

# Major pollution as the X-Press Pearl container ship is in flames off the coast of Sri Lanka

Sentinel-1 CSAR IW acquired on 27 May 2021 at 00:25:12 UTC  
Sentinel-1 CSAR IW acquired on 27 May 2021 at 00:25:37 UTC  
Sentinel-3 SLSTR RBT acquired on 28 May 2021 at 04:39:04 UTC  
Sentinel-2 MSI acquired on 30 May 2021 at 04:57:01 UTC

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Keyword(s): Emergency, man-made disaster, marine security, pollution, fishing, Sri Lanka



[2D Layerstack](#)

Fig. 1 - S1 (27.05.2021) - On 20 May, an intense fire began on X-Press Pearl, a 37 000 T, 186m long, Singaporean container ship built in 2021 [2D view](#)

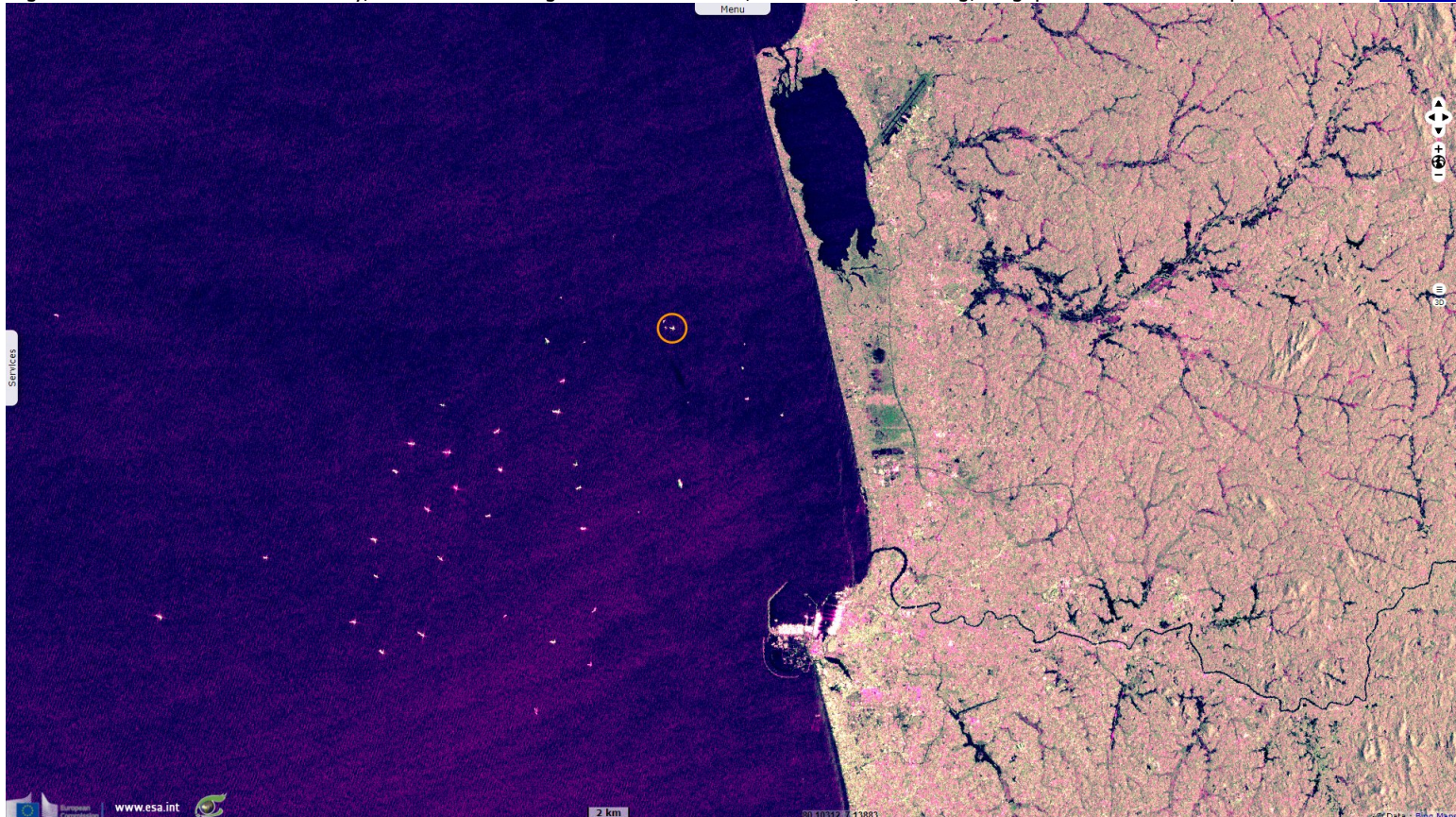
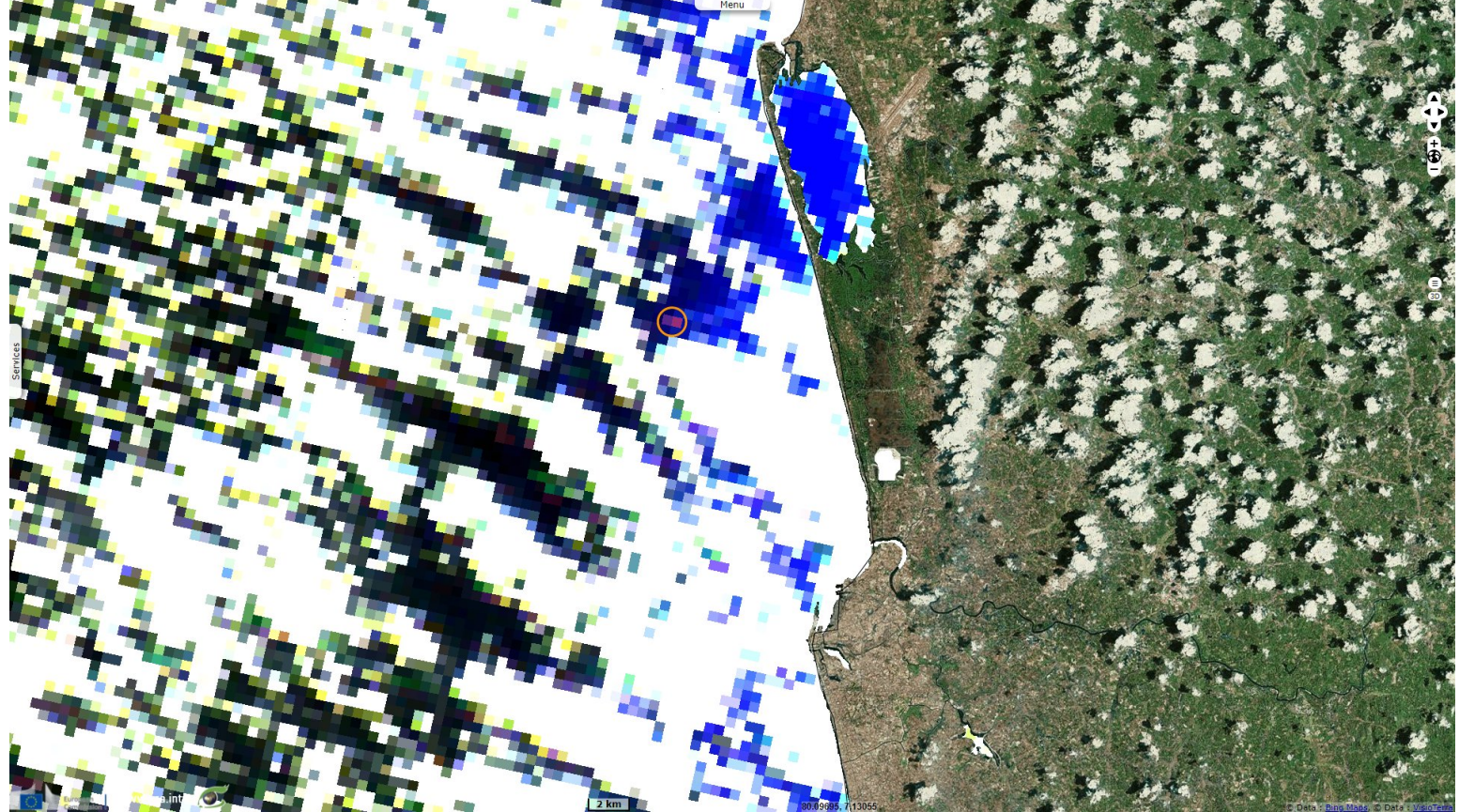
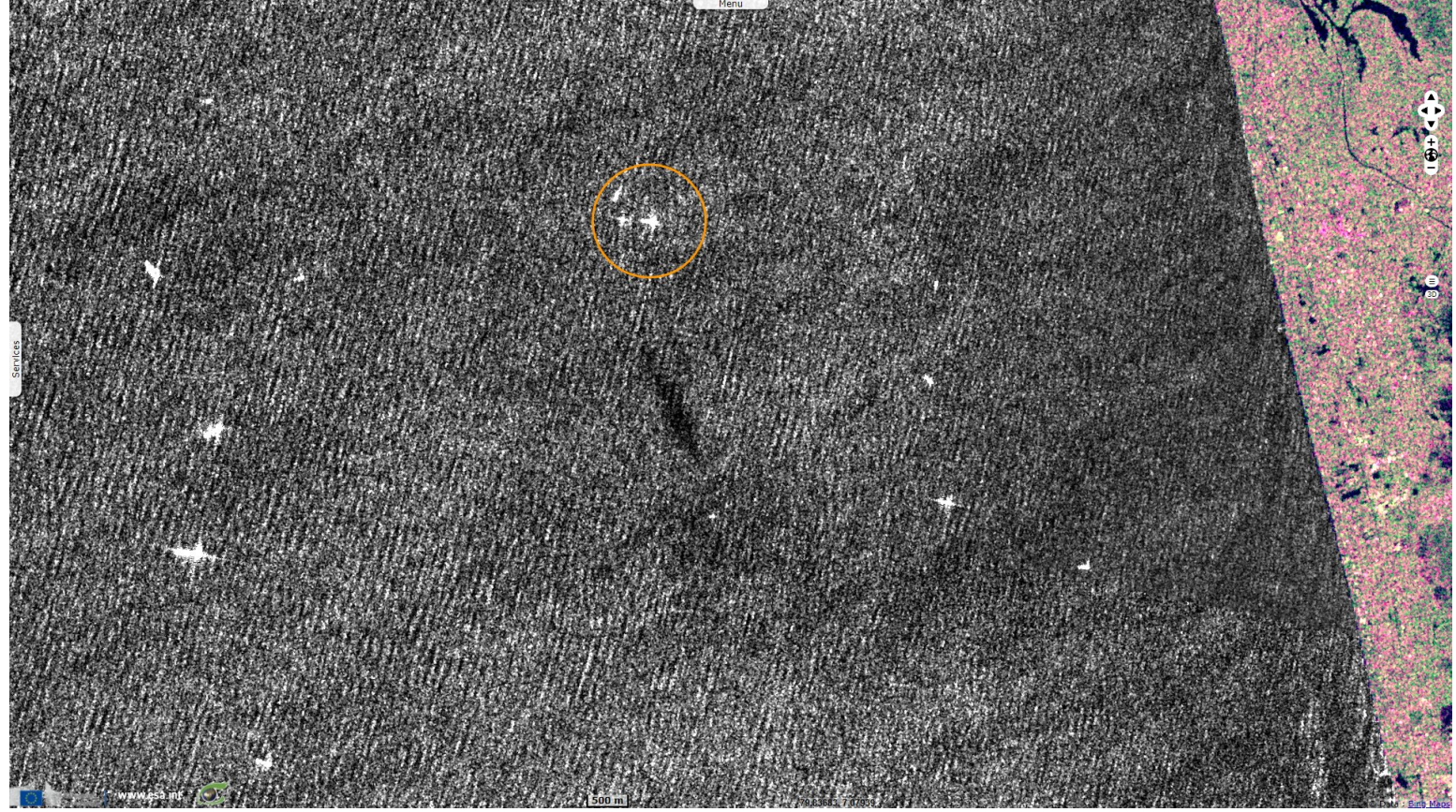


Fig. 2 - S3 SLSTR (28.05.2021) - The fire is visible in SWIR, showing here in red. It destroyed a large part of its cargo of 1500 containers. [2D view](#)



But 8 containers fell into the Indian Ocean. Millions of polyethylene pellets have covered Sri Lankan beaches, forcing a ban on fishing in an 80 km area.

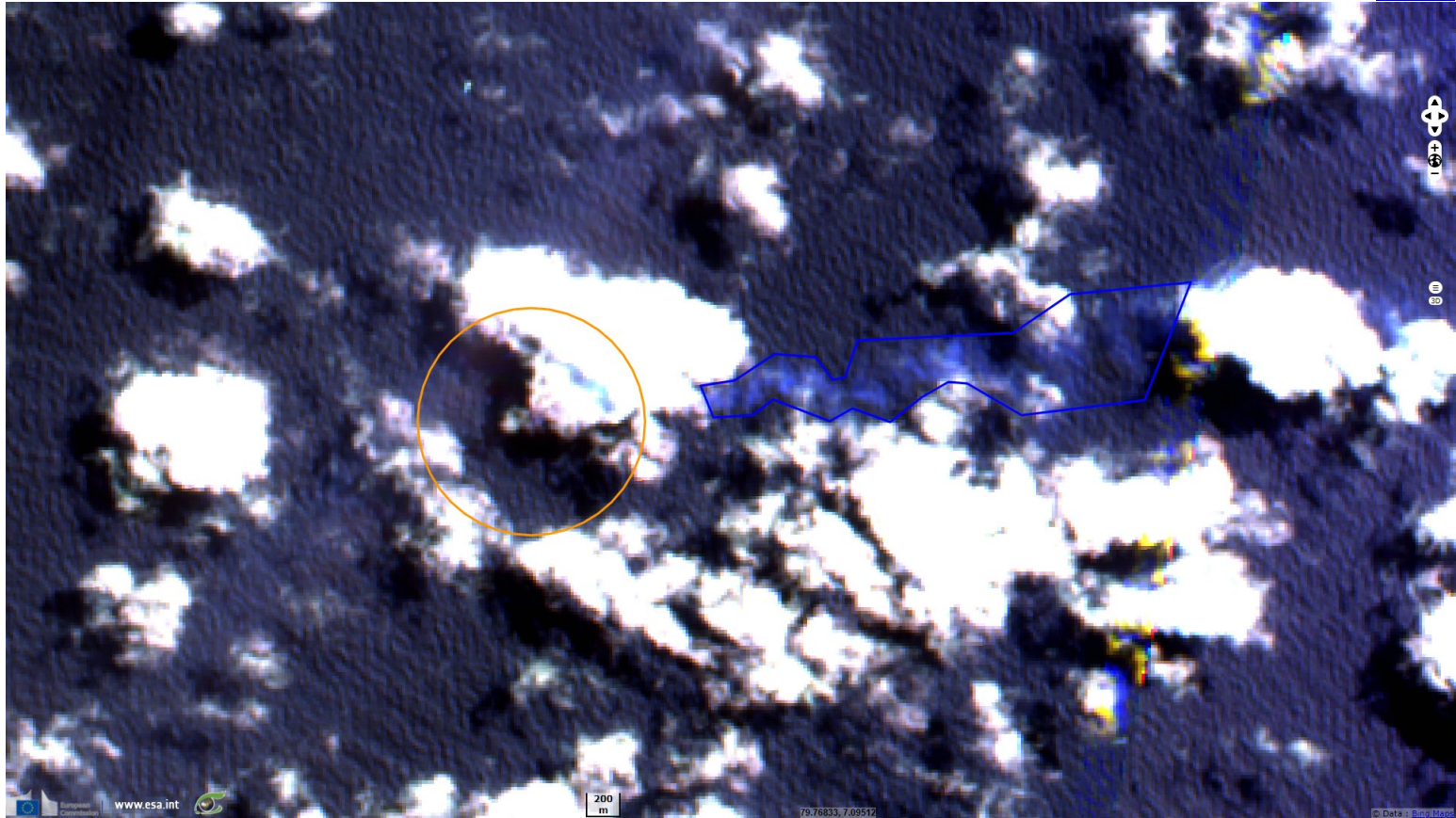
Fig. 3 - S1 (27.05.2021) - Sri Lankan Navy deployed two offshore patrol vessels in firefighting rescue operations, visible 500m at west. [2D view](#)



It triggered a Tier II oil spill warning with the oil slick possibly visible here south of the ships.

Fig. 4 - S2 (30.05.2021) - The smoke shows in bluish et east. The ecological damage are still being assessed, but it's the worst pollution Sri Lanka has ever seen.

[2D view](#)



*The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Space Agency or the European Union. Contains modified Copernicus Sentinel data 2021, processed by VisioTerra.*

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