

Emergency declared after Galapagos ship grounding

February 5 2015



A Green sea turtle swims near San Cristobal island in the Galapagos archipelago, where a cargo ship has stranded loaded with supplies that include hazardous materials

Ecuador activated a state of emergency Wednesday at the famous Galapagos Islands, authorities said, a week after the stranding of a cargo ship loaded with supplies that included hazardous materials.

The alert "will allow authorities to have immediate (financial) means to

deal with the situation," a Galapagos National Park spokesman told AFP, amid fears the boat poses an imminent risk to the [fragile ecosystem](#) of the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

On January 28, the ship Floreana, which runs supplies to the Galapagos, ran aground at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno. It was carrying 1,400 tons of cargo, including food and hazardous substances, as well as some 10,000 gallons of fuel.

There has been some leakage into the pristine waters but that has been controlled by booms. Meanwhile the ship, whose hull was destroyed, is in the process of being refloated and removed.

It is at least the third such incident in the past year at the islands.

Located some 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) off Ecuador's Pacific coast, the Galapagos are famed for the large number of species that have developed there in isolation.

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