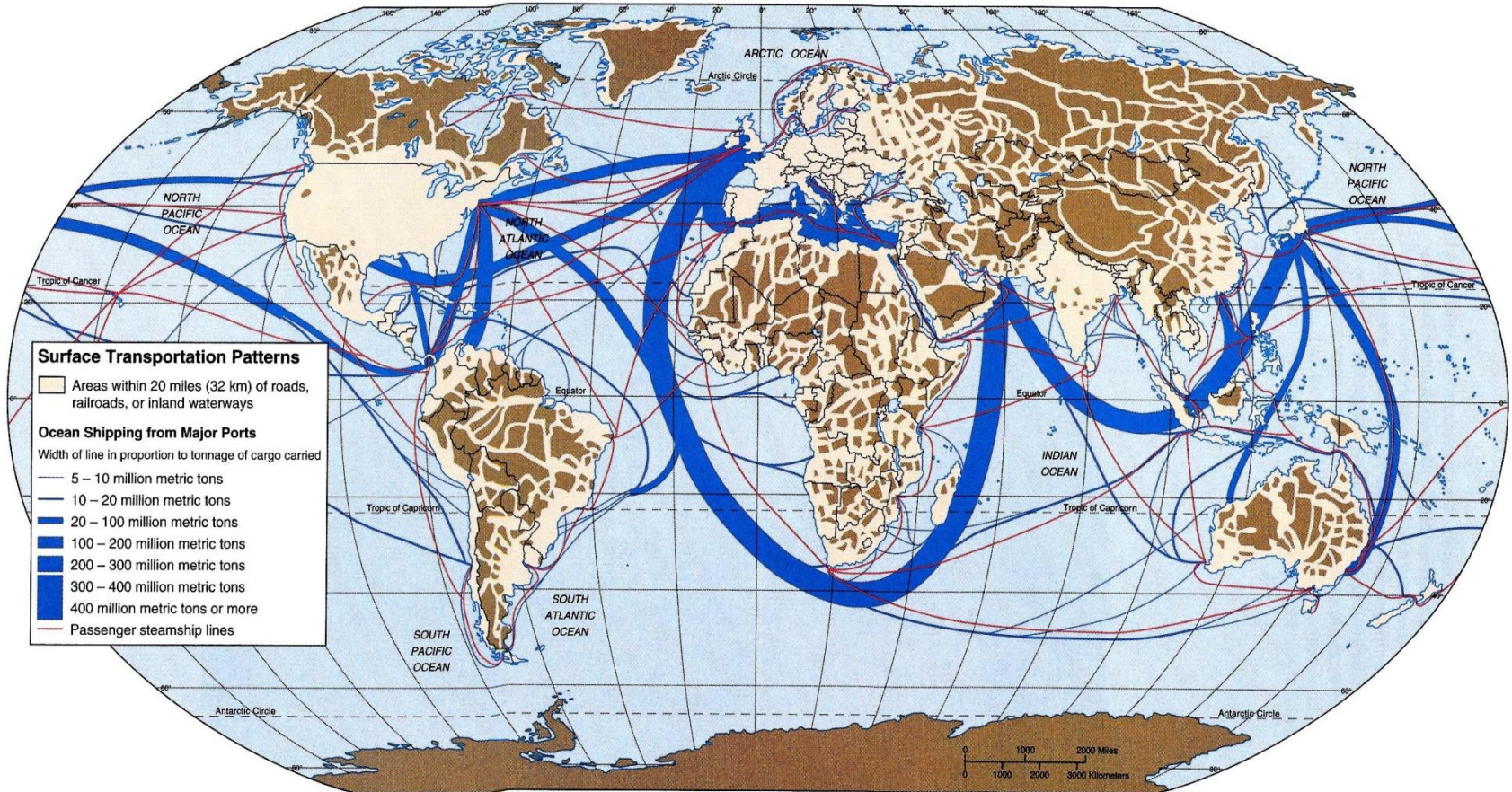# Piracy and Conflicting Claims at Maritime Chokepoints and in Narrow Seas

Charles E. Morrison
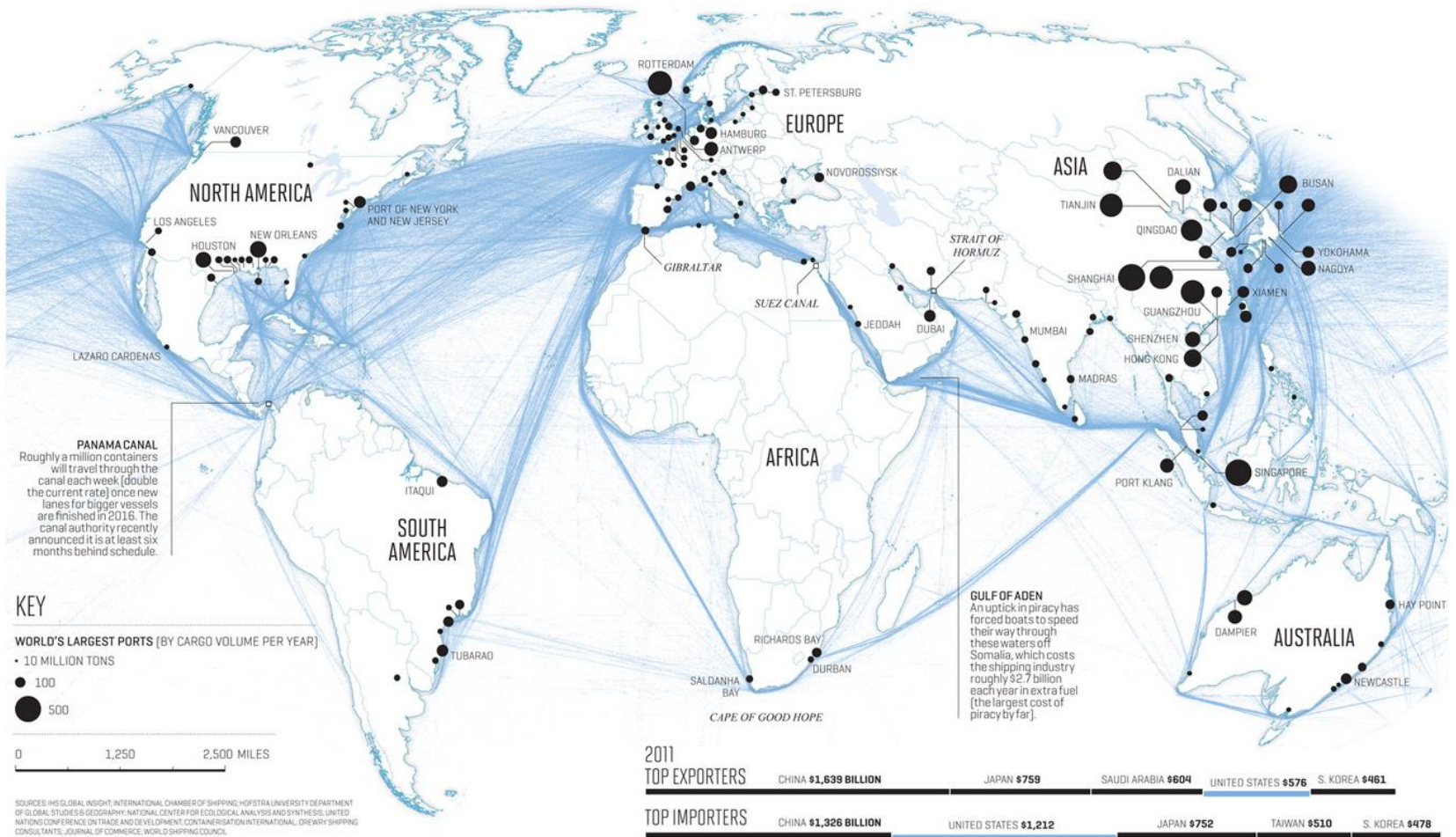
East-West Center

Global Transportation Patterns

World Transportation Patterns

Global Shipping Routes

PANAMA CANAL
Roughly a million containers will travel through the canal each week (double the current rate) once new lanes for bigger vessels are finished in 2016. The canal authority recently announced it is at least six months behind schedule.

GULF OF ADEN
An uptick in piracy has forced boats to speed their way through these waters off Somalia, which costs the shipping industry roughly $2.7 billion each year in extra fuel (the largest cost of piracy by far).

KEY

WORLD'S LARGEST PORTS [BY CARGO VOLUME PER YEAR]
· 10 MILLION TONS
· 100
· 500

0   1,250   2,500 MILES

SOURCES: IHS GLOBAL INSIGHT; INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF SHIPPING; HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF GLOBAL STUDIES & GEOGRAPHY; NATIONAL CENTER FOR ECOLOGICAL ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS; UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT; CONTAINERISATION INTERNATIONAL; DREWRY SHIPPING CONSULTANTS; JOURNAL OF COMMERCE; WORLD SHIPPING COUNCIL

2011
TOP EXPORTERS   CHINA $1,639 BILLION   JAPAN $759   SAUDI ARABIA $604   UNITED STATES $576   S. KOREA $461

TOP IMPORTERS   CHINA $1,326 BILLION   UNITED STATES $1,212   JAPAN $752   TAIWAN $510   S. KOREA $478

Big Container Ports

The World's 50 Busiest Container-Shipping Seaports in 2012

Millions of TEUs
- <3.0
- 3.1-6.0
- 6.1-9.0
- 9.1-12.0
- 12.1-15.0
- 15.1-18.0
- 18.1-21.0
- 21.1-24.0
- 24.1-27.0
- 27.1-30.0
- 30.1-33.0

Port, Country	Millions of TEUs
1) Shanghai, China	32.5
2) Singapore, Singapore	31.7
3) Hong Kong, China	23.1
4) Shenzhen, China	22.9
5) Busan, South Korea	17.0
6) Ningbo-Zhoushan, China	16.8
7) Guangzhou Harbor, China	14.7
8) Qingdao, China	14.5
9) Jebel Ali, Dubai, UAE	13.3
10) Tianjin, China	12.3
11) Rotterdam, Netherlands	11.9
12) Port Kelang, Malaysia	10.0
13) Kaohsiung, Taiwan, China	9.8
14) Hamburg, Germany	8.9
15) Antwerp, Belguim	8.6
16) Los Angeles, USA	8.1

Notes: How busy a seaport is depends on the unit of measure, and could refer to weight, volume, or value of shipments. The data displayed here are based on twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), which is a metric of cargo capacity (volume). Values represent the total port throughput in 2012, including filled and empty TEUs. As such, the busiest seaports may not be the most profitable or move the most cargo.

Two Maritime Threats: Piracy and War

Characteristics of Chokepoints

- Strategically significant as natural or artificial narrow channels between two wider bodies of water

- Because difficult or expensive to avoid, shipping congestion at such points

- Examples: Straits of Hormuz, Malacca Straits, Suez and Panama Canals, Bab el-Mandeb, Bosporus, Gibraltar, Danish Straits, Cape Horn

- May be magnate for geostrategic competition or illegal activity including piracy and hijacking.

Maritime Chokepoints and Piracy (about 2010)
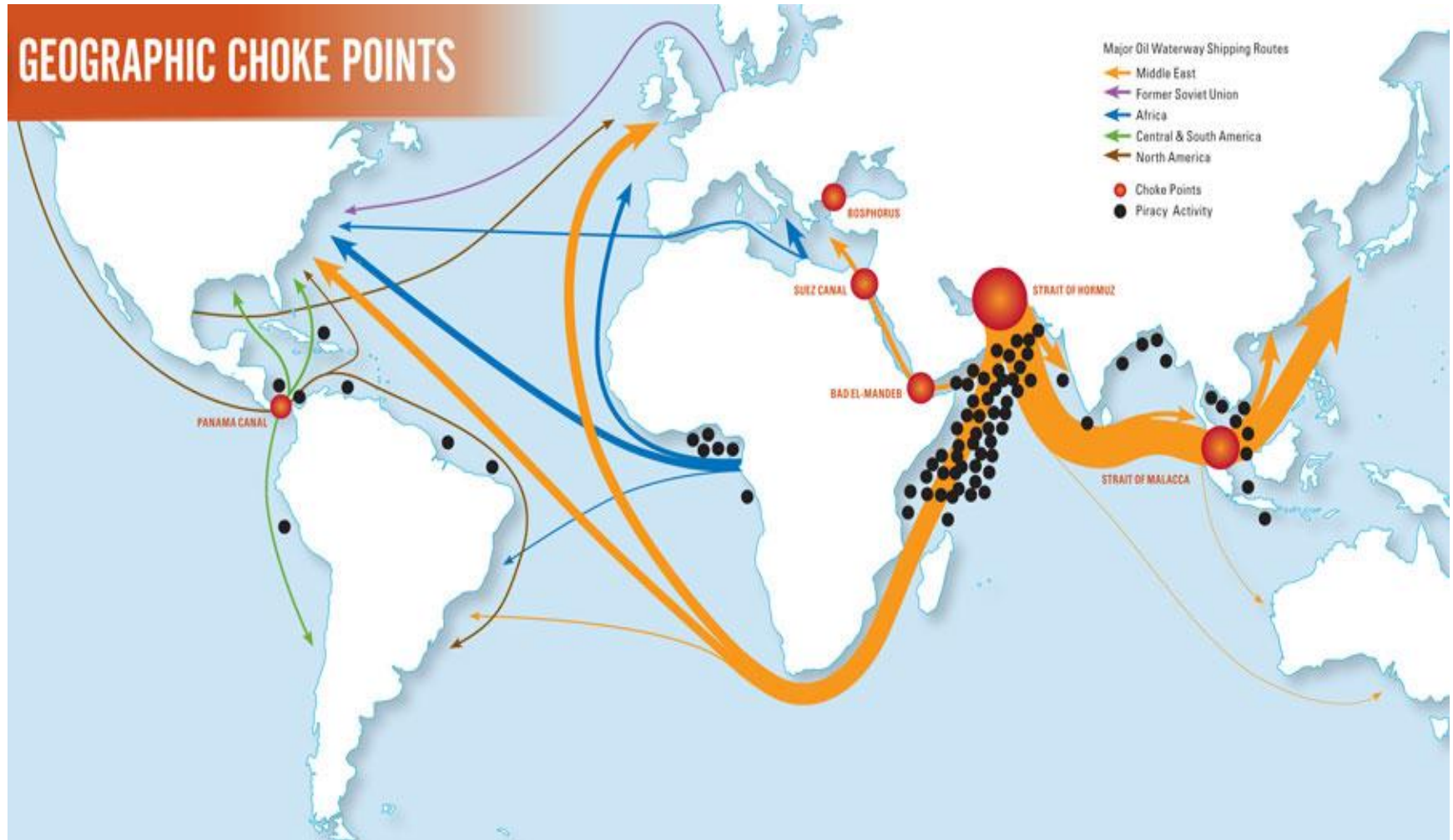
Factors Facilitating Piracy

- Geography:

    - Concentration of opportunity (lots of shipping)

    - Availability of hideouts

- Weak governance (high corruption) or fragmented governance where multiple enforcement agencies (or navies) do not cooperate

- Economic dislocation

- Groups and individuals able and willing to take advantage of opportunity (pirate entrepreneurship and leadership)

Three Main Regions of Piracy

- East Africa (Somalia) – rapid rise and then decline of piracy, with emphasis on hijacking and huge ransom payments

- West Africa (Nigeria) – much of "piracy" in territorial waters, mostly thievery

- Southeast Asia (Indonesia) – recent rise, but mostly thievery, robbery of ship's crews possessions, petroleum from small tankers

Global Piracy Zones

Mer des Caraïbes

Mer de Chine du Sud, Mer de la Sonde Golfe du Bengale

CHENNAI (MADRAS)

CHITTAGONG

BELAWAN

DETROIT DE BAB EL MANDEB

JAKARTA

Tg. PRIOK

DETROIT DE MALACCA

LAGOS

CARTHAGENE

Golfe de Guinée

Corne de L'Afrique

Principaux risques liés à la piraterie maritime

Zones de piraterie diffuse

détroits, ports et routes les plus affectés

attaques de navires marchands

attaques de passagers

The Good News: Global Decline in Incidents
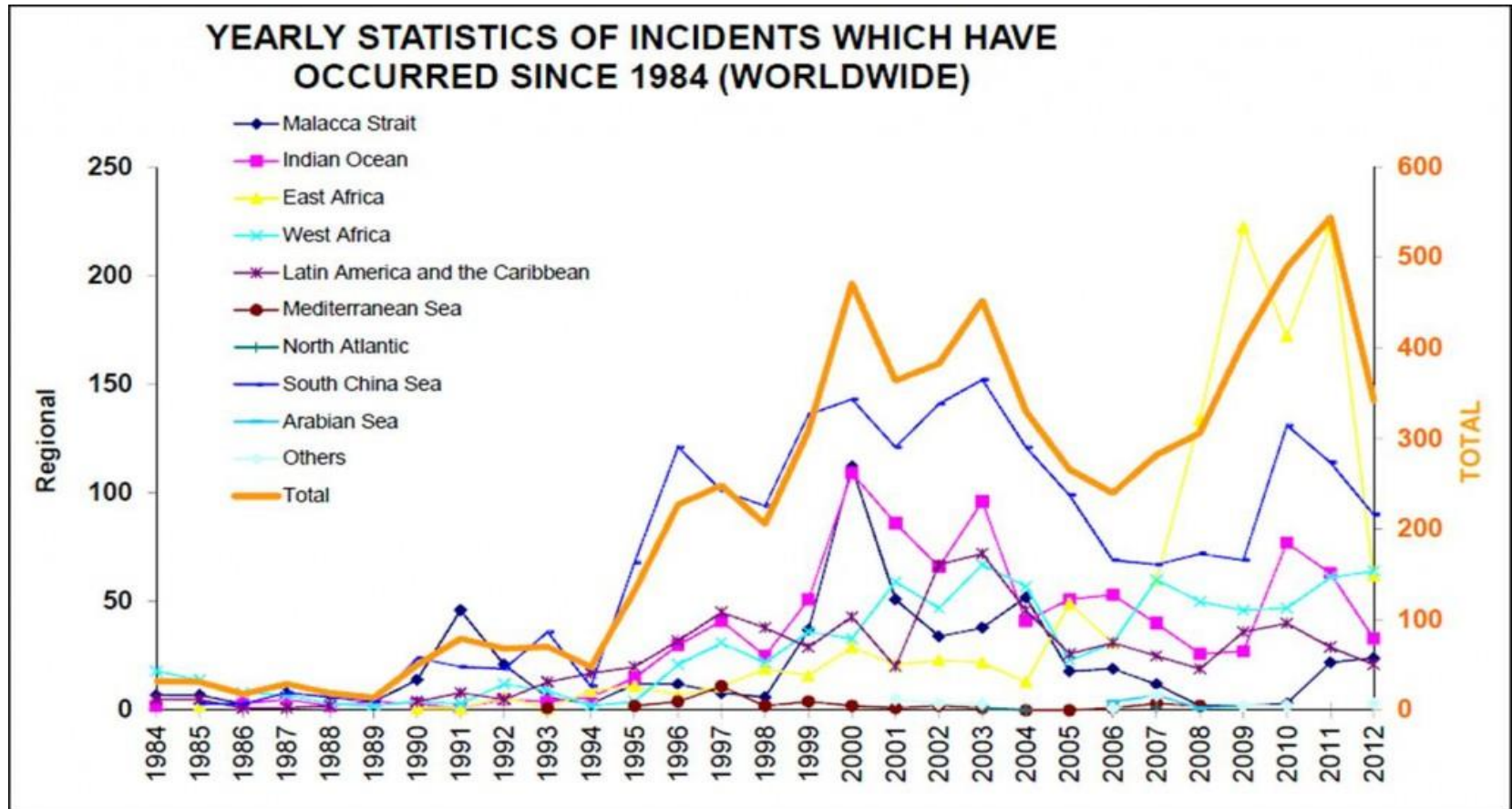
Area of Somalian Piracy

Rise of Piracy off Somalia (2007-2011)

- Tremendous concentration of shipping (30,000 vessels a year), and safe havens along whole Somalia coastline

- Breakdown of national government and military forces, and highly corrupt local governments

- Fishing industry, encouraged and built up by Somalian government in 1980s, hurt by long-distance, illegal fishing and waste dumping following disbandment of Somalian Navy (including from East Asian countries).

Beneficiaries and Losers from Rise of Piracy in Somalia

Beneficiaries

- Pirates (3-5,000)
- Local warlords
- Local coast communities
- Insurance industry
- Security protection agencies
- Hollywood

Losers

- Shipping companies
- Individual hostages
- National taxpayers for cost of naval operations
- Consumers
- Extra shipping costs estimated at $6.6 to $6.9 billion in 2011

Characteristics of Somalian Piracy

- Object was to chase, board, hijacking, holding even large vessels and/or crew for ransom
- Financed by local warlords and other shady but wealthy creditors
- Pirates had been professional fishermen and mostly amateur pirates
- Pirates originally believed they were defending Somalian waters/livelihoods and had substantially local community support
- Hostages were rarely harmed, but often kept for long periods in hope of ransom

Decline of Somalian Piracy 2011-

Number of Incidents
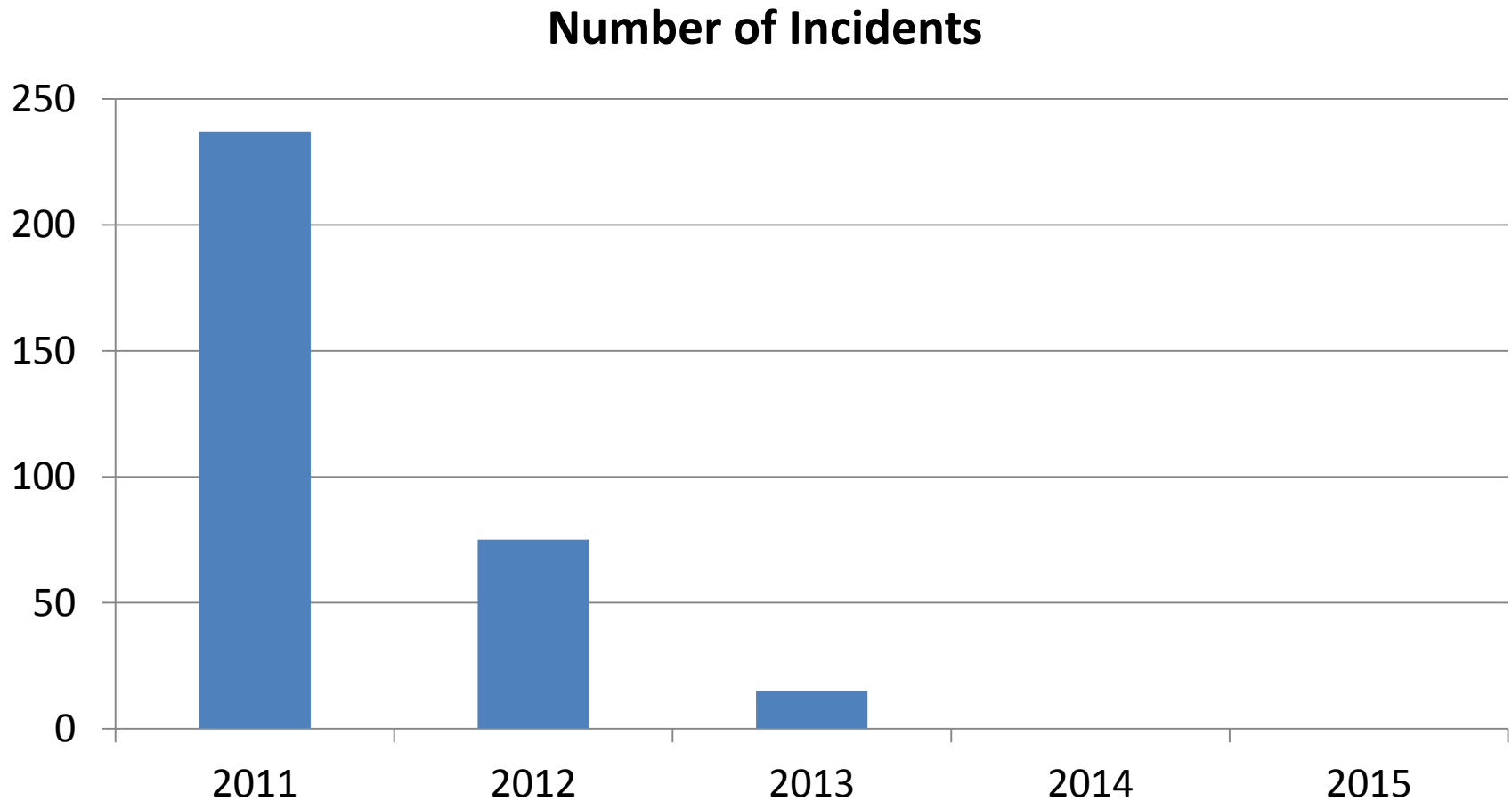
Ships Hijacked
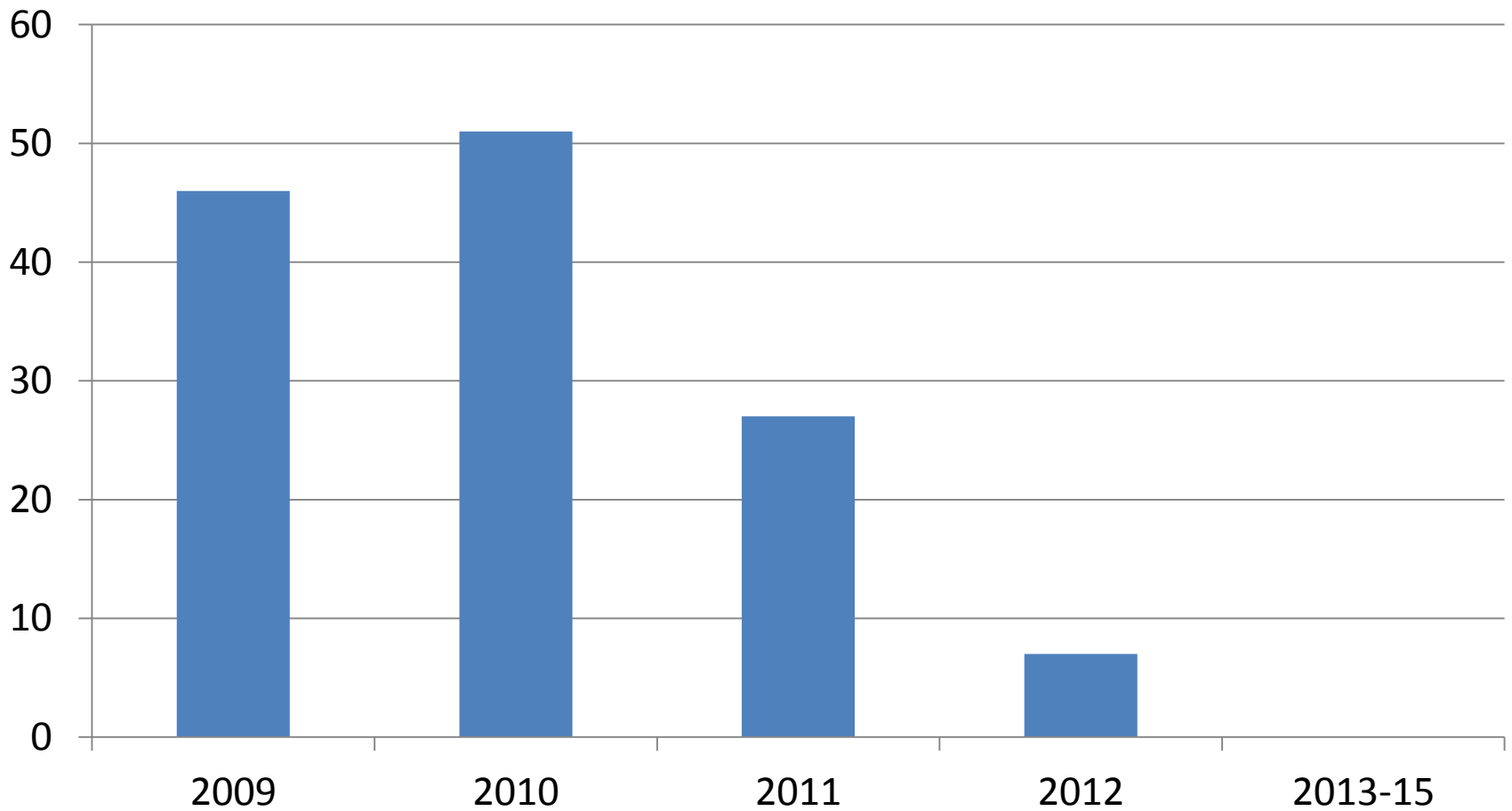
Factors in Decline

- Maritime companies hired security forces, committed to best management and security practices
- International naval cooperation: Combined Task Forces 150/151, EU Operation Atalanta.   First time since WWII that all 5 members of the UNSC had military forces on the same side.
- Pirates forced to operate farther from home bases with less and less success, creditors no longer willing to fund pirate operations
- Governments showed increased willingness to prosecute pirates in national courts (1000+ pirates in 20+ national courts by 2012)
- Assistance to Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, including law enforcement, and local governments
- Increased local community and local government resistance to pirates, for example, in Puntland
- Currently no vessels at ransom compared to 10 in 2012, but some hostages

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY COOPERATION

- UN resolutions in 2008 onward authorized UN members to come to the assistance of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia in its efforts to contain piracy.
- CTF150, originally anti-terrorism, run from US base in Bahrain, command rotates (above picture)
- CTF151, specifically for combatting piracy
- Operation Atalanta (EU), specifically for piracy
- Ocean Shield (NATO), specifically for piracy
- Many individual national efforts

Belligerents: Navies v. Pirates

- 13 NATO countries, including US, Canada, Germany, UK, France

- 21 non-NATO countries, including China, Japan, Russia, Ukraine, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, South Korea, Australia, NZ.

- 5 cooperating African navies/coast guards

- Pirates

Piracy ⬇ Shift to S.E. Asia

Piracy attacks 2009-2015
Piracy globally is off its peak, but has jumped in Southeast Asia

Legend:
- Central America, Caribbean and South America
- East Africa and Indian Ocean
- Southeast Asia and Indian Subcontinent
- West Africa
- Other areas

Values by year:
- 2009: 535
- 2010: 688
- 2011: 679
- 2012: 372
- 2013: 361
- 2014: 403
- 2015*: 306
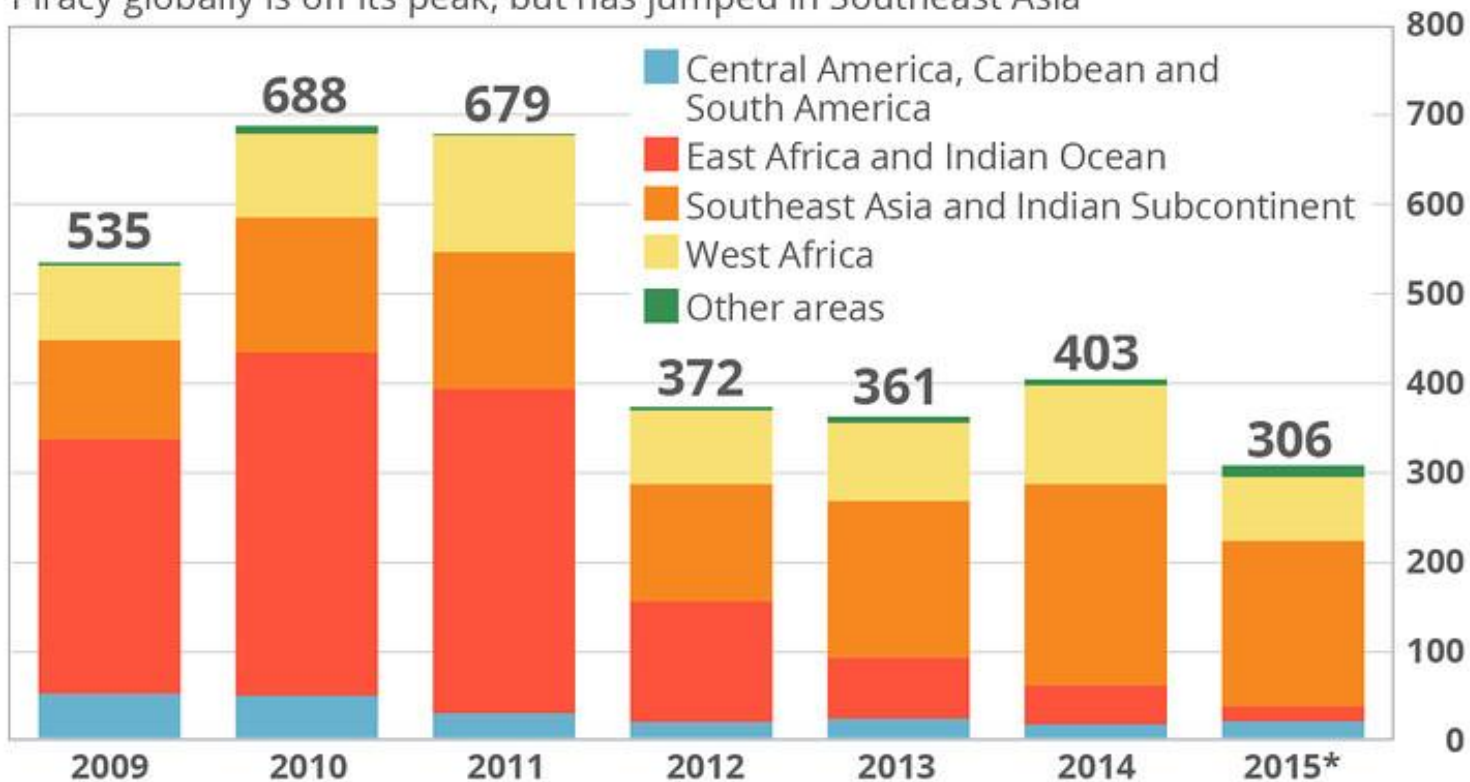
*As of Sept. 11, 2015

Source: Bergen Risk Solutions

Looking East Through Singapore Strait
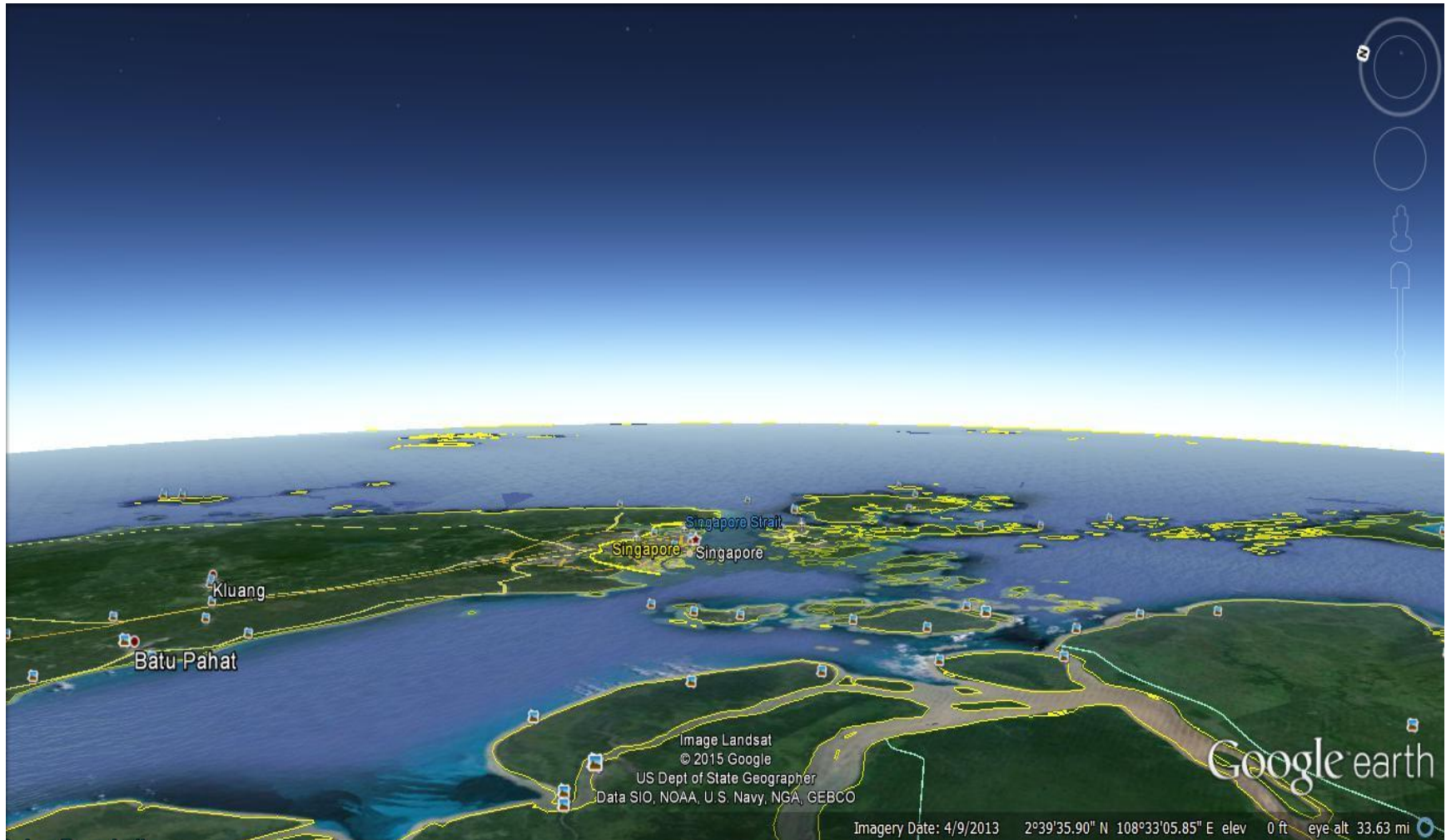
Strait of Malacca

Map 1: Transport and flows in the Strait of Malacca
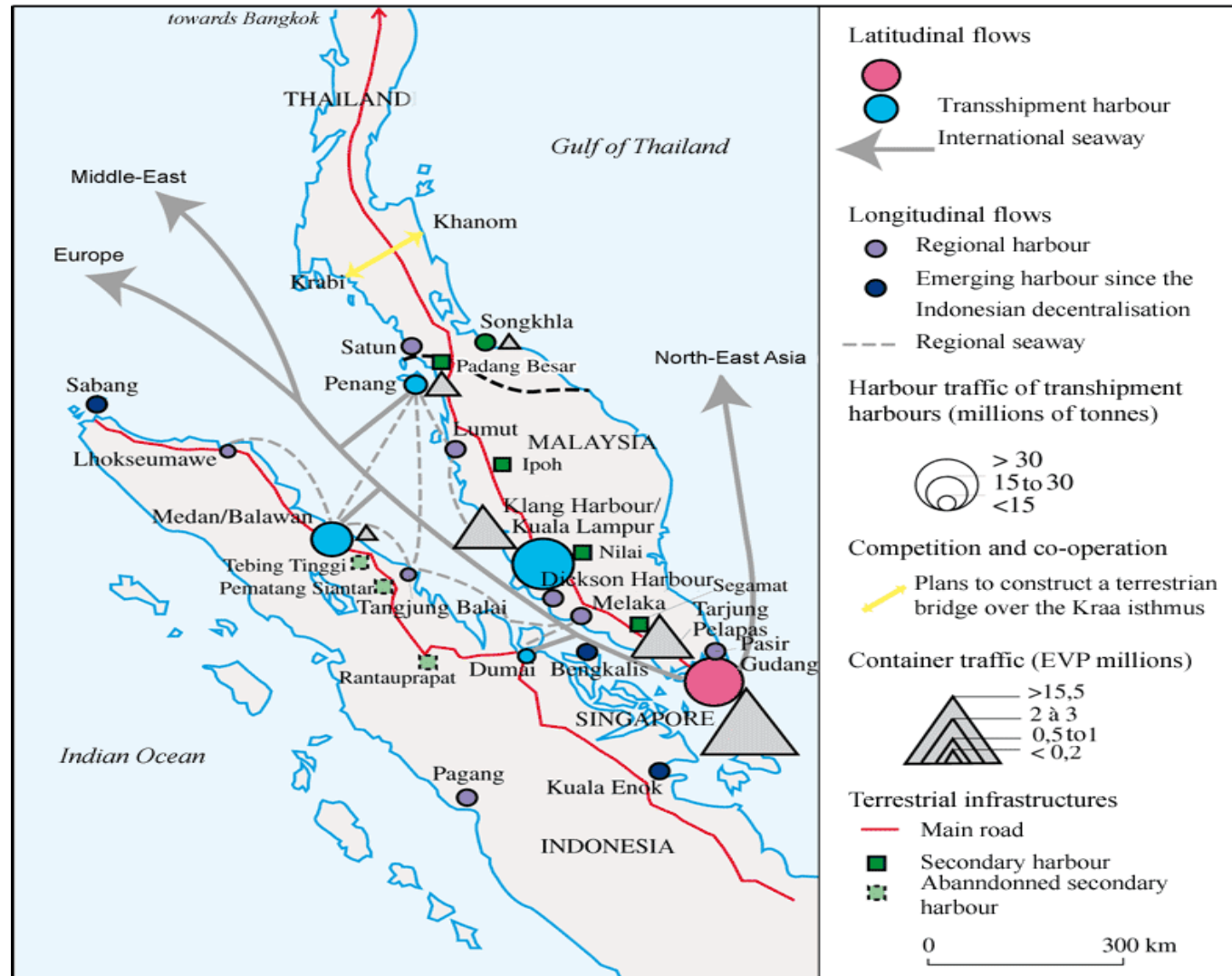
Crude Oil Traffic through S.E. Asia
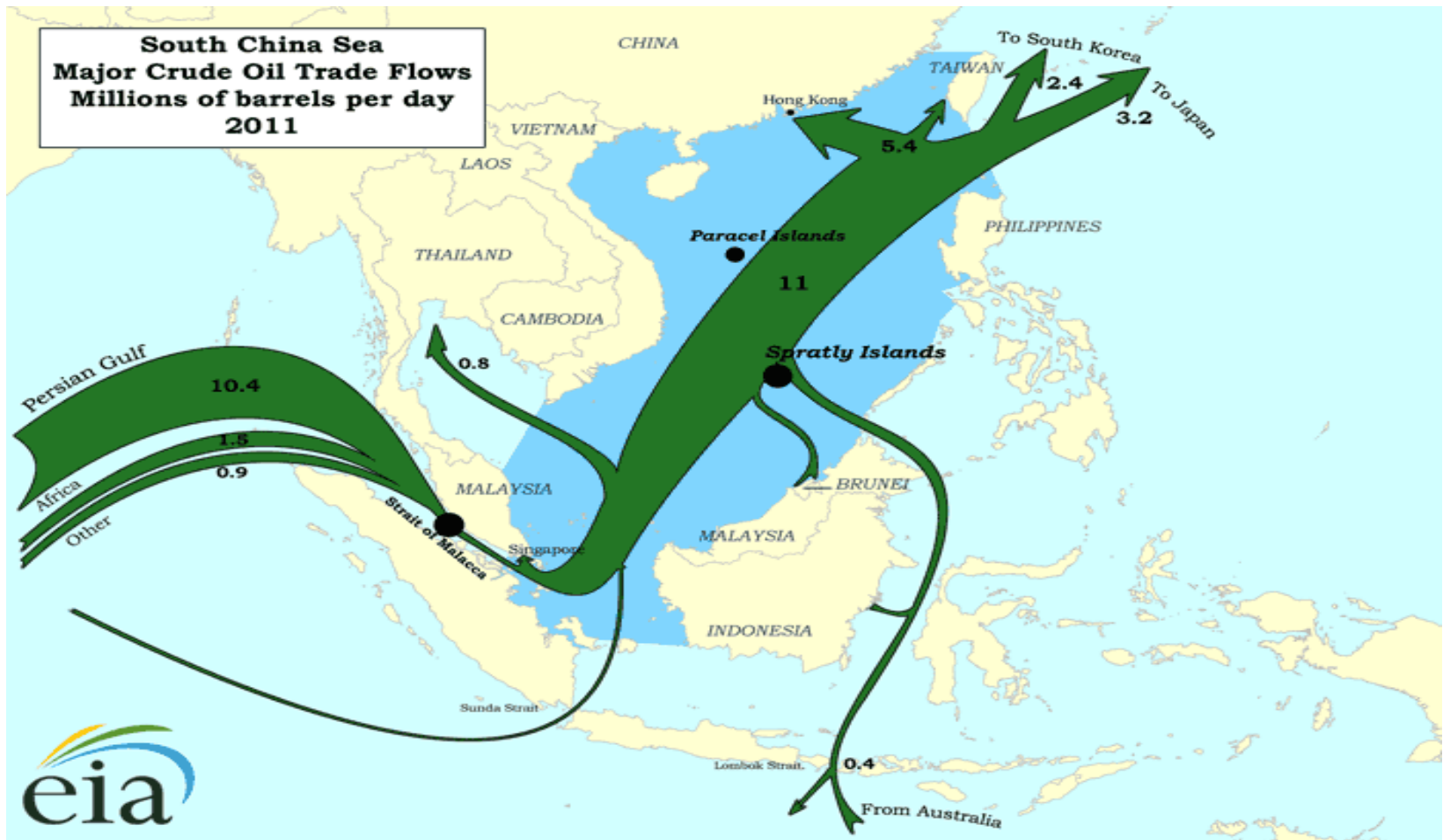
Southeast Asian Piracy
Number of Incidents Reported

Statistica
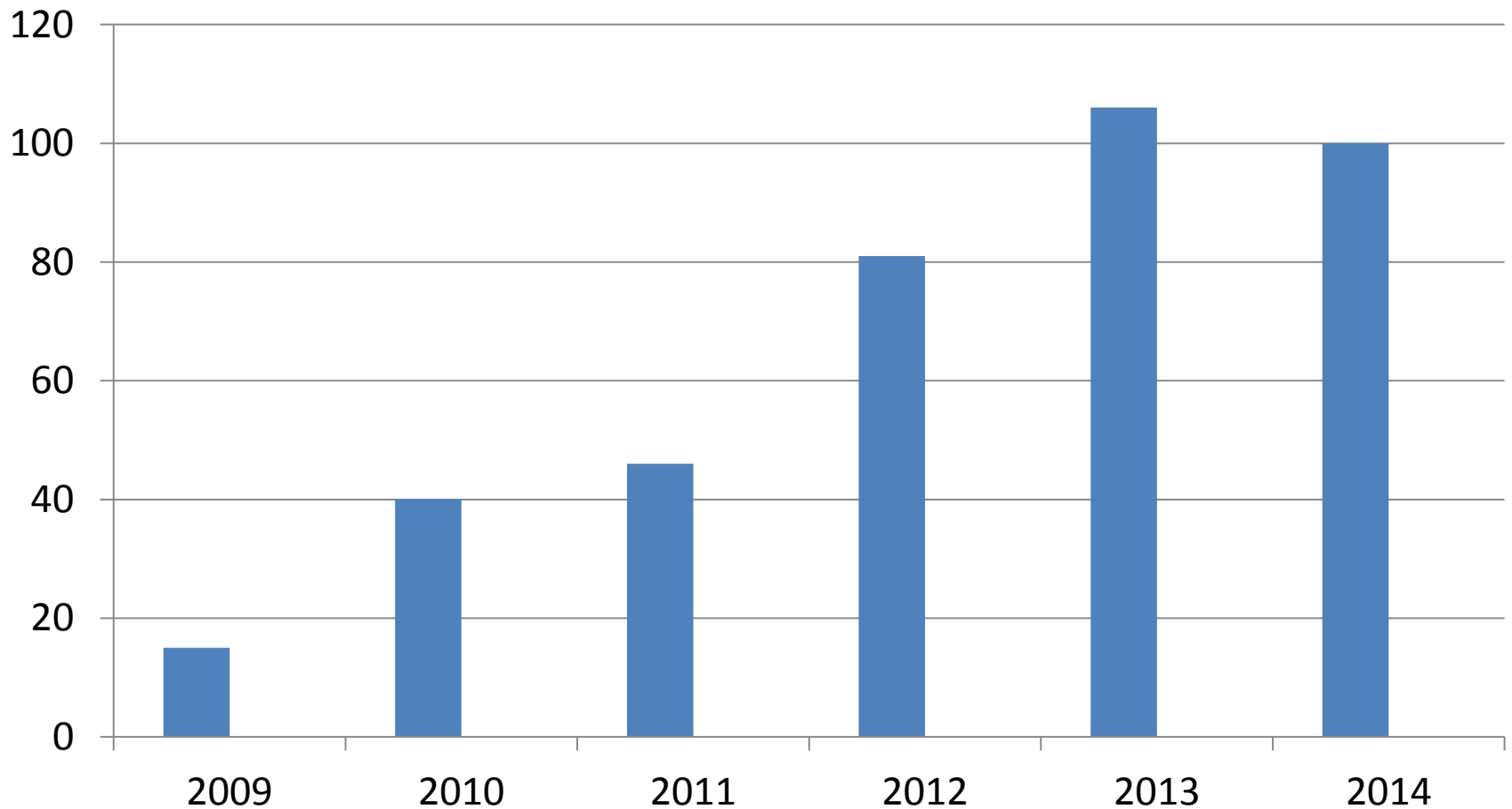
Factors Contributing to Rise of S.E. Asian Piracy

- Concentration of shipping (50,000 vessels a year. 30% of global trade), slow speeds through Malacca straits, many hiding places (1600 islands)
- Weaponized region with many other criminal activity including smuggling, drug trafficking, and human trafficking
- Weak naval enforcement, especially in Indonesia, and local government/military cooperation w pirates, again in Indonesia
- Economic dislocations following 1997 Asian economic crisis and Global Financial Crisis
- Great potential for economic gain from oil cargoes

# Characteristics of S.E. Asian Piracy

- Still increasing number of incidents, most pirate-prone region of the world

- Most incidents are in Indonesia

- Most incidents, especially in Indonesia, are in ports; only 13% of incidents on high seas

- Pirates not interested in kidnapping crew or ransoming ships; mostly theft

Characteristics of S.E. Asian Piracy (2)

- Pirates operate in small teams, often 4-7, but sometimes in coordination with other teams
- Many of the incidents are "petty," and involve stealing crew's possessions or goods on the ship
- Considerable theft of fuel of small coastal tankers; pirate transfer to own tankers
- On ground collusion, organized and coordinated attacks, intelligence activities, financing by syndicates interests involved in other illegal activities
- Pool of recruits from migrants elsewhere in Indonesia to Batam, Riau Archipelago

Most of the SE Asian Piracy is Indonesian [2012] and Little in International Waters

Occurrences According to Country and Area
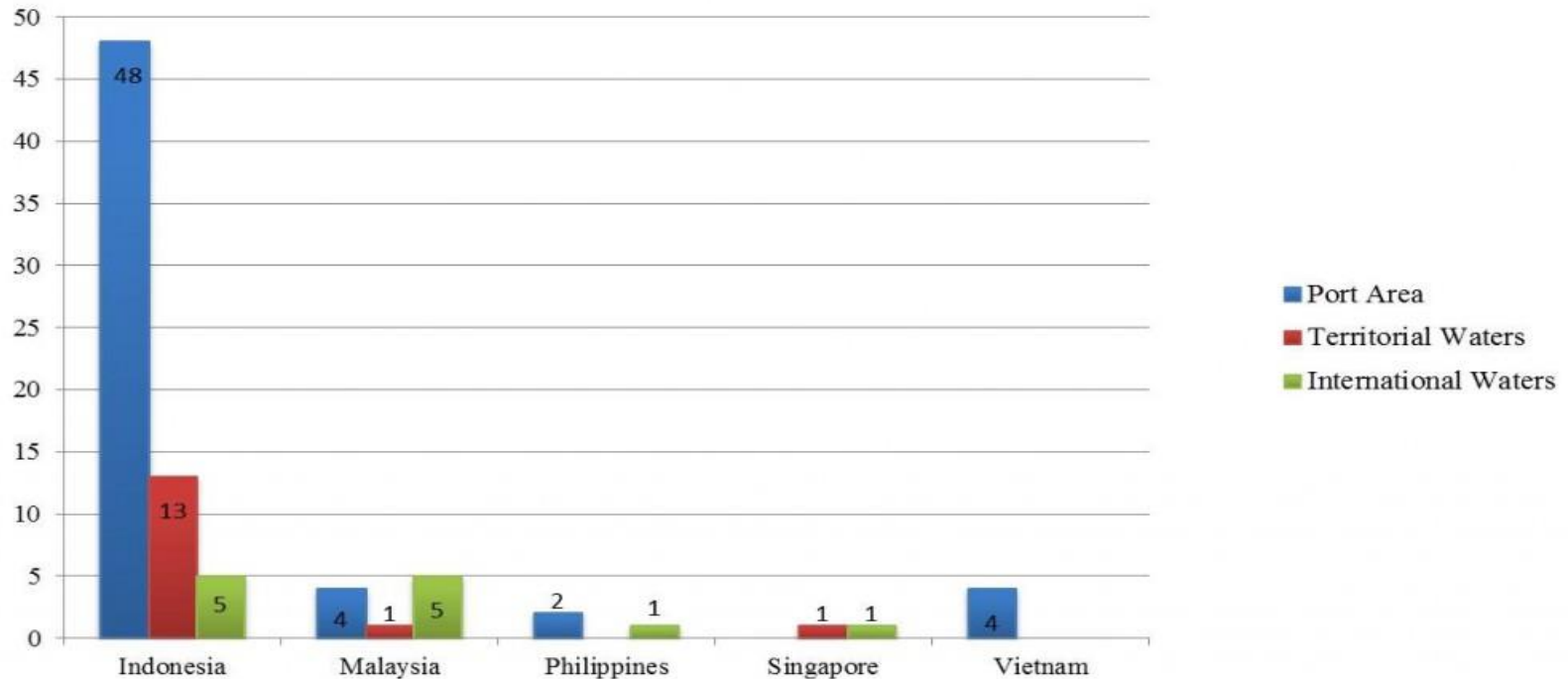
Changes in Indonesian Piracy

- Enhanced Singapore-Malaysia-Indonesian naval cooperation had some effect in moving pirates out of the Malacca, Singapore straits areas.

- Increased dispersion piracy throughout Indonesia (Eric Frécon, Chez les pirates d'Indonésie) . Lack of local enforcement.

- There has been a significant increase in S.E. Asian piracy, making it the most dangerous region in the world

Military Cooperation Limited

- Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore cooperate in Malacca Strait (MALSINDO, Trilateral Coordinated Patrol), but no hot pursuit into another country's territorial water
- Eye in the Sky program allows 3 km pursuit, but limited activity
- Naval ships unsuited for chasing high speed motor boasts among islands and mangrove swamps
- Regional countries not "failed states" like Somalia; will not tolerate outside interference
- South China Sea cooperation limited by territorial disputes

China's "Malacca Dilemma"

Piracy and China's "Belt and Road" Proposal

Countries along the Belt and Road should enhance customs cooperation such as information exchange, mutual recognition of regulations, and mutual assistance in law enforcement; improve bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the fields of inspection and quarantine, certification and accreditation, standard measurement, and statistical information; and work to ensure that the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement takes effect and is implemented. We should improve the customs clearance facilities of border ports, establish a "single-window" in border ports, reduce customs clearance costs, and improve customs clearance capability.