

Massive Siberian Oil Spill Causes \$80M in Waterway Damage – Greenpeace

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A massive diesel spill into a Siberian river caused at least 6 billion rubles (more than \$76 million) in damages to waterways above the Arctic Circle, Greenpeace Russia [said](#) Wednesday.

President Vladimir Putin ordered a state of emergency Wednesday five days after more than 20,000 metric tons of diesel fuel spilled into rivers near the city of Norilsk. The declaration is needed to bring in federal resources for the cleanup effort.

Related article: [Putin Declares State of Emergency Over Siberian Fuel Spill](#)

“Using the environment ministry's methodology for assessing the environmental damage to water bodies, it may amount to 6 billion rubles,” said Greenpeace Russia's head of energy, Vladimir Chuprov.

“The installed booms will only help collect a small part of the pollution, leading us to say that nearly all the diesel fuel will remain in the environment,” Chuprov said in a statement.

The estimate does not include damages to soil and the atmosphere from greenhouse gas emissions, the environmental NGO added.

Satellite images after the leak showed crimson water in the Ambarnaya river and nearby residents posted videos on social media of the polluted water.

Russia's Federal Inspection Service for Natural Resources Use [estimated](#) the overall damage at "several dozen, perhaps hundreds of billions of rubles."

Russia's Federal Fisheries Agency [forecast](#) that it could take "more than a decade" to restore the local aquatic ecosystem, saying the scale of the damage is underestimated.

Putin on Wednesday lambasted the head of the metals giant Norilsk Nickel subsidiary that owns the power plant, NTEK, after regional officials said the company failed to report the incident. Norilsk Nickel said the tank began leaking last Friday after supporting pillars that had "held it in place for 30 years without difficulty" began to sink.

Norilsk was constructed on permafrost and its infrastructure is threatened by melting ice caused by climate change.

Russia's Investigative Committee, which handles major crimes, [announced](#) that it launched four criminal probes into the accident and detained an employee of the power plant.

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