

# No golf for salvage expert Nick Sloane

ROME, ITALY: After rescuing a burning ship from pirate-infested waters off Yemen and salvaging a sinking oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico, South African salvage master Nick Sloane faces his biggest test yet off an idyllic Mediterranean island.



Nick Sloane will oversee attempts to refloat the rusting hulk of the Costa Concordia where it will be sold as scrap. Image: [The Parbuckling Project](#)

The 52-year-old says the attempt to float the Costa Concordia cruise ship which beached on Monday (14 July), is his most challenging yet in a career that has taken him to six continents and two war zones.

The Zambia-born Sloane was flown to the Italian island of Giglio in 2012 from New Zealand, where he was working on a spill from the MV Rena oil tanker, to tackle the biggest ever salvage operation of a passenger ship.

He has led an international operation with hundreds of salvage workers including divers, welders and engineers working 24 hours a day around the rusting 290-metre hulk, which is bigger than the Titanic.

Sloane's team successfully raised the ship into an upright last year in an operation that some thought impossible. Now the team plan to re-float the ship so it can be towed away as scrap.

## Parbuckling Project

"By the end of July, the Costa Concordia is gone from Giglio," Sloane said in one of his video updates for the operation's website - [The Parbuckling Project](#)

When the refloating of the 114,500-ton ship gets underway using giant sponsons welded to its sides for buoyancy, Sloane will be the one giving the commands. The ruddy salvage master hit a snag in 2012 when storms hampered the operation and there were serious difficulties drilling into the granite seabed to install a metal platform to keep the ship stable.

There is now concern that the ship may fall apart or fail to float, which would likely condemn it to the sea bed. Sloane is no stranger to spectacular accidents at sea.

CNN has described him as "a cross between Russell Crowe and Prince Harry" and he has a master mariner certificate, which allows him to sail any type of ship anywhere in the world.

He began his career in 1980 working on the tugs at Safmarine, a South African salvage company. His first major job was the salvage of the Castillo de Bellver, a burning Spanish tanker filled with 252,000 tons of crude stranded off the coast of South Africa.

He worked his way up the ranks and was promoted to the position of salvage master in 1991. He was part of a team that went in with the US Navy's salvage division to repair damaged pipelines and oil infrastructure in Afghanistan and Iraq immediately after the US-led invasions and has worked in Russia to build a giant oil pipeline for Kazakh crude.

He has dealt with accidents that caused some of the worst oil spills in the world in recent years. In 2011, he was involved in a risky operation when he helped secure the Brillante Virtuoso tanker, which was attacked by pirates off Yemen and set on fire.

While there are no golf courses to keep where he can practice his favourite sport, there is at least some solace for the



The damaged and rusting hulk of the once pristine and luxurious Costa Concordia. Image: [Raw Story](#)

work-hard, play-hard attitude of the South African: Tuscany, is home to his most-loved wine, Chianti.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>