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MEETING DOCUMENT

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Working Party on Maritime Issues - EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS)
Subject: Shadow fleet - Presentation by the EEAS

Delegations will find attached a presentation on EU Actions against the Russian shadow fleet, provided by the EEAS to the meeting of the Working Party on Maritime Issues - EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS) of 4 March 2026.

EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



EU Actions against the Russian Shadow Fleet

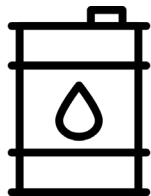
EUMSS WP, 4 March 2026

The Shadow Fleet: why should we care?



600 – 1400

Vessels associated to the shadow fleet*



Irregular and High-Risk
Shipping Practices



Threats to the
**Environment and to
Navigation Safety**



Risk for the EU's
**Critical Maritime
Infrastructure**

**Numbers differ by source; estimates reflect current understanding but are not definitive.*

What the EU Aims to Achieve

Reduce Russia's oil revenues that fuel its war economy;

Prevent the circumvention of EU oil sanctions with opaque or high-risk vessels;

Strengthen environmental protection, navigation safety, and broader maritime security within and beyond EU waters.





Overview of EU Actions

Maritime Domain Awareness

CSDP Contribution

Sanctions

Legal Framework and Enforcement

International Coordination



Maritime Domain Awareness and CSDP Contributions



The three CSDP naval operations have started

- Monitoring and information gathering
- Irini now also has a mandate to “visit” and inspect shadow fleet vessels



The EU is increasingly developing and promoting the use of tools to

- Identify and monitor shadow fleet vessels and ecosystem operators.



Member States are further encouraged to join the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) and European Maritime Surveillance (MARSUR) platforms.





Sanctions

The 19th Sanction package further increased the pressure by

- Listing more vessels;
- Targeting additional elements within the broader ecosystem.

Upcoming 20 Sanction package?

- A possible maritime services ban?





Legal Framework and Enforcement

Discussions in the relevant Council working groups (RELEX, COJUR, COMAR) to

- Legal framework on shadow fleet and to the protection of critical maritime infrastructure.
- Declaration of 15 December 2025
- Possible bilateral agreements with flag states on pre-authorized boardings for inspections



**THE LAW
OF THE SEA**

A more robust approach?

- Network of national contact points
- Vademecum of best practices
- Focus on article 110 of UNCLOS





International Coordination



The EU actively participates in the G7/NB8++ Shadow Fleet Task Force by

- Sharing information;
- Facilitating the coordination on sanctions;
- Outreach and the work in the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).



EU-NATO exchanges continue.



Coordination with multiple partners through Security and Defence Partnerships and Dialogues



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What further strategic actions are required?

Crucial role for EU Member States

- EEAS Shadow fleet coordinator to facilitate exchange
- Network of national contact points
- 12 March FAC Defence informal discussion

