

Oil Still Washing Ashore in Southern Russia 2 Months After Black Sea Spill

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New oil slicks have appeared along the coastlines of southern Russia, regional authorities [said](#) Tuesday, two months after a major spill in the Black Sea.

Emergency crews discovered fuel oil fragments at 11 of 41 clean-up sites along the southern Krasnodar region's coast, according to the regional crisis center. Officials in annexed Crimea also [reported](#) finding similar oil contamination off its shores in recent days.

Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry [said](#) Monday that workers and volunteers had removed 148,000 metric tons of contaminated sand from affected beaches.

The spill occurred on Dec. 15 when two aging Russian tankers were damaged in a storm off Krasnodar's coast, releasing thousands of tons of heavy fuel oil into the sea. Since then, scores of volunteers and emergency crews have worked to clean up the oil.

Related article: [Why Has the Black Sea Oil Spill Been So Devastating for Seabirds?](#)

Russia's environmental watchdog has threatened legal action against those responsible for the disaster. The tankers were operated by Volgatransneft, while the fuel oil on board belonged to state oil giant Rosneft.

Environment Minister Alexander Kozlov told President Vladimir Putin last month that cleanup efforts will extend until at least the summer of 2026.

Both Putin and Russian scientists have described the spill as one of the country's worst environmental disasters in recent decades. Environmental groups have reported widespread deaths of marine wildlife and seabirds and [warned](#) that up to 10 million more birds remain at risk.

The disaster has also cast uncertainty over this summer's tourist season, with demand for vacations [plummeting](#) in the popular Black Sea resort town of Anapa. Despite the crisis, Russian authorities have arranged spring and summer vacations in affected resort areas for disabled children.

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