

Middle East

Operations

Tankers

Sounion successfully towed away from Yemeni coastline



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Salvagers successfully towed a Greek-flagged oil tanker that had been ablaze for weeks following attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels to a secure area, preventing any oil spill, the European Union naval mission said yesterday.

The tanker was hit by multiple projectiles from the Houthis of Yemen on August 21, with the crew evacuating and the Houthis then boarding the *Sounion* and detonating a series of explosives.

Laden with 1.1m barrels of crude, the Delta Tankers ship risks becoming the fifth worst tanker spill of all time.

Fires were still visible from its deck as the delicate operation to tow it northwards started over the weekend.

The ship was escorted by three frigates, with helicopters overhead, while three tugs were engaged in the towage operation.

The *Sounion*'s destination is currently unknown with European naval forces merely stating a "safe location".

Salvors are now likely to assess how to proceed with a ship-to-ship transfer to empty the *Sounion*'s cargo of Iraqi heavy crude.

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