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Answer given by Ms Albuquerque
on behalf of the European Commission
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EU sanctions have restricted but not totally banned the sale of oil tankers by EU operators. Sales to Russia or for end-use in Russia are prohibited (with a derogation possible) while sales to third countries are subject to a notification. The fast-evolving nature of the shipping industry and frequent ownership changes of vessels must be noted, as well as the fact that, under EU sanctions, Russian oil exports may continue if undertaken below the oil price cap.

Through its sanctions packages, the EU has designated specific vessels for contributing to Russia's warfare against Ukraine, including vessels part of Russia's shadow fleet and engaging in deceptive and high-risk shipping practices contrary to international standards. Such vessels are subject to a port access and services ban. The 17th package brings the total of listed vessels to 342.

Further, the EU can subject individuals and entities that own or operate shadow fleet vessels to an asset freeze. It is prohibited to provide funds or economic resources to listed individuals or entities.

The Commission is continuously monitoring the developments relating to vessels belonging to Russia's shadow fleet as part of its efforts to combat the circumvention of EU sanctions. It also pro-actively reaches out to third countries providing flagging services, raising concerns of environmental protection and maritime safety.

Furthermore, the Commission adopted Delegated Directive 2025/811[1] requiring Ship Reporting Systems (SRS) to include reporting of insurance certificates. This will ensure that all vessels operating in EU vicinity are properly insured and improve the EU's ability to monitor and investigate maritime activities, thereby addressing risks posed by uninsured or unsafe vessels.

[1] OJ L, 2025/811, 28.4.2025https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202500811.