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Germany Seizes Russian 'Shadow Fleet' Tanker – Der Spiegel

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German customs officials have confiscated a tanker carrying 100,000 tons of oil, which they claim is a part of Russia's sanctions-busting "shadow fleet," weekly news magazine Der Spiegel reported Friday, citing anonymous sources.

The Panama-flagged vessel Eventin was traveling from the Russian port of Ust-Luga through the Baltic Sea to Egypt when its engine failed and it lost the ability to maneuver.

On Jan. 12, three German rescue vessels escorted the Eventin to the waters near the island of Ruegen, off the coast of Sassnitz.

The ship has been listed by the EU as part of Russia's "shadow fleet" since the end of February.

Germany officially took ownership of the Eventin after the General Customs Directorate issued a confiscation notice last Friday, according to Der Spiegel.

Berlin believes the “unusually harsh” move is a sign to Moscow that Germany is “not idly watching” Russian oil transiting through the Baltic Sea, the publication added.

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German authorities are now reportedly figuring out how to safely pump out the ship’s crude oil, as well as what to do with the vessel itself.

Germany’s Finance Ministry declined to comment on the reported confiscation due to “ongoing customs measures or the given security policy situation,” Der Spiegel said.

Following the January incident, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock slammed Russia for “endangering European security not only with its war of aggression against Ukraine but also with decrepit tankers.”

Russia has relied on tankers with opaque ownership and without proper insurance to continue its oil exports after Western nations hit the country’s oil industry with an embargo and a service ban in response to its invasion of Ukraine.

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