

# THE OTHER MARITIME CRIME

## How Illegal Fishing Fuels Organized Crime & Geopolitical Competition



### FUELS ORGANIZED CRIME



- Links to illicit activities including **drug trafficking**, **human smuggling**, and **arms proliferation**



- Provides **funding** and **operational cover** for criminal networks



- Facilitates **money laundering** and **corruption**

### GEOPOLITICAL COMPETITION



- Undermines **national sovereignty** and **maritime security**



- Intensifies **resource scarcity** and **regional tensions**



- Used as a tool for **strategic influence** and **power projection**



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# BEYOND THE NET

## Exposing the Multi-dimensional Threat of IUU Fishing to Global Security



### MULTI-DIMENSIONAL SECURITY THREAT



- IUU fishing undermines national and regional stability.
- Extends beyond environmental damage to direct security risks.

### REVENUE STREAM FOR CRIMINAL NETWORKS



- Funds operations for international cartels and extremist groups.
- Provides significant illicit financial resources.

### GATEWAY TO ILLICIT TRAFFICKING



- Facilitates narcotics smuggling, human trafficking, and arms proliferation.
- Utilizes fishing vessels as cover for non-fishing crimes.



# THE ECONOMIC FOUNDATION



Costs the Gulf  
of Guinea  
**\$2.3B - \$9.4B**  
annually



**15%** of global  
catch is illegal

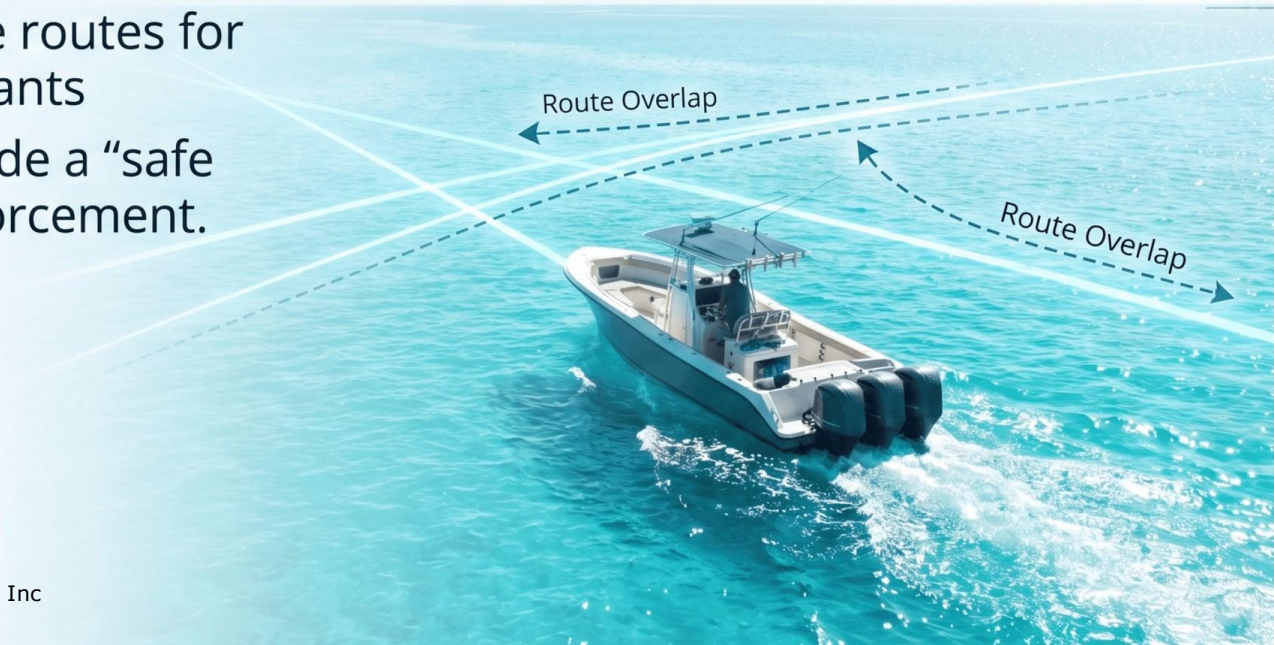


Destroys livelihoods  
of **5.2M** fishers

# THE CRIME NEXUS

## Floating Multi-Commodity Enterprises

- Vessels use the same routes for fish, drugs, and migrants
- Remote waters provide a “safe haven” from law enforcement.



# HUMAN RIGHTS AT SEA



Debt bondage, passport seizure,  
and physical violence are common

Isolation on long voyages creates  
perfect conditions for exploitation

First-ever sanctions on a NASDAQ-  
listed company for maritime labor abuses



# GEOPOLITICAL WEAPONIZATION

- China's distant-water fleet is the world's largest;
- Used to expand CCP power and weaken competitors;
- Fuses fishing vessels with military command and state subsidies.



# THE MARITIME MILITIA

- Nominally civilian boats under direct PLA command;
- Record daily average of 241 boats in the South China Sea (2025);
- Used to “change facts on the water” and assert sovereignty.



# GRAY-ZONE TACTICS

- **Dec 2025: 2,000 vessels** formed a mock blockade in the East China Sea;
- Scale that no conventional navy can replicate or counter easily;
- Calculated moves to undermine regional administration.



# THE U.S. RESPONSE

- **SAFE Act** formally links IUU fishing to transnational organized crime;
- 21-member Interagency Working Group on IUU Fishing;
- National strategy frames IUU as a security issue.

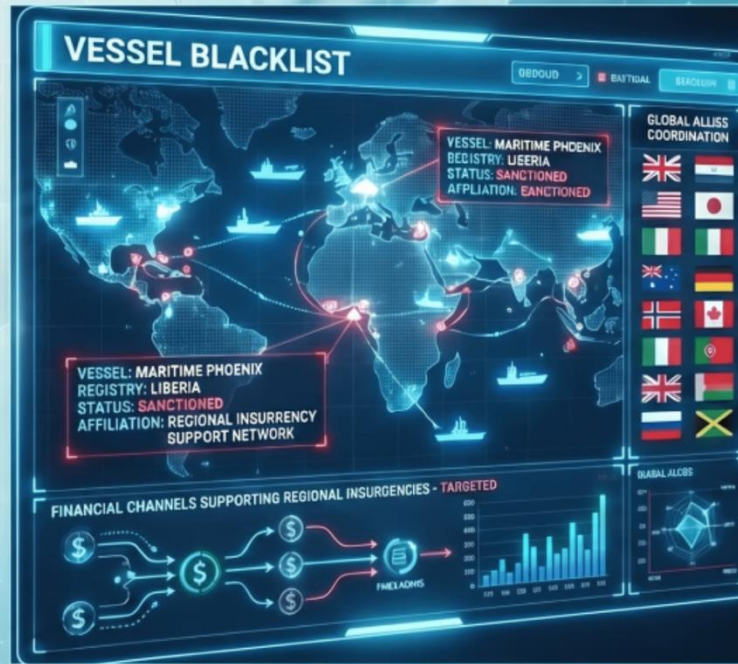




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# THE FISH ACT

- **FISH Act of 2025:** Extends sanctions to IUU-linked vessels;
- Enables coordinated designations with global allies;
- Targets financial channels





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# OPERATIONAL ENFORCEMENT

- USCG cutters host officers from 14+ partner nations;
- Extends enforcement into foreign Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs);
- **USS Harriet Lane**: A model for joint maritime governance.





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# A SECURITY IMPERATIVE.

- IUU fishing is the foundation of maritime instability;
- Must be treated as a primary maritime security threat.

## **Trident Group America:**

Specialized Maritime Security; Cyber Red Cell; Asset Protection (Sea, Air, Land); Professional Training & Security Operations.



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