



## **Directorate General of Shipping**

**SITREP – 38, 1800 hrs on 11/07/2025**

### **Sinking of MSC ELSA 3 (IMO no. 9123221, Flag Liberia) South West of Kochi**

The contents of this SITREP are based on both written and verbal inputs received from the stakeholders

#### **1. Incident Overview:**

Refer to SITREP – 6

#### **2. Response Actions Initiated:**

Refer to SITREP – 6

#### **3. Present Status:**

As of 11 July 2025, the MSC ELSA 3 incident response continues to proceed on multiple operational fronts. Salvage preparations by SMIT Salvage remain on track, with mobilisation of the Diving Support Vessel (DSV) from Singapore scheduled to commence around 24 July and arrival at site expected by 1 August. Weather forecasting is actively being monitored through a 21-day window to facilitate operational readiness. In the interim, the tug Canara Megh continues to undertake on-site caretaking duties without disruption, following a routine personnel change.

On the environmental side, the Marine Emergency Response Centre (MERC) has confirmed that a total of approximately 477 metric tons of plastic nurdles have been recovered from affected coastal stretches. Active collection is ongoing with the deployment of floating booms and boat-based retrieval supported by ITOPF guidance. A volunteer workforce of approximately 700–800 persons—of which 514 are currently deployed in Trivandrum—remains consistently engaged in beach cleanup efforts. Final recovery operations for sunken containers (washed ashore) are underway and are expected to be completed within the weekend.



*Figure 1: Nurdle cleanup operations are currently underway in the Swamp at Veli*

Legal and regulatory reviews concerning hazardous cargo onboard MSC ELSA 3 are also advancing. MSC has reported that documentation reviews for the 244 containers under scrutiny for IMDG Code compliance are still in progress, with updates anticipated by mid-next week. Coordination between MSC, the P&I Club, and legal counsel is ongoing to finalise submissions in response to the PIL and related inquiries.

#### **4. Situation Assessment:**

The overall operational landscape remains stable but requires continued coordination across salvage, environmental recovery, and legal compliance domains. Salvage preparations are moving forward as scheduled, but the commencement of extraction operations remains contingent on favourable weather and completion of mobilisation logistics. The interim caretaking operation by Canara Megh has ensured that the wreck site remains monitored and secure.

From an environmental standpoint, the nurdle recovery efforts have been notably extensive, with approximately 477 metric tons collected to date. However, continued stranding of pellets and the need for consistent manpower indicate that the situation



still demands sustained daily intervention. The deployment of containment booms and expansion of sea-based retrieval efforts marks an adaptive shift in strategy to limit further dispersal.



Figure 2: Deployment of booms

The review of container contents, particularly those flagged for hazardous materials, remains a critical compliance issue. Delays in finalising this review, coupled with the impending requirement to respond to the PIL, underline the importance of prompt and accurate documentation by MSC and its appointed consultants. Finalisation of disposal plans for the recovered nurdles in Kerala and Tamil Nadu also remains pending, adding a regulatory dimension to the ongoing environmental response.

In summary, while the operational tempo has been maintained and coordinated well. There are several sensitive transition points that will need resolution in the coming week to maintain momentum and mitigate environmental and legal risks.

**5. Environmental Risks:**

Refer to SITREP – 6, 1800 hrs on 28/05/2024

**6. Coordination Measures**

Refer to SITREP – 6 for the overall coordination measures being undertaken



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