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Maritime Crime Hotspots Along The Coast Of Ghana: Mapping The Threats

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Summary

Particular maritime crimes are prevalent in particular towns and places along Ghana's coast. The authors of this policy brief address numerous maritime crimes and the locations where they are most frequently committed. The study also goes over the various motives that lead to the various correlations among the different crime areas. The policy brief ends with a few recommendations and stresses the importance of identifying and recognising the contrasting hotspots of these maritime crimes as a necessary step in addressing them.



Fisherfolk air out their nets after a week of being at sea. Apam, Ghana.

Credit: Photographer ([_lens.stories_](#))

Introduction

Ghana's coastline is fraught with maritime crimes that include illegal transshipment of surplus catch at sea, illegal ship-to-ship transfer of oil and illicit trafficking of goods and persons.¹ Without an effective strategy to combat these crimes, they will continue to afflict Ghana's coastline and blue economy. Identifying specific crimes and their hotspots could be a proactive step in addressing them. Another aspect of these crimes is investigating the reasons for their occurrence and the distinct prime areas. The 550km coastline of Ghana, which also lies 30m above sea level,² is lined with communities that have an eclectic array of cultures and commercial activities, including oil and gas production, port operations and the generation of thermal and hydroelectric power.³ Nevertheless, the predominant activity is fishing.

Similarly, there is immense diversity in marine life along the five zones of the coast, namely internal waters, territorial sea, the contiguous zone, the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and the high seas) As a result, Ghana's entire stretch of shoreline has become a lucrative portal for various actors in the region: commerce⁴, crime⁵, and tourism.⁶ With maritime crimes, the country's economic resilience is undermined, the livelihoods of local communities are threatened and the possibility of political instability⁷.

¹Aning, E. K., Birikorang, E., Pokoo, J., Mensah, A., & Tachie-Menson, E. A., (2021). Maritime (In)security in the Gulf of Guinea: Ghana's actual maritime crime picture. Retrieved from Safe Seas: <http://www.safeseas.net/maritime-insecurity-in-the-gulf-of-guinea-ghanas-actual-4maritime-crime-picture/> Accessed on November 19, 2021.

²Dadson, I.Y., Owusu, A.B., & Adams, O. (2016). Analysis of shoreline change along the Cape Coast-Sekondi Coast, Ghana. *Geography Journal*, 2016: 10-22. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1155/2016/1868936>.

³UNESCO. (2021, January). Ghana's coastline, swallowed by the sea. Retrieved from The UNESCO Courier : <https://en.unesco.org/courier/2021-1/ghanas-coastline-swallowed-sea>; Accessed on November 17, 2022.

⁴UNESCO. (2021, January). Ghana's coastline, swallowed by the sea. Retrieved from The UNESCO Courier : <https://en.unesco.org/courier/2021-1/ghanas-coastline-swallowed-sea>; Accessed on November 17, 2022.

⁵Aning, E. K., Birikorang, E., Pokoo, J., Mensah, A., & Tachie-Menson, E. A., (2021). Maritime (In)security in the Gulf of Guinea: Ghana's actual maritime crime picture. Retrieved from Safe Seas: <http://www.safeseas.net/maritime-insecurity-in-the-gulf-of-guinea-ghanas-actual-maritime-crime-picture/> Accessed on November 19, 2021.

⁶Grant, R. (2009). *Globalizing city: The urban and economic transformation of Accra, Ghana*. New York: Syracuse University Press.

⁷Asiamah, M. A. (2018). *Investigating The Issue Of Maritime Domain Awareness: The Case Of Ghana*. MA Thesis, World Maritime University Dissertations.

This paper seeks to investigate and discuss the most prominent maritime crimes along the coast of Ghana and the reasons for their evolution and preferences. For this research, the coastline was divided into three areas for ease of movement: the eastern, western, and central coastlines. The first is Prampram, Ada, Keta (Lagoon), Volta (Lake), and Denu; the second is Tema, Accra, Winneba, Apam, Elmina, and Cape Coast; and the third is Axim, New Town, Half Assini, Jaway Wharf, and Sekondi-Takoradi.

Mapping Out Crime Hotspots

To begin with, in the context of this policy paper, it is critical to define a hotspot. A hotspot is a section of a path where an occurrence is more common than others. However, maritime crimes are limited because offences committed in the waters cannot be precisely assigned to a corresponding community as a hotspot area. To appreciate the complexity of maritime crimes present in Ghana, the public choice theory provides a better framework for understanding the motivations of criminals in various locations.⁸ A plethora of reasons underprops the prevalence of corresponding hotspots across the coastline of Ghana: geographical conditions, the culture of the inhabitants, the lucrateness of the crimes, and the availability of various networks and resources that facilitate criminal activities.

Nonetheless, the lack of law enforcement in these areas is one overarching reason these crimes continue to occur and evolve. Generally, proximity to the marine area is an incentive for all coastal townships.⁹ The central zone of the coastline is the most vulnerable to IUU fishing crimes, which include illegal transshipment (SAIKO) and various unsustainable fishing techniques. These fishing techniques include light fishing, fishing with explosives and chemicals, fishing with microfilament nets and harvesting/catching endangered marine creatures. In some towns, the fishers expressed concerns that while non-prescribed fishing equipment is readily available, they disagree that their utilisation

should be criminalised.¹⁰ In their view, if government agencies encourage their importation and sale, there should be no issues regarding their use as fishermen. Fisheries crimes are the most common type of marine crime, and they occur along all three sections of the coast.

Furthermore, with ports as economically lucrative hubs, Tema and Takoradi are hotspots for the inflow and outflow of goods. While the ports provide a conducive environment for robust commercial activities, they also allow for the flow of illicit goods into and out of the country. Humans,¹¹ narcotics,¹² endangered fauna,¹³ unlicensed small arms and light weapons¹⁴ are all part of these flows. The connections between these areas and the flow of mentioned cargo will be discussed further in this policy brief. In addition, the occurrence of piracy attacks in the Gulf of Guinea¹⁵ creates imminent piracy threats for Ghana's coastline, as the country's coastline has seen some armed robbery at sea attacks. However, there is difficulty identifying the hotspots of an armed robbery at sea, as they occur in internal waters and not on land.

Therefore, there is difficulty associating crimes with a specific Ghanaian community or town. This limitation spells similar issues for allocating illegal ship-to-ship transfers to a spot. This activity involves diverting crude and refined products by unauthorised persons at sea across the coastline to fishers, filling stations and other automobile users. Against this backdrop, the Ghanaian Navy arrested two Nigerian-flagged vessels, MT Mammy Mary and MT Metrix 1, when they illegally traded oil consignment about 5nm from Tema Harbour on April 14, 2018.¹⁶ Oil and gas trade between individuals and institutions needs to be secured, as official trade in that industry is compromised by piracy. Pirates illegally siphon oil from the gas pipeline in the Niger Delta and sell it at lower prices and by illegal means, compromising the trade activity of the oil and gas industry. Meanwhile, no reliable data exists on how much oil is lost from legitimate trade due to piracy.¹⁷ Below is a preliminary list of marine crimes and the

⁸Boyne, G. A. (1998). Public choice theory and local government. Macmillan, Basingstoke.

⁹Schumacher, J. A. (1984). The Model of a Human Being in Public Choice Theory. *American Behavioural Scientist*, 28(2), 211–231. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/000276484028002005> Accessed on May 24, 2022.

¹⁰Interview with the Fisher Community, Apam, April 30, 2021.

¹¹Oteng-Ababio, M. (2016). Beyond poverty and criminalization: Splintering youth groups and 'conflict of governmentalities' in urban Ghana. *Ghana Journal of Geography*, 8(1): 51-78.

¹²Aning, K., & Aubyn, F. (2013). Bridging the Capacity Gaps to meet West Africa's Security Challenges. *Strategie und Sicherheit*, (1): 309-320.

¹³Kansanga, M. M., Dinko, D. H., Nyantakyi-Frimpong, H., Arku, G., & Luginaah, I. (2021). Scalar politics and black markets: The political ecology of illegal rosewood logging in Ghana. *Geoforum*, 119: 83-93.

¹⁴Aning, K., & Pokoo, J. (2014). Understanding the nature and threats of drug trafficking to national and regional security in West Africa. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 3(1): 1-13.

¹⁵CEMLAWS AFRICA. (2020). Gulf of Guinea piracy: The Old, the New and the Dark shades. *Maritime Governance Brief*. Vol. 2, Issue 1. Retrieved from <https://www.cemlawsafrica.com/gulf-of-guinea-piracy/> Accessed on May 23, 2022.

¹⁶Ocloo, P. (2018). Navy, NPA impound 2 vessels over illegal oil transfer. *Dailygraphic.com.gh* Retrieved from <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/navy-npa-impound-2-vessels-over-illegal-oil-transfer.html> Accessed on October 20, 2021.

¹⁷Barrios, C. (2013). Fighting piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. *European Union Institute for Security Studies Brief*, 20.

towns and cities where they most commonly occur. While other crimes are committed in various locations, this table highlights the areas known to be hotspots for these maritime crimes. This matrix depicts the various marine crimes discovered in the area.

Figure 2: A matrix of maritime crimes and their corresponding hotspots.

	MARITIME CRIME	HOTSPOT(S)
1.	Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing	Jamestown, Apam, Elmina, Cape Coast, Axim, Jaway Wharf, Denu, Prampram.
2.	Human Trafficking	Keta, Ho, and other towns along the Volta Lake
3.	Drug/arms trafficking	Tema, New Town, Prampram, Keta
4.	Stowing away	Sekondi-Takoradi
5.	Armed robbery at sea	All
6.	Dumping of waste	Accra
7.	Illegal ship-to-ship transfer of oil	All

Source: Authors' construct, 2021

For this study, the aforementioned coastal demarcations will be the pivot of discussions, exploring the linkages between the maritime crimes occurring in a respective area and the dynamics that facilitate the sustenance of those crimes.

Eastern Coastline

The eastern coastline encompasses the area of Prampram, Ada, Keta (Lagoon), the Volta (Lake) and Denu. The furthest extreme of this part shares borders with Togo. The unresolved pre-existing border disputes between Ghana and Togo¹⁸ are noteworthy attributes of this area. The area features the Volta Lake and the Keta Lagoon, where the most prominent inland fishing occurs.

The RAMSAR Convention¹⁹ protects five significant wetlands²⁰ in Ghana, of which two sites are located in the Densu delta and Keta.²¹ The economic activities of these communities are characterised by both freshwater fishing across Volta Lake and marine fishing in the Gulf of Guinea. The presence of solid and sturdy stumps of old trees lining the bottom of the Lake serves as a constant obstacle to various fisherfolk when they cast their nets out, and young children with tiny fingers are a preferred resource to unravel the entanglements from these stumps,²² putting children at risk of drowning and becoming trapped. These children are also prone to contracting diseases like bilharzia and guinea worm as they work in hazardous conditions²³ and abuse.²⁴ The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour under the International Labour Organisation (ILO-IPEC) estimates that over 70 per cent of all child labour is found in agriculture (mainly fisheries and forestry), accounting for over 173 million children worldwide.²⁵

This type of abuse is in contravention of the provisions of

¹⁸Adotey, E. (2021). An imaginary line? Decolonisation, bordering and borderscapes on the Ghana–Togo border. *Third World Quarterly*, 42(5): 1069-1086.

¹⁹The RAMSAR Convention is an international treaty for the conservation of sustainable utilization of wetlands, recognising ecological functions of wetlands and their economic, cultural, scientific and recreational value.

²⁰Wetlands, under the text of the Ramsar Convention (Article 1.1), are defined as: 'Areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres.'

²¹RAMSAR. (2016). Handbook 1(5th Edition) : An Introduction to the Convention on Wetlands. Retrieved from RAMSAR: <https://ramsar.org/document/handbook-1-5th-edition-an-introduction-to-the-convention-on-wetlands>

²²Interview with personnel Fisheries Commission, Tema on April 18, 2021.

²³Hazardous child labour is defined by Article 3 of ILO Convention, No. 182 on Prohibition and immediate Action on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999, as 'work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardise the health, safety, or morals of young persons.'

²⁴Hamenoo, E. S., & Sottie, C. A. (2015). Stories from Lake Volta: The lived experiences of trafficked children in Ghana. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 40: 103-112.

²⁵International Labour Organization. (2013). Analytical Study on Child labour in Volta Lake fishing in Ghana. Geneva: ILO.

²⁶The Human Trafficking Act of Ghana 2005, Act 694, Section 3 states: A person who provides another person, conveys persons or uses trafficked persons commits an offence and is liable to not less than 5 years of imprisonment. Retrieved from https://www.mint.gov.gh/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Human_Trafficking_Act_2015-1.pdf Accessed on November 18, 2021.

the Human Trafficking Act, 2005 Ghana.²⁶ Concerning child labour and trafficking of children in fishing, the relevant International Labour Organisation's Conventions and recommendations include:

- i. The Convention on the rights of the child;
- ii. The ILO Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child Labour, 1999;
- iii. The ILO Convention No. 138 on the minimum age, 1973; and
- iv. The ILO Convention No. 188 on the work of children in fishing, 2007.

One factor contributing to this phenomenon of child abuse is the proximity of children and their families to the area of Volta Lake.

Another motivator for child trafficking in these impoverished areas is deeply ingrained in tradition and culture. The Volta region ranks with the fourth highest levels of poverty in Ghana. As of 2020, the headcount ratio of multidimensional poverty in the Volta Region is 58.2 percent, implying that 58.2 per cent of the region's population is poor.²⁸ It is common for children to work as apprentices in Ghana (with family or a family friend), as they believe that sending children to work will provide them with a better way of life. Hence, children are viewed by traffickers as cheap labour.²⁹ Although trafficked children are not necessarily from poverty-stricken areas, it is one of the incentives for trafficking in these areas.

The Fisheries Regulations, 2010 (LI. 1968) sought to regulate fishery activities. However, it is silent on child labour and trafficking of children into fishing; like the Fisheries Act, its provisions make it possible for the Fisheries Commission and Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture development to eliminate child labour and trafficking of children in fishing.

Further, these children are primarily from deprived communities where the meagre payments they (and their families) receive for the cheap labour they provide is all they have.³⁰ The percentage of households in a community reporting at least one child subjected to trafficking or exploitation ranged from 2 per cent in two communities to 100 percent in one community.³¹ The low sums traffickers demonstrated the economic desperation of some households that could pay parents to "hire" their children. In 2018, it reportedly ranged from 100 GHS (approximately \$25) to 300 GHS (roughly \$60).³² Offsetting these one-time payments to the minimum wage in the country in 2018 (Ghc10.65)³³ and even in 2022 (Ghc12.53),³⁴ livelihoods are not decent. A total of 331 victims of person trafficking in Ghana were registered in 2018, a drop compared to the previous year when 558 cases were detected. Moreover, while in 2018, most people trafficked were minors (251), adults dominated the count in 2017 (362).³⁵

Due to the location of these crimes at the extremes of the length of the coast, policing and surveillance by state institutions are ineffective. This development is due to a lack of logistics, due to which state institutions are under-resourced to perform patrol duties.³⁶ Other fishing crimes that plague the region are IUU fishing crimes, particularly the use of non-prescribed equipment such as microfilament nets and fishing with bright lights. These crimes, although substantial, are not as prominent and evident as child trafficking. Fishermen use microfilament nets appropriate for building construction and fenestration to catch fish, including fingerlings.³⁷

Central Coastline

The eastern coastline, one of Ghana's important ports located in Tema, has gained notoriety for

²⁷July 29, 2020. UNDP, Ghana. New data looking at poverty in different dimensions in Ghana, show reduction over time. Retrieved from <https://www.gh.undp.org/content/ghana/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2020/new-data-looking-at-poverty-in-different-dimensions-in-ghana-sho.html>. Accessed on April 27, 2022.

²⁸Ghana Statistical Service, (2020) Ghana's Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index Report. Retrieved from https://www.gh.undp.org/content/ghana/en/home/library/poverty/ghana_s-multidimensional-poverty-index-report.html. Accessed on April 27, 2022.

²⁹Atuguba, R. A., & Raymond, D. (2005). Human trafficking in Ghana: A review of legislation. Geneva, Switzerland: *International Labor Organization*.

³⁰Atuguba, R. A., & Raymond, D. (2005). Human trafficking in Ghana: A review of legislation. Geneva, Switzerland: *International Labor Organization*.

³¹Free the slaves. (2018). Trafficking footprints: A two-phase baseline study of child trafficking in 34 communities in 6 districts in Ghana.

³²Free the slaves. (2018). Trafficking footprints: A two-phase baseline study of child trafficking in 34 communities in 6 districts in Ghana.

³³Wage Indicator. (2018). Minimum wage in Ghana goes up by 10% - November 28, 2018. Retrieved from [https://wageindicator.org/salary/minimum-wage/minimum-wages-news/minimum-wage-in-ghana-goes-up-by-10-november-28-2018#:~:text=Ghana%20National%20Tripartite%20Committee%20\(NTC,65%20from%20current%20GH%C8%BB9](https://wageindicator.org/salary/minimum-wage/minimum-wages-news/minimum-wage-in-ghana-goes-up-by-10-november-28-2018#:~:text=Ghana%20National%20Tripartite%20Committee%20(NTC,65%20from%20current%20GH%C8%BB9). Accessed on May 23, 2022.

³⁴Communique by the National Tripartite Committee (NTC) on the 2021 and 2022 National Daily minimum wage, Retrieved from <https://melr.gov.gh/communique-by-the-national-tripartite-committee-ntc-on-the-2021-and-2022-national-daily-minimum-wage/>. Accessed on May 23, 2022.

³⁵Statista. (2021). Number of victims of trafficking in persons in Ghana 2017-2018. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1206560/number-of-victims-of-trafficking-in-persons-in-ghana/>. Accessed on May 21, 2022.

³⁶Interview with Marine Police, April 17, 2021.

³⁷Interview with Fisher Folk of Apam April 30, 2021.

commercial activities involving illicit flows, such as narcotic drugs, narcotics and small arms and light weapons (SALW) and counterfeit and contraband foods and over-the-counter medicines.³⁸ Specifically, the economies of coastal communities in towns such as Winneba, Apam, Accra, Cape Coast, and Elmina are based primarily on the trade of fish and related goods and services. As a result, the areas are characterised by IUU crimes, ranging from using hazardous equipment and techniques to marine and human life to illegal transshipment (SAIKO). The majority of the perpetrators are indigenous peoples who have lost their livelihoods due to the activities of Chinese trawler vessels. They are then forced to sell their surplus catch to make a living.³⁹ The more significant issue, in this case, is an ineffective licensing regime which facilitates the fronting by Ghanaian citizens or institutions for foreign nationals to acquire operational licenses. Underpinning this phenomenon is the existence of loopholes regarding ownership and partnership in the company laws and regulations that govern commerce in Ghana, giving foreign nationals predominantly Chinese operation and decision power. In general, the persistence of these maritime crimes along this stretch of Ghana's coast is due to the ineffectiveness of state institutions, such as the Ghana Navy and Marine Police, in combating them.⁴⁰

On the other hand, Tema, the port city and its environs have been characterised by the exportation and importation of staples, such as tinned fish and meat, milk and drinks, household goods, agricultural produce and products. As a result, this zone's economy is fraught with maritime crimes involving the flow and circulation of illegal goods such as small arms and light weapons⁴¹, narcotic drugs, and general contraband goods, such as counterfeit over-the-counter drugs.⁴²

Western Coastline

Cote d'Ivoire borders the western coastline of Ghana.

³⁸Aning, E. K., Birikorang, E., Pokoo, J., Mensah, A., & Tachie-Menson, E. A., (2021). Maritime (In)security in the Gulf of Guinea: Ghana's actual maritime crime picture. Retrieved from Safe Seas: <http://www.safeseas.net/maritime-insecurity-in-the-gulf-of-guinea-ghanas-actual-4maritime-crime-picture/> Accessed on November 19, 2021.

³⁹Focus group meeting with Fisher Folk at Apam, April 30, 2021.

⁴⁰Focus group meeting, KA IPTC, Accra August 17, 2021.

⁴¹Washington, E. (2021, June 17). Customs intercept 3 rifles hidden in personal effects at Tema Port. Retrieved from Citi News Room: <https://citinewsroom.com/2021/06/customs-intercept-3-rifles-hidden-in-personal-effects-at-tema-port/> Accessed on May 18, 2022.

⁴²MyJoyOnline. (2020, September 20). Cocaine valued at \$10m intercepted at Tema Port. Retrieved from MyJoyOnline: <https://www.myjoyonline.com/cocaine-valued-at-10m-intercepted-at-tema-port/> Accessed on May 28, 2022.

⁴³Interview, Marine Police, Takoradi, Ghana. April 17, 2021.

⁴⁴Interview, Marine Police, Takoradi, Ghana. April 17, 2021.

⁴⁵Aning, K. (2007). Are there emerging West African criminal networks? The case of Ghana. *Global Crime*, 8(3): 193-212.

⁴⁶Pape, E. (2005). 'West Africa: The New "Drug Triangle."' *Newsweek International*, August 25, 2005.

⁴⁷Adogla-Bessa. (March 14, 2019). Citi Newsroom, £29.9m worth of cannabis heading to UK intercepted at the Tema Port. Retrieved from <https://citinewsroom.com/2019/03/29-2m-worth-of-cannabis-heading-to-uk-intercepted-at-tema-port/>. Accessed on May 23, 2022.

⁴⁸My JoyOnline. (September 26, 2020). 152 kg of cocaine concealed as sugar intercepted at Tema Port. Retrieved from <https://www.myjoyonline.com/152kgs-of-cocaine-concealed-as-sugar-intercepted-at-tema-port/>. Accessed on May 23, 2022.

This part entails towns including Axim, Half Assini, Jaway Wharf, and the twin city of Sekondi-Takoradi. These areas also show evidence of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonial presence. Due to logistical constraints of the Ghana Navy and Marine Police, surveillance is not as thorough as on the central coast,⁴³ although there is a Naval Command in the region. Agriculture and mining are the primary sources of livelihood in these towns. Due to these activities, there is easy and unmonitored access to chemical fertilisers, explosives, and microfilament nets appropriated by fisherfolk for IUU fishing practices.⁴⁴ The high altitude allows voyagers to monitor vessels to and from the Takoradi Harbour. They then take advantage of the blindside of crew members and sneak onto the vessels. Stowing away to European countries has historically been a profitable enterprise for young people to pursue better living conditions, and it is still a source of motivation for stowaway voyagers in the present day. While the western coastline is often not labelled as a narcotics hub, there have been instances where drugs have been trafficked through the port.

Since the early 2000s scholars have discussed the possibility of the existence of African networks that foster the constant flow of illicit goods⁴⁵ and the lack of political will to combat these activities.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, in recent years, there have been various events of interception of cannabis⁴⁷ and cocaine⁴⁸ at the ports of Ghana; the GoG continues to be a hub for illicit flows of humans, goods and substances in and out of the continent.⁴⁹

It is critical that when addressing these crimes, a good understanding of where they are most prevalent and the factors that contribute to their occurrence is identified and mapped with appropriate strategies.

Recognising Hotspots As Part Of Addressing Maritime Crimes

Various mechanisms and instruments have been

initiated to address marine crimes along Ghana’s coast. These include the Ghana National Maritime Strategy (NIMS). However, presently surveillance and frequent patrolling are measures used to apprehend perpetrators of crimes. Though these strategies help address these crimes and reduce their occurrence, it is critical to address the underlying causes: the profitability, the historical antecedents, and the incentives provided by the geography of an area. Therefore, to supplement these approaches, it would be beneficial to be vigilant of the hotspots, their history, the reasons for their occurrences, and the threats that these factors pose to the country’s blue economy’s resilience or potency.

Recommendations

The preceding considerations clarify that insufficient policing and a lack of presence in some areas contribute to the high levels of crime there.

Below are the key recommendations of this policy paper:

- the Government of Ghana and other stakeholders must pay close attention to prevalent marine crimes assessing their evolution and expansion. This approach will allow the state and other stakeholders to address

the crimes more effectively and comprehensively to prevent future threats and circumstances; and

- the Government of Ghana and relevant stakeholders must build and implement a comprehensive Maritime Security Strategy, which multi-dimensionally addresses the various security issues in the country’s maritime domain.

Conclusion

This study calls to consider the hotspots of the respective crimes along the country’s coastline and their historical antecedents, which stem from the various factors that contribute to their occurrence and preference. Crimes, particularly maritime crimes, will become more pervasive over time. However, more positive results will be obtained if efforts and measures to combat these crimes are implemented carefully and strategically. States and regions must stay vigilant and abreast regarding emerging and threatening trends that compromise the safety of their blue economy and the entire maritime domain. Therefore, this study contributes to the body of knowledge on maritime crimes, particularly in Ghana and the Gulf of Guinea, and informs policymakers of the importance of maritime crimes in their various strategies and initiatives to promote maritime safety.

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