

Splash

247.com

Master of Chinese boxship accused of severing Baltic gas pipeline appears in HK court

[Sam Chambers](#)

May 9, 2025

X.com



X.com

The master of the *Newnew Polar Bear*, a Hong Kong-flagged boxship, has been taken into custody in Hong Kong for damaging a gas pipeline in the Baltic Sea 19 months ago.

Wan Wenguo, 43, appeared at a court in Hong Kong yesterday to face a charge of criminal damage and two additional charges for breaching local maritime regulations.

Prosecutors said he is responsible for damage to the 77 km Balticconnector – a natural gas pipeline between Estonia and Finland – as well as to a nearby telecommunications cable.

The Balticconnector gas pipeline was damaged in early October 2023 in the Finnish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Later that month, the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation stated that the damage was caused by an external mechanical force and that they had found [a heavy object](#) near the damaged pipeline.

It turned out that the mentioned heavy object was an anchor from the Hong Kong-registered vessel, and the Finnish authorities found that the same type of paint was identified on the anchor as on the Balticconnector and that it was most probably from the *Newnew Polar Bear*.

Seabed gas pipelines, power cables and fiber optic cables have all been attacked – likely by merchant ships dragging their anchors – over the past couple of years across the Baltic, forcing NATO to establish Baltic Sentry, a naval protection operation.