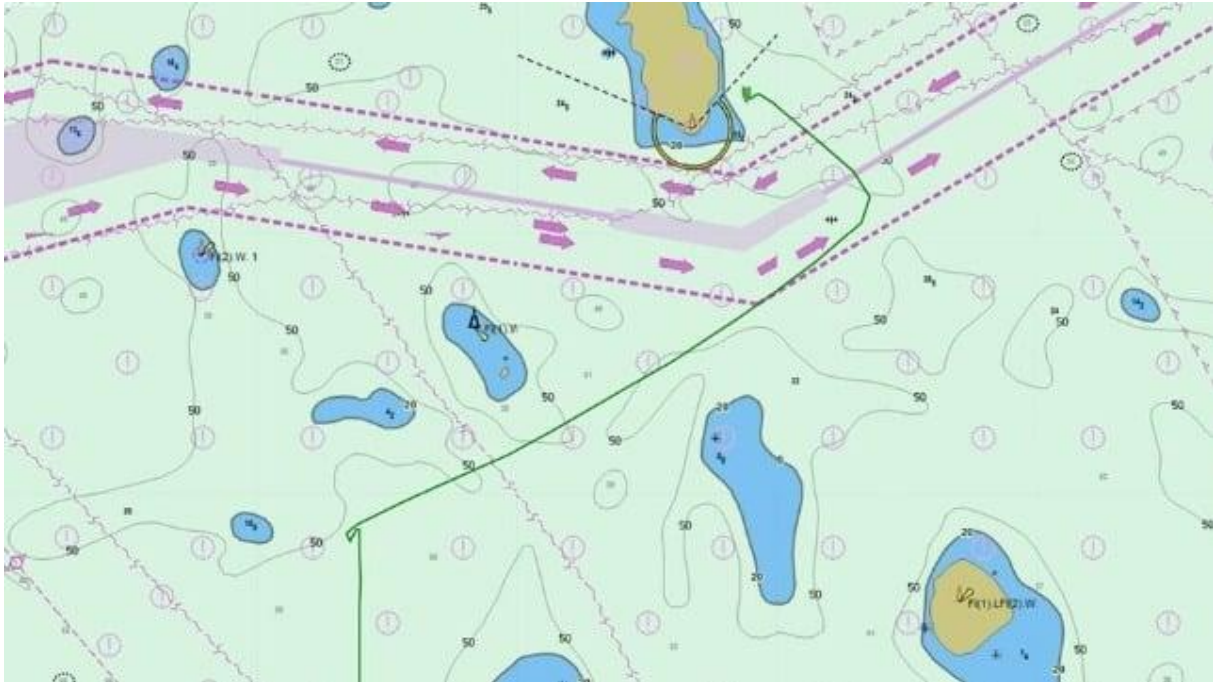


Russia Intercepts and Detains Greek Tanker off Estonia



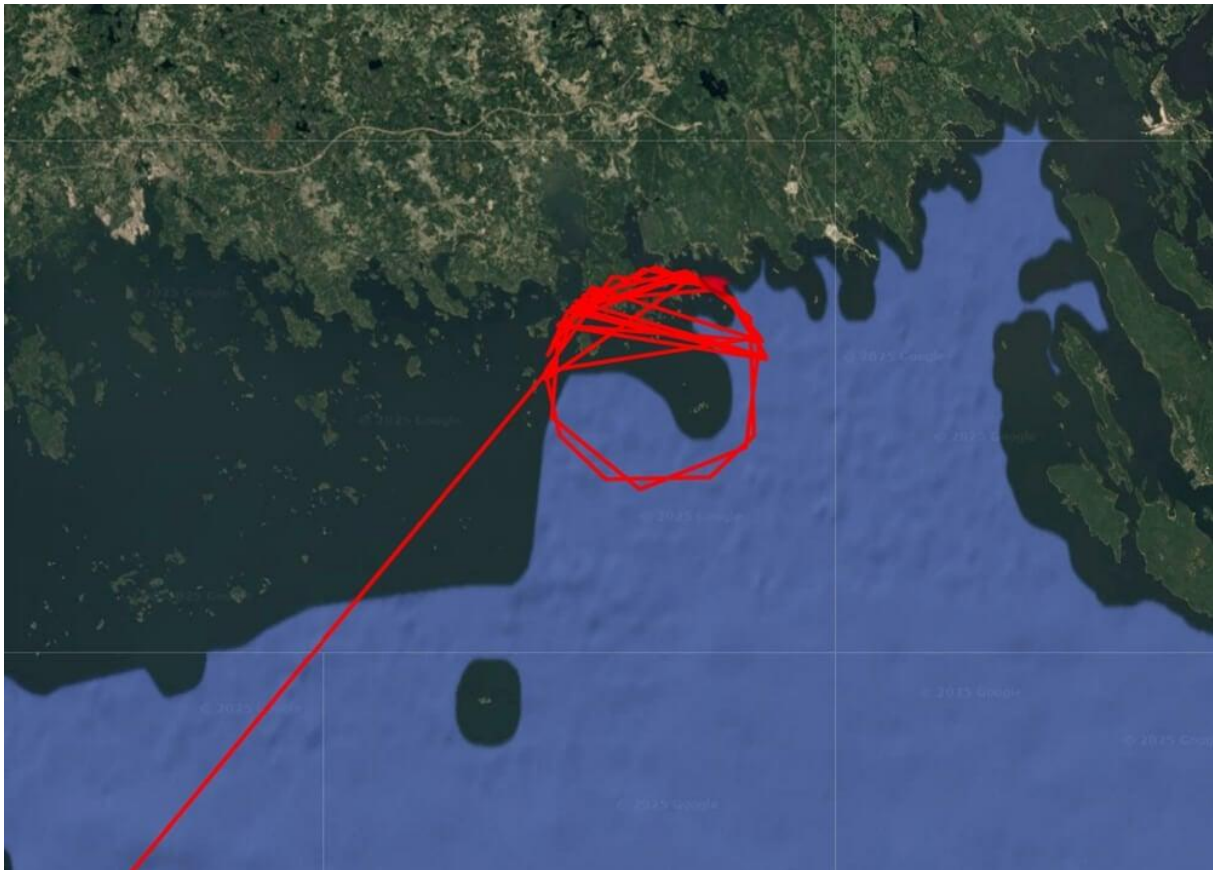
Green Admire's course, showing her diversion to the northeast to Gogland (Pole Star)

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Following the Estonian Navy's attempt to intercept a Russia-bound tanker in the Baltic last week, the Russian Navy has intercepted and diverted a Greek tanker full of Estonian fuel oil in the Gulf of Finland, according to Estonia's transport administration.

The agency said that Russian forces had intercepted the Liberian-flagged, Greek-owned tanker *Green Admire* in the early hours of Sunday morning, shortly after the vessel departed the Port of Sillamäe. The seaport is right next to the Russian border, and the tanker's route took it into Russian territorial seas, where Russian forces detained it. The vessel was diverted to Gogland, a Russian-controlled island northwest of Sillamäe.

After the detention, the *Green Admire's* AIS signal showed obvious signs of spoofing, as is common in this region: it appeared to relocate to the northern coast of the gulf, then maintained a circular course at twice its maximum sea speed, occasionally passing over land.



Green Admire's AIS track after her diversion to Gogland (Courtesy [Pole Star](#))

It is the first time that such an incident has happened, the ministry told local outlet ERR. The route that *Green Admire* used is an internationally-approved safety corridor for deep-draft shipping, and was agreed to by Russia, Estonia and Finland; going forward, Estonia's merchant ship traffic will be advised to follow a different and somewhat more challenging route to stay out of Russian waters.

"Today's incident shows that Russia continues to act unpredictably, which is why ships will be directed along an alternative route in the future," said Minister of Foreign Affairs Margus Tsahkna in a statement.

The detention may have been a response to an Estonian Navy intercept attempt last week. Estonia asserts that it has a right to inspect vessels transiting the Baltic for safety reasons, a response to the frequent deficiencies, questionable insurance arrangements and occasional false flagging associated with Russia's "shadow fleet" of aging tankers. On May 13, the Estonian Navy interdicted the sanctioned tanker *Jaguar* en route to Primorsk, Russia, and ordered it to change course; however, it continued on its voyage, and the Russian military scrambled a fighter jet to the scene in response. Estonia filed a diplomatic complaint with Russia, accusing the jet of briefly violating Estonian airspace in a manner that was "not acceptable in any way."

On Sunday, Tsahkna told TV news show "Aktuaalne Kaamera" that there was a clear link between the Estonian Navy interdiction of the *Jaguar* and the Russian intercept of the *Green Admire*.

"This is definitely connected to the fact that we have started to harass Russia's shadow fleet. I am not just talking about Estonia, but about Finland and other Baltic Sea countries more broadly," he said.