



# Regional Threat Update in the Western Indian Ocean

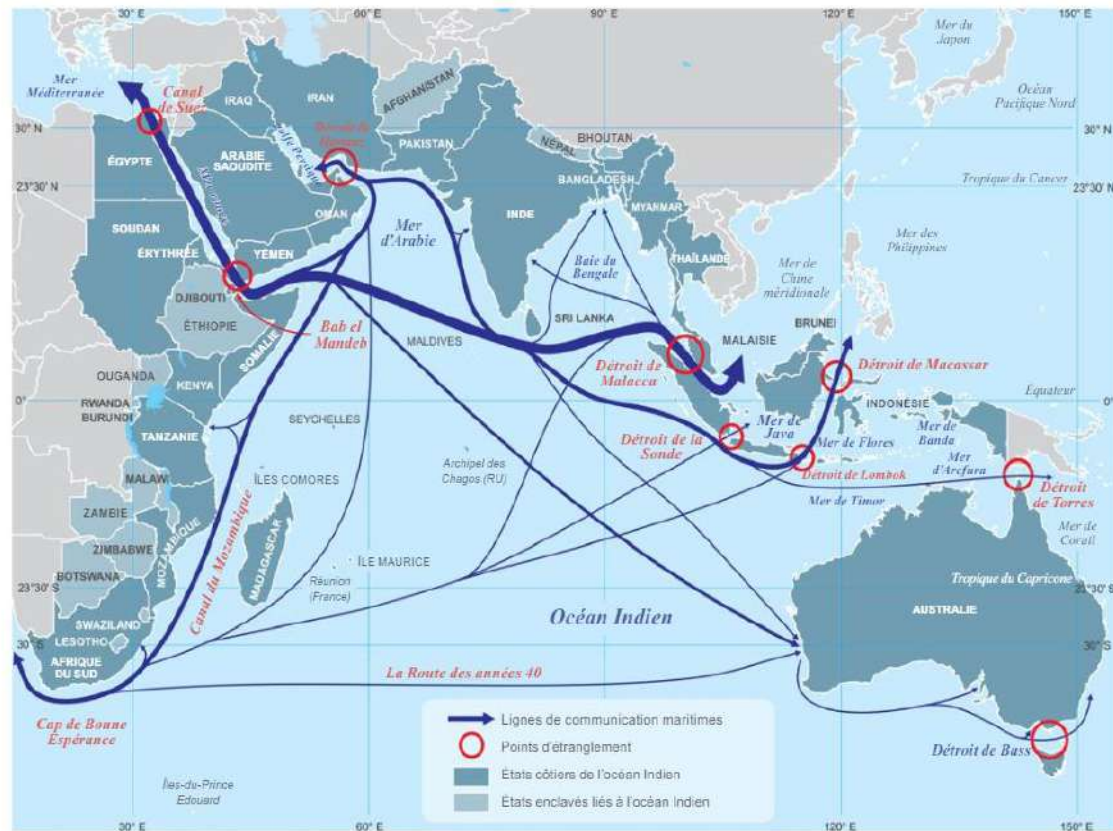
DCOC Working Group3, Mombasa

Presented by:  
**Capt RALAIARIVONY H. Alex, Director of RMIFC**

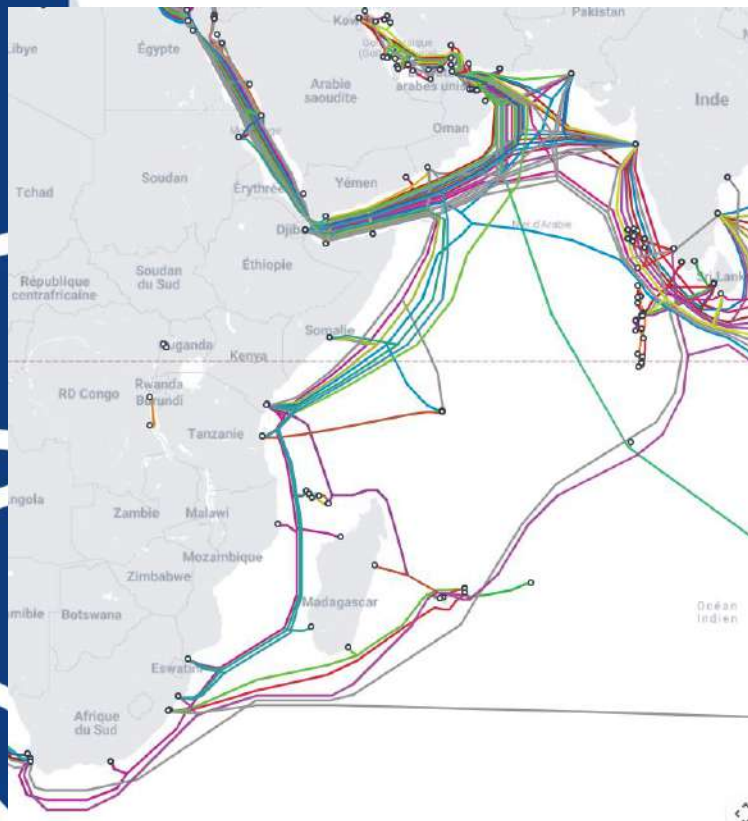


01.09.2025

# Introduction



# Introduction



## Submarine Cables Network: A Critical Vulnerability for the ESA-IO Region

### The Relevance:

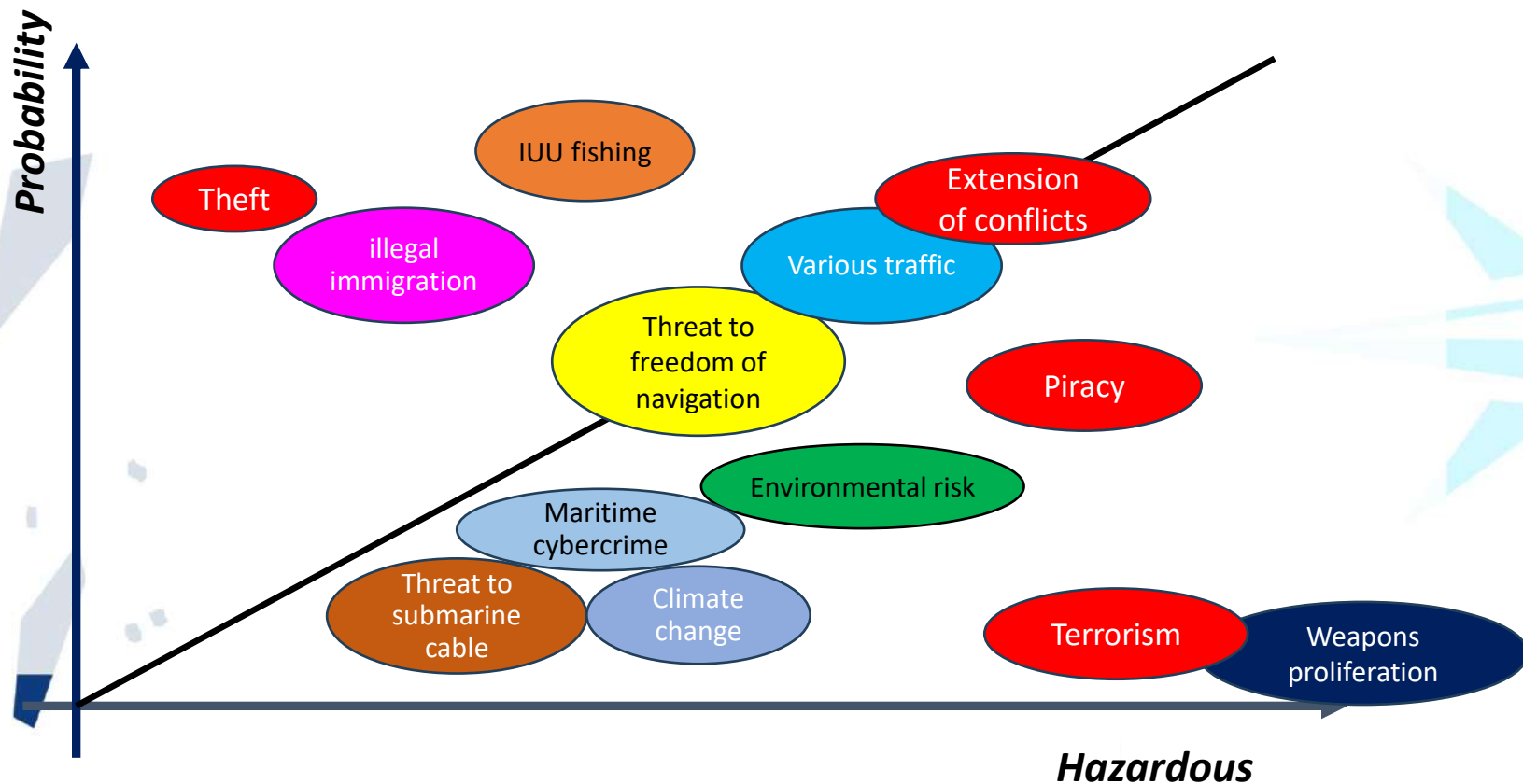
Submarine telecommunications cables are the **central nervous system of the global economy and modern society**, carrying over 99% of international data. For the ESA-IO region, they are not just infrastructure; they are the single point of failure for national security, economic stability, and digital inclusion.

# Focus



1. MULTIDIMENSIONAL THREATS
2. RMIFC CONTRIBUTION TO THE REGION
3. LESSONS LEARNED

# 1. MULTIDIMENSIONAL THREATS



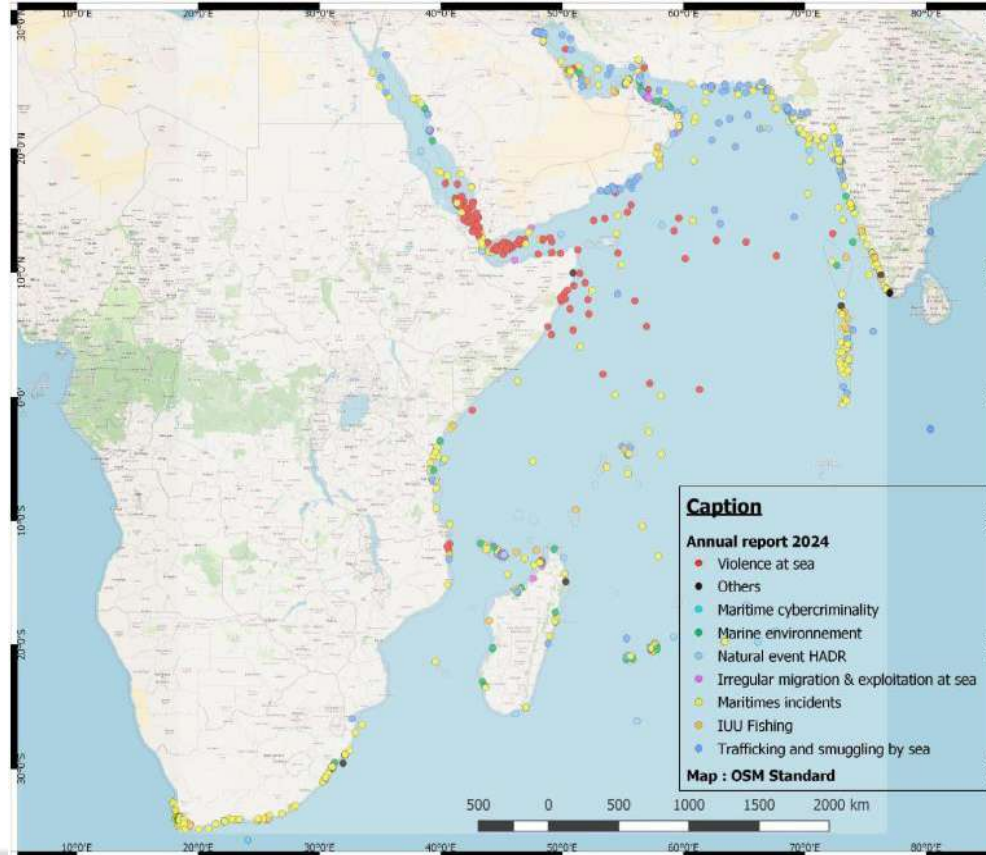
# CASCADING IMPACTS

"Consequences cascade:

- **Commerce:** When ships divert via the Cape (*point to Cape route*), Egypt loses **\$7 billion** in Suez revenue. Voyages stretch by 10 days—insurance costs explode 350%.
- **Security:** Ransoms fund criminal empires. Trafficked Houthi weapons prolong conflicts.
- **Environment:** The *MV Sounion* near-disaster reminds us: one spill could devastate coral reefs for decades."



# DATA AGGRAGATION AND ANALYSIS



GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF ALL ACTIVITIES IN ESA-IO REGION 2024

# Principaux itinéraires de la drogue en Afrique

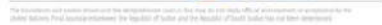
enact



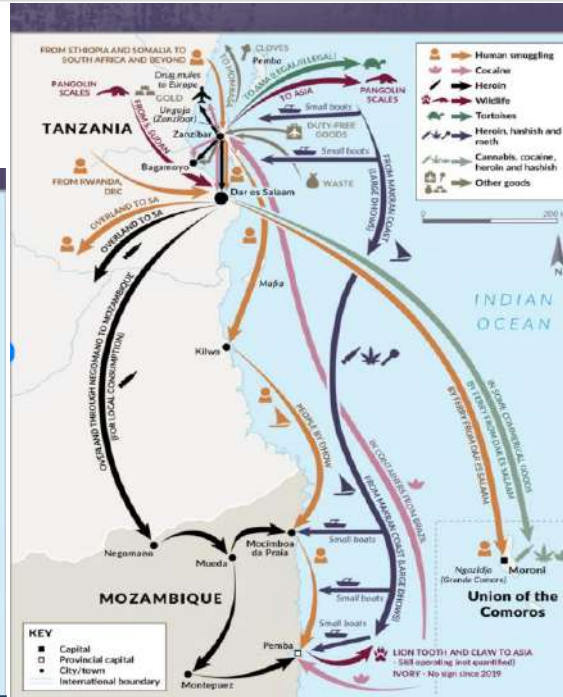
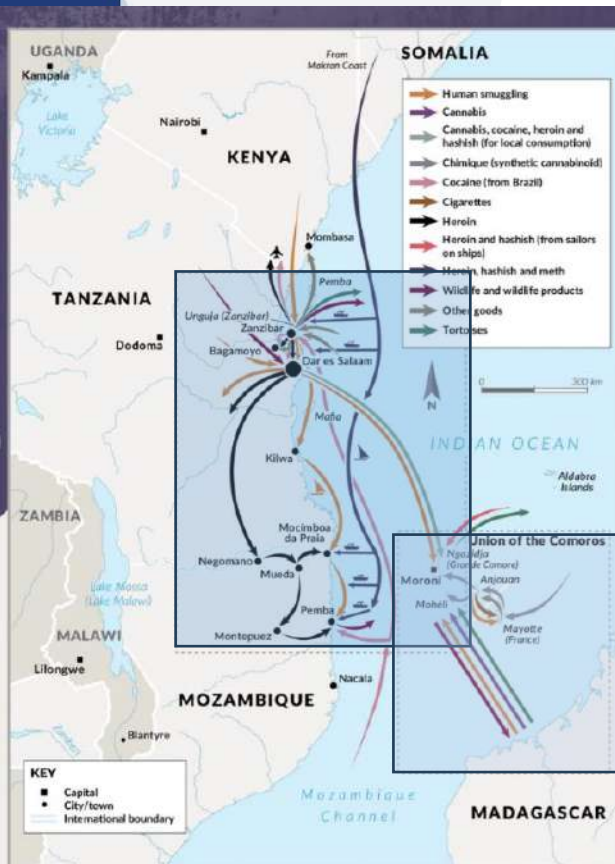
Source : Rapport mondial sur les drogues 2018 de l'ONUDC



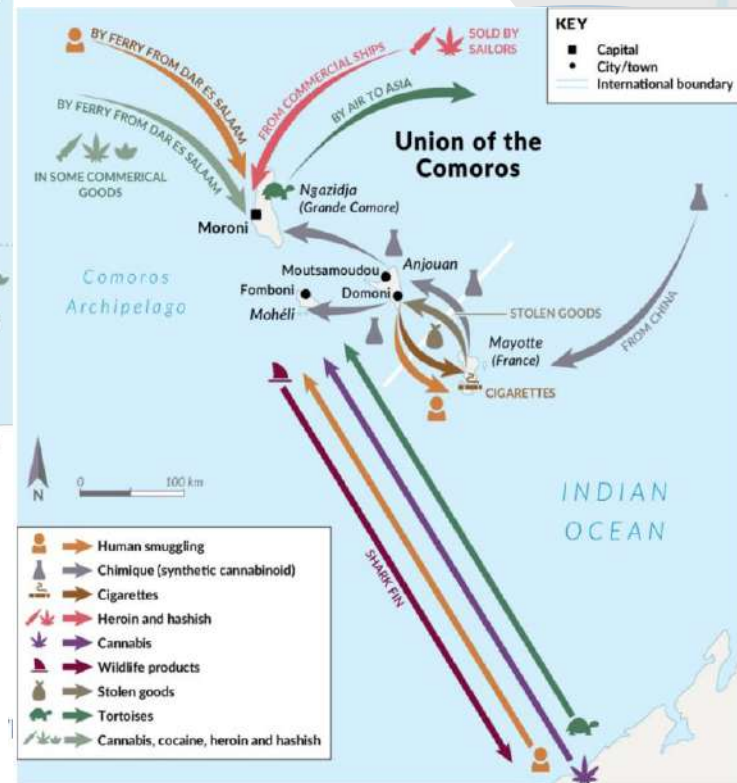
### Main cocaine trafficking routes and cocaine seizure cases in



# THREAT



The routes and modalities of various illicit-trafficking flows that occur between and via Zanzibar, northern Mozambique and the Comoros.



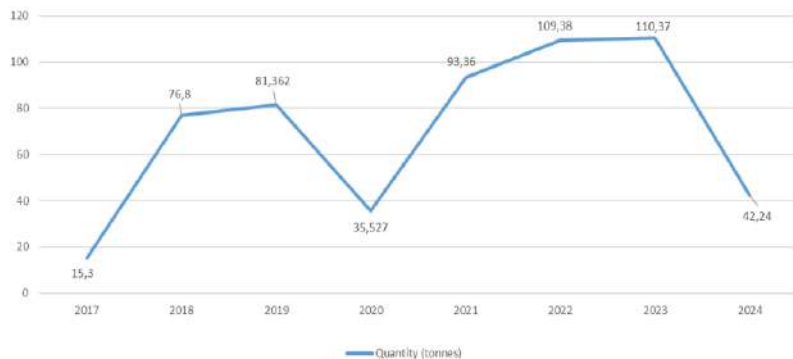
Source :

Triangle of Vulnerability : Changing pattern of illicit trafficking off Swahili coast. Report 2020

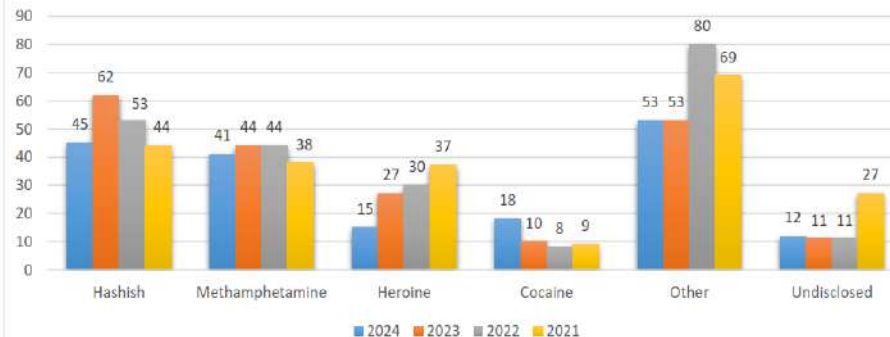
# DRUG TRAFFIC ANALYSIS



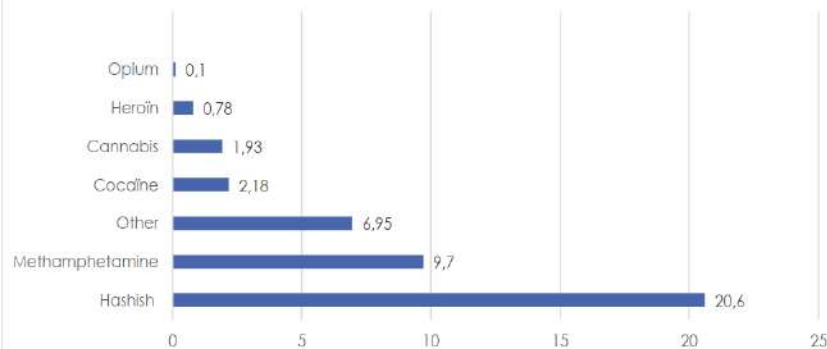
Quantities of drugs seized ESA-IO Region 2017 - 2024



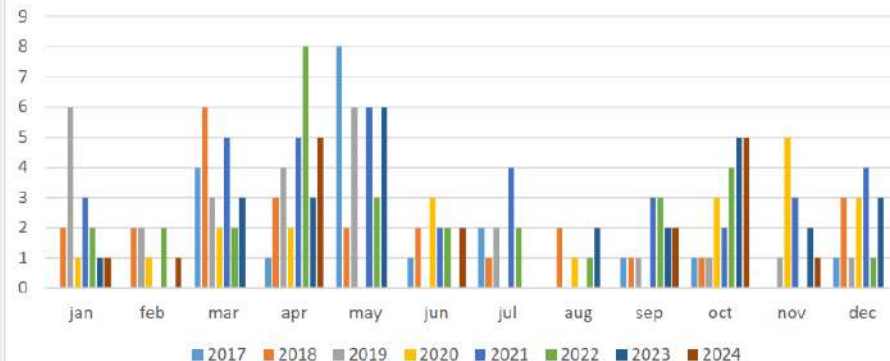
NUMBER OF DRUG SEIZURES AS PER PRODUCT  
ESA-IO REGION 2021 /2024



VOLUME OF NARCOTICS SEIZED (Tons)  
ESA-IO REGION - 2024



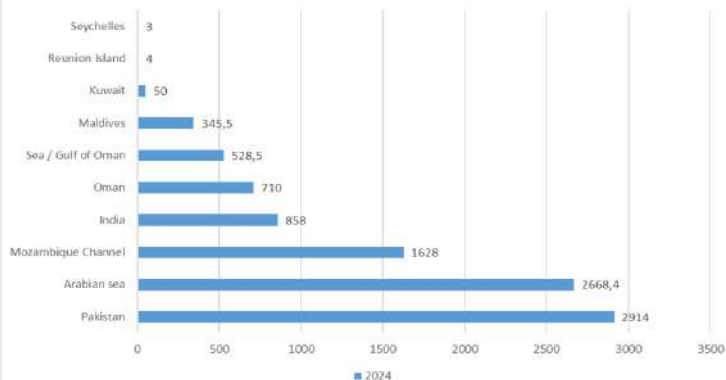
Seasonality of heroin seizures ESA-IO  
2017 - 2024



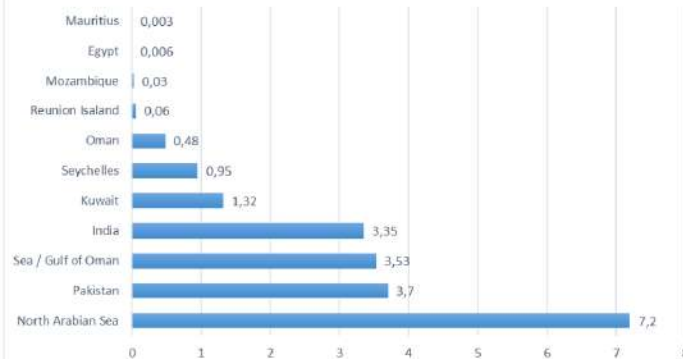
# DRUG TRAFFIC ANALYSIS



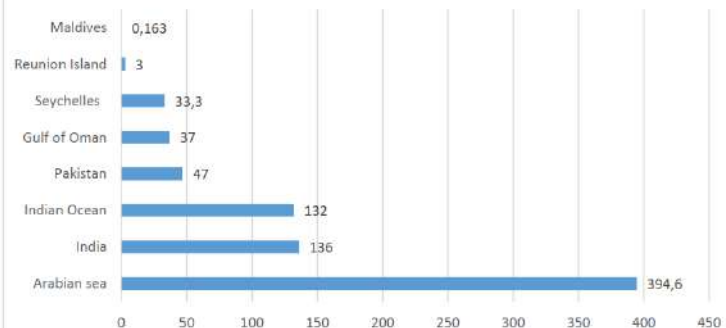
Methamphetamine seizures with respect to their locations (kgs)  
Western Indian Ocean - 2024



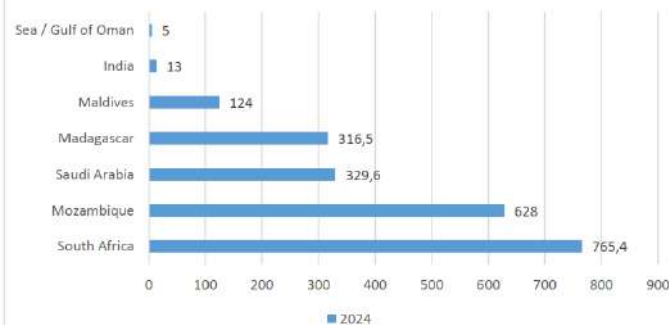
HASHISH SEIZURES WITH RESPECT TO THEIR  
LOCATIONS (TONS)  
WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN - 2024



Amount of heroin seizure classified location-wise (kg)  
ESA-IO - year 2024

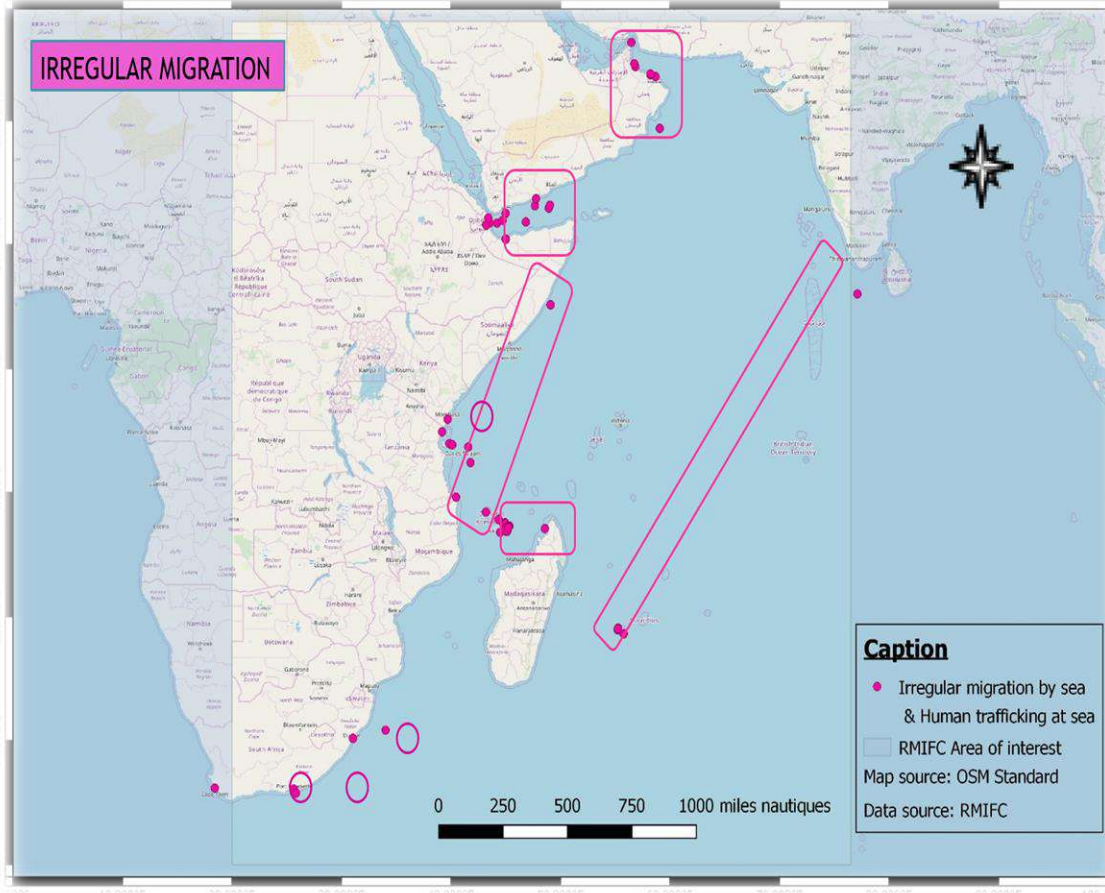


Cocaine seizures with respect to their locations (kgs)  
Western Indian Ocean - 2024





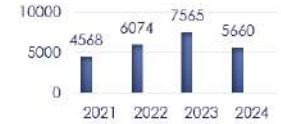
# ILLEGAL MIGRATION



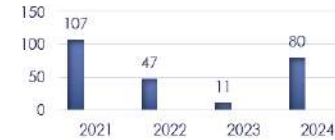
**Comoros-Madagascar-Mayotte  
2021 to 2024**



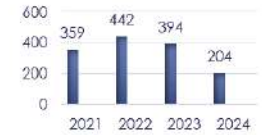
**Ajouan-Mayotte flow  
2021 to 2024**



**Madagascar-Mayotte flows  
2021 to 2024**



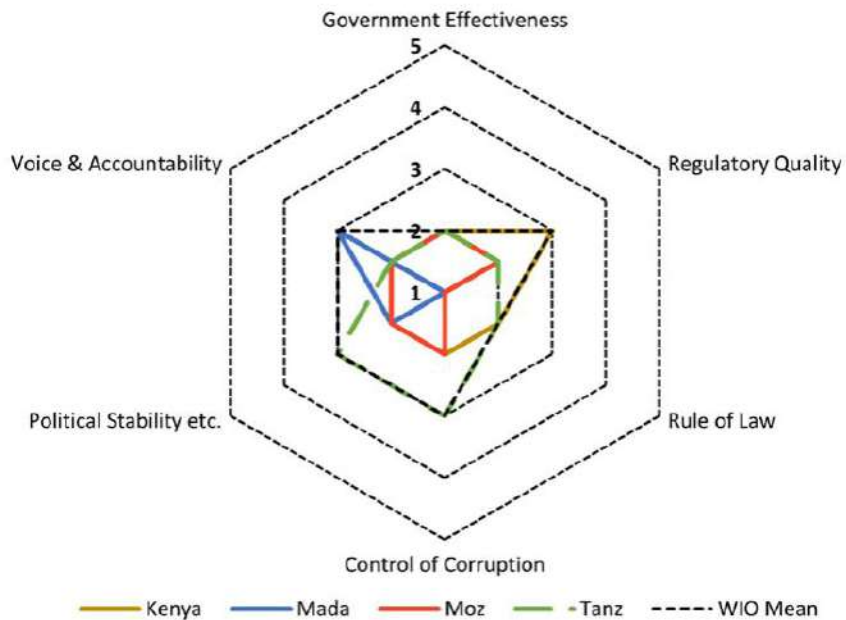
**Gulf of Oman flow  
2021 to 2024**







# IUU FISHING ANALYSIS



## TYPES OF IUU FISHING ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS

TYPES OF IUU FISHING ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS	NUMBER
Operations in disputed maritime space	05
Finding of violations of fisheries regulations (excluding poaching)	37
Fight against poaching	26
Police operation against a fishing vessel of a distant fleet	01
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>

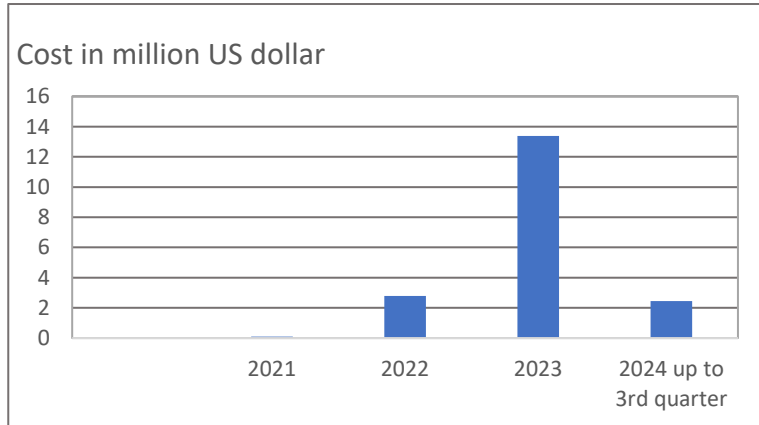
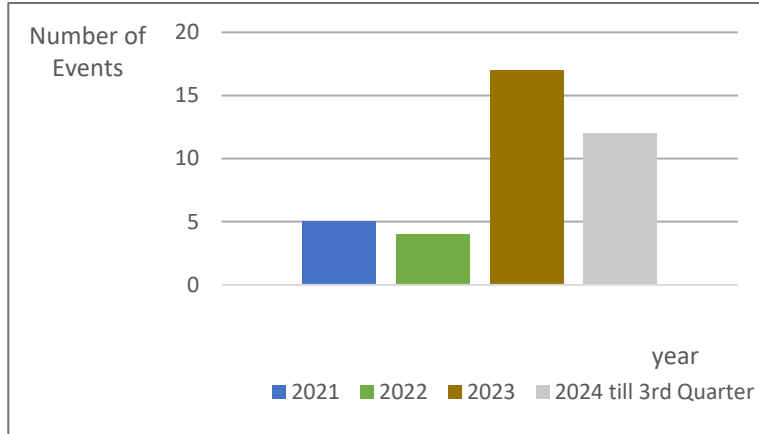
*Sub-categories of IUU fishing in the region*

Data from the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators

# EVENT ANALYSIS

## POACHING

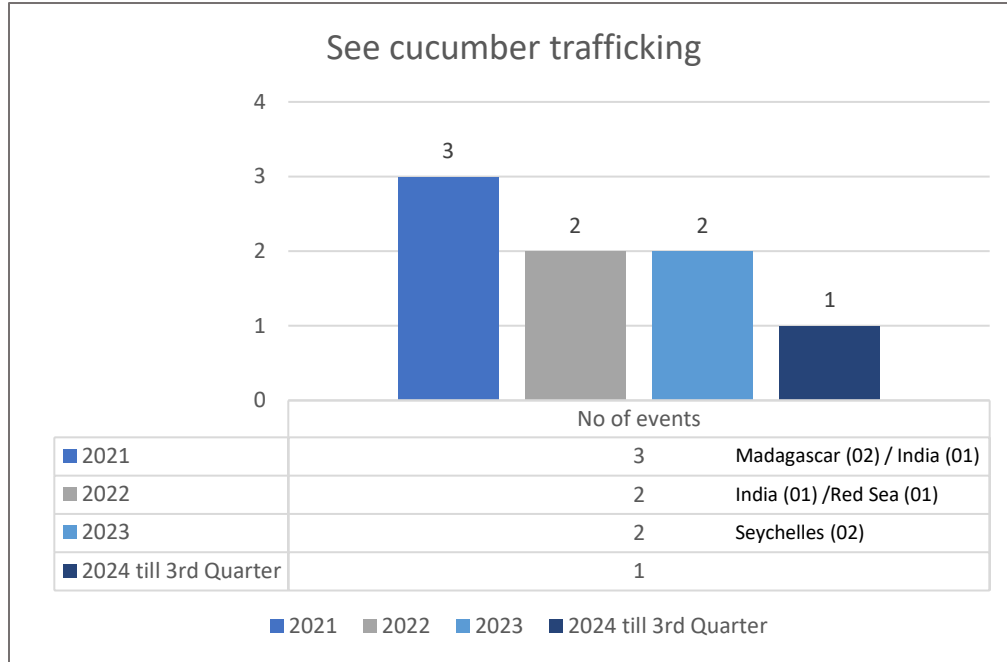
### Abalones trafficking



# . EVENT ANALYSIS

## POACHING

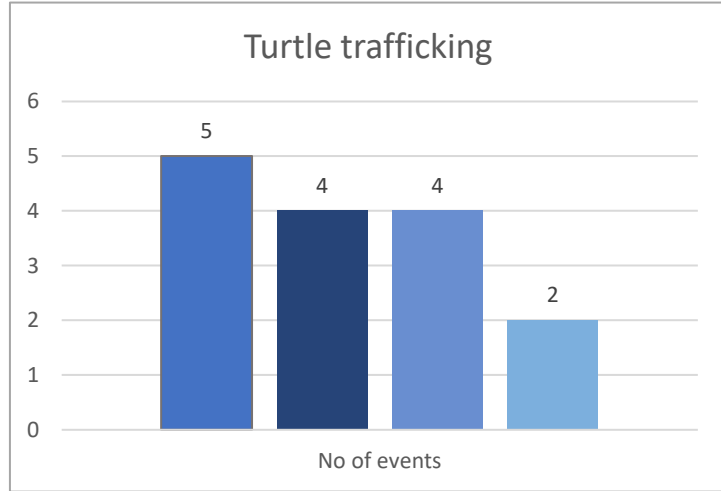
Sea cucumber trafficking



# . EVENT ANALYSIS

## POACHING

### Turtle



2024

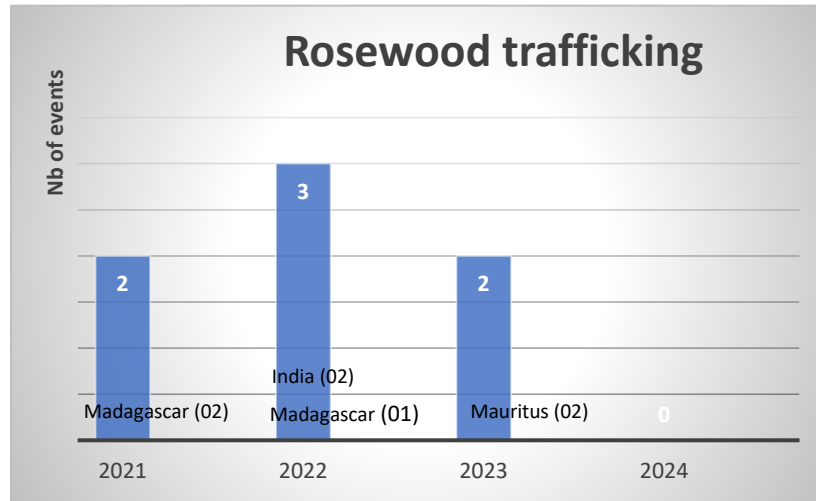
**Capture Zones:** Coastal areas of Comoros, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Madagascar.

•**Transit Points:** Major seaports like Anjouan, Mombasa, Dar es Salaam, and Maputo.

•**Destination Markets:** East Asia (China, Thailand and Vietnam), with minor routes to Europe.

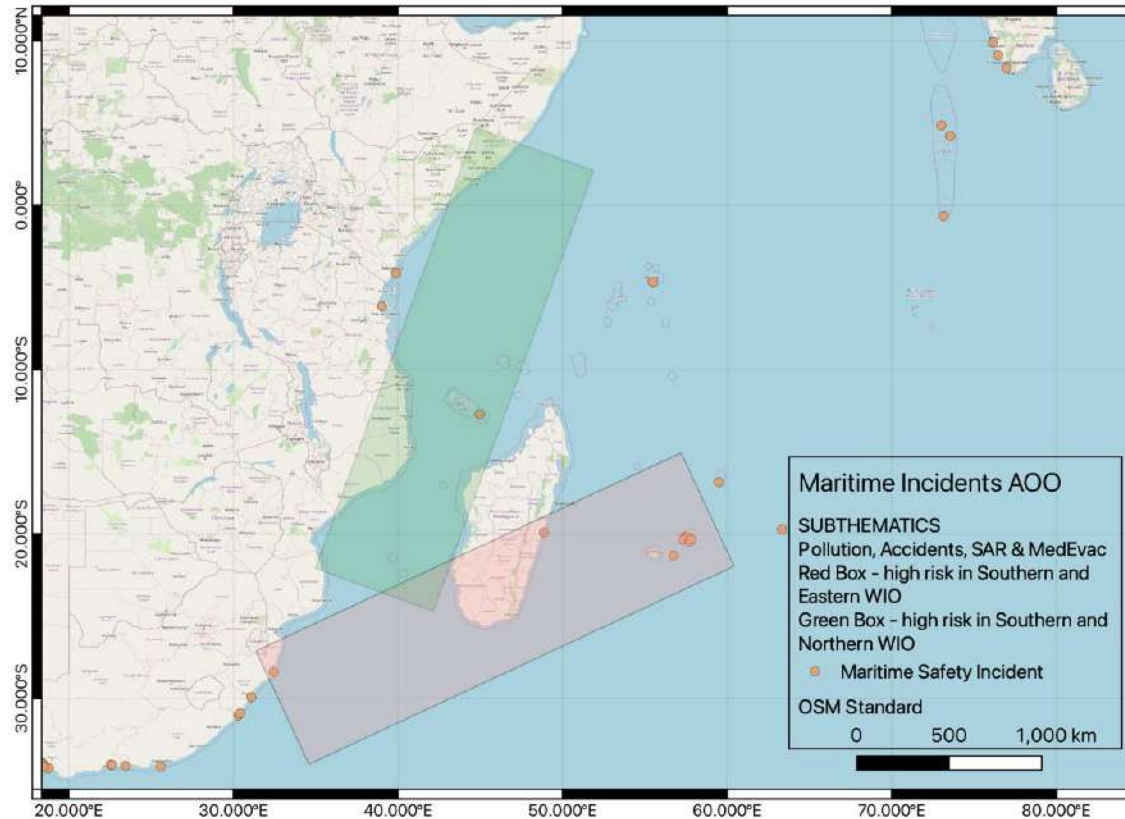
# . EVENT ANALYSIS

Rosewood/ Red sander trafficking



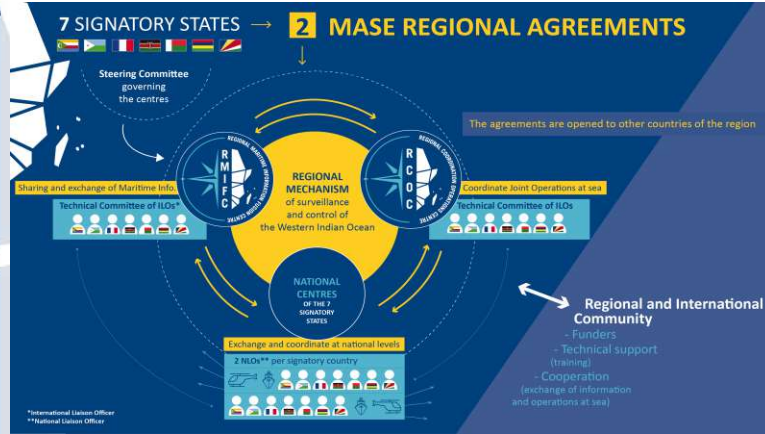
# . MARITIME INCIDENT

## MARITIME INCIDENTS - AOO





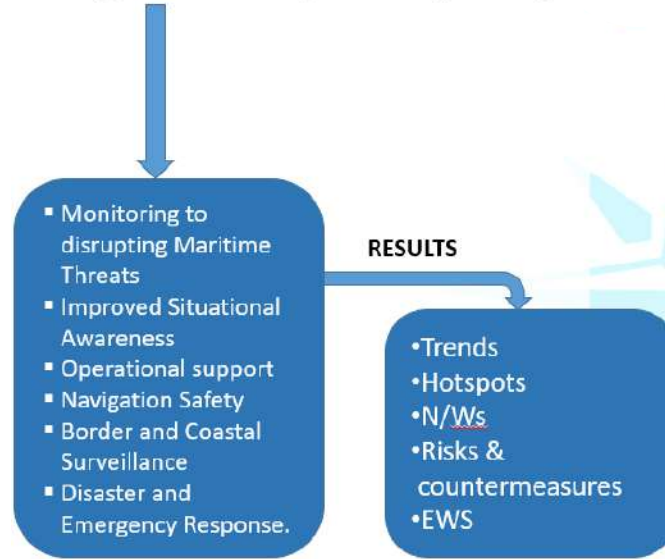
# 2. RMIFC CONTRIBUTION TO THE WIO REGION



**Actionable Information**



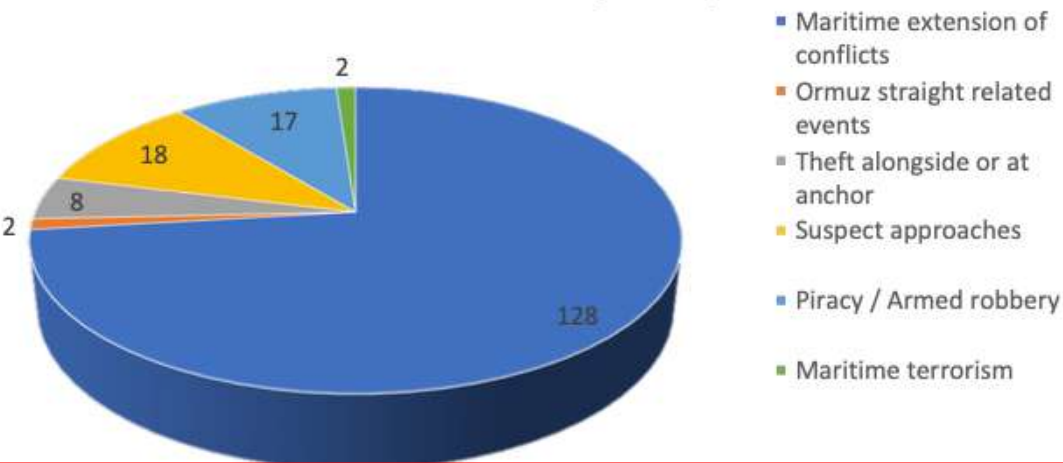
## Progress - Geo-Spatial Reporting



# MANAGING “EMERGING” THREATS AGAINST FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION AND MARITIME SECURITY AND SAFETY



Violent acts at sea  
Western Indian Ocean (2024)

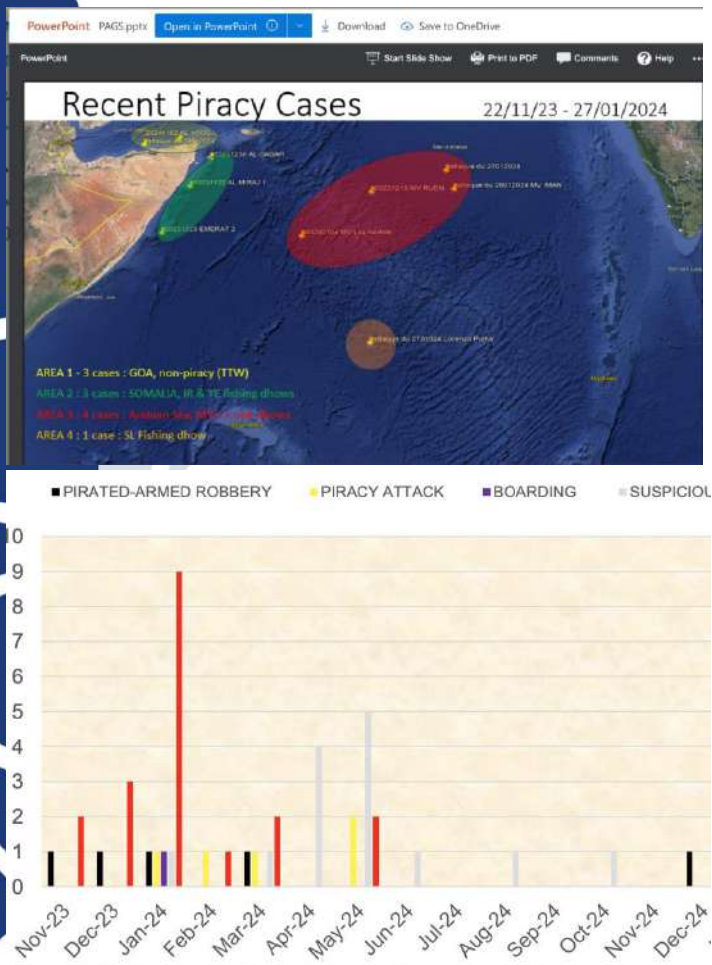


## Non state Actors

- Direct threat against oil and gas tankers at the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden
- Aug. 2024. MV Sounion set on fire while carrying over 900,000 barrels of crude was attacked
- Threatened to be the worst global oil spill incident.
- Incident signaled that deliberate human acts now pose a high risk factor in marine pollution
- Explored new partnerships (MoUs)
- Held engagements with strategic partners (US NAVAL FORCE EUROPE/AFRICA – CMF - EUNAVFOR Atalanta – Japan – UK - India others)



# Progress – countering piracy in the WIO



## Using data (including from various sources and partners) analysis

- Achieved general understanding of the modus operandi of the PAGs
- Triangulation of PAGs potential positions - based on attacks
- Identified potential bases (liaise with Somali authorities).

## Early warning system has allowed us to;

- Plan preventive patrols / defensive posture to protect shipping and trade routes
- Achieved some level of deterrence against pirate attacks in the southern Somalia
- Enhanced info sharing in our AOR with partners (including against Yemen logistics and attacks)

# RMSA model : Generation of Actionable results



## **Triggered several joint OPS**

- Apart from piracy. RMIFC identified other ops zones – against IUUF, narcotics / human smuggling, arms trafficking, etc
- Primary objective safeguard freedom of navigation (through deterrence).

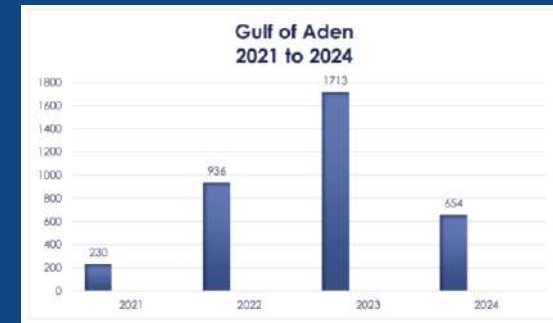
## **Reports influenced policy decision making**

- Several SSA States have added additional assets to enhance.
- May 2025 – Kenya added 2 additional OPVs.
- Addition of other assets nearing completion





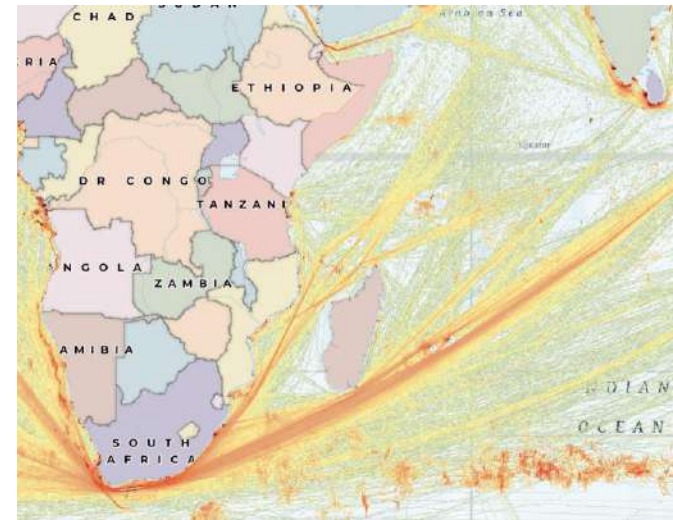
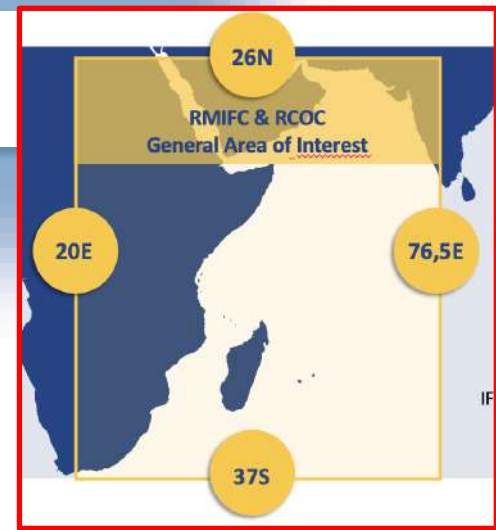
# Generation of actionable results – Illegal migration



- ❖ Data driven and intelligence led – to monitor existing N/Ws and identifying new and emerging routes.
- ❖ The RMIFC reported a decline of about 61% in its annual activity report. Possibly due to attrition at the Centres.
- ❖ Djibouti – continues to be the preferred transit point for illegal migrants (Ethiopians, Somalis, Eritreans etc) to cross into the Red Sea to Gulf countries, Europe
- ❖ Other H.S/T n/ws – linked to Anjouan + Mayotte, Nosy Be + Mayotte, East Africa + Comoros,
- ❖ RMIFC efforts – to identify underlying conditions and support national initiatives (publications and articles).
- ❖ **Protection of human rights** – prioritizing safety of migrants and ensuring medical provisions are in place (advance engagements with States through ILOs)

# 3. LESSON LEARNED

- Strengthening information sharing :  
Need to develop National Information Sharing Centre to feed regional centre
- The Imperative for a Coordinated ESA-IO Response face to transnational organized crime
- Capacity building –Training opportunities in GEOINT, MDA courses, to strengthen our analysis
- Organizing exercise (TTX, FTX, workshops, conferences, ...)
- Legal framework should be enforced :
  - International and domestic law
  - Prosecutors Forum in partnership with UNODC





# Shift in operation Approach



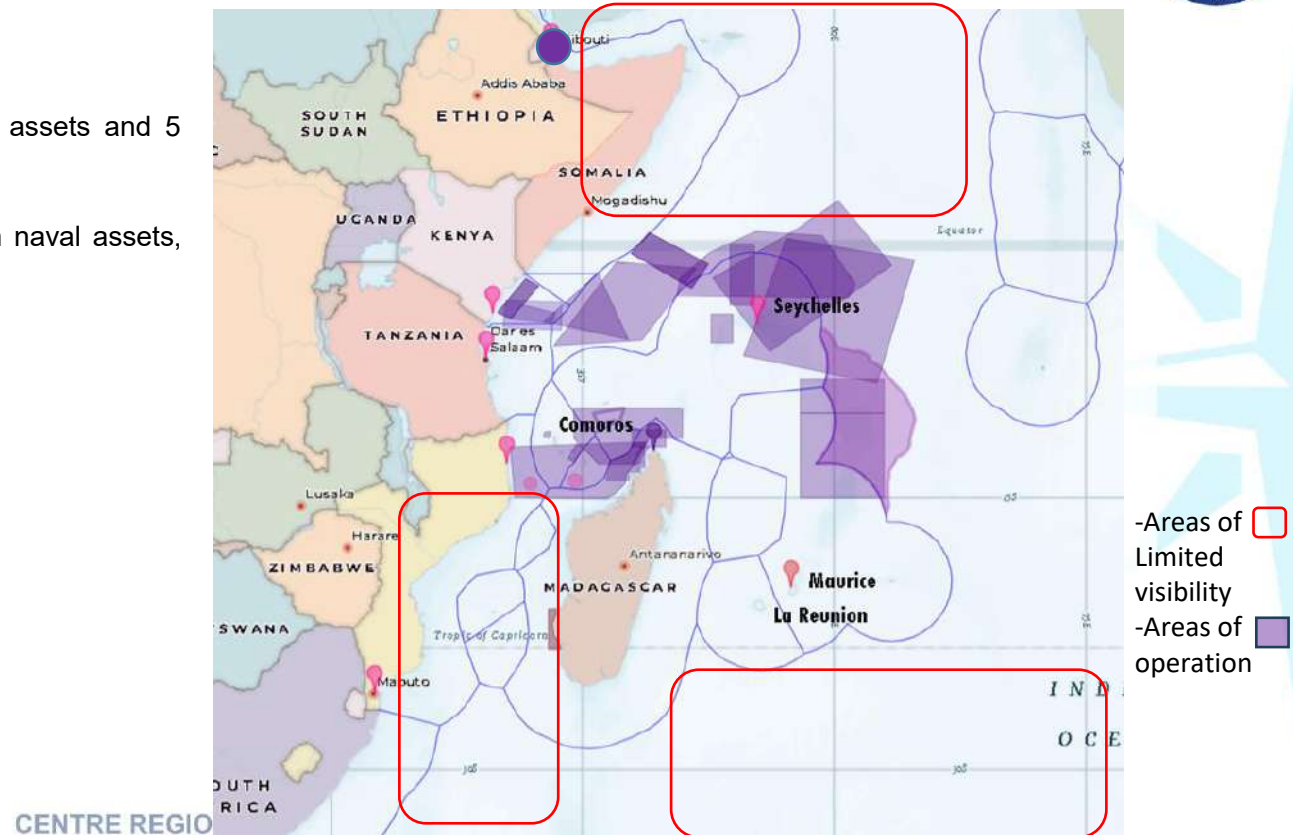
## 2019 -2024

07 countries involved with 20 naval assets and 5 aircraft

02 partners (EUNAVFOR & UK) with naval assets, Air assets and drones

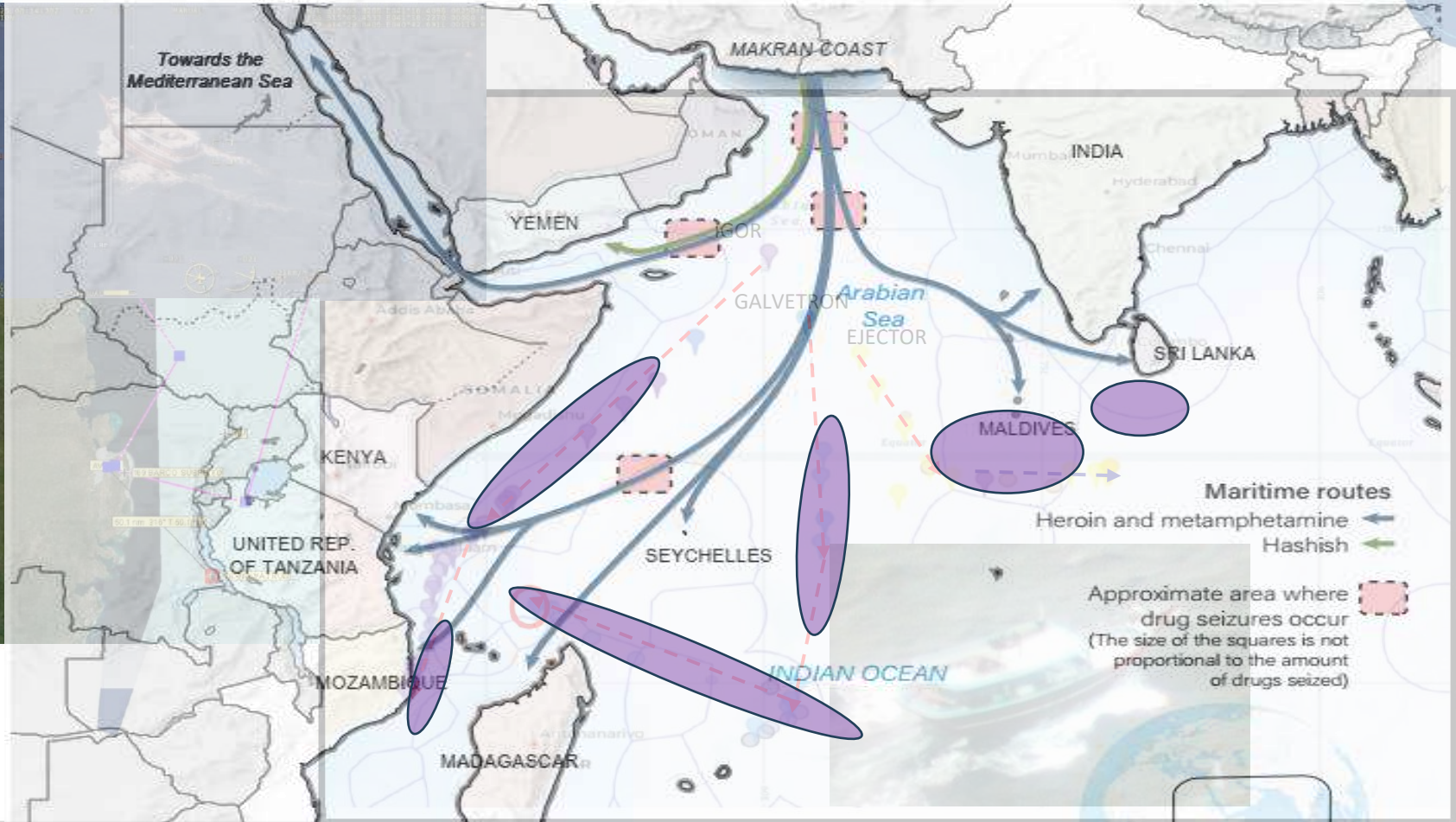
Four main threats:

- IUU fishing
- Narcotic trafficking
- Irregular immigration
- Piracy



CENTRE REGION

# Operation Sea Shield (May-June 2025)





# Key points

**Addresses the Vast Geography:** use of intelligence to focus limited assets on the highest-risk targets, maximizing efficiency and resource allocation.

**Overcomes Resource Asymmetry:** integrated and valued contribution

**Builds Trust and Shared Responsibility:** By co-locating personnel and sharing a common COP, you break down institutional and national barriers, fostering the trust essential for complex operations.

**Proactive vs. Reactive:** Instead of responding to incidents, the architecture aims to predict and prevent them.

**Scalable and Adaptable:** The same architecture can be scaled up or down to address different threats, from piracy and narcotics to the protection of critical underwater infrastructure and the disruption of illicit financial flows.



## 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