

Regulation

First India recyclers set to be approved by Brussels

Alang recyclers are linked to EU list for the first time



Shree Ram Recycling is one of two ship recyclers included in the latest EU approved list update. Photo: Shree Ram Recycling

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Two Indian facilities have been included in a proposed update of the European Union list of approved ship recyclers.

Scrap tonnage linked to European owners or trade, and subject to EU regulations, can be recycled only at facilities on the list.

While the list has slowly grown in numbers and includes facilities in Turkey, the UK and other non-EU countries, it does not yet include any Asian facilities.



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In a proposal that is out for public consultation, the European Commission said the two Indian yards, YSI Recyclers and Shree Ram, had been assessed and found to comply with the EU Ship Recycling Regulation.

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Although South Asia's ship recyclers dominate the market, they have been shunned from Brussels' list of approved yards due largely to safety and environmental concerns.



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Lobby groups say the beaching method that Asian yards have been using is not environmentally sound, and they point to the injuries and deaths of workers in the past.

Ingvild Jenssen, director of the NGO Shipbreaking Platform, told TradeWinds that the group is assessing the inspection reports for the two Indian yards in detail.

She noted that neither yard's beaching practices would be allowed to be cloned on a tidal mudflat in the EU.

“Allowing such practices on the EU List is a double standard which will clearly undermine the EU's own ship recycling sector,” she said.

She also noted that another Alang recycler considered for approval has not been added to the list.

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“We also note that Priya Blue has not been approved due to the multiple deficiencies identified in their inspection report.

“The recent oil spill at their yard further showcases that procedures declared on paper are not followed in practice, and that it is impossible to contain an oil spill when operating on a tidal mudflat.”

However, since the three main countries, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, have invested in yard improvements in recent years, and signed up to the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, there have been calls, notably for those in Alang, to be allowed onto the EU list.

They argue that the facilities have been substantially improved to address safety and environmental concerns.

Bimco welcomed the proposed inclusion of the two facilities, as did the European Community Shipowners' Association (ECSA).

Bimco runs the Ship Recycling Alliance. In a letter to alliance members, it said: "This decision demonstrates that high standards can be achieved in South Asian recycling states and marks a further step towards a more outcome-based approach to regulating ship recycling.



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“However, this can only be considered as the first step in the further global acceptance of the Hong Kong Convention.

“While the additional capacity to the EU list is welcome, the industry will continue to require significantly more approved recycling capacity to meet future demand.”

Bimco said it will be commenting on the public consultation and is asking Ship Recycling Alliance members to submit their own comments.

Sotiris Raptis, ECSA secretary general, called it a long-awaited and welcome step, as Europe’s shipowners need more approved recycling capacity.



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“We now count on policymakers to swiftly finalise and adopt the List so that the two facilities can be approved without further delay, and we hope to see more compliant non-OECD yards making the List in the future,” he said.

“Addressing the capacity challenge is essential if the European List is to work as an incentive for safe and environmentally sound ship recycling worldwide.”

The consultation for the 16th update of the approved list of recyclers closes at the end of August.

This story was updated to include a response from the NGO Shipbreaking Platform

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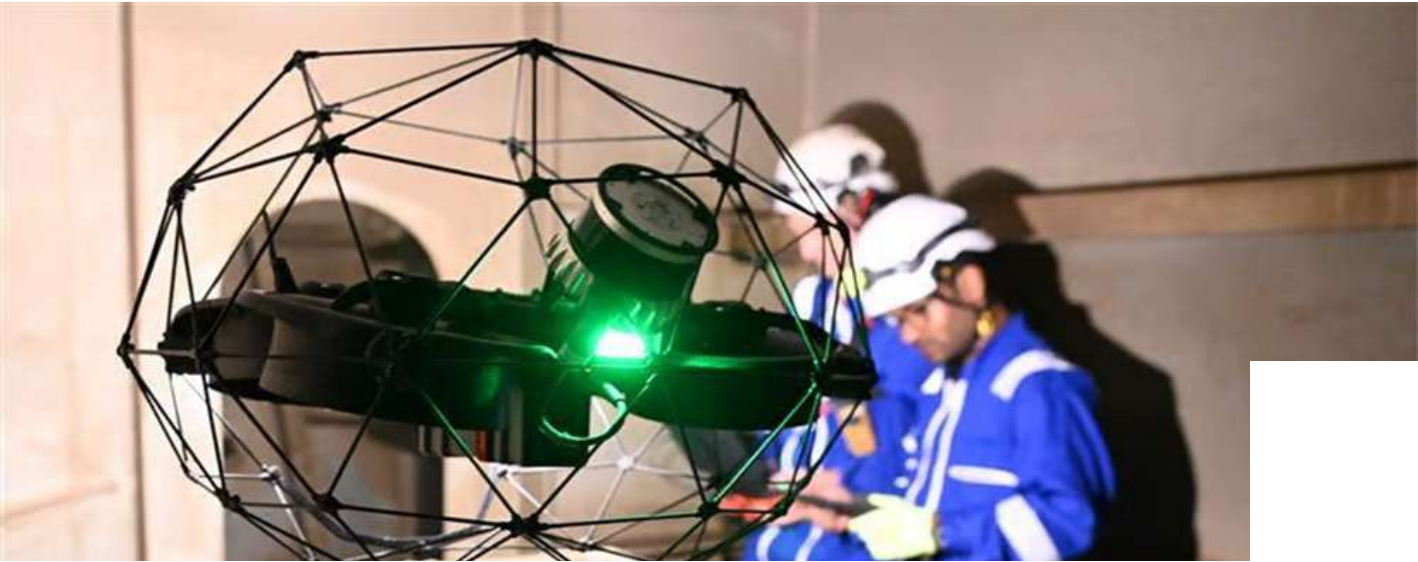
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