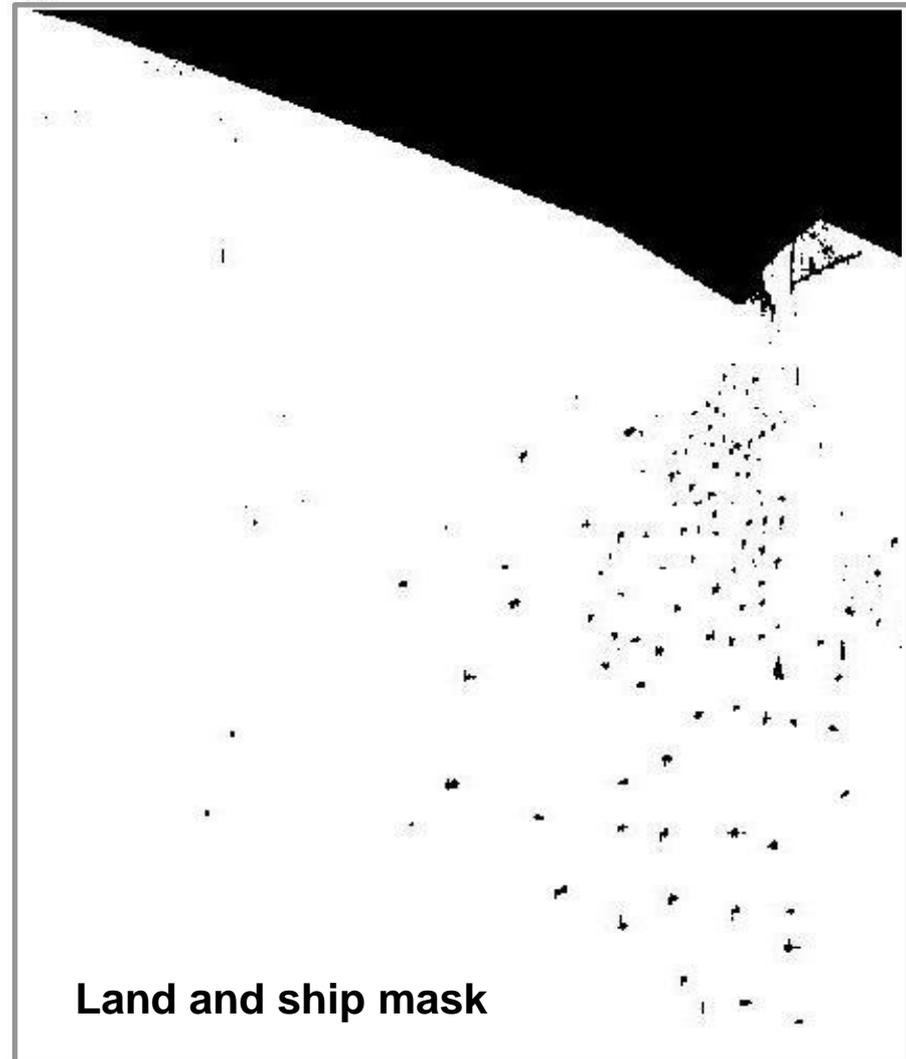
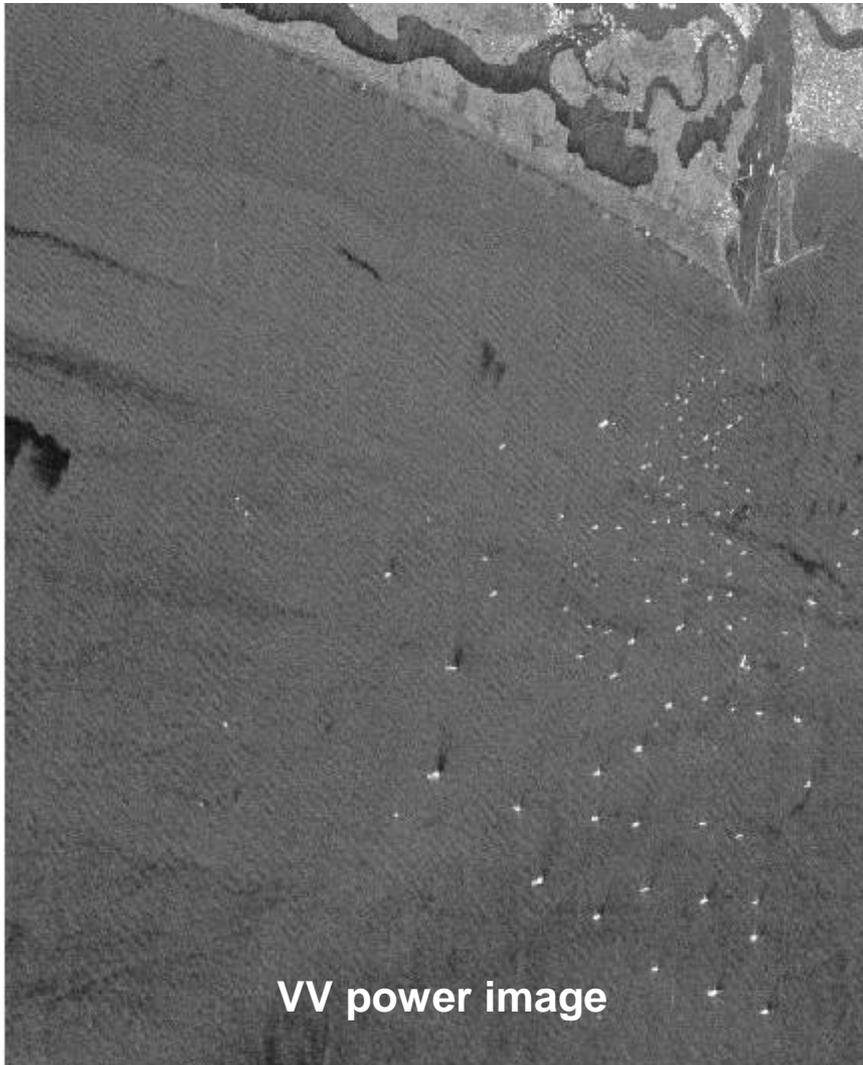
Slicks

- Seeps
- Pollution

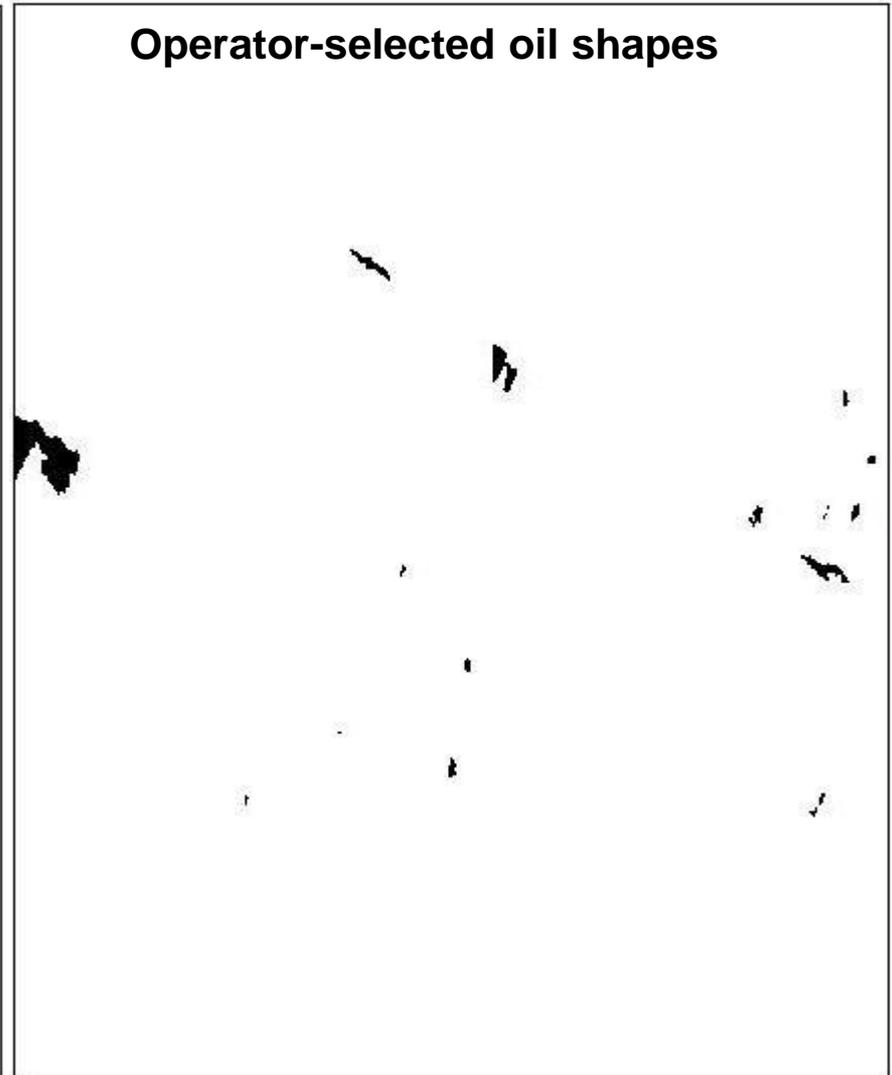
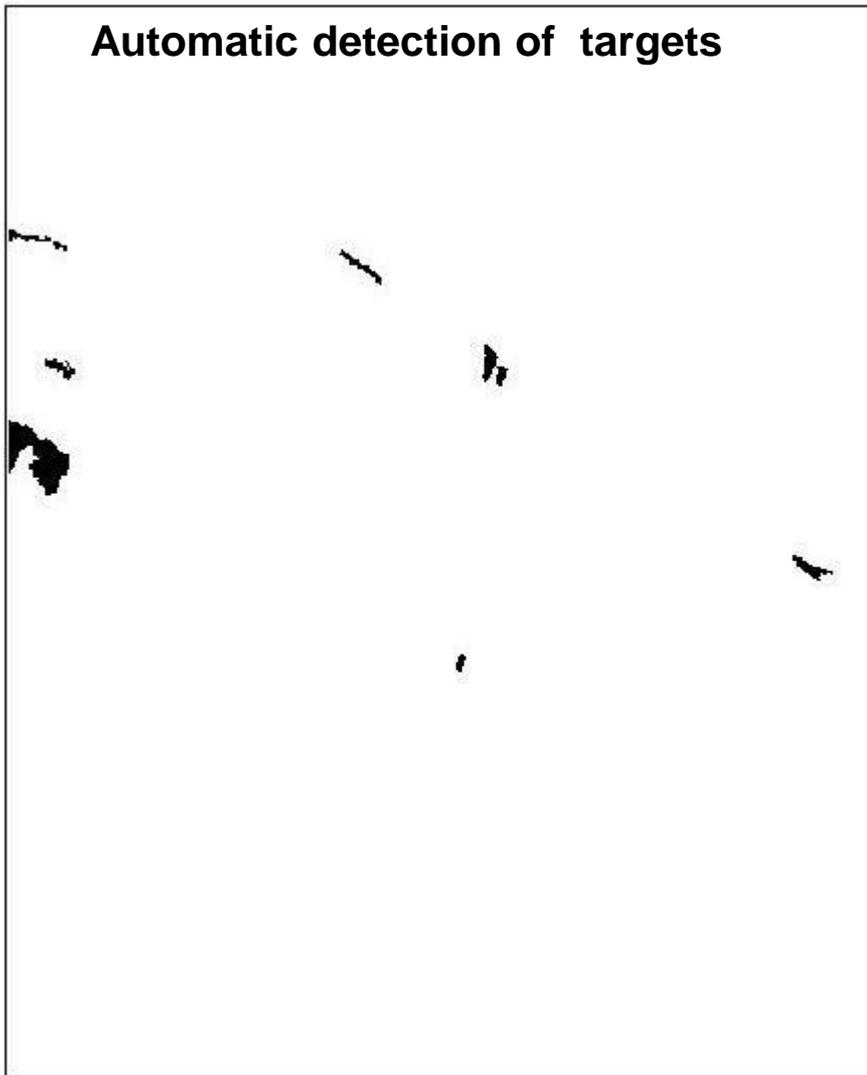
Ships/Other

- AIS correlated
- Non-AIS correlated

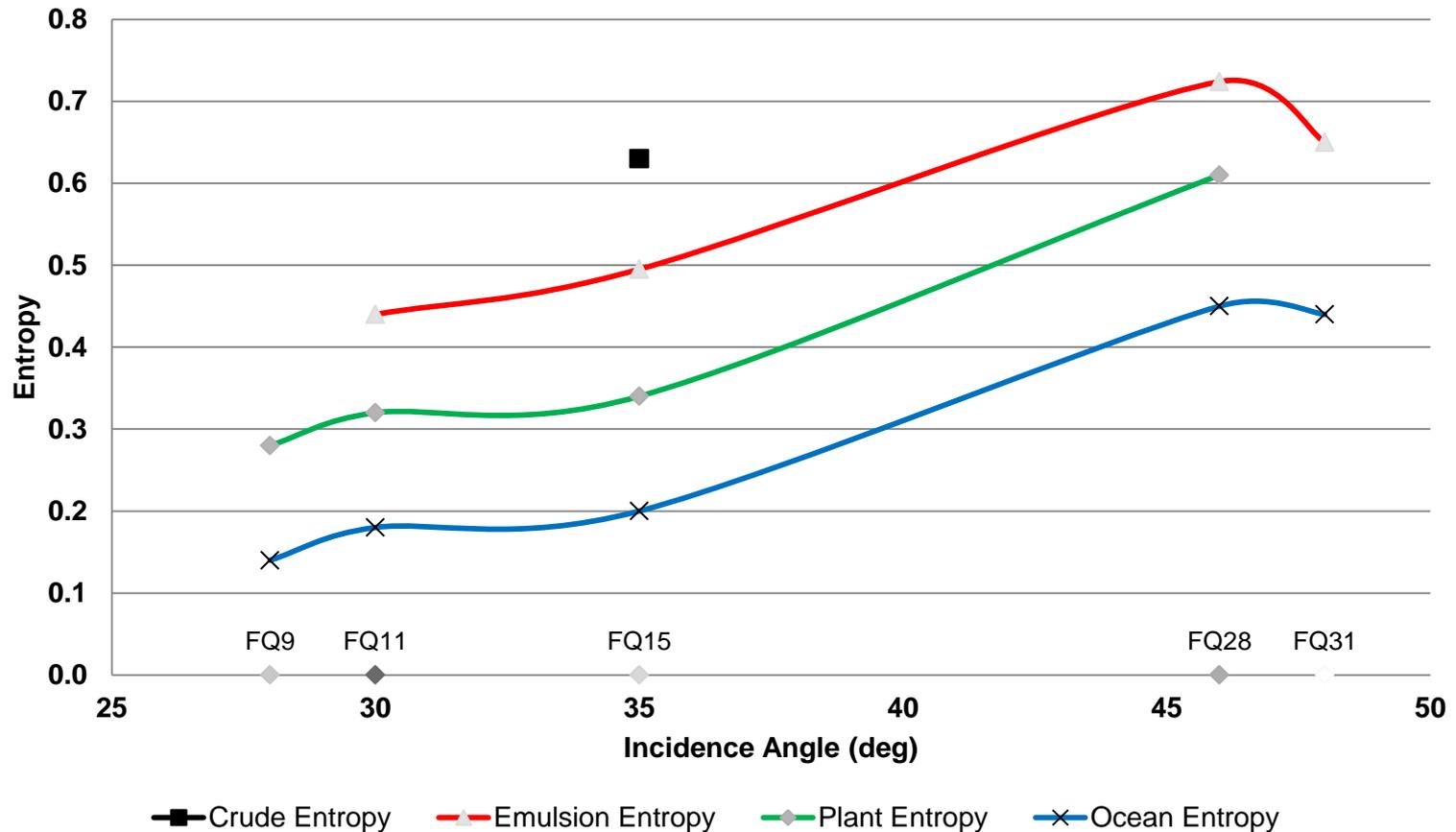
Land and Ship Mask



Automatic Detection vs. Operator Selected



Oil Type Discrimination



- The results were based on data acquired between 2011 and 2013.

Spaceborne Radar for Emergency Preparedness and Response

- Routine monitoring
- Multiple sensors
- Emergency preparedness
- Information products and Common Operating Picture

Routine Monitoring

- Satellite-based monitoring has typically been used after an incident was suspected or identified. During the first 24-48 hours after a spill, the need for information is very high, so acquisition latency is an issue.
- Routine monitoring of an operational area helps to mitigate some of the challenges associated with radar such as the lead time for the activation and reception of the first images.
- A recent simulation of emergency response timelines in the Gulf of Mexico showed that delivery of data is 4 times more likely within one day from the start of the incident versus a request for data acquisition after the incident occurred.
- Routine monitoring can be used to establish a baseline for the type of slicks that might be present due to natural and anthropogenic sources, e.g. seeps, algae blooms, bilge dumping.

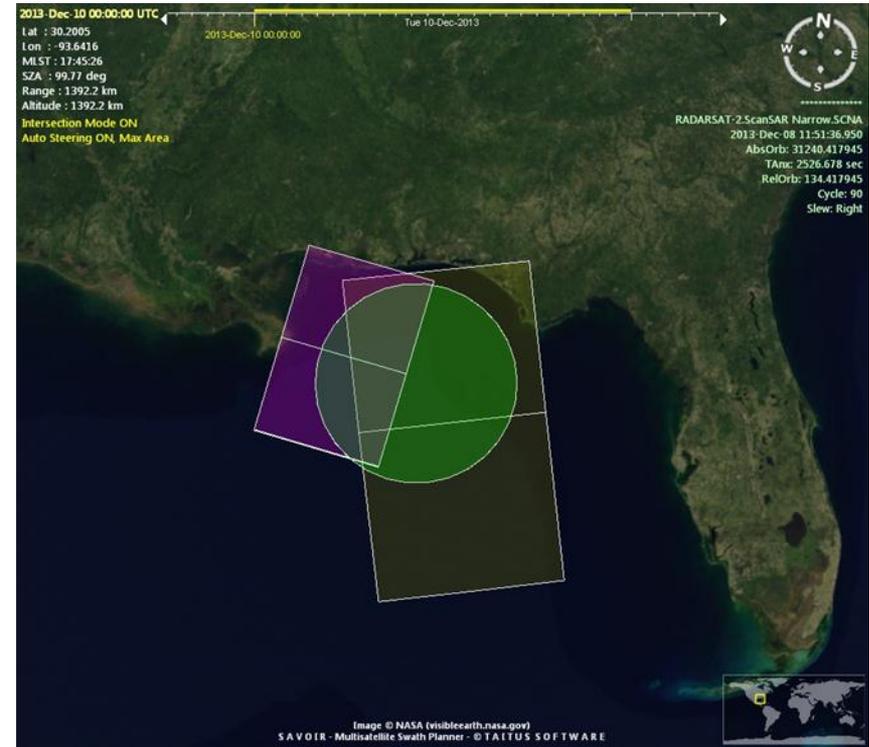
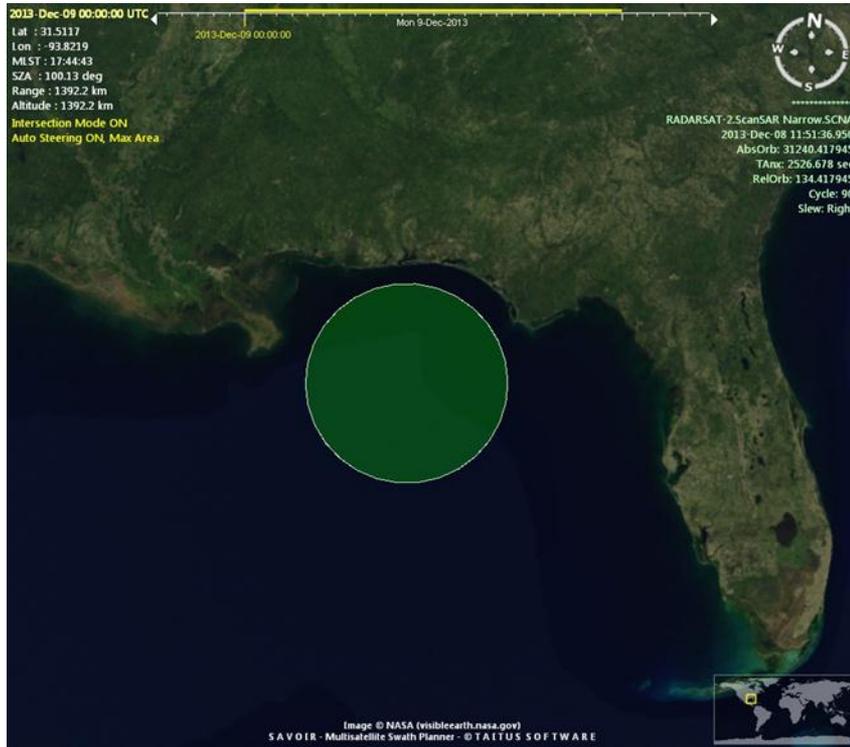
Multiple Sensors

- A common approach is to use a broad-area sensor for primary coverage and a secondary sensor to fill schedule gaps or perform more focused imaging using alternate imaging modes

- Multiple sensors can also be used to reduce the time to acquire imagery and increase spatial coverage

- In a recent exercise conducted on behalf of the IOGP and working with OSRL, an emergency acquisition drill with multiple satellite operators was conducted:
 - The time to acquire the first image ranged from 14 hrs to 51 hrs for northern latitudes and 23 hrs to 58 hrs for equatorial latitudes;
 - Routine monitoring with multiple satellites would have reduced the time gap between image request and image delivery.

Multiple Sensors Improve Coverage



Day 9 and Day 10

RADARSAT-2: green
TerraSAR-X: purple

RADARSAT-2 only: 6 acquisitions

RADARSAT-2 + TerraSAR-X: 11 acquisitions

Emergency Preparedness

- Routine monitoring is a key step in the emergency preparedness end-to-end solution

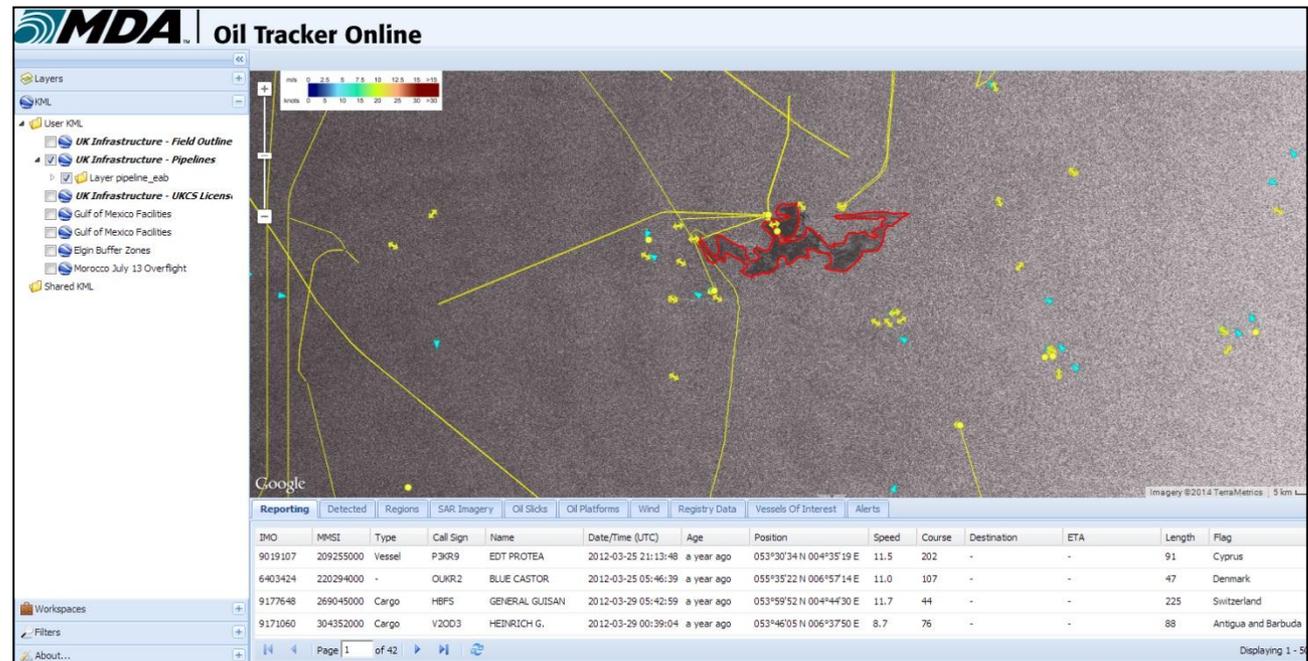
- Incorporation of radar data in spill response contingency plans:
 - Training on the procedures to order data
 - Training on the benefits and limitations of radar data
 - Integration of radar data in training exercises

- Verification that data volumes of radar-derived information products are commensurate with communication bandwidths

- Ensuring that information products are in a format that is compatible with end-user needs (e.g. geoTIFF, kml, shp)

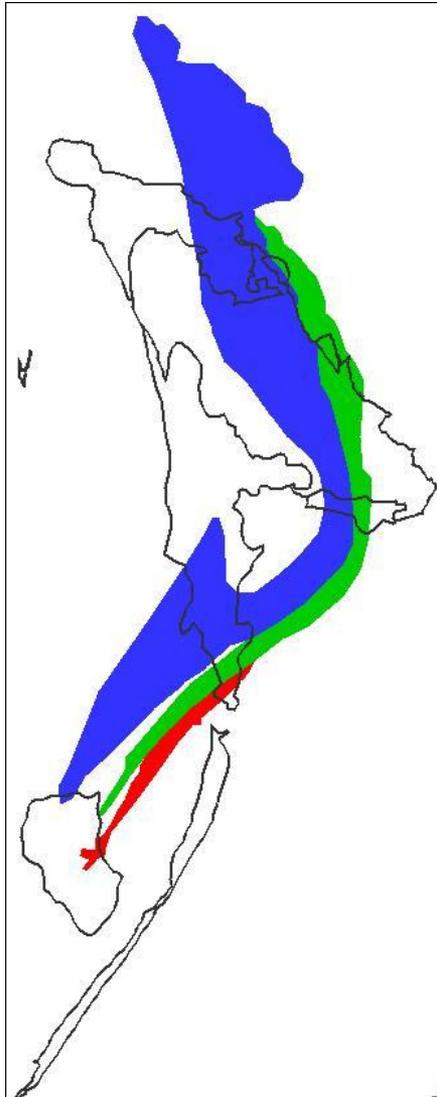
Information Products and Common Operating Picture (COP)

- To be of value, information products should be:
 - Interpretable
 - Interoperable
 - Timely



Example of information products (oil slick, ships, and AIS tracks) displayed in the MDA Oil Tracker which can be integrated into the COP.

RADARSAT-2 Data and Oil Spill Trajectory Models



Day 4

Day 4 (1)

Day 4 (2)

Day 4 (RS2)

- RADARSAT-2 data was used to initialize and update an oil spill trajectory model (OSCAR). The slick outline shows the slick location 4 days after the start of the spill.
- Day 4: Model only
- Day 4 (1): Model plus one image on Day 1
- Day 4 (2): Model plus image on Day 1 and Day 2
- Day 4 (RS2): Slick location from imagery only on Day 4.

Summary

- There is a good understanding of the benefits and limitation of spaceborne radar for oil spill preparedness and response.

- Information from radar:
 - Spill location and extent
 - Wind speed/direction
 - Ships and platforms
 - *Oil characteristics*

- Emergency preparedness and response
 - Routine monitoring helps to reduce acquisition latency and provides baseline information
 - Multiple sensors provide faster re-visit and increased spatial coverage
 - Integration of radar in oil spill contingency plans means that spill responders are familiar to data access timelines, data formats, and what to expect with information products
 - Radar can be readily integrated and used to update a COP

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