

# 'Dangerous materials' in sunken cargo ship off France: authorities

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The Italian cargo ship "Grande America" sank off the French Atlantic coast after a fire got out of control

French authorities said Wednesday that an Italian cargo ship which sank in the Atlantic was carrying 45 containers of "dangerous materials."

"For now the possible pollution risk consists mainly of the 2,200 tons of heavy fuel oil onboard," Jean-Louis Lozier, head of the regional maritime authority, told reporters in Brest on France's Brittany [coast](#).

The "Grande America" was en route from Hamburg, Germany, to Casablanca in Morocco when a fire broke out late Sunday.

All 27 people onboard were evacuated on Monday night as the fire worsened, causing the ship to sink about 260 kilometres (160 miles) southwest of Penmarc'h on France's Atlantic coast.

Lozier said the ship's Italian owner Grimaldi had indicated that 365 [shipping containers](#) were onboard, "of which 45 are carrying [dangerous materials](#)," as well as around 2,000 vehicles.

He declined to identify what might be in the containers.

Escaped fuel could begin reaching the French coast along the Gironde and Charente-Maritime departments near Bordeaux in the coming days based on current wind forecasts, Lozier said.

Environment minister Francois de Rugy said Tuesday that anti-pollution measures were already being taken.

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