

Soren Toft
CEO
MSC - Mediterranean Shipping Agency AG
Steinentorstrasse 39
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Zurich, 18th September 2025

Dear Mr. Soren Toft

I am writing to you in regard to the MSC ELSA 3 shipwreck offshore Kerala, India, on 25th May 2025. This maritime disaster resulted in the loss of 643 containers at sea, many of which included hazardous chemicals and huge amounts of plastic nurdles that have since been washing up on the shoreline and unique ecosystems of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, up to the [Dhanushkodi sanctuary](#) and the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve of the Gulf of Mannar – which is considered one of the world's richest regions from a marine biodiversity perspective – as well as most of Sri Lanka's coastline from Jaffna in the North Province to Matara in the South, only four years after the similar X-Press Pearl shipwreck disaster.

These plastic nurdles are extremely difficult to remove from the environment; they absorb other pollutants, choke marine animals, enter the food chain, and break down into smaller microplastics that will cause lasting damage to sensitive ecosystems such as coral reefs, seagrass meadows, mangroves, and fish feeding grounds.

The Kerala government declared the incident a “[state-specific disaster](#),” which has significantly impacted over one million fisherfolk, with the 20-nautical-mile fishing ban period following the accident, countless pieces of shipwreck debris damaging fishing gear, and rising mistrust from seafood consumers, with serious consequences on daily income, food security, and occupational health. The longer-term consequences on local economies and the regional marine ecosystems are yet to be further determined upon thorough socio-economic and environmental impact assessments.

Besides, while it seems that most of the 451 tonnes of the MSC ELSA 3 diesel and furnace oil are still contained in the vessel, [satellite images](#) have shown actual leakages spanning over several nautical miles from the wreck, and removal of the remainder of the oil shall be seen as an absolute priority.

As a direct consequence, the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) has already been facing several proceedings in India (FIR, PIL), Kerala High Court Orders, and a Kerala State Admiralty Suit, among other private plaintiffs' lawsuits and sister ship arrests. Yet, in the face of all the above and more than three months after the MSC ELSA 3 shipwreck, we have not been made aware of any public communication from the company outside media-reported denial

statements to the Kerala High Court. This is not only disrespectful to the impacted population but also highly concerning in regard to the necessary acknowledgement of MSC's responsibility and the fulfillment of its obligation to pay for cleanup, restoration, and loss and damage resulting from the accident under the Polluter Pays Principle.

Therefore, Greenpeace Schweiz calls on the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) to:

1. Immediately commit to fund past and ongoing state-led cleanup programs in all impacted geographies;
2. Extract the remaining oil from the sunken ship before it further seeps into the ocean;
3. Commit to fund rapid and preliminary compensation for coastal fishing communities in all impacted geographies;
4. Commit to fund independent environmental and socio-economic impact assessments in all impacted geographies;
5. Commit to fund longer-term, comprehensive, and up-to-scale compensation based on the above-mentioned impact assessments.

In light of this unfortunate tragedy for South Asia's coastal communities and ecosystems, we do hope the MSC response may still be consistent with the spirit, objectives, and direction taken by the MSC Foundation for the preservation of the marine environment. Therefore, we would expect to receive your public position in reply to this letter within a fortnight.

"We all have the duty to leave a [better world](#) for future generations."

Capt. Gianluigi Aponte - [MSC Foundation](#) Chair

Best Regards,

Alexander Hauri

Programme Director
Greenpeace Schweiz