



Marine Conservation Project Cleanwreck.org

The Shipwreck Decontamination Project

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Thousands of ships that sank during WWII are leaking oil!

With the disintegration of their rusty tanks, it is **not a question of whether** a “peak leak”, a breakthrough with far-reaching consequences for the environment, will happen, **but when**. Current estimates assume **2.5 to 20 million tons of oil** stored worldwide in these potentially dangerous wrecks – about twice to twenty times as much as the amount that went into the sea in 2010 during the Deepwater Horizon catastrophe. The same applies to other toxic substances such as ammunition.

We must detect, investigate and treat potentially dangerous wrecks now, before they harm fauna and flora. Between 1939 and 1945, more than 300 ships were sunk in the Mediterranean alone, including 20 tankers. Most have still not been located, few have been inspected or even decontaminated. This is where our Marine Conservation Project Clean Wreck comes in, with the aim of tracking down as many of these ticking bombs as possible, making them harmless and to create a broad awareness of the so far little known threat.

In the past, unfortunately, only very moderate efforts were made by the previous German and Austrian federal governments to eliminate the threats posed by ships sunk during the Second World War. The **environmental crimes** caused by the Nazis, **which chronically pollute our oceans**, have been negligently ignored, suppressed or denied in German and Austrian reparation policy to this day. Liability for environmental damage caused by warship wrecks is – incomprehensibly – still a legal grey area. As two of the richest countries in the world, Germany and Austria have not only the resources but also the moral obligation, more than seventy years after their sinking, to finally and without further delay ensure the decontamination of these legacies! **Marine conservation is climate mitigation!**

War profiteers without liability and conscience

Neither companies, nor individuals or their legal successors, have so far been charged for the costs of wreck decontamination. They seized – and inherited – significant assets directly or indirectly related to these potentially dangerous shipwrecks. However, they stubbornly deny their responsibility against better knowledge. **War profiteers**, such as the families of *Krupp, Porsche, Piëch, Siemens* and their companies, *Blohm & Voss, Lürssen, Abeking & Rasmussen, Daimler, MAN, Voestalpine, Deutsche Bank* or *Commerzbank* – to name but a few – made **extremely lucrative deals with the Nazis**. In case of critical self-reflection, they should feel the need to support the removal of their legacies significantly! **But they do not.**

No fat profits

Cleanwreck.org is an independent, international **non-profit project** that is permanently financed by donations and the marketing of the diving rights to the shipwrecks it decontaminates. However, our project **does not generate fat profits** – we are **not treasure-hunters!** All revenues from the economic use of the found wrecks flow – until the last remaining potentially dangerous wreck – back into the **search and decontamination!** For this reason, Cleanwreck.org is naturally completely unattractive to investors who are only interested in profit. We would, however, in any case – not least to keep our independence – always refrain from offering such people an opportunity to enrich themselves in the removal of environmental crimes that have only grown out of **greed for power and profit.**

Nonetheless, the funds for the **basic investment** in our research project must be **raised now!**

Claims from the federal governments and the economies of Germany and Austria:

1. The granting of federal bank guarantees

We demand that the governments provide **federal bank guarantees** for an interest-free, repayable investment loan of **€ 2 million**, as a public-sector contribution to the project. In this context, German and Austrian companies (shipyards, outfitters, etc.) are generally given preference when awarding contracts. **We do not claim any public funds**, but only the assumption of guarantees, of roughly 2 Eurocent per citizen!

2. The diving rights and economic rights of use of German shipwrecks

We claim the exclusive **diving rights** to all German warship wrecks – especially those from the WWII – which we locate or decontaminate, to **finance the running costs** of Cleanwreck.org and the **economic use** of the same to finance the **decontamination** (again preferably in cooperation with specialized German / Austrian companies).

3. Legal and diplomatic support and priority for marine protection

We expect active legal and diplomatic support in connection with wreck findings of **foreign ships**, negotiations about **diving rights**, enforcement of **economic rights**. Commitment to internationally accepted regulations for the unhindered removal of toxic and hazardous substances from German and other shipwrecks – especially those declared as naval war graves. In cases of doubt, marine protection must be given binding priority over competing interests. **Marine conservation prior naval war grave protection!**

4. Decontamination fund

We call on the German and Austrian economies – especially **corporations, companies, families or individuals** who directly or indirectly, in any way, benefited from the ships sunk during the Second World War – **to set up a fund to support decontaminations**.

The search for the wrecks cannot be delayed. Even in the best case scenario, all we can achieve in the future is damage limitation only. We cannot afford to deny our responsibility – as we have done up to now – and instead stand idly by and watch the shipwrecks continue to contaminate our oceans. This ignorance is as serious as the historical environmental crimes themselves!

[Act now and sign our claims to the government and the industry here!](#)