

In February 2024, the Sea Punk I starts its second search and rescue operation in the Mediterranean. On 15 February, we leave the port of Augusta, Sicily. We make our next stop off Lampedusa to borrow two more rafts from friendly NGOs. Training sessions are held with the crew until they are handed over. During the night, we set off in calm seas for the area of operation, the northernmost point of which we reach **on the morning of 16 February**. From here, the Sea Punk I heads south to the area off the coastal seas of Tunisia and Libya.

In the afternoon, we receive a distress call from a **blue wooden boat without fuel with 40 people on board**. Unfortunately, the boat cannot be located and we coordinate with our colleagues from the Aita Mari and search for another emergency. And unfortunately again, this one cannot be found either and at dusk we search for the blue wooden boat again. **However, even with assistance from the air, the boat could not be located**. During the night, we receive further reports of an emergency in which the engine is no longer running and water is entering the boat. With high waves, there are said to be **around 50 people on board**, several of whom require medical assistance. Night has fallen. The night is dark. Far away from any civilized light pollution, we can see the stars above us.



At 2 a.m. on Saturday, we point our searchlights into the sky in the hope that the people on the wooden boat can see them. **And eventually they see us, and we see their mobile phone lights**.

When we arrive at the boat at around 4 a.m., we find one person over 80 years old and one seriously ill person among the **54 people**. The boat is overloaded, no longer seaworthy and the people have been traveling for over 30 hours on the increasingly rough water. They are exhausted and dehydrated. Our crew distributes life jackets, water and food to the shipwrecked people.

The sick person on board the boat is in a very bad condition. He is very seasick and needs urgent medical attention. We inform the relevant Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre and **request a medical evacuation**. We use our RHIB (an inflatable boat for the open sea) to transport the sick person and a relative onto the Sea Punk I to receive emergency treatment from our medical team. As we cannot take everyone on board, **our RHIB accompanies the stabilized boat** and, at a safe distance, the Sea Punk I as well.

The rescue control centers advise us to continue north, the people on the boat are confused by this announcement, they have been on a barely sea-



worthy boat for far too long. With the help of the relative on board the Sea Punk I, we manage to persuade the passengers on the wooden boat to travel this route with us.

The tireless RHIB crew is supplied with coffee and we continue our journey towards Lampedusa.

The patient on the Sea Punk I is getting visibly worse.

The relevant rescue centers still refuse to take the patient on board.



About 30 kilometers off the coast of Lampedusa, **shortly before 13:00, the Lampedusa coastguard finally takes charge of all the shipwrecked people, including the medical emergency.** The crew is relieved.

And exhausted. We also realize that with the remaining fuel for our RHIBs, it would be almost impossible to repeat such a long escort of another emergency. The Sea Punk heads back into the

Tunisian corridor, but is not yet ready for action again. The crew needs to rest and the reserves are checked. The following morning there are 1.5 meter high waves, we hope that there are no boats on the way. The next day the weather is supposed to improve again, so we decide to stay in the area. However, the following day brings even rougher weather and we seek shelter near Lampedusa. As the forecasts for the next few days do not promise any improvement,

we set off on the long 'journey home' to Sicily.

The entire organisation thanks the very well-coordinated crew for their efforts! Many thanks also to all donors and supporters on land.

Sea rescue is a promise - and with your support, we were able to fulfil this promise once again.

Thank you!
Your Sea Punks

