



AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

Maritime Cooperation & Coordination In The Western Indian Ocean

Mombasa, Kenya
April 14th-April 17th, 2026



**AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

Session 5: Regional Maritime Security Strategy Development and Implementation



DCoC/JA Regional Maritime Security Strategy

From Strategy to Operations
Western Indian Ocean & Gulf of Aden

Kiruja Micheni

Project Manager, DCoC/JA – International Maritime Organization



AGENDA

1. Mandate and Background
2. Progress to Date – From Concept to Structured Framework
3. The Core Challenge – Bridging Strategy and Operations
3. Best Practices and Priority Initiatives
4. The Role of the RMSS
5. Looking Ahead –
6. Conclusion

Mandate & Progress

From Political Direction to Structured Framework

- **Mandated by HLMs**
 - 6th HLM (Cape Town, 2023) – Resolution 2
 - Reinforced at 7th HLM (Dar es Salaam, 2024)
- **Jeddah Workshop (Nov 2024):**
 - Defined Ends – Ways – Means
 - Identified Derived Tasks
 - Shift toward implementation focus
- **National Progress:**
 - NMSS, NMSCs, NMISCs advancing

RMSS = Strategic coherence across the region

The Core Challenge

From Strategy to Operations

- **Key Issue:** Translating strategy into operational capability
- **Critical Gaps:**
 - Policy–operations disconnect
 - Weak inter-agency coordination
 - Inconsistent information sharing
 - Limited regional operational mechanisms
 - Capacity and resource constraints

We know *what to do* — now we must deliver *how*

What Works (Priority Actions)

Building an Operational Architecture

1. National Coordination

- Functional NMSCs
- Clear roles across agencies

2. Information Sharing

- Dev of NMISCs
- Domestication of SOPs
- Dev and maintenance of Regional VOI Database
- Common Lexicon

3. Regional Coordination

- RMIFC & RCOC integration
- Joint exercises (TTEEx)
- WG3 operational role

4. Coordinated Capacity Building

- CB Matrix + FoDCoC alignment

Role of the RMSS

A Strategic Enabler for Regional Maritime Security

The RMSS is not just a policy document — it is a strategic enabler

It Provides:

- Strategic coherence across national and regional initiatives
- A common framework for aligning capabilities
- A foundation for interoperability and coordinated operations
- A mechanism for resource mobilization and donor alignment
- A pathway to long-term sustainability

The value of the RMSS lies not in its design, but in its implementation.

Way Forward

From Framework to Impact

Next Step: Jeddah Workshop (2026)

- Finalization of the RMSS
- Priority actions & sequencing
- Defined **coordination roles**
- **Move to costed action plan**

Key Message

- Strategy is in place
- Progress is real
- Priority: coordinated action at sea

Desired Outcome:

A coherent, operational, and sustainable maritime security architecture



INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

Kiruja Micheni, Project Manager DCoC

Email: kmicheni@imo.org

Tel +254723982555

IMO website: www.imo.org

DCoC website: www.dcoc.org



**AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

Session 5: Regional Maritime Security Strategy Development and Implementation

From strategy to patchwork: Lessons for maritime security governance

Professor Christian Bueger

University of Copenhagen, Ocean Infrastructure Research Group

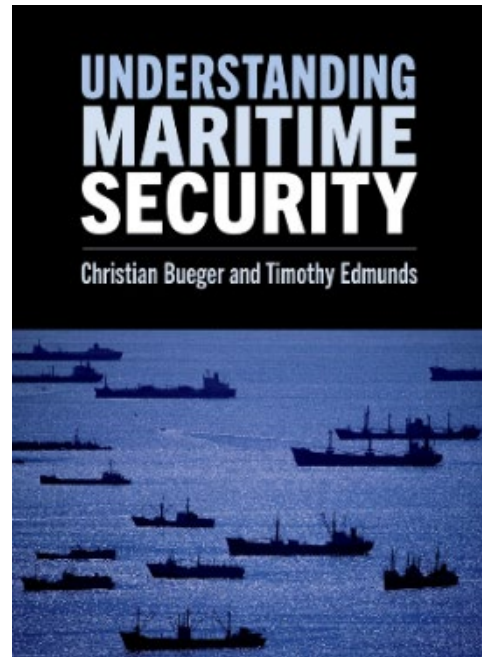
United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

www.bueger.info – Christian.bueger@ifs.ku.dk





»»» Background





Overview

How can we better organize maritime security governance?

- Maritime security governance patchworks
- Types of regional organizations
- Patchwork challenges
- Strategies as governance instruments
- Models for national maritime security strategies



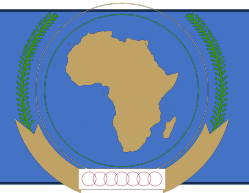
»»» Patchworks of maritime security governance

Global level



International norms and standards, support for regions and states, emergency responses

Regional levels



Regional seas, regional norms and standards, coordination of and support for states,

National level



Territorial waters, EEZ, ports, coastguard functions, defense



»»» Global level: >30 organizations

FIGURE 2.

The big five United Nations Agencies

UNITED NATIONS AGENCY	BODIES & PROGRAMMES	MANDATE	NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS
International Maritime Organization (IMO)	MSC & FAL Committees, Technical Cooperation Programme	Marine Safety, Ship & Port Security	Maritime Authorities, Ministries of Transport
Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)	RFMOs	Illicit Fishing	Fishing Authorities, Ministries of Agriculture
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	Regional Seas Conventions	Marine Protection, Pollution	Coastguards, Ministries of Environment
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)	Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP)	Transnational Organized Crime	Coastguards, Police, Prosecutors, Ministries of interior
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Immigration and Border Management (IBM) Division	Border Management	Border Guards, Coast Guards, Ministries of Interior & Labour

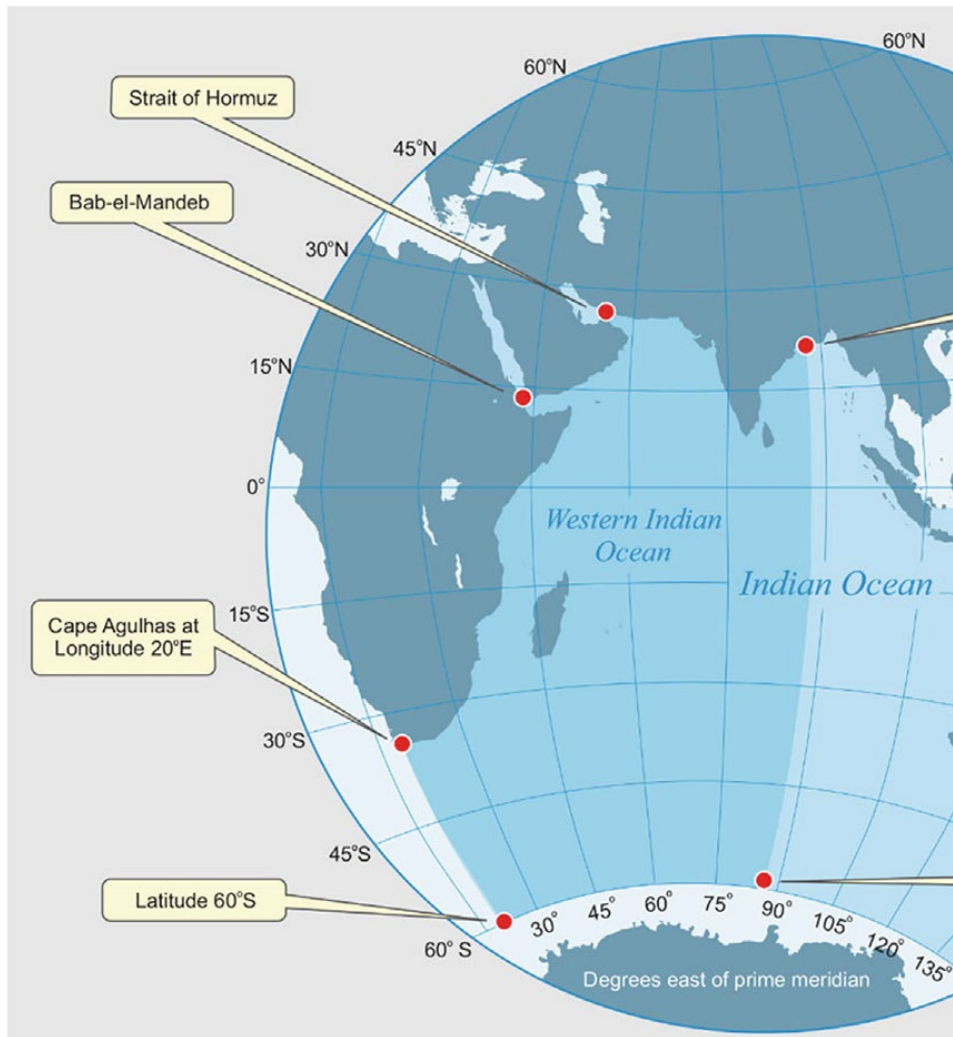


»» Regional level organizations

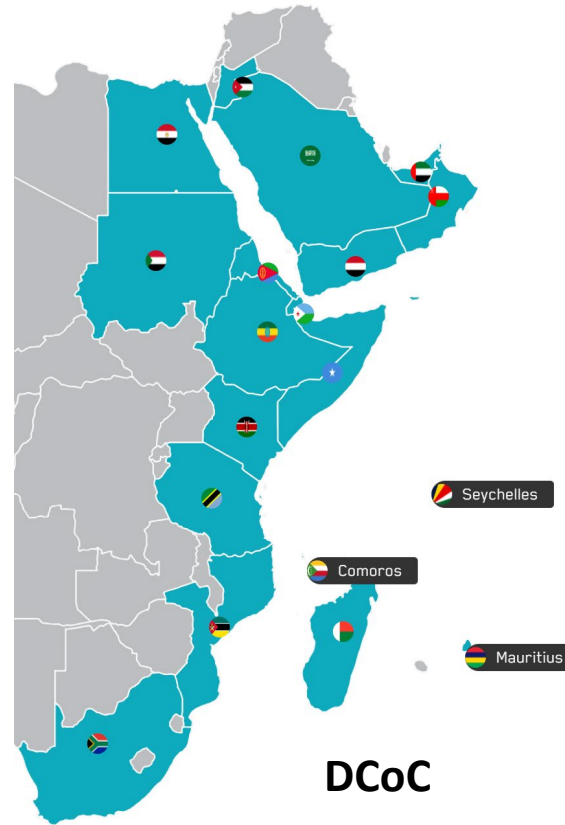
- Terrestrial vs. maritime (e.g. SADC / IORA / Nairobi Convention)
- Comprehensive vs. issue-specific (IOC vs. CGPCS)
- Formal vs. informal (e.g. AU / DCoC / CMF / contact groups)
- Donor-driven vs. needs based
- High number of organizations and complexity in any place in the world.



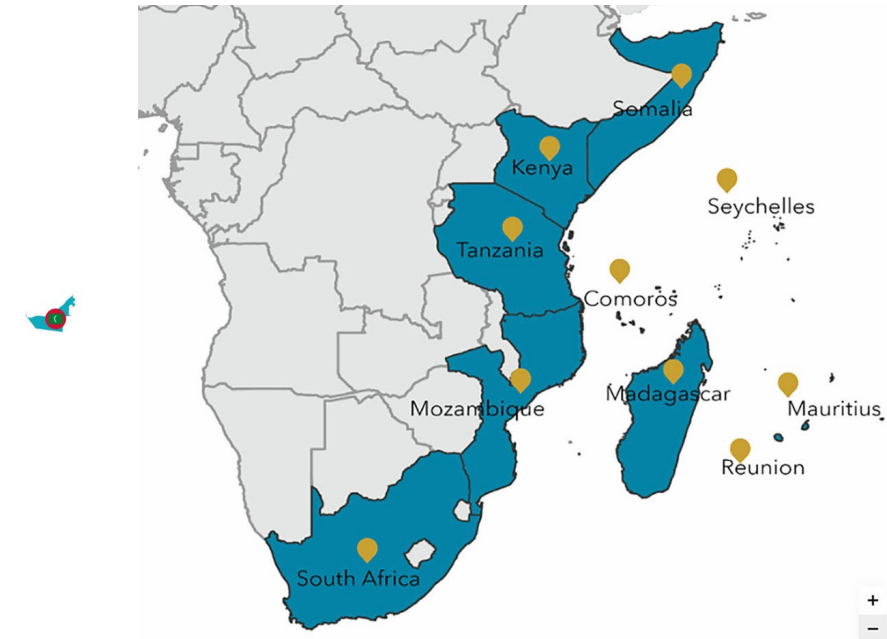
Western Indian Ocean – wide vs. narrow



Geography



DCoC



**Int. Law
(Nairobi Convention)**

Bueger, Christian. Pragmatic spaces and the contestation over the Western Indian Ocean, in "The Politics of Global Ocean Regions", edited by Christian Bueger, Elizabeth Mendenhall and Rebecca Strating, Palgrave MacMillan, 73-97, 2025,



Patchwork Challenges

- Specialization is good, but risks fragmentation and competition over resources
- Mission creep and mandate expansion are common
- Duplication can arise, forum shopping follows
- Coverage gaps for 'high hanging fruits'
- Organizations can develop with high speed, or different temporalities
- Oversight, foresight, and management of interface conflicts needed

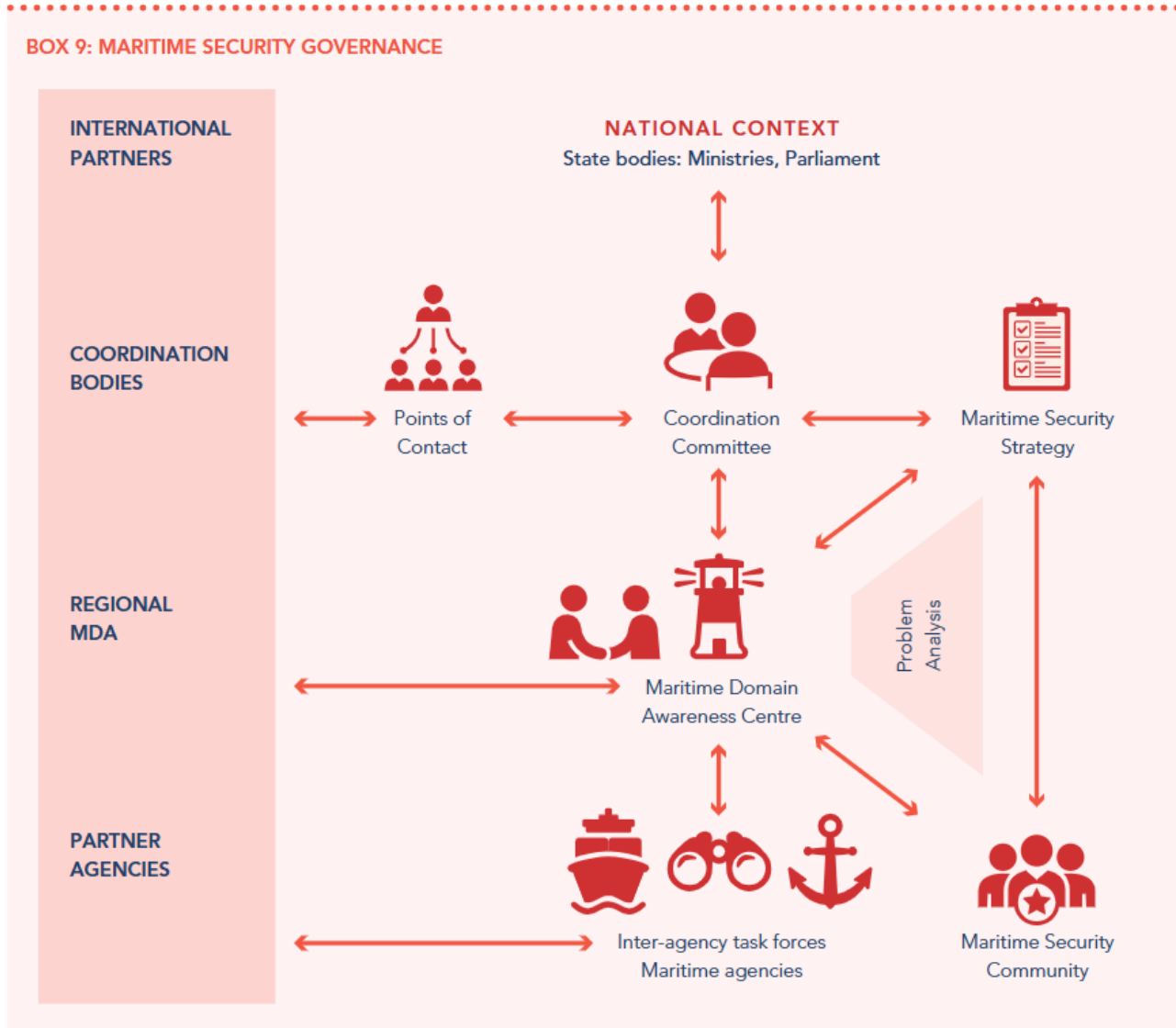


Strategy and governance

- Strategy documents can be important governance instruments
- Strategy production as alignment process
- Enhancing transparency
- Spotting the gaps
- Allocating resources and responsibilities
- Often become zombies after adoption
- No universal model, no magic potion



»» National level: SafeSeas model





National level: EU model

Coast guard functions

For the purposes of the Handbook, coast guard functions (CGFs) are understood as those commonly referred to by the three agencies.

The list was originally generated by the European Coast Guard Functions Forum (ECGFF) as follows (in no order of priority):

1. maritime safety, including vessel traffic management;
2. ship casualty and maritime assistance service;
3. fisheries inspection and control;
4. maritime border control;
5. maritime environmental protection and response;
6. prevention and suppression of trafficking and smuggling and connected maritime law enforcement;
7. maritime search and rescue;
8. maritime monitoring and surveillance;
9. maritime customs activities;
10. maritime accident and disaster response;
11. maritime, ship and port security.

<https://coastguard.europa.eu/>



»» Take away points

- Maritime security needs agile patchwork governance
→ “stitching”
- Transparency and inter-face conflict management are key
- Strategy is no magic potion, but can be a useful governance instrument
- Not all states will benefit from dedicated maritime security strategy (e.g. islands, informal cultures)
- Maritime security strategies can have a short shelf life



**AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

Session 5: Regional Maritime Security Strategy Development and Implementation

Session 8: Regional Maritime Security Strategy Development and Implementation

Objectives:

- Clarify the core security objectives, priorities, and scope of the emerging regional maritime security strategy under the Djibouti Code of Conduct/Jeddah (DCoC/JA) Amendment, including how these apply across the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden.
- Examine best practices and existing mechanisms for ensuring a practical basis for implementation, including how regional strategies can be designed to translate into actionable guidance for national, bilateral, and regional authorities, responsibilities, cooperation, and coordination mechanisms.
- Identify opportunities and challenges for harmonizing national maritime security strategies capacities and capabilities aligned to the regional strategy.

Discuss the importance of integrating operational and strategic collaboration between naval forces and the international shipping industry when developing protocols for maritime operations, reporting, and information sharing. Reflect on how such collaboration should be incorporated into broader regional maritime security strategies.

Provide recommendations DCOC/JA leadership, signatories, and partners must consider when developing and establishing national and regional level capabilities and capacities that will enhance relationships and cooperation with international shipping.

- **Why the cooperation is necessary ?** what was achieved and why it was so effective, mutual trust, expectation management, confidence in mutual benefit, information sharing to support mutual needs.
- **What did we build ?** MSCHOA (Maritime Security Centre Horn of Africa), reporting guidance, BMP (Best Management Practices) Threat assessments, intelligence sharing, legal finish,
- **How did we do it ?** trust and partnership
- **How could the industry cooperation at the operational level be strengthened in the southern Indian ocean region within the regional architecture ?**

SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

- BMP reporting procedures
- Maritime Domain Awareness
- Navigation Warnings
- Group Transit System

MERCHANT SHIPPING INDUSTRY

MSCHOA

CP MILITARY & REGIONAL STATES

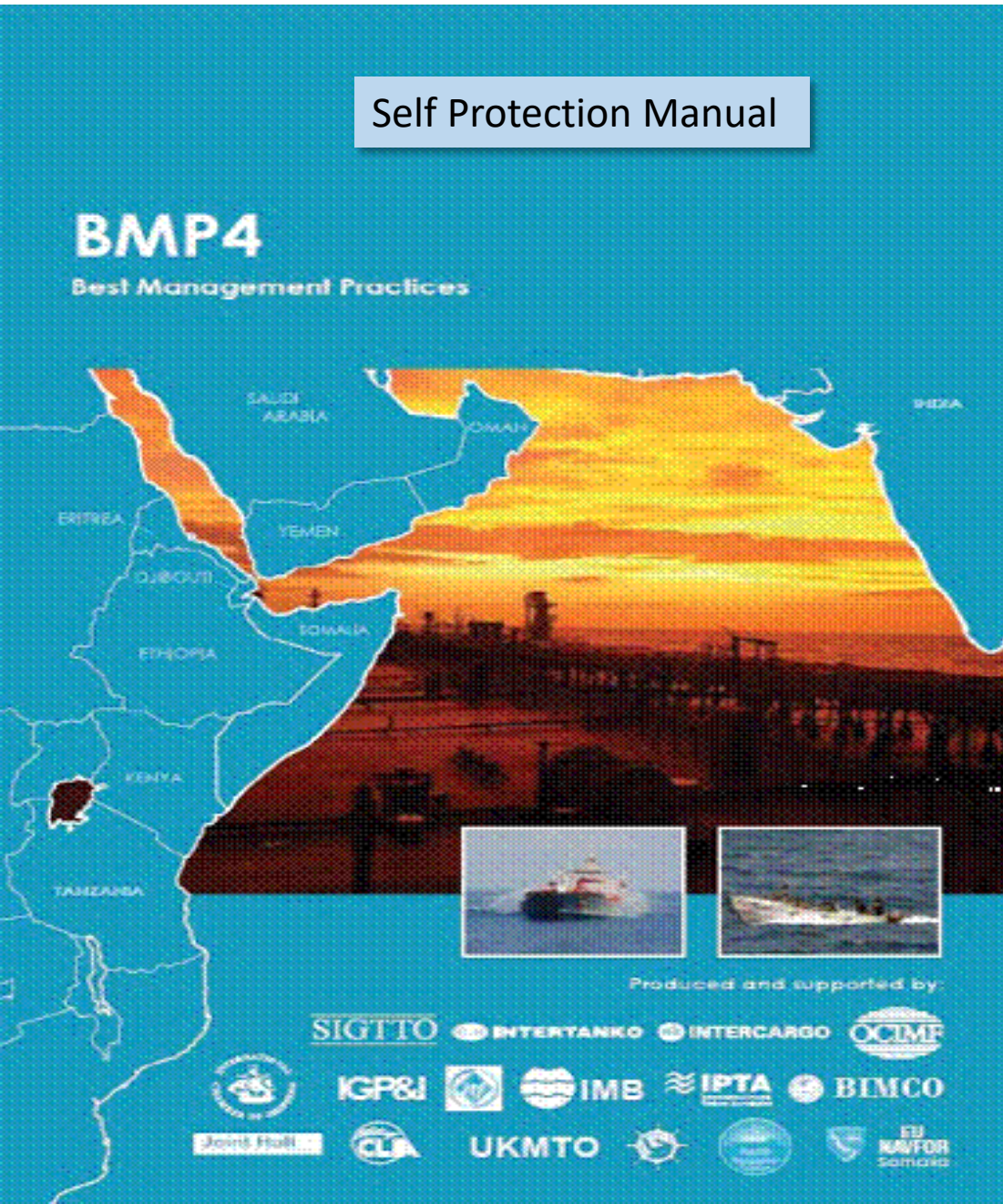
MILITARY RESPONSE

- Convoy Coordination
- Military Communications Platform MERCURY
- Military Grade Intelligence
- Collection of maritime intelligence
- Command and Control

MSCHOA – Relationship between Industry and the Military

The Partnership with the Global Shipping Industry

Self Protection Manual



INDIAN OCEAN SHADE



The accomplishments of Indian Ocean SHADE

SHADE enabled the creation of a neutral forum where the collective responsibility rested upon the participating stakeholders to optimize the deterrence of piracy action groups and the promotion of and application of best management practices by merchant shipping. SHADE implemented many measures to support this objective, here are some of them ;

- Setting up of the IRTC (Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor)
- Communications Platform Mercury
- Convoy coordination
- Naval Surface and Air Asset De-confliction – De-confliction tool
- Re-fuelling at sea coordination and support
- Maritime Domain Awareness analysis
- Military threat assessments to Industry

Joint Maritime Information Center

Update 022 to JMIC Advisory Note: 01 - 22 March 2026

Regional Tension - Impact on Maritime Security

Area of Concern:

Middle East Maritime Region

JMIC# 001-26

Regional Threat Level: **CRITICAL**

1. Regional Risk Level Assessment

Overall Maritime Risk Level: **CRITICAL**

JMIC Threat Scale: **Low** | **Moderate** | **Substantial** | **Severe** | **Critical**

The regional maritime threat environment across the **Arabian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and Gulf of Oman remains CRITICAL**. The overall maritime threat environment remains at a critical level due to recent attack patterns, continued navigation interference, and persistent operational disruption, to include port facilities, across the region.

Operational Indicators (22 March)

- Confirmed maritime attacks/incidents since 1 March: **21**
- Vessel attacks past 24 hours: **0**
- Historical SoH traffic: **~138/day**
- Current observed SoH vessel traffic: **1 vessel/day**
- GNSS interference: **localized and sporadic; improving last 24 hours**

On March 22, a bulk carrier at anchor approximately 12 NM off the coast of UAE heard an unknown explosion and observed a fire for a short period approximately 1300 meters from the vessel. The event is classified as suspicious activity. Since the start of hostilities on 28 February, more than twenty maritime incidents involving commercial vessels and offshore infrastructure have been reported across the Arabian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and Gulf of Oman. The incidents involve a wide range of vessel types and flag states, with no consistent pattern of Western ownership linkage, suggesting that the current strike pattern reflects a campaign aimed at broad maritime disruption rather than selective vessel targeting. Attacks may occur at anchorages, Ship-to-Ship (STS) operations, and port approaches. Commercial vessels operating within the critical threat area are strongly encouraged to maintain reporting contact with UKMTO.

AIS transmission remains governed by SOLAS regulations. Operators should review AIS transmission policies within their internal risk management frameworks while maintaining compliance with regulatory requirements. Mariners should also remain alert to the possibility of unexploded ordnance (UXO) aboard affected vessels and treat any suspected projectile as extremely hazardous in accordance with BMP-MS guidance.

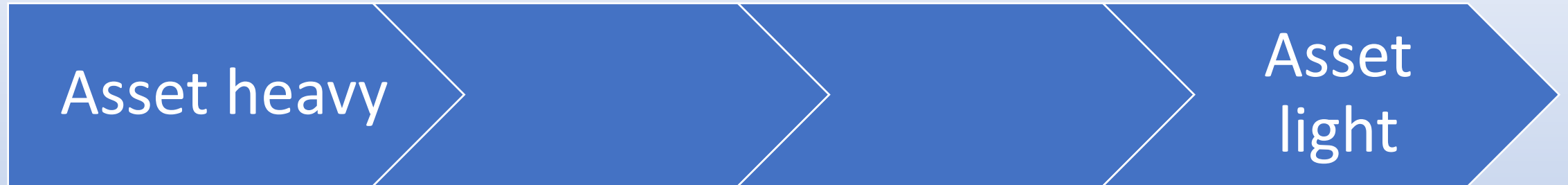


Military grade threat assessments carry more weight.

The privileged access to intelligence-based reports provides the Shipping company with confidence to make decisions on vessel guidance and protection.

Established battle rhythm of updates supports and cultivates trusted support and mutual benefit.

NAVAL FOOTPRINT EVOLUTION



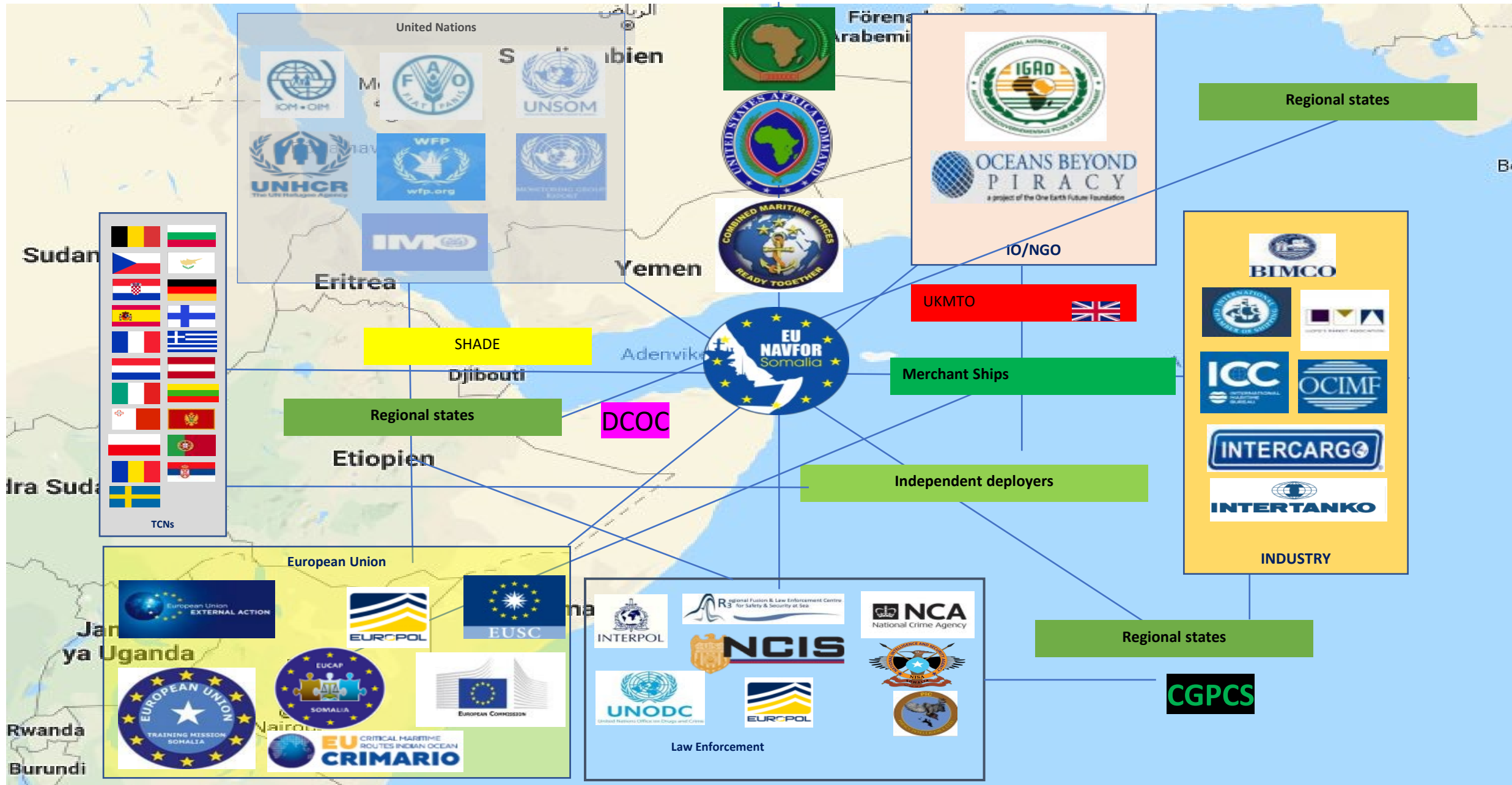
Year 2010

- 2011 EUNAVFOR force flow 11 ships
- 2011 total surface assets in Gulf of Aden 30
- Maritime Patrol Aircraft coverage 4 states

PRESENT DAY

- 2025 EUNAVFOR force flow 1 ship
- 2025 total surface assets 8-10
- Maritime Patrol Aircraft coverage 2 states

Multi Stakeholder cooperation



How could the industry cooperation at the operational level be strengthened in the southern Indian ocean region within the regional architecture ?

- 1. Establish a tailored, enduring Southern Indian Ocean operational Maritime Security Forum** part of and nested inside SHADE Indian Ocean forum but regional coastal states focused. Some areas of work could be (a) deconflicted naval patrol corridors and defined escort responsibilities; (b) real-time intelligence fusion (maritime + air) and common counter-UAS protocols; (c) rapid legal frameworks for interdiction/prosecution and handling captured crews.
- 2. Seek a strategic partnership with the shipping industry.** The experience from Somali piracy and the Houthi threat in the Red Sea tells us that inclusivity as partners in forums such as the Djibouti Code of Conduct is essential if trust building is to be accomplished.
- 3. Work with existing industry guidance from BMP to BMP-Plus (counter-UAS & EOD aware).** Seek to support existing industry established guidance and to avoid duplicating reporting requirements. Through a SHADE connected Indian ocean maritime security forum seek mechanisms for cooperation with RMIFC, RCOC, IFC-IOR and the ISC's In the DCOC.
- 4. Scale incident formation-sharing & incident attribution capacity.** Establish fast transparent attribution mechanisms (coalition intelligence + incident analysis) in partnership with UKMTO and MSCIO to add intelligence and regional MDA knowledge adding value to operational cooperation.
- 5. Consider creation of a permanent industry nexus** – By having industry expertise and an advisory capacity to guide the cooperation and coordination in all elements for this region, such a role could bring industry closer in cooperation.



**AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

Maritime Cooperation & Coordination In The Western Indian Ocean

**Mombasa, Kenya
April 14th-April 17th, 2026**



**AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

Session 6: Regional Maritime Security Architecture: Information Sharing and Operational Coordination



STRATEGIC STUDY

Regional Maritime Security Architecture

Assessing Regional Capacity and Operational Readiness of RMIFC in the
WIO

Mombasa, April 16, 2026



CRFIM-CRCO

UNIQUES ET COMPLÉMENTAIRES

Avec la vocation d'établir un mécanisme de surveillance
et de contrôle maritime dans l'océan Indien occidental

RMIFC-RCOC

UNIQUE AND COMPLEMENTARY

With a mission to establish a maritime surveillance
and control mechanism in Western Indian Ocean



GOVERNANCE VACUUM

Categorizing the 2026 Western Indian Ocean Environment

| THE COST OF INACTION

\$1.14B
ANNUAL REGIONAL LOSS

Economic Consequences

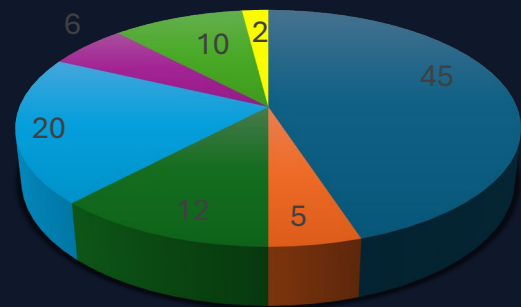
The 2026 UNECA/IOC "Rocking the Boat" report quantifies the total impact of maritime insecurity. This includes direct losses from IUU fishing, narco-trafficking, and increased insurance premiums in JWC-listed areas.

Moving the RMIFC to permanent line-item funding is no longer an option, sustainability funding is key for regional stability.

Source : <https://www.uneca.org/rocking-the-boat-the-socio-economic-impact-of-maritime-threats-in-the-western-indian-ocean>

RMIFC OPERATIONAL READINESS

RMIFC ACTIVITIES(%)



- Information Sharing
- Voluntary Community Report
- Intelligence
- Operation
- Support to international organization
- Support to countries
- Support to Academic Researcher

- ✓ Support on analysis and decision making.
- ✓ Contribute to the Strategic Estimate
- ✓ Providing actionable information.
- ✓ Real-time anomaly detection for "Dark Vessels."
- ✓ Watchfloor working 24/7 and ILO presence for rapid data release.

THE KEY ROLE OF RMIFC AND RCOC



National centres/
/ISC/MRCC/MOC

Other informations :

- satellites (RF/ Light/Infrared)
- Other platform
- Human intelligence
- Maritime industry

INTERPOL/DEA/TPC/IFC/UKMTO/MICA
CENTRE/EUNAVFOR/NAFAR/RECAAP/

Data



Safety and security, marine environment

Information

RMP

intelligence

Threat mapping

Analyse of the thematics

Areas of operation

Monitoring

Vessels of Interest

Operation planning

Ressource allocation

Deconfliction

Actionable Information

Field intelligence

Operational feedback

Coordination of operation



COORDINATION & REPORTING

NATIONAL (NMISC)

Mandate: Legal enforcement and "First Inquiry."

Role: Filters domestic silos to provide vetted data to the regional hub. Holds the ultimate authority for territorial waters.

REGIONAL (RMIFC)

Mandate: Coordination and Analysis.

Role: Aggregates national data into a trans-regional view. Alerts the RCOC for hand-off between EEZ **jurisdictions**. It facilitates the communication between the "pursuing state" and the "receiving state" to ensure there is no gap in coverage at the maritime border.

CHALLENGES

- **Vast maritime region** – Limited resources, monitoring capabilities
- **65% Maritime coverage** – Lack of satellite, VMS, drones
- **Pending State memberships** – Mozambique, Somalia, Tanzania, South Africa, other partners
- **Threats by the conflict between Iran and the coalition of US and Israel, by Iranian backed Houthis and resurgence of piracy** – increased traffic in Southern Indian ocean
- Big gap in wildlife species trafficking data
- Increases risk of oil spill in the region
- Shipping Community interaction
- Limitation in the law of the sea regarding the High seas
- Sustainability of the RMSA

THREAT EVOLUTION: 2020 VS 2026

Shadow Fleet (1.3k vessels)

95% INCREASE

AIS Spoofing Incidents

80% FREQUENCY

Grey Zone Hybrid Threats

70% COMPLEXITY

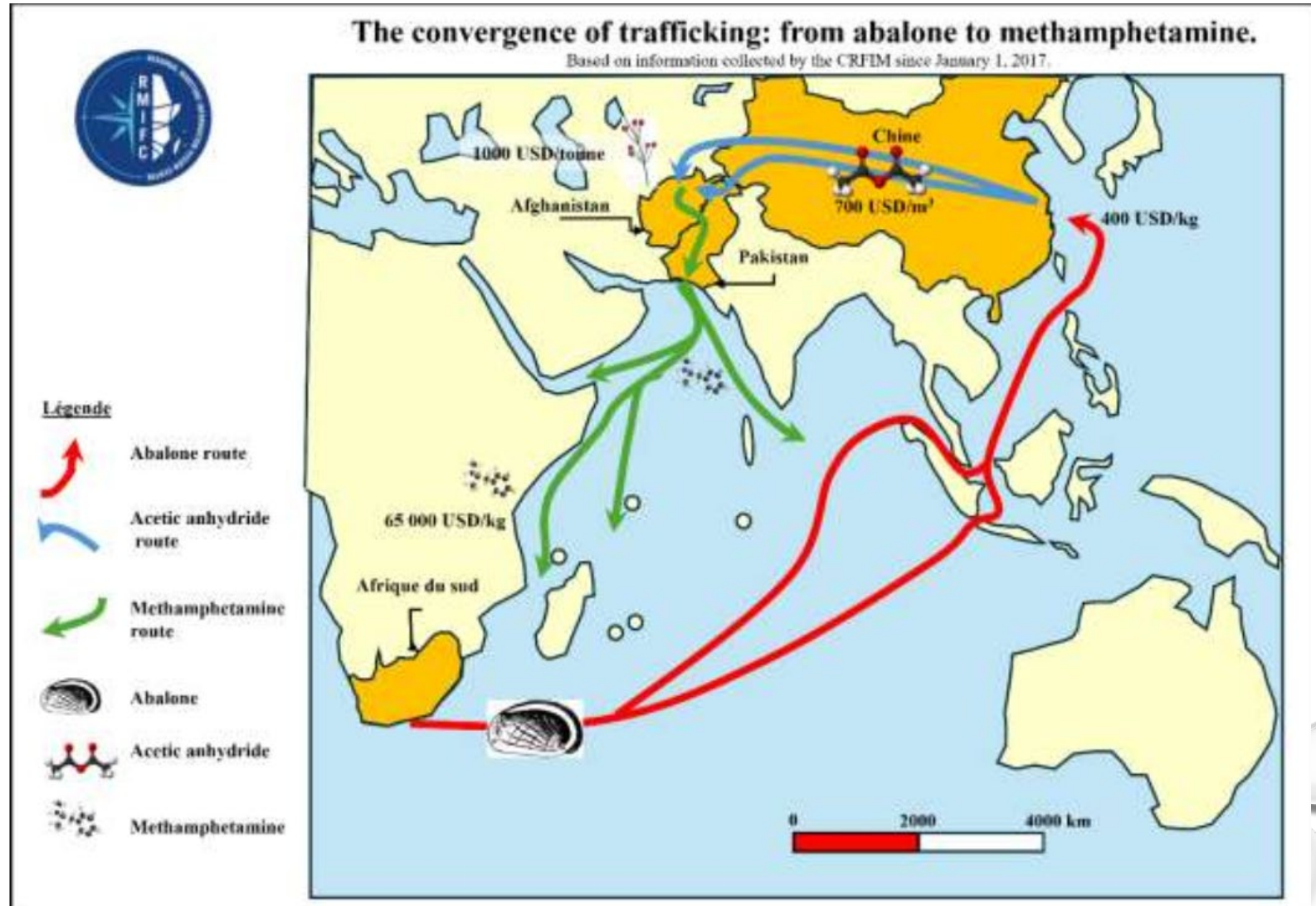
Note: "Shadow Fleet" activity has evolved from simple sanction evasion to Grey Zone kinetic hybrid warfare.

EXTRA-REGIONAL COLLABORATION



IFC-IOR
IFC-Sri Lanka
IFC Singapore
ICC Yaoundé
IFC Péru

Seamless data exchange with IFs



THE GROWING NETWORK OF THE RMIFC

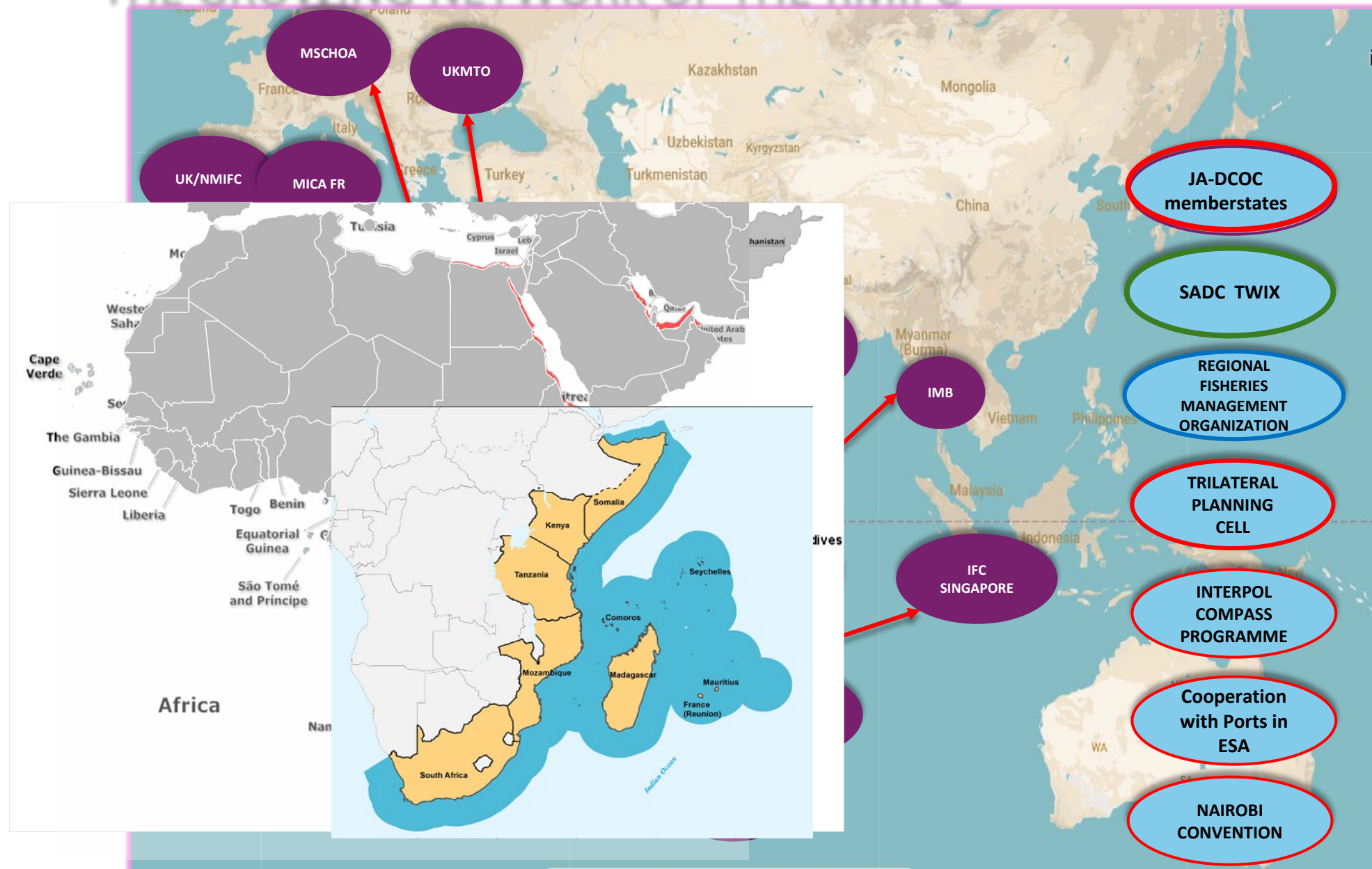


Table 2: Table tracking drug seizures, with the price per kilogram calculated in US dollars

Country	Narcotic	Price USD	Date	Origin
Mauritius	Cannabis	26 265 /Kg	10/2025	Open source
Mauritius	Haschisch	109 530 / kg	10/2025	Open source
Mauritius	Cocaine	328 792 / Kg	10/2025	Open source
South Africa	Cocaine	14 400 / Kg	10/2025	Open source
South Africa	Cocaine	106 666 / Kg	10/2025	Open source
Australia	Methamphetamine	587 790 / Kg	11/2025	Open source
Mozambique	Cannabis	50 / Kg		Open source
Mozambique	Heroin	9 383 / Kg		Open source
Mozambique	Cocaine	12 569 / Kg		Open source
Mer d'Arabie ¹	Methamphetamine	400 000 / Kg	10/2025	Open source
Mer d'Arabie	Cocaine	200 000 / Kg	10/2025	Open source
India	Heroin	788 472 / Kg	02/2024	Open source
India	Heroin	785 852 / Kg	04/2024	Open source
Pakistan	Methamphetamine	198 901 / Kg	05/2024	Open source
Koweit	Haschisch	8 163 / Kg	05/2024	Open source
Pakistan	Methamphetamine	5 198 / Kg	05/2024	Open source
Pakistan	Haschisch	16 684 / Kg	06/2024	Open source
Koweit	Cannabis	9 796 / Kg	06/2024	Open source
Sri Lanka	Heroin	81 888 / Kg	06/2024	Open source
Mauritius	Cannabis	33 099 / Kg	09/2024	Open source
Pakistan	Cocaine	155 404 / Kg	09/2024	Equation BOS ²
South Africa	Methamphetamine	13 246 / Kg	10/2025	Open source
South Africa	Cocaine	148 438 / Kg	10/2025	Open source
South Africa	Cannabis	7 542 / Kg	10/2025	Open source
Mer d'Arabie	Methamphetamine	400 000/ Kg	10/2025	CTF 150
Mer d'Arabie	Methamphetamine	400 000/ Kg	10/2025	CTF 150
Mer d'Arabie	Cocaine	200 000/ Kg	10/2025	CTF 150
South Africa	Heroin	9 674 / Kg	07/2025	Open source
Kenya	Methamphetamine	63 000 / Kg ³	10/2025	Kenyan Auth.
India	Cannabis	113 192/ Kg	11/2025	Open source
South Africa	Methamphetamine	13 600 / kg	11/2025	Open source
India	Cannabis	110 000 / kg	11/2025	Custom
India	Methamphetamine	110 000 / kg	05/2025	Custom
India	Heroin	778 225 / Kg	06/2025	Custom
Barhein	Methamphetamine	65 000/ kg	11/2025	CTF 150
Sri Lanka	Cannabis	720/ Kg	12/2025	Open source
Mauritius	Cocaine	314 000/ Kg		Open source



CRFIM-CRCO

UNIQUES ET COMPLÉMENTAIRES

Avec la vocation d'établir un mécanisme de surveillance
et de contrôle maritime dans l'océan Indien occidental

RMIFC-RCOC

UNIQUE AND COMPLEMENTARY

With a mission to establish a maritime surveillance
and control mechanism in Western Indian Ocean



Thank You

Questions/ Comments/ Clarifications/ Inputs



**AFRICA CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

Session 6: Regional Maritime Security Architecture: Information Sharing and Operational Coordination