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CONCERNING: **Draft Implementing Decision to add two Indian beaching yards to the 16th European List of approved ship recycling facilities under Regulation (EU) No 1257/2013**

Dear Minister Sigrun Aasland,

Oslo/Brussels, 18. September 2026

Ahead of the Ship Recycling Expert Group Meeting on 21 September, we write to you on behalf of Bellona and the NGO Shipbreaking Platform, a global coalition of environmental and human rights NGOs, to share serious concerns related to the European Commission's proposal to add two Indian beaching yards – YSI Recycling and Shree Ram Vessel Scrap – to the 16th version of the European List of approved ship recycling facilities.

We urge Norway to (1) raise the concerns outlined below at the Ship Recycling Expert Group Meeting on 21 September, and (2) take these concerns into account as reasons to reject the proposal should the Commission maintain its draft Implementing Decision and ask Member States to vote on the issue.

The inclusion of two Indian beaching yards on the European List would seriously undermine key EU policies on strategic autonomy and resilience; decarbonisation; and hazardous waste management. We outline these concerns and why YSI Recycling and Shree Ram Vessel Scrap *do not meet the requirements for safe and environmentally sound ship recycling* as required by the EU Ship Recycling Regulation (EU) No 1257/2013 in [our submission to the public consultation](#)¹, and provide some further details concerning the inspection reports and practices at the two yards below.

Importantly, a diverse and important range of stakeholders, including the European steel sector; European recycling sector; trade unions; and numerous NGOs, share our concerns. In a [letter signed by EUROFER, Recycling Europe, IndustriAll Europe, the European Environmental Bureau \(EEB\), Transport & Environment \(T&E\) and the NGO Shipbreaking Platform](#)² we strongly call on Commissioner Roswell and Commissioner Séjourné to immediately withdraw the proposal to include YSI Recyclers and Shree Ram Vessel Scrap on the European List.

More specifically, we warn that the Commission's proposal runs counter to the **Industrial Maritime Strategy** which calls upon expansion of the European ship recycling sector³, as well as the **Clean Industrial Deal**'s objectives to accelerate the decarbonisation of the steel sector; the circular

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/16573-Ship-recycling-European-list-of-ship-recycling-facilities-16th-edition-/F33566988_en

² https://cdn-shipbreakingplatform-org-pui3.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/LetterRoswallSejourne16thList_-1.pdf

³ European Commission (2026), *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the EU Industrial Maritime Strategy*, COM(2026) 111 final, Brussels, 4 March 2026.

transition; and ensure the EU's material strategic autonomy. Approving substandard yards in India will seriously aggravate the unfair competition EU/EFTA based ship recycling facilities approved on the European list already face⁴.

Permitting EU-flagged vessels, which remain subject to regulatory responsibility of the Union regardless of their location, to be dismantled in non-OECD countries where equivalent standards and protection levels cannot be guaranteed furthermore **contradicts the policy rationale underpinning Regulation (EU) 2024/1157 on waste shipment's export prohibition** and will rubberstamp the continued export of harm caused by hazardous waste to the Global South.

As outlined in in our submission to the public consultation and in Annex I below, **YSI Recyclers and Shree Ram Vessel Scrap are not able to provide for safe and environmentally sound ship recycling in line with the requirements set out in Article 13(1) and 15(5) of the EU Ship Recycling Regulation.**

According to those provisions, ship recycling facilities must be *designed, constructed, and operated in a safe and environmentally sound manner*. Operations must be conducted from *fixed structures and on impermeable floors with effective drainage*. Any *leakage* resulting from the dismantling operations *must be controlled* to prevent harm to human health and the environment. All wastes must be managed in way that *does not expose workers, local communities and the environment to harm*.

YSI Recyclers and Shree Ram Vessel Scrap, alike the entire Indian shipbreaking industry in Alang-Sosiya, rely on the beaching method. **This method is not allowed in any EU Member State and directly prevents compliance with the EU Ship Recycling Regulation's Article 13(1) which requires controlling all leakages and conducting all operations on impermeable floors.**

Indeed, the beaching method inherently comes with risk of uncontrolled leakage as ships are ramped up at full speed and taken apart directly on permeable tidal mudflats. Analyses of water, sediment, and fish shared in the inspection reports of the two Indian beaching yards show particularly high concentrations of mercury and aluminium in fish, and very high concentrations of substances such as lead, PFAS, and TBT in sediments. This pollution puts the health of workers and local communities at serious risk, including harm to the foetus, nervous system, immune system, as well as cancer. Heavy metal levels in water were furthermore found higher than in sediments, indicating a substantial and continuous discharge of highly hazardous chemicals and metals from the facilities.

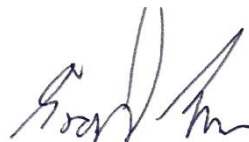
The EU has a responsibility to stop the export its hazardous waste to third countries and all facilities on the European List should be held accountable to the same high standards as EU/EFTA based facilities. We therefore urge you to reject the Commission's proposal to include YSI Recyclers and Shree Ram Vessel Scrap on the European List.

We remain available should you have any questions.

Yours Sincerely,



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⁴ <https://www.transportenvironment.org/articles/most-eu-ships-are-being-scraped-in-south-asia-despite-sufficient-domestic-recycling-capacity-confirms-new-study>

ANNEX I

Where YSI Recyclers and Shree Ram Vessel scrap fail to meet the requirements of EU Ship Recycling Regulation (EU) No 1257/2013

Legal Requirement

Article 13(1)(b): it is designed, constructed and operated in a safe and environmentally sound manner;

Article 13(1)(c): a ship recycling facility operates from built structures.

Concerns

Although both yards have installed concrete floors in their front and back yards where secondary cutting operations are performed, **primary cutting still takes place directly in the intertidal zone**, on a permeable tidal mudflat.

The Technical Guidance Note 2.2.1. clearly states that “**both measures and infrastructure** [must be] in place to prevent leakages to the environment.” Reliance on operational procedures (tidal-window sequencing, slag collection, debris control) alone thus cannot substitute for the permanent physical infrastructure the provisions require. Indeed, breaking ships directly on tidal mudflats would never be allowed in the EU.

YSI RECYCLERS

- No infrastructure, nor measures to control leakage during the **grounding of the vessel**.
- **Primary cutting is conducted in the intertidal zone** (p.1) and protection of the intertidal zone depends on a **series of operational procedures** (use of slag collection devices, debris control, tank cleaning...) rather than permanent physical infrastructures.
- **No ship recycling operations were being performed at the time of inspection**. The operational procedure described was last checked by EU inspectors in 2020, and satellite evidence shows that vessels scrapped at YSI have not followed the written procedure as the double hull of vessels has been cut below the slope and drain.

SHREE RAM

- No infrastructure, nor measures to control of leakage during the **grounding of the vessel**.
- Instead of built infrastructures designed to control accidental spills, the **facility relies exclusively on a sequence of operational procedures** that include cleaning, cutting and closing the hull to prevent water ingress. DNV states it is “*imperative*” that the full sequence is completed within a single low-tide window, i.e. within 6 to 8 hours (p.5). This seems, at the very best, to be challenging, if not unrealistic.

Legal Requirement

Article 13(1)(f): a ship recycling facility prevents adverse effects on human health and the environment, including the **demonstration of the control of any leakage, in particular in intertidal zones**.

Article 13(1)(g): a ship recycling facility ensures safe and environmentally sound management and storage of hazardous materials and waste, including: (i) the containment of all hazardous materials present on board **during the entire ship recycling process so as to prevent any release of those materials into the environment**; and in addition, the handling of hazardous materials, and of waste generated during the ship recycling process, **only on impermeable floors with effective drainage systems**.

Concerns

During the grounding of vessels in Alang the ships' antifouling paints will be grinded off as the ship is propelled or pulled through the mudflat over long distances. There is no possibility to contain this leakage and thus not possible to meet with the Technical Guidance Note 2.2.2. which states that the facilities *"need to not only contain hazardous fluids, but also to **counter the possibility of hazardous materials being washed away into the environment.**"* Indeed, the inspection reports themselves recognize this concern and thus state that vessels with TBT and/or Cybutryne⁵ containing paints must be excluded by the yards. The inspection reports, however, ignore the many other materials contained in anti-fouling paints, some of which the toxicity is enhanced when accumulated.

At both yards primary cutting is conducted directly on permeable tidal mudflats. This would never be allowed in the EU. The Technical Guidance Note 2.2.2. further states that *"The interior of the ship itself can be considered as an impermeable floor in the context of the Regulation if:*

- (a) the **hull is sealed, integrity of the bottom of the hull has been analysed and has not been compromised;***
- (c) **oil containment booms are deployed from the ship's hull to the shore/quay prior to any activity posing a threat to the environment and oil skimmers are readily available;***
- (e) the **release of paint chips and toxic coatings into the sea/permeable surface is controlled;***
- (f) as early as is feasible, **transfer of the remainder of the ship's bottom itself to impermeable floor areas** is carried out in a safe and environmentally sound manner, e.g. through the use of cranes, sleds or beams coupled with winches, to **allow for the cutting of the bottom to take place above an impermeable floor with effective drainage system**, including above a floating structure such as a floating dry dock, a flat top barge or equivalent with an effective drainage system.*

Spills cannot be adequately contained and mitigated on a tidal mudflat, as exposed by the recent oil spill at Priya Blue's shipbreaking plot V1/V2 in June 2026.⁶ At both yards, primary cutting is conducted directly on the permeable tidal mudflat, including the ships' double hull.

The inspection reports themselves identify that oil booms are not possible to use due to the tide. EU evaluators furthermore already concluded that the absence or inadequate use of oil booms was considered a "deficiency" in Turkey.⁷

YSI

- There was no vessel at the facility at the time of inspection, and DNV inspectors were therefore not able to verify pulling and cutting operations above the drain line, debris collection, etc. during their last inspection (p.2). Satellite imagery of YSI Recyclers 2022 indicate that, in reality, the double bottom is cut below the ramp and drainage (see Annex II for pictures)
- The inspection report's section on compliance with Art.13(1)(f) does not refer to any oil boom or any other example of control systems mentioned in the Technical Guidance Note.

⁵ While TBT has been banned for many years, Cybutryne has just recently been banned. Ship owners must either remove or seal paint layers containing these materials. Sealing is by far the most likely option as it is cheaper and requires less lay-up time. Cybutryne has been widely used and thus many ships are likely to have underlying paint layers containing Cybutryne.

⁶ [Press Release - Massive Oil Spill at India's "Best Shipbreaking Yard" Raises Serious Concerns Over Hong Kong Convention Certification. NGOs call for a global ban on beaching](#)

⁷ Unannounced inspection of ÖGE Ship Recycling Facility in Türkiye clearly states that *"Lack of an oil boom around the vessel is a potential non-compliance as it is not demonstrated how the facility controls or prevents containment of leakages from the vessel."* This was also considered a deficiency during the unannounced inspection of Leyal, Anadolu Gemi Sokum, Öge and BMS Gemi.

• YSI commits to restrict dismantling to ships without TBT or Cybutryne (p.39), but does not stop the potential release of other harmful substances from paint. • The inspection report highlights that <i>“observed metal residues might be artificially low because the tides are washing deposited residues to the sea”</i> (p.6) indicating that residues are believed to be left in the intertidal zone and released into the sea.
SHREE RAM
• The inspection report confirms that the ship’s double bottom is cut while the vessel is grounded in the intertidal zone, i.e. on a permeable floor (p.28). • If a slipway has been installed since the time of inspection, compliance must be certified following a site inspection as per Art.15(4). The Commission cannot rely on self-reported, uninspected claims as equivalent evidence. It should furthermore be noted that such a slip way will not prevent leakage during the grounding of the vessel, nor if primary cutting is still conducted on the intertidal mudflat. • The inspection report states that oil booms are not suitable to use due to the significant tidal range. • The inspection report acknowledges that <i>“evaluators have a general concern of possible release of harmful substances from anti-fouling paint (TBT and Cybutryne) to sediments if ships are being pulled when in contact with the seabed of tidal beaches.”</i> (p.18) Shree Ram commits to restrict dismantling to ships without TBT or Cybutryne (p.18), but it does not stop the potential release of other harmful substances from paint.
Legal Requirement
Article 13(d) it establishes management and monitoring systems, procedures and techniques which have the purpose of preventing, reducing, minimising and to the extent practicable eliminating: (i) health risks to the workers concerned and to the population in the vicinity of the ship recycling facility, and (ii) adverse effects on the environment caused by ship recycling;
Concerns
To conclude compliance with Article 13(d), EU evaluators base their analysis on an assessment report on environmental conditions in Alang dated from October 2024 (Shree Ram p.14; YSI p.2). The report finds increased levels of copper, chromium, cadmium, lead and mercury exceeding EU thresholds, with levels increasing compared to similar studies from 2017 and 2020. Yet, the evaluators conclusion is simply that <i>“these results [are] abnormally high and question if the units are incorrect or if sampling is conducted in a representative manner.”</i> (Shree Ram p.15; YSI p.3). The Commission’s inspection reports also identify huge discrepancies between estimated annual wastewater amounts and those actually delivered for disposal by both facilities. For example, Shree Ram sent only 30 tonnes of contaminated rainwater to the effluent treatment plant, whereas the evaluators' own calculations put the theoretical annual volume of rainwater falling on the yard closer to 18,500 tonnes (p.31). This tends to indicate that abnormally high quantities of wastewater have been considered uncontaminated and released into the sea. Evaluators set out a series of recommendations for future assessments, including assessing all other relevant hazardous materials listed in Annex I and II of the EU SRR, implying that not all of them currently are included (Shree Ram p.15; YSI p.3). At facility level, environmental monitoring consistently benchmarks results against US EPA, Canadian, or Indian standards rather than the EU thresholds, and where EU or WHO comparisons are made, contamination is found to be severe (see below).

The Commission's conclusion that Article 13(d) is complied with is not supported by the environmental evidence its own evaluators gathered.

YSI

- **Soil monitoring** is missing (p.4).
- For **sediment in water**, results found levels of lead and copper exceeding Indian regulations and US EPA thresholds, which are higher than EU ones (p.5).
- **Sediments monitoring** used detection limits too high for several EU SRR-required substances (PCBs, PBBs, PBDEs, HBCDD, PFOS, TBT) to confirm their actual absence (p.6).
- **Water testing** found iron, zinc, copper (and near-limit lead) above various non-EU national norms. Samples results were not compared to EU norms directly (p.6-7). Water testing *“does not provide results for TBT and no “Norms” for several of the compounds listed by the EU SRR, such as total Chromium, hexavalent Chromium, PBBs, and PBDEs”* (p.7).

SHREE RAM

- **Soil monitoring** is missing (p.16).
- *“The analysis did not include all required parameters”* (p.17). Missing parameters are not given.
- **Sediment samples** found chromium, Copper, Lead, Nickel and Zinc exceeding Canadian permissible limits (p.17). Detection limits for PGOS and brominated flame retardants were relatively high, *“as a result, significant contamination levels may be present before they are detected.”* (p.18). Results also revealed high concentrations of PFOS and TBT (p.18).
- **Water samples** found Iron and Zinc above US norms, levels of PFOS, Cadmium, Mercury and Lead *“very high compared to European standards”* and *“analysis of oil and grease were present above norms”* (p.19).
- **Fish samples** from local markets near Alang showed aluminum, iron and mercury at 68x, 285x and 6x WHO limits respectively, plus high bacterial contamination, with no confirmation that nearby residents were ever given dietary advice (p.20).

Legal Requirement

Article 13(1)(a): *In order to be included in the European List, a ship recycling facility is **authorised by its competent authorities** to conduct ship recycling operations.*

Concerns

While an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to be able to conduct ship recycling operations in the EU, in line with Directive 2011/92/EU, the entire shipbreaking sector in Alang-Sosiya has not issued neither an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) nor a Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification.

Legal Requirement

Article 15(5): *For the purposes of Article 13, with regard to the waste recovery or disposal operation concerned, environmentally sound management may only be assumed to be in place provided the ship recycling company can demonstrate that the waste management facility which receives the waste will be operated in accordance with human health and environmental protection standards that are **broadly equivalent** to relevant international and Union standards.*

Technical guideline 2.2.5.: *“The requirement does not imply full compliance with EU requirements stemming from legal acts other than the Regulation and other international standards, but rather the need to ensure that the requirements/standards applied in the waste management facility **ensure a similar level of protection of human health and the environment.**”*

Concerns

Indian emission limit thresholds to air from waste incineration are up to 5 times higher for dust, SO_x, HCl, HF and TOC compared to EU standards. Consequently, samples shared with EU inspectors in 2024 found levels at GEPIL (the main incinerator used by yards) exceeding EU thresholds, with total dust measured at 29.4 mg/Nm³, HCl at 18.5 mg/Nm³ and SO₂ at 78.7 mg/Nm³ (p.69) Samples shared from BEIL incineration facility (another facility used by yards) also exceeded EU thresholds. The evaluators also share that monitoring records from GEPIL found PM₁₀ *“in concentration above threshold limit*. GEPIL's incinerator was furthermore not found *“not suitable to handle hazardous waste, such as persistent organic pollutants (POPs)”*. BEIL is offered as an interim alternative, although the facility's permit expired in April 2025 and **the facility reported to DNV not having yet received any waste from Alang ship breaking yards.** While the Commission states that they have very recently received information that the new GEPIL incinerator is now operational, this has **not been verified by inspection** and the Commission relies only on commitments that EU thresholds will be respected.

The Commission inspection reports note that **Indian threshold limits for discharge of wastewater are not considered “broadly equivalent” to EU standards**, and therefore they *“expect”* that individual facilities use EU limits as reference for testing prior to any discharge to the sea. GPCB will not monitor this, and neither YSI Recyclers, nor Shree Ram Vessel Scrap have provided any evidence that this is done at yard level or included in their operational plans.

The Indian Recycling of Ships Regulations 2026 specifies that recovered Asbestos Containing Materials are to be sold for reuse as permitted by law.

Recovered steel sent to local re-rolling mills is heated at low temperatures and processed into construction rebar. **Re-rolling recovered ship plate directly into construction rebar is explicitly excluded by both EU (EN 10080) and Indian standards (IS 1786:2008).** The inspection reports, which only individually checked 2 of many listed steel mills, do not verify whether these facilities, or any of the others listed, engage in direct re-rolling of ship plate into reinforcing bar, in breach of European and Indian standards, despite it being a known destination for scrap steel in Alang. More broadly, there is strikingly little information on how steel is actually processed downstream in Alang, even though this should be a central element of any credible downstream waste management assessment (steel constitutes the overwhelming majority of a ship's mass). Since the rerolling mills Shree Ram and YSI depend on are all small, they do not fall within the scope of the IED, exempting them from BAT-based-review.

While the Technical Guidance Note 2.2.5 states that standards must be applied to *“ensure a similar level of protection of human health and the environment.”* That is an outcome-based test, so a single non-equivalent parameter may be compensated or explained, but when **multiple, unresolved gaps** exist simultaneously, the “similar level of protection” cannot be concluded overall. Reading Article 15(5) to tolerate any number of gaps, provided each is argued individually and never aggregated, would let a facility fail multiple separate requirements and still pass, effectively emptying the “broadly equivalent” standard in Article 15(5) of meaning.

Shortcomings in the underlying assessment cannot be remedied by attaching conditions.