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**LIBERIA TO HOST
THE 8TH AAMA
CONFERENCE IN
OCTOBER 2025**

**RWANDA AIR:
CONNECTING AFRICA
THROUGH KEY
EXPANSIONS**

**THE DJIBOUTI CODE
OF CONDUCT**

**PMAESA Marks 50 Years
with Pomp and Pageantry**

EATTA

HARMONY IN A CUP: Promoting Tea for People and Planet

HANDBOOK



THE 6TH
AFRICAN TEA
CONVENTION & EXHIBITION

HARMONY IN A CUP: Promoting Tea for People and Planet



EATTA

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for People and Planet

HANDBOOK 2024

HANDBOOK 2024

**Coming
Soon!**

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A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." This is a common saying that originated from a Chinese proverb.

This proverb came true to the Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA) on Sunday, 1st December 2024, as it hosted a grand ceremony to mark its 50th anniversary in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

This anniversary necessitated the publication of a commemorative handbook: **"A History and Future of African Ports."**

The publication of this handbook would not be possible were it not for the support of the PMAESA leadership and a cross-section of members, stakeholders, and well-wishers.

The publication stems from the desire to honour and preserve the collective memories and achievements of PMAESA.

Celebrating half a century of dedicated service and significant contributions to the member states' port infrastructure and economic growth is no mean feat. The milestone handbook highlights PMAESA's journey from its establishment in 1973 to becoming a pivotal platform in the sub-region's economic development.

We at the Media Concept owe it to the PMAESA leadership for entrusting us with this assignment. An assignment we did with passion and enthusiasm.

First and foremost, we would like to acknowledge the support of Adv. Modjadji Phyllis Difeto, PMAESA Chairperson and the Acting Chief Executive Officer of South Africa's National Ports Authority, and the PMAESA Board for approving this project.

We also appreciate the PMAESA Secretariat staff under the leadership of Secretary-General Col. Andre Ciseau for the valuable support they accorded the consultants drawn from Media Concept Limited and Beyond the Vision Limited in producing the handbook.

In the words of Col. Ciseau during the grand launch ceremony of the



handbook. When PMAESA was born, Africa was a continent.

Much of it comprised newly independent states with high hopes and aspirations.

However, economic decline and political instability often challenged those aspirations in subsequent years. But those aspirations and hopes never died.

Women and men of goodwill and resilience were determined to prevail.

Therefore, as we look back as to whether we have been true and faithful to the visions of our founding fathers, we can say with pride that we have played our part.

PMAESA has indeed remained a dynamic institution in a fast-changing continent.

George Sunguh
MANAGING EDITOR



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PMAESA Marks 50 Years with Pomp and Pageantry

It was pomp and pageantry at the Serena Hotel Dar es Salaam on Sunday, 1st December 2024, as the "Who is Who" in the African maritime industry came together to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA). The occasion also marked the launch of the PMAESA @50 Handbook "**A History and the Future of the African Ports**". The commemorative handbook is a testament to the dedication, obligation, and teamwork that have driven PMAESA's progress since its inception on April 16th, 1973, in Tunis, Tunisia.

Adv Phyllis Diffeto, the Ag. CEO Transnet National Ports Authority of South Africa,

who is also the PMAESA Chairperson, in her welcome address said: "PMAESA journey of hope, is symbolized with how our Continent, Africa is nicknamed, "Mother Continent" as it's the oldest inhabited continent on Earth.

"With that analogy, we see motherly figure in PMAESA as it is more than just an a legal persona/ entity – it is a living network that provides connection, opportunity and unity for the African port ecosystem, at this critical juncture in global maritime history, we see African ports increasingly pivotal in reshaping international trade routes, particularly amid complex geopolitical challenges' the PMAESA Chairperson told the gathering at Dar el Salaam Serena

Hotel.

PMAESA being fundamentally about human ambition, resilience and collective progress have managed to nurture transformation of fragmented ports systems in the region.

This has been through collaborative spirit, innovative thinking in addressing port challenges, firming up strategic partnerships and shared the vision of technological advancement in ports.

"Each container, each ship represents more than cargo – they carry human hopes, dreams, and economic aspirations. TEUs are more than cargo statistics; they measure human lives. Ports are not just infrastructure – they are living bridges connecting communities, businesses,

and opportunities,” she added while challenging stakeholders in the industry to up their game.

According to the PMAESA Chairperson, the Sub-Saharan ports have geopolitical significance, are strategically positioned for more cargo through diversion, resilient global supply chain solutions, and are uniquely positioned between Asian and Western markets.

PMAESA Secretary General Col.

Andre Ciseau, paid tribute to the member states partners in Africa and beyond and to his illustrious predecessors. He said that when PMAESA was born, Africa was a continent. Much of it comprised newly independent states with high hopes and aspirations. However, economic decline and political instability often challenged those aspirations in subsequent years.

But those aspirations and hopes never died. Women and men of goodwill and resilience were determined to prevail.

“Therefore, as we look back as to whether we have been true and faithful to the visions of our founding fathers, we can say with pride that we have played our part. I can proudly state that PMAESA was able to remain a dynamic institution in a fast-changing continent.”

Tanzania’s Minister for transport Prof. MAKAME MBARAWA commended PMAESA for providing a platform for exchanging information, ideas and best practices among member states.

“My special commendation goes to the PMAESA Chairperson, Board of Directors, the Secretariat, and management staff - those who are with us today and those we serve in memoriam - for their dedication and professionalism to move PMAESA to greater heights. Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

He said that Tanzania is very grateful to PMAESA members and development

partners for allowing them to participate in policy and technical-level discussions.

“This enables us to achieve better results in our outreach efforts to promote intra-African trade.”

He said the Ministry of Transport of the United Republic of Tanzania reaffirms its full commitment to supporting the Port Management Association for Eastern & Southern Africa (PMAESA) and looks forward to playing its part in steering its progress and development for the joint benefit of our countries and its people. My Ministry, through the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) and Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation (TASAC), will continue to exchange information and experience with PMAESA on vital issues affecting the Maritime Transport Sector to cement further this relationship and extend it to other areas of mutual interest.

The IMO Secretary-General, Mr. Arsenio Dominguez congratulated PMAESA on the remarkable milestone of its 50th anniversary, saying that over the past five decades, PMAESA has been a vital force in enhancing regional port management, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, and advancing the growth of the maritime sector in Eastern and Southern Africa. In a message read on his behalf by Mr. Vincent Olabisi Job, Senior Deputy Director, Technical Corporation and Implementation Division (TCID), **IMO**.

“The official launch of the PMAESA Handbook marks another significant achievement. This comprehensive guide will undoubtedly serve as a valuable resource for the maritime community, fostering knowledge-sharing and best practices. By supporting capacity-building and innovation, the handbook underscores PMAESA’s dedication to strengthening the maritime industry in line with global standards.”

In his goodwill message, Mr. Jean-Marie Koffi, the Secretary General of the Port

Management Association of West and Central Africa (PMAWCA) and the Executive Secretary of the Pan African Ports Corporation (PAPC) said the five decades of cooperation, integration, and development of the region’s ports are a testament to your unwavering commitment and determination.

“As members of the Pan-African Association for Port Cooperation (PAPC), we recognize the importance of strengthening ties between our ports and communities. We must build a stronger and more engaging community of interest that fosters cooperation, innovation, and sustainable growth,” he said.

PMAWCA and PMAESA have a long history of collaboration and cooperation.

“Together, we have worked to promote regional integration, improve port efficiency, and enhance port safety and security.

As we look to the future, we are committed to continuing our collaboration and cooperation to address the challenges and opportunities facing our ports and communities. We will work together to promote sustainable development, improve port infrastructure, and enhance the competitiveness of our ports.”

Mr. Plasduce Mbossa, the Director General of Tanzania Ports Authority in his message during the Gala Dinner it was a special privilege honour to host such a group of distinguished professionals who through their dedication and expertise have propelled the success of the port industry in East and Southern Africa.

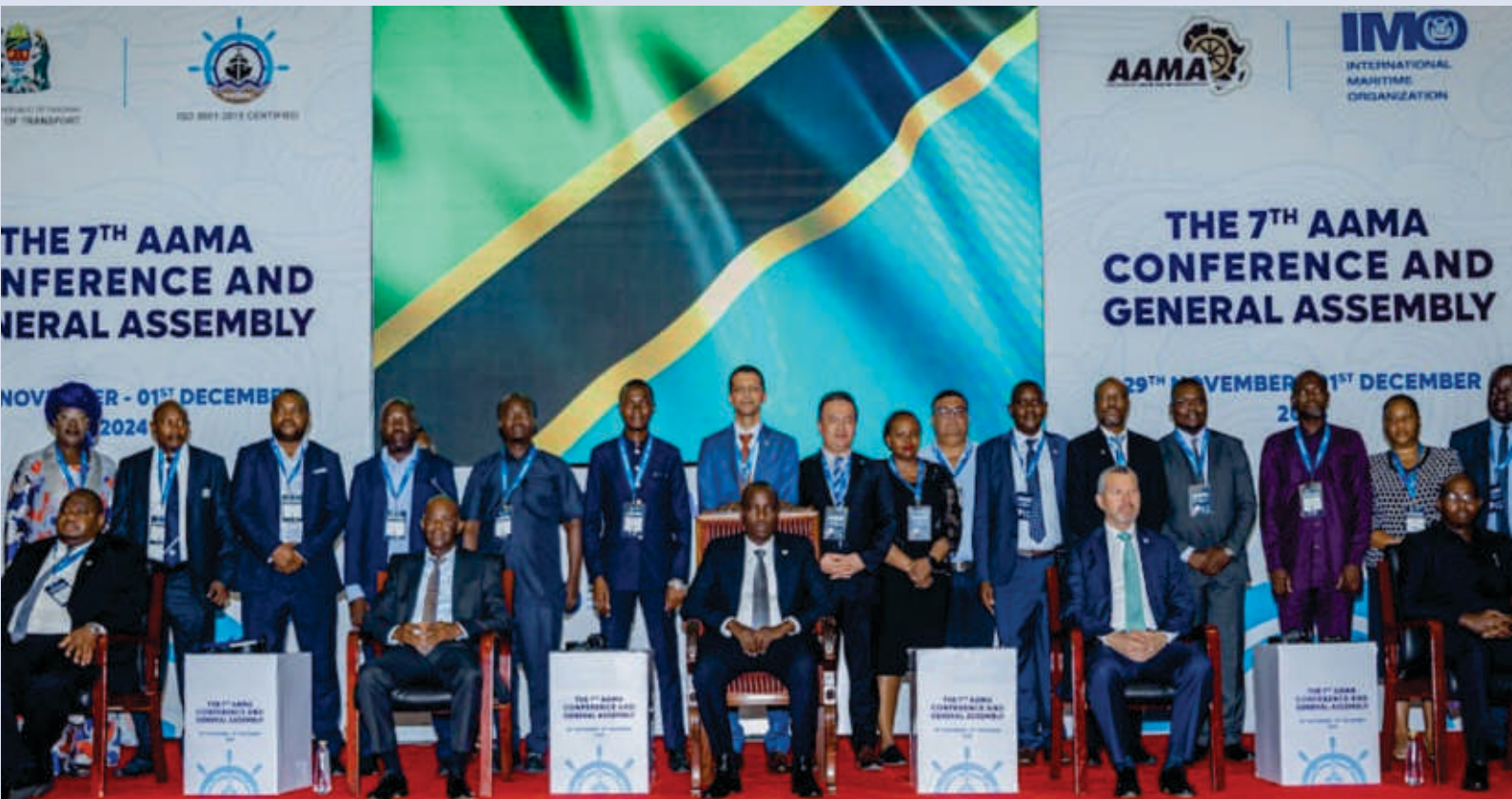
“To the PMAESA Board of Directors and Secretariat I am deeply touched by this gesture. This is because out of all the Member countries – the PMAESA Management ultimately decided to mark its golden jubilee in Dar es Salaam.”

“Rest assured – the Association can count on the support of the Tanzanian Ports Authority.”

PMAESA: CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

**A HISTORY AND FUTURE OF
AFRICAN PORTS**





Liberia to Host the 8th AAMA Conference in October 2025

Liberia, the West African coastal state, was unanimously nominated by the 7th Annual Conference and General Assembly of the Association of African Maritime Administrations (AAMA) to host the 8th AAMA Conference in October 2025 while the Republic of Ghana is to host the 9th AAMA Conference and 8th General Assembly in 2026.

The just concluded 7th General Assembly in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, which brought together 48 African countries and more than ten regional organizations, was held by the Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization under the theme “Navigating the Future of Africa’s Maritime Sector:

Collaborating on Technology and Innovation to Enhance Safety, Security, Decarbonization and Marine Environment for a Sustainable Future” with the view of unleashing and harnessing the continent’s maritime potentials.

The Conference deliberated on why the transition to decarbonize international shipping needs to be ‘just and equitable.’

The Assembly considered the potential impacts and opportunities that the International Maritime Organization – IMO adopted GHG reduction measures may have on African economies, including that on food security.

It was also decided to appreciate the benefits that may accrue to African countries regarding capacity building, infrastructural development, and technology transfers.

Furthermore, the Conference stressed the need for gender diversity and inclusivity in the maritime sector and called for greater women participation at all levels, robust implementation of maritime single windows to facilitate maritime trade and commerce within Africa, the need for a sustainable financing framework to accelerate the financing and development of maritime projects within Africa amongst others. Ambassador Robert Wilmont Kpadeh, Liberia’s Permanent Representative to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), who led the Liberian delegation to the 7th AAMA Conference, told newsmen in Dar

Es Saalam that the nomination of Liberia to host the 8th AAMA Conference presents an excellent opportunity for Liberia to showcase its blue economy and tourism potentials, and also serve as an essential platform to project Liberia’s re-election bid to Category A on the IMO Council to the global maritime industry.

“I am just profoundly pleased that Liberia is regaining its recognition in the International community,” said Ambassador Kpadeh.

About 45 African states and several regional and international organizations, including the International Maritime Organisation, European Union, African Development Bank, International Shippers Union, Port Management Association for Eastern and Southern Africa, and Industry leaders are expected to honor the AAMA-Monrovia Conference.

At the same time, Liberia’s Maritime Commissioner and CEO Cllr. Neto Zarzar Lighe Sr. has embraced the news with immense incitement and promised to ensure that Liberia offers excellent hospitality to member states and

AAMA CONFERENCE

organizations in attendance. He said the Liberian Maritime Authority will seize the opportunity to showcase Liberia's vast maritime and tourism potential to the rest of the world.

He thanked Amb. Kpadeh and the entire Liberian delegation in Dar Es Salaam for the able representation have yielded credible results for the nation.

During the end of the presentations, discussions, and deliberations, AAMA member states resolved the following:

On the decarbonization of international shipping, member states resolved to actively engage in GHG discussions at IMO to ensure that the measures adopted are just and equitable. Thus, the ratification of MARPOL Annex VI by member states that have not yet done so should be fast-tracked to keep up with IMO GHG 2050 agenda and for the role of stakeholders to be more defined. The IMO greenhouse gas strategy should consider measures to mitigate the impact on food security in Africa, ensure technology transfer and capacity building and develop renewable energy potentials of the continent.

Member states are encouraged to develop their national action plan to actualize their obligations fully.

On the Capacity Development and Training for Future Maritime Challenges, member states resolved to develop a maritime workforce training roadmap to accommodate upcoming technological changes in the maritime sector. In addition, member states welcomed the IMO's potential contribution and support through the Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme. Member states are encouraged to commit more resources to capacity building and leverage the existing vast capacities within the continent.

On Financing Sustainable Maritime Transport in Africa, it was resolved that a sustainable financing framework for Africa's maritime sector should be developed. Member states welcomed the commitment of financial institutions to finance Africa's maritime projects through concessional lending, among others. Maritime Administrations are encouraged to develop the required capacity for producing bankable proposals and the capability to absorb the financing. Member states are encouraged to explore other financial facilities currently available.

On Enhancing Maritime Safety and Security in Africa, member states resolved that a Strategic action plan for enhancing maritime safety and security should be developed. AAMA considered the

proposed plan of action for the safety of domestic ferries (annex 1) and resolved to implement the IMO Model Regulation (Resolution MSC 518 (105)). The action plan is intended to achieve the objective of the Conference to develop actionable roadmaps that outline the steps necessary to achieve the goal for the safety of domestic ferries.

AAMA also agreed to proactively support IMO, IMLI, and WMU projects to enhance domestic ferry safety by providing best practices from the African Region. Member states are encouraged to pursue the support available from donors about development of regulations under the partnership arrangements.

Member states are encouraged to implement IMSAS corrective action plans and seek assistance from IMO in areas of difficulties. Member states should nominate competent auditors for IMO to carry out IMSAS audits and reviews for African member states.

On Governance, Facilitation of Maritime Development and Trade in Africa, member states resolved to identify and develop priorities and action plans to strengthen maritime governance and infrastructure development. IMO is called upon to assist African countries to develop National Maritime Transport Policies and to approach donors to fund the project if need be. Member states took note of the ongoing

initiatives to strengthen maritime governance in Africa. They requested that regional maritime institutions fast-track the ratification of the Revised African Maritime Transport Charter of 2010. The AU is called upon to enhance its capacity to oversee the implementation of the AIMS Strategy.

Member states noted the need to further engage on the proposal to establish a continental maritime governance framework. AUC, MOWCA, AAMA, and MOESNA, with the support of AfDB and others, including IMO, will collaborate to host an expert meeting to deliberate on the establishment of a continental maritime governance framework.

Member states took note of the coming into force of the mandatory implementation of maritime Single Window under the IMO FAL Convention. Member states are encouraged to implement Maritime Single Window to facilitate maritime trade and commerce and to pursue technical assistance as may be needed to ensure its establishment and implementation.

On Gender and Diversity in the Maritime Sector, member states agreed to develop a gender and diversity action plan.

The AAMA Assembly resolved to set up working groups to address each of the above six resolutions and to provide regular updates to member states.



PMAESA's Communication Consultant Mr. George Sunguh explains a point to Tanzania's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy, Mr. Doto Mashaka Biteko and other dignitaries who visited the PMAESA booth during the Seventh International Conference of the Association of African Maritime Administrators (AAMA) in Dar es Salaam.

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Col. Ciseau of PMAESA, Mr. William Azuh former Deputy Director IMO and other delegates during the AAMA Conference in Dar es Salaam.



Adv. Difeto (Centre) and Col Ciseau (Left) usher in Ms Stella Katondo, who represented Prof. Makame Mbarawa, Tanzania's Minister of Works & Transport, the chief guest at the ceremony.



The West African delegation to the PMAESA@50 celebrations in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.



Guests registering for the launch ceremony



IMO Secretary General Mr. Arsenio Dominguez, welcomes the Tanzania's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy, Mr. Doto Mashaka Biteko and other dignitaries who visited the IMO exhibition booth during the Seventh International Conference of the Association of African Maritime Administrators (AAMA) in Dar es Salaam.



It is thumbs up for the successful ceremony by this line up: From left to right Mr. Jean- Marie Koffi, the Secretary General Port Management Association for Western and Central Africa (PMAWCA) and the Executive Secretary Pan African Ports Corporation (PAPC); Col. Ciseau; Mr. Jean- Marie Koffi. Col. Ciseau, Mr. Mwinyi Jahazi -Shipping Executive at Seaport Operations; Ms Rozina Mwandawiro-Irungu (PMAESA Secretariat), Ms Nozipho Mdawe, (former PMAESA SG), Adv. Difeto, Ms Ruth Muigai (PMAESA Secretariat) and George Sunguh the Editor of the PMAESA @50 Handbook.



Mr. Henri DUPUIS, Chief Operations Officer, Port Reunion and a colleague presents Col Ciseau and Ad. Difeto with a plaque of honour for their exemplary service to PMAESA.



Dr. Egbert Moustache of Port of Seychelles, Mr. Simon Gouranton country manager OCETRA Indian Ocean and Mr. Niriko Tsirenge of Madagascar at the PMAESA@50 Gala dinner.



Delegates attending Djibouti Code of Conduct conference held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.



It was a moment to “shake a leg” at the colourful ceremony.

Acts of Exceptional Bravery at Sea Honoured at Annual IMO Awards Ceremony



Captain Avhilash Rawat receives the 2024 International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea in London.

The 2024 IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea has been presented to two sets of nominees: the Captain and crew of the oil tanker *Marlin Luanda*, for containing a fire after the ship was struck by an uncrewed aerial device; and the Captain and crew of the tugboat *Pemex Maya*, for their rescue of six shipwrecked persons from four different vessels, during a hurricane.

They received the medals and certificates during the annual IMO Awards Ceremony, held in London on 2 December 2024. The ceremony followed the first day of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 109) session, which is taking place from 2 to 6 December 2024.

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez commended the worthy recipients of the IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea. "It is truly an honour to have this opportunity to recognize the valiant efforts and dedication of these heroic individuals, who took it upon themselves to act in the face of extreme danger at sea, to save lives. Their bravery is an inspiration for all of us," he said.

Captain Avhilash Rawat and crew of oil tanker *Marlin Luanda* and the crew of the oil tanker *Marlin Luanda*, nominated by the Marshall Islands, for their extraordinary courage, determination and endurance demonstrated while coordinating firefighting and damage control efforts to combat the fire that broke out after an uncrewed aerial device struck their vessel.

On the evening of 26 January 2024, the *Marlin Luanda*, carrying 84,147 tons of Naphtha, was en route from Suez to Incheon when it was attacked. The explosion ignited a cargo tank, creating a significant fire hazard with flames exceeding 5 meters. Despite the damage, Captain Avhilash Rawat swiftly organized firefighting efforts, ensuring the crew's safety and maintaining the ship's navigability amidst the chaos. With the starboard lifeboat destroyed, the remaining crew mustered at the port lifeboat station, ready for potential evacuation. Despite the extreme danger and the constant threat of further attacks, the crew fought the fire using fixed foam monitors and portable hoses. The fire continued to spread, particularly affecting an adjacent tank, but the crew managed to contain it using seawater after foam supplies were exhausted.

After four and a half hours fighting the fire on their own, assistance arrived from the merchant tanker *Achilles*, and later from the French frigate *FS Alsace* and the United States frigate *USS Carney*, which provided additional firefighting foam and support, followed soon after by the Indian warship *INS Visakhapatnam*. The fire reignited multiple times. The situation remained critical, and expert consultations suggested abandoning the vessel. However, Captain Rawat and his crew persisted. The turning point came when professionally trained firefighters from the Indian Navy boarded the ship. They managed to get closer to the fire and their efforts, combined with those of the *Marlin Luanda* crew, finally succeeded in extinguishing the fire and sealing a significant hull breach. Twenty-four hours after the attack, the *Marlin Luanda* sailed to safety under naval escort.

Captain Avhilash Rawat was at the award ceremony to receive the medal and certificate, saying: "I want to take this opportunity to thank my entire crew for their exceptional courage, professionalism, and unwavering dedication. Your support and trust were invaluable during those critical hours, and together, we overcame challenges that seemed insurmountable." He thanked the naval crews who assisted and the ship's owners. He added: "Finally, to all the brave seafarers navigating the high seas, your commitment, courage, and resilience inspire not only those of us aboard but also those who rely on the sea for their livelihoods. As we sail through both calm and stormy waters, let us remember that it is our unity, skill, and determination that strengthen us and keep us committed to the work we do."



A Sustainable Shipping Practices and Green Ports

Sustainable shipping practices and green ports are crucial components in the effort to reduce the environmental impact of transportation and promote sustainability in the shipping industry.

With increasing concerns about climate change and the need to preserve natural resources, adopting eco-friendly practices and implementing green initiatives have become essential.

Industry Stakeholders Applaud Viaservice Container Solution

Logistics industry stakeholders in Kenya have applauded a recent initiative by a Swiss-based firm to offer an alternative to the punitive container deposit seeing it as a major reprieve to grow cargo volumes along the corridor.

Viaservice Container Solution (VCS) was introduced in the Kenyan market mid-this year to address the long-standing and menacing container deposit, one of the biggest regional non-tariff barriers. The rigorous container deposits the shipping lines ask shippers and clearing agents to pay to allow them free access to empty boxes for a limited number of days is a serious non-tariff barrier.

Robel Nuguse, Director at Ronash Limited, a company involved in clearing South Sudan-based cargo and who has already been onboarded into the solution says that it is one of the greatest transformations the freight forwarders industry has witnessed in recent years. The service they are offering, he said, has solved a very big problem in the cargo-clearing logistics.

“The main challenge in this industry is container deposit. For a clearing agent to pay for a single container for transit US dollars 4,000 and when one has 20 containers this translates to over US \$ 100,000 US dollars. It takes about 25-30 days to take cargo to South Sudan and another 15 days to have the deposit refunded by shipping lines. For about 45- 60 days your operating cash is fully held up there,” Nuguse said.

The container deposit, he said, has blocked small firms from seeking more business afraid that they will end up not delivering due to the challenge of cash flow. Although shipping lines had a right to secure their containers, the amount in question has greatly hindered the sector's growth. VCS entails the issuance of a guarantee by Viaservice in favour of a shipping line or agent on behalf of registered



customs agents, freight forwarders, and shippers against which the shipping line or agent will waive the container cash deposit.

The Secretary-General Maritime Organization for Eastern Southern and Northern Africa (MOESNA) Mr. Daniel Kiange also said the container deposit has been a major non-tariff barrier with a solution to it not forthcoming. For a very long time, MOESNA region has been importing mainly through Mombasa port and the port of Dar es Salaam.

“If you go by statistics, in Mombasa, we are talking of 1.5 million containers per year and Dar es Salaam 900,000 to 1 million containers. The container deposit that is deposited for local

cargo is between 500- 1000 US dollars per container depending on where your cargo is destined as ascertained by the shipping lines risk-assessment. For transit cargo, we are talking about 2000-5000 dollars,” Kiange said, adding that if you take calculation and find out that 50-60 percent of these containers have deposit paid, we are talking of a colossal amount of money held by shipping lines as guarantees of usage of their containers.

“The situation is not good because that money is not in circulation and the majority of the people who pay container guarantees are small business people because their risk is also bigger. The big people might have a negotiated contract with the shipping lines and get

a waiver for containers,” he added.

MOESNA has been working with the shipping lines on the way to operate but since the agency does not have a mandatory regulatory mandate, it is only an industry advisory, advocacy, and lobbying agency, its role on the the container deposit solution efforts has not been successful.

“We have tried to talk to insurance companies to introduce bonds or guarantees for these containers but so far, we have not been very successful in terms of bringing them on board. The idea of premium is working out well in Europe and America. The leasing of the containers is another alternative that is not available in Kenya. We have to talk to companies coming up in the region such as Viaservice which is bringing an alternative container guarantee,” Kiange said.

Instead of paying US dollars 500 dollars, for example, to a shipping line, VCS can work with a non-refundable payment of as low as US dollars 50, according to Kiange.

Kenya Ships Agents Association Designate Chief Executive Officer Elijah Mbaru contends that the risk of returning empty containers is enormous for liners and charters as well as container leasing companies, hence why they ask for container deposits as collateral. There are also a lot of trade imbalances in the region at a ratio of 80 to 20 percent for imports and exports respectively, raising the risk profile further.

“The containers are supposed to be moving with the ships since this is how they make money. A container at the port is safe but that is not where it is supposed to be. If a container is locked at the port due to delay, that container would have made another round,” Mbaru said.

“It is not in the interest of the shipping lines to collect a container deposit. If you look at the cost of a container, it is enormous. Unreturned containers are money paid out elsewhere in terms of shipment that would have otherwise been transported by the same container. The container deposit is not money kept by shipping lines. It is like collateral the way you can take a loan.



“We have tried to talk to insurance companies to introduce bonds or guarantees for these containers but so far, we have not been very successful in terms of bringing them on board. The idea of premium is working out well in Europe and America. The leasing of the containers is another alternative that is not available in Kenya. We have to talk to companies coming up in the region such as Viaservice which is bringing an alternative container guarantee - **Mr. Daniel Kiange, Secretary General - MOESNA**

A container is a very expensive subject and I think you can see in the market that shipping lines have lost containers and we see in Kenya today we have containers unreturned by customs agents for 20 years. You can imagine the amount of money the shipping lines have lost, he added

Supporting the Viaservice move, Mbaru said it is a good thing in the industry because it will go a step further to enhance seamless operations and would realize that for some custom agents, the container may have stuck at the port because this person has not paid a shipping lines the amount of money required and thus container could be stuck at the bottom of the stacking yard and it cannot be moved.

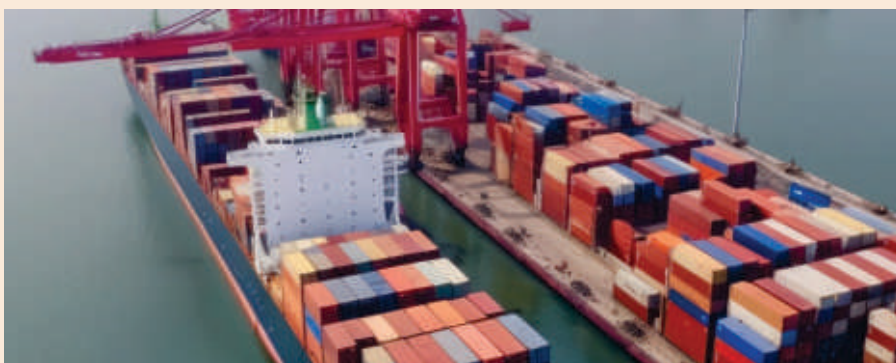
The long-term benefit is that if the customs agents embrace these initiatives coming up in the market, in the long-term, the gain could be quick movement of equipment and the shipping lines could be exposed to less risk of unreturned containers because third parties could have committed to pay if clearing agents do not return them.

Kenya is learning vital lessons from

Tanzania where the solution was launched in 2020 to cater to the commercial interests of the shipping lines while allowing their customers the flexibility of using a business-friendly alternative to container cash deposit. The introduction of VCS in Tanzania has successfully improved the cargo clearance process through Dar es Salaam port. Customers no longer need to worry about raising cash deposits.

On the other hand, VCS has enabled shipping lines to experience reduced operational and financial risks. This has also allowed improved turnaround of containers, enabling shipping lines to optimize their resources and focus on other value-added services. VCS has reduced regional risk, making it more attractive to shipping lines.

According to John Mathenge, Regional (East Africa) Managing Director, Viaservice Limited, the company is in Tanzania serving 65 percent of clearing and forwarding agencies an equivalent of more than 600 companies. In Kenya, four shipping lines have been onboard and another three lined up to join the solution in the coming months.



AWARDS GALORE - PMAESA@50 BANQUET -



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1. Dr. George Fasha Director Communications and Public Relations Tanzania Ports Authority received an appreciation award on behalf of his Director General from Madam Stella Katondo Director for Transport Environment and Safety in the Ministry of Works and Transport, Tanzania.

2. Adv. Modjadji Phyllis Difeto Chairperson PMAESA receives an award from Madam Katondo.

3. Col. Andre Ciseau, the Secretary General PMAESA presents Mr. Mohamed Malick Salum, Director General Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation (TASAC) with an award.

4. Mr. Salum, hands over an award to Mr. Vincent Job - IMO's Senior Deputy Director.

5. Col. Ciseau presents TNPA's Adv Difeto and Captain Thulani Dubeko with an appreciation award.

6. Mr. Salum Presents an award to Mr. Jean-Marie Koffi – the Executive Secretary Pan African Ports Corporation and Secretary General Port Management Association of Western and Central Africa (PMAWCA).

7. Col Ciseau presents an award to Dr. Tumaini Gurumo, the Rector Dar es Salaam Maritime Institute (DMI).

8. Col. Ciseau presents an award to Mr. Daniel Kiange Secretary General, Maritime Organization for Eastern, Southern, and Northern Africa (MOESNA).



AirAsia X Executives Visit KATA after Opening the First Sales Office in Africa

The Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA) is delighted to announce a courtesy visit from the Chief Executive Officer of AirAsia X Mr. Benjamin Ismail and the Group Chief Commercial Officer of AirAsia Group Mr. Paul Carroll. The high-level delegation met with KATA board members to discuss the recent opening of AirAsia's inaugural sales office in Africa, the upcoming inaugural flight to Nairobi on November 15, and the exciting opportunities available for travel agents to partner with the airline.

LAMU PORT

The Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA) is delighted to announce a courtesy visit from the Chief Executive Officer of AirAsia X Mr. Benjamin Ismail and the Group Chief Commercial Officer of AirAsia Group Mr. Paul Carroll. The high-level delegation met with KATA board members to discuss the recent opening of AirAsia's inaugural sales office in Africa, the upcoming inaugural flight to Nairobi on November 15, and the exciting opportunities available for travel agents to partner with the airline.

During the meeting, AirAsia executives expressed their enthusiasm for the African market and highlighted the potential for significant growth in the coming years. They emphasized the airline's commitment to providing

affordable fares and exceptional customer service, making it an attractive option for both leisure and business travelers.

KATA board of directors welcomed AirAsia's expansion into Africa and expressed their support for the airline's initiatives. They discussed the potential benefits of partnering with AirAsia, including increased revenue streams, access to new markets, and opportunities for professional development.

The meeting also focused on the support that travel agents can provide to AirAsia in promoting its services and attracting customers. KATA pledged its commitment to working closely with the airline to ensure a successful launch and ongoing partnership.

As AirAsia prepares for its inaugural

flight to Nairobi, the airline's presence in Africa is expected to have a significant impact on the continent's tourism industry. With its affordable fares and extensive network, AirAsia is poised to become a major player in the African aviation market.

We see potential in this partnership and believe AirAsia's entry into the Kenyan market will create opportunities for our members, including new revenue streams and professional development, opening access to 150 underserved destinations and enhance connectivity. Air Asia will operate 4 flights a week and target 150,000 passengers annually.

Others present were Allenie Caccam Business Growth Head and Siew Lee Group Head of Sales and Distribution.



Enhancing Port Digitalization to Boost African Trade

IMO has joined States of the African Alliance for Electronic Commerce (AACE) to support work on 'The Role of Single Windows and Digitalization in Boosting African Trade' at a workshop in Casablanca, Morocco (4 December).

Participants learned about the 2022 amendments to IMO's FAL Convention, which now mandates the electronic exchange of mandatory data in ports to complete formalities.

Since 1 January 2024, all IMO Member States must use a centralized digital platform or 'Maritime Single Window' to collect and exchange information with vessels when they dock at ports.

The workshop will boost States' ability to implement a MSW, which aims to significantly reduce time and costs associated with port procedures and thereby enhance shipping efficiency worldwide.

The workshop was organized by the AACE in partnership with the Moroccan Single Window, Portnet SA.

The members of AAEC are: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Mauritius, Kenya, Libya, Morocco, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Senegal and the WAEMU Commission.



Flydubai Unveils its New Dedicated Business Class Check-In

The new elevated experience starts prior to Business Class passengers arriving at the terminal with a dedicated Business Team available to assist with enquiries

Flydubai, the Dubai-based carrier, has officially launched its new Business Class check-in at Terminal 2, Dubai International (DXB). The dedicated space offers flydubai's Business Class passengers a unique and smooth check-in experience with a personalised Meet and Assist service, seated check-in and a Fast Track service through passport control and security lanes.

This is the carrier's first dedicated check-in facility for Business Class passengers and it is located at the Departures area at Terminal 2, Dubai International (DXB) near Entrance 3. The new space is designed to elevate the Business Class preflight experience and further underscores flydubai's commitment to investing in enhancing the overall customer experience both on the ground and in the air.

Commenting on the new Business Class check-in, Ghaith Al Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer at flydubai, said: "we are excited to be extending to our Business Class customers the personalised service we offer them in our cabin on the ground as well. The new service will ensure our customers' journey is efficient, hassle-free and enjoyable from the minute they arrive at Terminal 2 until they reach their destination. We continue to listen to our customers' needs and invest in enhancing our products and services and we hope this is the first of many."

The new Business Class check-in area features design elements that draw inspiration from the serene and timeless beauty of desert dunes.

...from Page 19

The sweeping arches, warm tones and minimalist aesthetics reflect the undulating landscape of the desert, creating an inviting space for customers seeking efficiency and comfort.

The new elevated experience starts prior to Business Class passengers arriving at the terminal with a dedicated Business Team available to assist with enquiries. A Dedicated Kerbside Drop-off Area and a separate Entrance for Business Class check-in have been allocated at Terminal 2, Dubai International.

Business Class customers can enjoy a personalised Meet and Assist service from a member of the Business Team and a dedicated complimentary porter service. The welcoming space offers a variety of personalised experiences, including a quiet space for relaxation with a traditional Arabic welcome offering refreshing towels followed by coffee, dates or refreshments. Inside the check-in area, customers can look forward to a smooth check-in process while a porter attends to their baggage, minimising waiting time and queues at the terminal.

A member of the Business Team accompanies Business Class passengers to the flydubai Business Lounge while benefiting from a Fast Track service through e-gates or passport control and security lanes.

The new Business Class check-in is now available to all flydubai Business Class customers travelling from Terminal 2, Dubai International. Customers who upgrade to Business Class prior to check-in can also use the new facility.

flydubai has built a growing network of more than 125 destinations in 55 countries across Africa, Central Asia, the Caucasus, Central and Southeast Europe, the GCC and the Middle East, the Indian Subcontinent as well as Southeast Asia. The carrier has opened more than 90 new routes that did not previously have direct air links to Dubai and is served by a young and efficient fleet of 88 Boeing 737 aircraft.

IMO BOSS RECEIVES THE HANDBOOK



Galaxy Note20 Ultra 5G

PMAESA Chairperson and the Acting CEO of Transnet National Ports Authority of South Africa Adv Phyllis Diffeto (centre) presents Mr. Arsenio Dominguez the Secretary General of IMO with a copy of the PMAESA@50 handbook in Dar es Salaam Tanzania during the 7th General Assembly of the Association of African Maritime Administrations (AAMA). She is accompanied by Mr. George Sunguh the book's editor and PMAESA Communications Consultant.



PMAESA SG Visits RMIFC in Madagascar

Col Andre Ciseau (left) is taken through a presentation on the workings of the Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre (RMIFC) by the Centre Director Mr. Harifidy Andrianjaka Alex Ralaivonony (front right) in Antananarivo, Madagascar during a recent visit.

The Regional Maritime Information Fusion Center (RMIFC) had the privilege of hosting Colonel Andre Ciseau, the General Secretary of the Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA), during his official visit on December 14, 2024. This significant event underscored the shared commitment to bolstering maritime security and enhancing cooperation across regional organizations.

Colonel Ciseau's visit included participation in the planning meeting for the Table Top Exercise RECOPORT ESA 25. This pivotal exercise, aimed at strengthening information-sharing mechanisms among regional maritime centers and ports, aligns with the broader objectives of promoting security and efficiency in maritime operations across the Eastern and Southern African region.

During his visit, Colonel Ciseau toured the RMIFC facilities, gaining firsthand insight into the center's operations, including its cutting-edge capabilities in maritime domain awareness and real-

time information exchange. He commended the RMIFC's role in fostering collaboration among regional stakeholders to address the multifaceted challenges facing the maritime domain, such as piracy, illicit trafficking, and environmental risks.

The planning meeting for the Table Top Exercise RECOPORT ESA 25 was a highlight of the visit. This exercise, scheduled to take place in RMIFC Antananarivo on January 27-31, 2025, is designed to simulate real-world scenarios requiring coordinated responses from maritime centers and port authorities. The discussions emphasized the importance of seamless communication, timely information dissemination, and strategic decision-making to ensure maritime security and operational efficiency. Colonel Ciseau's contributions during the meeting reflected PMAESA's commitment to strengthening the integration of ports within the regional security framework.

This visit also provided an opportunity to reinforce the longstanding partnership between PMAESA and

RMIFC. Both organizations reaffirmed their dedication to advancing maritime safety, economic development, and environmental sustainability in the region. The exchange of expertise and ideas during the visit highlighted the value of collaborative efforts in achieving these shared goals.

Colonel Ciseau's engagement with RMIFC and his active participation in the RECOPORT ESA 25 planning meeting mark a significant step forward in regional maritime cooperation. The outcomes of this visit are expected to contribute to more robust and resilient maritime information-sharing networks, ultimately enhancing the safety and security of the region's maritime domain.

RMIFC looks forward to continued collaboration with PMAESA and other regional stakeholders to ensure the success of upcoming initiatives, including the RECOPORT ESA 25 exercise. Together, these efforts are poised to strengthen the region's maritime framework, fostering a secure and prosperous future for Eastern and Southern Africa.



RwandaAir: Connecting Africa through Key Expansions

RwandaAir has seen a strong post-pandemic rebound with most of its international routes now reopened. However, services to China – a major market for African and Chinese traders – remains suspended.

Habba Adijah Kamwesiga, RwandaAir's senior manager for promotions and communications

"We have not been able to resume our flights to China because the circumstances are beyond us, but we know there is huge demand," said Habba Adijah Kamwesiga, RwandaAir's senior manager for promotions and communications at the World Travel Market in London recently. She explained that while the process for the resumption of operations to China is slow, the airline is offering alternative routings, especially for traders.

"China is not on the conversation on a day-to-day basis because of the many factors beyond our control but for traders, they can opt to fly with RwandaAir via Dubai and most airlines, especially the big carriers, are actually doing that," she added.

Making Connections

Connecting Africa effectively and linking up intra-regional markets is a key focus area for African aviation, as cited by organisations like IATA and AFRAA. RwandaAir's biggest footprint is Africa

and as Adijah Kamwesiga indicates, the mission is to continue connecting Africa. "Africa is really paramount for us," she commented.

Inter-connectivity in Africa is often tainted by high costs, with long and painfully slow regulations and limitations that facilitate that connectivity. Flying between African countries is often expensive, and it is not unusual to see passengers connecting via Europe to return to Africa. However, change is in the air. "There are many factors pushing airlines to do better for the continent and as an airline, we are piggybacking so much on what Rwanda is doing," Adijah Kamwesiga explained.

For instance, Rwanda has pioneered an open policy permitting every citizen of the world to obtain a visa on arrival – and free for African travellers. Adijah Kamwesiga reckons such initiatives are helpful to unlock opportunities and to boost intra-African travel, thereby easing some of the cost limitations associated with regional travel. In fact, just last month authorities in neighbouring Kenya also announced ending visa requirements for all African citizens by the end of the year. Certainly, the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) project is the most crucial initiative on the continent aimed at creating a single

unified air transport market in Africa. SAATM is a widely supported initiative that, once fully implemented, will open up Africa's skies and promote the value of aviation throughout the continent. There are currently 34 African countries signed up, but progress has been slow and the hesitation by some signatories to fully commit to SAATM's objectives is reportedly frustrating for some airlines in the region.

"For us as an airline, we have expressed interest and we are very collaborative to ensure that we achieve SAATM, but it is not just one airline's business, all the stakeholders must come together. It is a journey that every airline is taking but it is not easy, we are doing our part as an airline to achieve the objectives," Adijah Kamwesiga added.

Expansion Plan

RwandaAir plans to expand to other African destinations including Maputo in Mozambique and to reopen routes such as Mombasa in Kenya which were suspended during the pandemic. In addition to typical business traffic, there is a deliberate plan to broaden access to more leisure-oriented routes like Zanzibar and encourage more Africans to visit countries within the continent in addition to the traditional hotspots like Dubai or Paris.

Further afield, RwandAir is expanding its presence to Europe and now flies to London Heathrow from Kigali. The original plan was to have a daily service to Heathrow, but to ensure operational resilience during the current season, this is now six a week. It also launched operations to Paris in June, operated by A330s.

The European routes are especially vital for facilitating connections to some key African markets like Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa but also to underserved markets in southern Africa like Zambia and Zimbabwe. Adijah Kamwesiga disclosed that further European expansion is planned.

Growing the Fleet

RwandAir flies 14 aircraft across its network in Africa, Europe and the Middle East with plans to double the fleet within the next decade. The current fleet include three A330s and seven B737-NGs. The latest example, a -800 registered 9XR-WY, was delivered in October to further expand its regional operations. Last November, the Rwandan airline also took delivery of its first dedicated freighter, a B737-800SF, to tap into the increasingly lucrative freighter market which is becoming an important sector for the airline. Other regional routes are operated by a fleet of CRJ-900s and Q-400 Dash 8 aircraft.

Industry observers suggest an order for new regional aircraft to potentially replace the CRJs and Q-400s is imminent but so far this remains speculative. However, Adijah Kamwesiga hints to a future fleet strategy potentially comprising a mix of leased and outright purchases. "The expansion is inevitable because we are growing,



and to achieve our plans of expansion within Africa, Europe and the rest of the world, we need the capacity. I will not put specifics on numbers, but fleet expansion is on the cards," she stated.

Further Investment

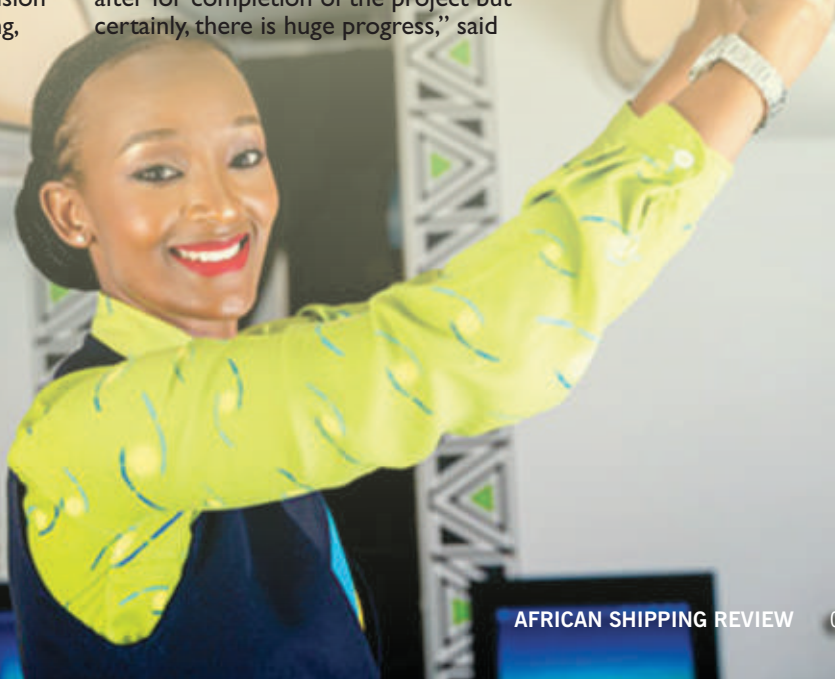
Looking to the future, it will be interesting to see how RwandAir's partnership with Qatar Airways plays out with its planned 49% stake announced in 2020. At the time of this writing, the Qatari investment was still pending. Reportedly, progress is at the tail end but still ongoing.

Qatar Airways has also partnered with Rwanda to build a new airport project which is also progressing well. "We're looking at around 2026 or the year after for completion of the project but certainly, there is huge progress," said

Adijah Kamwesiga.

In May, RwandAir announced a new African cargo hub in partnership with Qatar Airways Cargo which regularly sees a Qatar B777F on the ramp. The recent pandemic also acted as a catalyst for the importance of cargo. A strategic advantage for Rwanda lies in its geographic location which provides a significant catchment area for passenger and cargo traffic from all corners of Africa via Kigali.

The key priority for 2024, according to Adijah Kamwesiga, is more connectivity. "Our number one mission is to connect as much as we can, and also to get Africa closer to the world so we will be looking at how quickly we can get to achieve those plans," she concluded.





The Djibouti Code of Conduct

The safety and security of shipping and the maritime environment in the Western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden region are critical to global trade, as demonstrated over the past year. The IMO Secretary-General, Mr. Arsenio Dominguez, said this in his keynote address during the High-Level Meeting on implementing the Djibouti Code of Conduct held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, between 28-30 November 2024.

“Any gaps in the region's maritime safety and security can have damaging impacts on the lives, economies, and livelihoods of those who depend on maritime safety and security,” said Mr. Dominguez.

He noted that about 10% of the world's maritime trade by volume and 22% of containerized trade crosses the Suez Canal, and we are all very aware of the disruption that has been caused in the region over the last year. “Re-routing vessels around Africa

increases global demands by 3% and containership demand by 12%, and of course, these have been temporary measures that the shipping industry has been forced to adopt, which also contravenes the progress that we are making at the International Maritime Organization when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.” The SG acknowledged the progress made by the concerned parties.

“You have cultivated a strong culture of regional cooperation, as you've heard already exemplified by training over 1,800 beneficiaries under the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC).”

“I also understand that the DCoC has been instrumental in establishing regional maritime information-sharing centers in Dar es Salaam - where we are very kindly being hosted today and for the rest of the conference - Mombasa and Sana'a, which played a pivotal role in suppressing piracy from 2009.”

He said he recently had an opportunity

to visit the one in Aden. It has been operating from there, and I was very impressed with the actions that they have taken. Of course, I encourage them to continue to enhance the connectivity between the three centers and with all the Friends of the DCoC.

Member States have been encouraged to update national laws to criminalize piracy, reinforcing a sustainable maritime future.

The SG expressed his appreciation to the United Republic of Tanzania and Tanzania's ministries of work and transport for their excellent logistical and administrative planning, which had set the stage for a productive gathering and, of course, for the great hospitality. He emphasized the need to sustain safe and secure shipping channels to ensure the continuity of global trade and interconnectivity for billions of people worldwide.

“In light of the ongoing attacks against commercial shipping in the Red Sea, I

“ I also appreciate the African Chiefs of Navies, who reaffirmed their support to the Djibouti Code of Conduct at the 5th Sea Power for Africa Symposium last month, urging Member States to uphold the objectives of the DCoC Jeddah Amendment
- **Mr. Arsenio Dominguez, IMO Secretary General**



must express my deep concern over the critical vulnerabilities that these incidents reveal in our global shipping networks,” he said.

These attacks, he added, pose a serious risk to the safety of seafarers, the stability of maritime trade, and the region's security.

He welcomed the DCoC steering committee's approach to seeking a regional solution to these urgent issues. He told the delegates of a recent DCoC donor meeting held at IMO headquarters in October, where he was encouraged by the commitment shown by partners to support the work of the DCoC, including regional efforts to coordinate operations at sea in addressing maritime security threats. “I also appreciate the African Chiefs of Navies, who reaffirmed their support to the Djibouti Code of Conduct at the 5th Sea Power for Africa Symposium last month, urging Member States to uphold the objectives of the DCoC Jeddah Amendment.”

He encouraged the DCoC to focus on tangible results through the implementation of the projects through the 8-point action plan to demonstrate that all the effort and contribution that is provided results in benefits for the maritime domain.

In the meantime, the EU stepped up its engagement in maritime security through the Djibouti Code of Conduct

High-Level Meeting.

The DCOC-JA is a regional framework of 18 signatory states aimed at strengthening maritime security, countering piracy, and addressing other transnational maritime threats, including illegal fishing, trafficking, and environmental crimes.

The EU became a Friend of the DCOC-JA in April 2024, reaffirming its commitment to supporting regional efforts to build a robust maritime security architecture.

The European Union (EU) participated for the first time as a 'Friend' (observer) in the High-Level Meeting of the Djibouti Code of Conduct-Jeddah Amendment (DCOC-JA), held in Dar es Salaam.

The EU highlighted its growing engagement in maritime security, presenting several key initiatives during the meeting. These include Operation ATALANTA, the EU's naval operation countering piracy; Operation ASPIDES, focused on safe navigation in the Red Sea; and the EUCAP Somalia capacity-building mission.

The EU also promotes maritime security through its Safe Seas for Africa, Port Security and Safety of Navigation, Red Sea programmes, and CRIMARIO II, a capacity-building project enhancing maritime domain awareness.

“A safe and secure maritime environment is in everybody's interest.

Only through regional collaboration can we collectively meet today's maritime challenges,” said Christine Grau, EU Ambassador to Tanzania. “The EU is committed to supporting this region's efforts to monitor, secure, and sustainably develop its maritime domain.”

The EU's financial contributions to regional maritime security exceed €80 million annually, supporting capacity building, training, and regional initiatives. During the meeting, the EU announced plans for a new €4 million project to address maritime threats and advance the DCOC-JA's eight-point action plan. Participants praised the EU's role in promoting information-sharing and coordination through CRIMARIO II's IORIS platform, which enables secure, multi-agency regional cooperation. At the High-Level Meeting, the EU was also represented by the Operation Commander of Operation ATALANTA, the Chief of Operations for Operation ASPIDES, the Head of Mission of EUCAP Somalia, and representatives of the European External Action Service (EEAS), European Commission services, and EU-funded capacity-building projects.

The meeting concluded with renewed commitments to tackle transnational maritime challenges through enhanced cooperation and resource mobilization.



Group of Chinese illegal fishing vessels confronting Argentina Coastguards.

Taking Over from the Inside: China's Growing Reach into Local Waters

...the superpower of seafood dominates more than just the high seas

By Ian Urbina, Pete McKenzie & Milko Schwartzman

This new piece reveals that, in recent years, China has been buying its way into restricted national fishing grounds, primarily using a process known as "flagging in." The trend is happening from South America to Africa to the far Pacific. The method typically involves the use of business partnerships to register foreign ships under the flag of another country, thereby allowing those vessels to fish in that country's territorial waters.

Why should the world care? Most national fisheries require vessels to be owned locally to keep profits within the country and make it easier to enforce fishing regulations. Flagging-in undermines those aims. Aside from the sovereignty and financial concerns, food security is also undermined by the export of this vital source of affordable protein.

No one has ever mapped and itemized this trend. It took us a year to track all such ships but we have now documented more than 250 of these Chinese industrial fishing that operate mostly in the waters of Argentina, Ghana, Senegal, and Morocco but also across the Pacific.

Many of these companies have been tied to a variety of crimes, including dumping fish at sea, turning off their transponders, and engaging in tax evasion and fraud. Trade records show that much of what is caught by these vessels is sent back to China, but some of the seafood is also exported to countries including the United States, Canada, Italy, and Spain.

On March 14, 2016, in the squid grounds off the coast of Patagonia, a rusty Chinese squid jigger called the Lu Yan Yuan Yu 10 was fishing illegally in Argentina's national waters. Spotted by an Argentine coast-guard patrol and ordered over the radio to halt, the specially designed squid-fishing ship known as a jigger fled the scene. The Argentinians gave chase and fired warning shots. The Lu Yan Yuan Yu 10 then tried to ram the coast-guard cutter, prompting it to open fire directly on the jigger, which soon sank. Although the violent encounter at sea that day was unusual, the incursion into Argentine waters by a Chinese squid jigger was not. Owned by a state-run behemoth called the China National Fisheries Corporation, or CNFC, the Lu Yan Yuan Yu 10 was part of a fleet of several hundred Chinese jiggers that makes annual visits to the high-seas portion of the fishing grounds that lie beyond Argentina's territorial waters. During their visits, many of these jiggers turn off their locational transponders and cross secretly into Argentine waters, where they are not permitted. Since 2010, the Argentine navy has chased at least 11 Chinese squid vessels out of Argentine waters for suspected illegal fishing, according to the government.

A year after the illegal incursion and sinking of the Lu Yan Yuan Yu 10, Argentina's Federal Fishing Council issued a little-noticed announcement: it was granting fishing licenses to two foreign vessels that would allow them to operate within Argentine waters. Both would sail under the Argentine flag through a local front company, but their true "beneficial" owner was CNFC.

This decision was noteworthy because it seemed to violate Argentine regulations that not only forbid foreign-owned ships from flying Argentina's flag or fishing in its waters but also prohibit the granting of fishing licenses to ship operators with records of illegal fishing in Argentine waters. "The decision was a total contradiction," said Eduardo Pucci, a former Argentine fisheries minister who now works as a fishing consultant.

The move by local authorities may have been a contradiction, but it is an increasingly common one in Argentina and elsewhere around the world. In recent years, from South America to Africa to the far Pacific, China has been buying its way into restricted national fishing grounds, primarily using a

process known as "flagging in." This method typically involves the use of business partnerships to register foreign ships under the flag of another country, thereby allowing those vessels to fish in that country's territorial waters.

Chinese companies now control at least 62 industrial squid-fishing vessels that fly the Argentine flag, which constitutes most of the country's entire squid fleet. Many of these companies have been tied to a variety of crimes, including dumping fish at sea, turning off their transponders, and engaging in tax evasion and fraud. Trade records show that much of what is caught by these vessels is sent back to China, but some of the seafood is also exported to countries including the United States, Canada, Italy, and Spain. China now operates almost 250 of these flagged-in vessels in the waters of countries including Micronesia, Kenya, Ghana, Senegal, Morocco, and Iran. The size of this hidden fleet was not previously known. Nor was the extent of its illegal behavior, concentration in certain foreign waters or the amount of seafood coming from these ships that winds up in European and American markets. The scope of the armada matters because most countries require vessels to be owned locally to keep profits within the country and make it easier to enforce fishing regulations.

Flagging-in undermines those aims, said

Duncan Copeland, the former executive director of TMT, a non-profit research organization specializing in maritime crime. And aside from the sovereignty and financial concerns, food security is also undermined by the export of this vital source of affordable protein, added Dyhia Belhabib, a principal investigator at Ecotrust Canada, a charity focused on environmental activism.

These hundreds of industrial fishing ships also complicate China's ocean conservation goals. In 2017, after pressure from environmental groups about overfishing, Beijing announced that it would cap the size of its distant-water fleet at 3,000 vessels. But that tally does not take into account the growing number of industrial ships that China owns and flags into other countries.

Over the past three decades, China has gained supremacy over global fishing by dominating the high seas with more than 6,000 distant-water ships, a fleet that is more than triple the size of the next largest national fleet. When it came to targeting other countries' waters, Chinese fishing ships typically sat "on the outside," parking in international waters along sea borders, then running incursions across the line into domestic waters. In recent years, China has increasingly taken a "softer" approach, gaining control from the inside by paying to flag in their ships so they can fish in domestic waters.



Hu Shun Yu Vessels at Buenos Aires (Sourced from Pedro Soto, friend of Milko)

Subtler than simply entering foreign coastal areas to fish illegally, the tactic—which is often legal—is less likely to result in political clashes, bad press, or sunken vessels. China has not hidden how this approach factors into larger ambitions. In an academic paper published in 2023, Chinese fishery officials explained how they have relied extensively on Chinese companies, for example, to penetrate Argentina's territorial waters through “leasing and transfer methods,” and how this is part of a global policy. The trend is especially pronounced in Africa, where Chinese companies operate flagged-in ships in the national waters of at least nine countries on the continent—among them, notably, Ghana, where at least 70 Chinese fishing ships flying the Ghanaian flag are fishing in national waters, even though foreign investment in fishing is technically illegal. Nonetheless, up to 95 percent of Ghana's industrial trawling fleet has some element of Chinese control, according to a 2018 report by the Environmental Justice Foundation, an advocacy group. China has also displaced fishing vessels from the European Union, right on its doorstep, in the waters of Morocco. In the recent past, dozens of vessels, most of them from Spain, fished with the permission of the Moroccan government inside the African country's exclusive economic zone. The agreement lapsed, however, in 2023 and China now operates at least six flagged-in vessels in Moroccan waters. China has also established a growing presence across the Pacific Ocean. Chinese ships comb the waters of Fiji, the Solomon Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia, having flagged in or signed access agreements with those countries, according to a report released in 2022 by the Congressional Research Service in the U.S. “Chinese fleets are active in waters far from China's shores,” the report warned, “and the growth in their harvests threatens to worsen the already dire depletion in global fisheries.” As global demand for seafood has doubled since the nineteen-sixties, the appetite for fish has outpaced what can be sustainably caught. Now, more than a third of the world's stocks have been overfished. To feed the demand, the proliferation of foreign industrial fishing ships, especially from China, risks collapsing domestic fish stocks of countries in the global south while also jeopardizing local livelihoods and compromising

food security by exporting an essential source of protein. Western consumers, particularly in Europe, the U.S. and Canada, are beneficiaries of this cheap and seemingly abundant seafood caught or processed by China. In the past six years, more than 50 ships flagged to a dozen different countries but controlled by Chinese companies had engaged in crimes such as illegal fishing, unauthorized transshipments, and forced labor, according to an investigation by the Outlaw Ocean Project. In one instance, a fishing observer for Ghana's Fisheries Commission called Emmanuel Essien disappeared without a trace from the Meng Xin 15, beneficially owned by the Chinese company Dalian Meng Xin Ocean Fisheries, on the night of July 5, 2019. The observer's disappearance came a fortnight after he provided police with video evidence of crew on another ship transferring catch illegally between it and a second vessel, according to local investigative reporting. An investigation has been launched into the disappearance, but the lack of human remains has hindered its development. Four of the vessels showed a pattern of repeatedly turning off their automated tracking systems for longer than a day at a time while

out on the Pacific, often at the edge of an exclusive economic zone. Vessels 'going dark' is a risk factor for illegal fishing and transshipment, marine researchers say, because it makes it harder for law enforcement to comprehensively track a vessel's movement or see if it is likely engaged with other ships at sea. “It's a net transfer from poorer states who don't have the capacity to protect their fisheries, to richer states who just want cheaper food products,” Isaac B. Kardon, Senior Fellow for China Studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said. Of the 249 vessels identified in the investigation as part of China's flagged-in fleet, 115 are currently approved by the relevant European agency to export to the E.U. (and over 70 of the vessels are ultimately owned by Chinese companies that have sent 17,000 tons of seafood to the United States since 2018) But ocean sustainability and food security are by no means the only concern tied to the growth of China's control of global seafood and penetration into foreign near-shore waters. Labor abuses and other crimes are a widespread problem with Chinese fishing ships.



Xu Hai Jun Shipping Container I (Sourced from Revista Puerto)

▼ TECHNICAL
SITE VISIT

▼ INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE

▼ INTERNATIONAL
EXHIBITION

▼ 300 DELEGATES

▼ NETWORKING
RECEPTION

▼ LOCAL DELEGATES
DISCOUNT

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In January 2019, as part of a four-year investigation, a team of reporters from The Outlaw Ocean Project boarded a Chilean fishing ship in Punta Arenas, Chile, where the crew recounted recently watching a Chinese captain on a nearby squid ship punching and slapping deckhands. Later that year, the same team of journalists was reporting at sea off the coast of the West African nation of Gambia, where they boarded a Chinese ship called the Victory 205. There they found six African crew members sleeping on sea-soaked foam mattresses in a cramped and dangerously hot crawl space above the engine room. The ship was later detained by local authorities for these labor and other violations.

In February 2022, the reporters boarded a Chinese squid jigger on the high seas near the Falkland Islands, where an 18-year-old Chinese deckhand nervously begged to be rescued, explaining that his and the rest of the workers' passports had been confiscated. "Can you take us to the embassy in Argentina?" he asked. Roughly four months later, the reporting team climbed onto another Chinese fishing ship in international waters near the Galapagos Islands, to document living conditions. As if in suspended animation, the crew of 30 men wore thousand yard stares. Their teeth were yellowed from smoking, their skin ashen, and their hands spongy from handling fresh squid. The walls and floors were covered in slippery ooze of squid ink. The deckhands said they worked 15-hour days, 6 days per week. Mostly, they stood shin deep in squid, monitoring the reels to ensure they did not jam, and tossing their catch into overflowing baskets for later sorting. Below deck, a cook stirred instant noodles and bits of squid in a rice cooker. He said the vessel had run out of vegetables and fruit — a common cause at sea of fatal malnutrition. In June 2023, the same reporters were contacted by Uruguayan authorities seeking help after a local woman stumbled across a message in a bottle, washed ashore, apparently thrown from a Chinese squidder: "I am a crew member of the ship Lu Qing Yuan Yu 765 and I was locked up by the company," the message said. "When you see this paper, please help me call the police! Help, help." [When contacted for comment, the ship's owner Qingdao Songhai Fishery said "it was completely fabricated by individual crew members" and that Uruguayan police had looked into the matter.]

For most of the past decade, one dead body has been dropped off every other month on average in the port of Montevideo, Uruguay, mostly from Chinese squid ships. Some of the workers on these ships have died from beriberi, an easily avoidable and reversible form of malnutrition caused by a B1 vitamin deficiency that experts say is a warning sign of criminal neglect, typically caused on ships by eating too much white rice or instant noodles, which lack the vitamin. At least 24 workers on 14 Chinese fishing ships suffered symptoms associated with beriberi between 2013 and 2021, according to a recent investigation by the Outlaw Ocean Project. Of those, at least 15 died. The investigation also documented dozens of cases of forced labor, wage theft, violence, the confiscation of passports and deprivation of medical care. Many of these crimes have taken place on the high seas, beyond any country's territorial jurisdiction. But increasingly, Chinese-owned vessels are fishing in the local waters of nations where policing is little better because governments lack the finances, the coast-guard vessels, or the political will to board and spot-check the ships. To help create jobs, make money and feed its growing middle class, the Chinese government heavily supports its fishing industry with billions of

dollars in subsidies for things like fuel discounts, ship building, or engine purchases. The Chinese fishing companies flagging into poorer countries' waters are also eligible for these subsidies. "The reason why the Chinese subsidize these fleets could be not only for the fish," said Fernando Rivera, chairman of the Argentine Fishing Industry Chamber. "It has a very important geopolitical aspect."

As U.S. and European fishing fleets and navies have shrunk, so too has Western development funding and market investment in Latin America, Africa, and the Pacific. This has created a void that China is filling as part of its Belt and Road Initiative, Beijing's global development program. Between 2000 and 2020, China's trade with Latin America and the Caribbean grew from \$12 billion to \$315 billion, according to the World Economic Forum. China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China, two major state-owned Chinese banks, provided \$137 billion in loans to Latin American governments between 2005 and 2020. In exchange, China has at times received exclusive access to a wide range of resources, from oil fields to lithium mines. Chinese-owned vessels flagging in through the setup of joint ventures can serve as a source of self-enrichment for politically connected leaders in poorer countries who have a



Rusty vessel Victory205 on the sea with speedboats

personal stake in the fisheries industry. On the other hand, if this foreign investment is responsibly managed, it can be a legitimate source of income for local economies.

The maritime domain is an important front in China's growth plans, which includes exerting power not just over the high seas and contested waters like those in the South China Sea but also consolidating control over shipping, fishing in foreign coastal waters, and ports abroad. Chinese companies now operate dozens of overseas processing plants and cold-storage facilities, and terminals in more than 90 foreign fishing or shipping ports, according to research by Kardon.

Though most of these business ventures go unnoticed, some of them have sparked controversy. Starting in 2007, China extended more than a billion dollars worth of loans to Sri Lanka as part of a plan for a Chinese state-owned company to build a port and an airport. The deal was made based on the promise that the project would generate more than enough revenue for Sri Lanka to pay back these loans. By 2017, however, the port and airport had not recuperated the debt, and Sri Lanka had no way to pay back the loan. China struck a new deal extending credit further. The deal gave China majority control over the port and the surrounding area for 99 years. In 2018, a Chinese company purchased a seventy-acre plot of land in

Montevideo, Uruguay, to build a "megaport" consisting of two half-mile-long docks, a tax-exempt "free-trade zone," a new ice factory, a ship-repair warehouse, a fuel depot, and dorms for staff. The plan was eventually canceled after local protests, but the Uruguayan government later announced that it would build the port itself, with foreign investment, and China's ambassador, Wang Gang, expressed interest in managing the project.

More recently, in May 2021, Sierra Leone signed an agreement with China to build a new fishing harbor and fishmeal processing factory on a beach near a national park. In response, local organizations pushed for more transparency around the deal, which they said would harm the area's biodiversity, according to a 2023 report by The Stimson Center.

In Argentina, China has provided billions of dollars in currency swaps, providing a crucial lifeline amid skyrocketing domestic inflation and growing hesitancy from other international investment or lending organizations. China has also made or promised billion-dollar investments in Argentina's railway system, hydroelectric dams, lithium mines, and solar and wind power plants.

For Beijing, this money has created a variety of business opportunities. But it has also bought the type of political influence that became crucially important for the crew of the Lu Yan

Yuan Yu 10, which Argentine authorities sank in 2016 for illegal fishing.

All 29 of the men on the Chinese jigger were rescued from the water that day. Most of the men were scooped up by another Chinese fishing ship, Zhong Yuan Yu 11, which was also owned by CNFC and had its own history of illegal fishing in Argentine waters. These men were immediately taken directly back to China. Four of the crew, however, including the captain, were rescued by the Argentine Coast Guard, brought to shore, and charged with a range of crimes including violating fishing laws, resisting arrest, and endangering a coast guard vessel, and put under house arrest.

Roberto Wyn Hughes, a lawyer who frequently defends Chinese fishing companies, said that in those years, Argentine authorities typically did not prosecute the companies involved. Instead, they normally allowed the Chinese companies to pay a fine, after which their crew would be released. The sinking of the Lu Yan Yuan Yu 10 was different, however, because it sparked a media storm in Argentina and could not be handled as discreetly. Local news outlets described the ramming by the Chinese and showed footage of the sinking.

Hugo Sastre, the judge handling the case, initially justified the charges filed. The Chinese officers had placed "both the life and property of the Chinese vessel itself and the personnel and ship of the Argentine Prefecture at risk," he said. But China's foreign ministry soon pushed back. On March 16, a spokesman told reporters that he had "serious concerns" about the sinking and that his government had been engaged on behalf of the crew.

Two days later, the posture from the Argentine government began to shift. Susana Malcorra, Argentina's foreign minister, told reporters that the charges had "provoked a reaction of great concern from the Chinese government." She explained that she had reassured China that Argentina would follow local and international laws. "We hope it will not impact bilateral relations," she told reporters. Several weeks later, the Argentine judiciary also fell in line. "Given the doubt that weighs on the facts and criminal responsibility" of the captain, he and the three other sailors would be released without penalty, the court announced.

On April 7, the four Chinese crew members were flown back to China.



Xu Hai Jun Shipping Container 2 (Sourced from Revista Puerto)

ASR SPECIAL FEATURES

By May, Argentina's foreign minister was on a plane to Beijing to meet with the Chinese foreign minister, Wang Yi. After their meeting, China's foreign minister hailed their countries' "voyage of overall cooperation" and promised another surge of Chinese investment to Argentina. Wang added: "China will continue its support to the efforts made by Argentina in safeguarding its national sovereignty and territorial integrity."

Chinese political influence shows up on board the fishing vessels as well. In the Spring of 2021, an Argentinian crew member named Manuel Quiquinte, on a squid jigger called the Xin Shi Ji 89, contracted Covid while at sea. Owned by the Chinese, the ship was flagged to Argentina and jigging in Argentinian waters. Its crew was a mix of Argentinian and Chinese workers. Several days after Quiquinte fell ill, the Argentine captain called the Chinese owners to ask if the ship could go to

shore in Argentina to get medical care. Company officials said no and to keep fishing. Quiquinte died on the ship shortly thereafter, in May. This influence was certainly present on Quiquinte's ship. In court papers tied to Quiquinte's death, several of the ship's Argentinian crew members explained that despite Argentine law forbidding non-Argentines from being the captains or senior officers on these fishing ships, the reality is that the Chinese crew on board make the decisions. Even when they are designated on paper as lowly deckhands, the Chinese decide whether the ship will enter port to drop off a sick worker, like Quiquinte. The Argentinians might be designated as the engineers on board but they are not supposed to touch the machines when the vessel leaves port. "The only thing we do is to assume responsibility for any accident," Fernando Daniel Marquez, the engineer on the Xin Shi Ji

89, said in the court documents.

When contacted by reporters about the death, the vessel's parent company Zhejiang Ocean Family said that the crew member had tested negative for COVID-19 prior to working on board but had indeed contracted the illness on the vessel and died after his condition deteriorated rapidly. Ocean Family said the vessel belonged to a local Argentine company which Ocean Family has invested in, and it was this local company which handled the situation.

On land and at sea, the Chinese use a variety of approaches to gain access to foreign waters and circumvent rules meant to protect local interests. In some countries, they sell or lease their ships to locals but retain control over decisions and profits. In other places where the governments forbid foreigners from fishing their waters, Chinese companies pay fees through "access agreements."



Arg. Ambassador Poses With Shandong Bodelong Executives (Sourced from China Foreign Ministry)

Elsewhere, China has gone around the prohibitions on foreign shipowners by partnering with local residents and giving them a majority ownership stake. Typically about a quarter of the workers on fishing ships owned by the Chinese operating in Argentinian waters are Chinese nationals, according to a review of about a dozen crew manifests published by local media. Jorge Frias, the secretary general of the Argentine fishing captains' union, explained that on Argentine-flagged ships, the Chinese call the shots. The captains are Argentinians, but "fishing masters," who are Chinese, decide where to go and when.

The scourge of illegal and overfishing did not originate with China, of course. Western industrial fleets dominated the world's oceans for much of the 20th century, fishing unsustainably in ways that have helped cause the current crisis, explained Daniel Pauly, a marine biologist at the University of British Columbia.

China's expansionist methods are also not historically unique. The U.S. has a long and infamous record of intervening abroad when foreign leaders begin erecting highly protectionist laws. In the past several decades, the tactic of "flagging in" has been used by American and Icelandic fishing companies. More recently, as China has increased its control over global fishing, the U.S. and European nations have jumped at the opportunity to focus international attention on China's misdeeds. Still, China has a well-documented reputation for violating international fishing laws and standards, bullying other ships, intruding on the maritime territory of other countries and abusing its fishing workers. In 2021, the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, a nonprofit research group, ranked China as the world's biggest purveyor of illegal fishing. But even frequent culprits can also be easy scapegoats: a country that regularly flouts norms and breaks the law can also at times be a victim of misinformation. When criticized in the media, China typically pushes back, not without reason, by dismissing their criticism as politically motivated and by accusing its detractors of hypocrisy. China's sheer size, ubiquity and poor track record on labor and marine conservation is raising concerns.

In Ghana, for instance, industrial trawlers, most of which are owned by China, catch over 100,000 metric tons of fish each year, according to the

Environmental Justice Foundation in 2017, and the country's fishing stocks are now in crisis, as local fishermen's incomes have dropped by up to 40 percent over the past two decades. "Fishing vessel owners and operators exploit African flags to escape effective oversight and to fish unsustainably and illegally both in sovereign African waters," wrote TMT, the nonprofit that tracks maritime crime, adding that the companies were creating "a situation where they can harness the resources of a State without any meaningful restrictions or management oversight." In the Pacific, an inspection in 2024 by

local police and the U.S. Coast Guard found that six Chinese flagged-in ships fishing in the waters of Vanuatu had violated regulations requiring them to record the amount of fish they catch. And in South America, the increasingly foreign presence in territorial waters is stoking nationalist worry in places like Peru and Argentina. "China is becoming the only player, by displacing local companies or purchasing them," said Alfonso Miranda Eyzaguirre, a former Peruvian minister of production. Pablo Isasa, a captain of an Argentinian hake trawler, added: "We have the enemy inside and out."



Jing Yuan 626 approaching Argentina coastguard vessel from stern

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