

Image: Suez Canal traffic jam seen from space

March 29 2021



Credit: Contains modified Copernicus Sentinel data (2021), processed by ESA,
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The enormous Ever Given container ship, wedged in Egypt's Suez Canal, is visible in new images captured by the Copernicus Sentinel-1 mission.

The giant [container ship](#) ran aground in the canal on 23 March on its

journey from China to the Netherlands. The image on the left, captured on 21 March, shows routine maritime traffic in the canal with vessels visible every 2 to 3 km. The image on the right, captured on 25 March, shows the 400 m-ship blocking the canal.

The canal connects Port Said on the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean via the Egyptian city of Suez on the Red Sea. The blockage has delayed hundreds of tankers and vessels in reaching their destination, and more [maritime traffic](#) is still heading to the crucial waterway. Ships can be seen accumulating in the Gulf of Suez.

Tug boats are working hard to dislodge the 200 000 ton ship, however Egyptian authorities say it is unclear when the route will reopen.

The two identical Copernicus Sentinel-1 satellites carry radar instruments to provide an all-weather, day-and-night supply of imagery of Earth's surface, making it ideal to monitor ship traffic.

The sea surface reflects the radar signal away from the satellite, and makes water appear dark in the image. This contrasts with metal objects, in this case the ships in the bay, which appear as bright dots in the dark waters.

Provided by European Space Agency

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