

# Theft, Robbery, and Piracy at Sea (TRAPS)

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20 July 2023



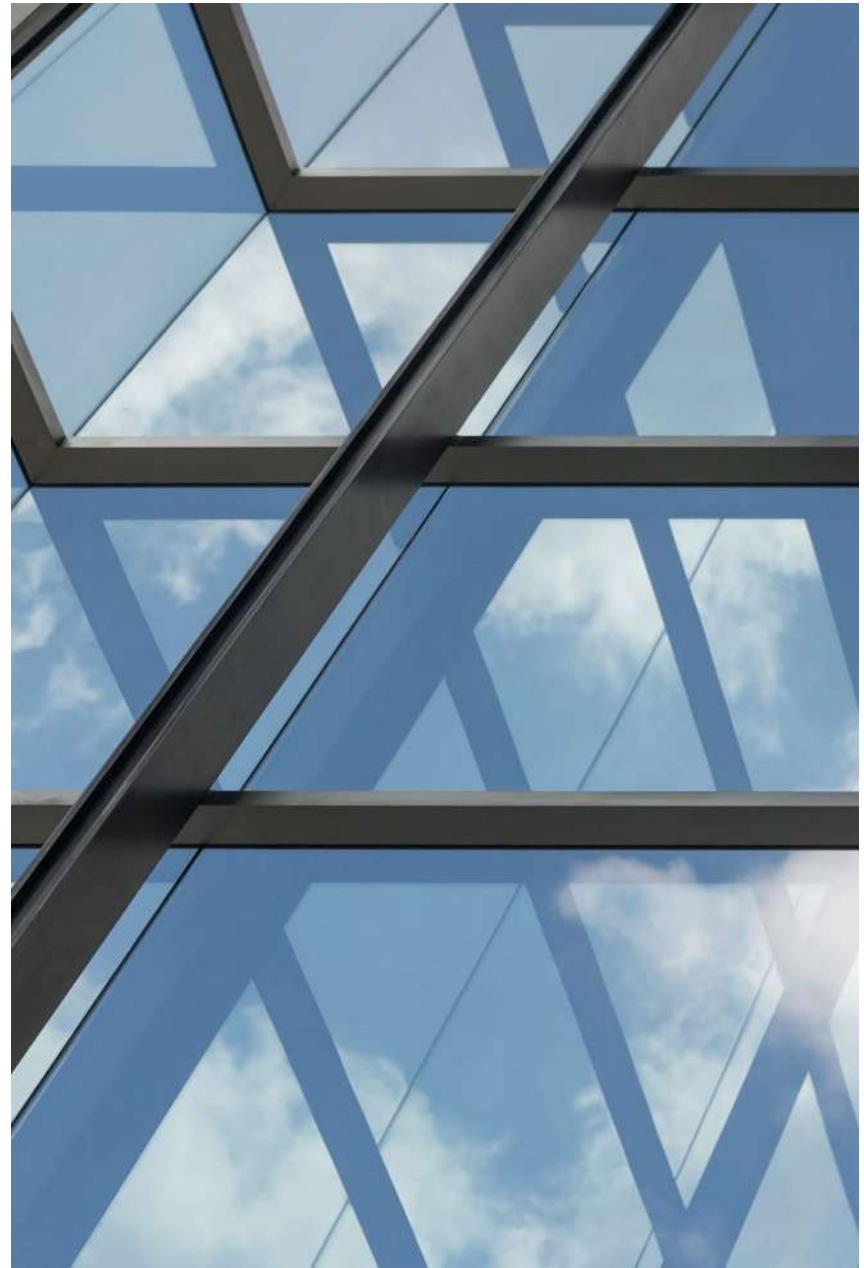
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# Outline

- TRAPS definitions and categorisations
- Factors in piracy and counterpiracy
- Southeast Asian piracy in comparison
- TRAPS data
- Case studies

# TRAPS definitions and categorisations



# Typology of maritime crime

	Profit mechanism	
Nature of crime	<i>Predation on people</i>	<i>Responding to market demand</i>
<b><i>Punctuated incident</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maritime piracy (Robbery)</li> <li>- Maritime piracy (Ship/cargo seizure)</li> <li>- Maritime piracy (Kidnap for ransom)</li> <li>- Maritime terrorist attacks</li> <li>- Attacks on critical infrastructure</li> </ul> <p>(I)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hazardous waste dumping/pollution</li> <li>- IUU fishing</li> <li>- Illicit seabed mining</li> </ul> <p>(II)</p>
<b><i>Flow</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Human trafficking by sea</li> </ul> <p>(III)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Smuggling by sea</li> <li>- Sanctions evasion by sea</li> <li>- Illicit migration by sea</li> <li>- Stowaways</li> </ul> <p>(IV)</p>

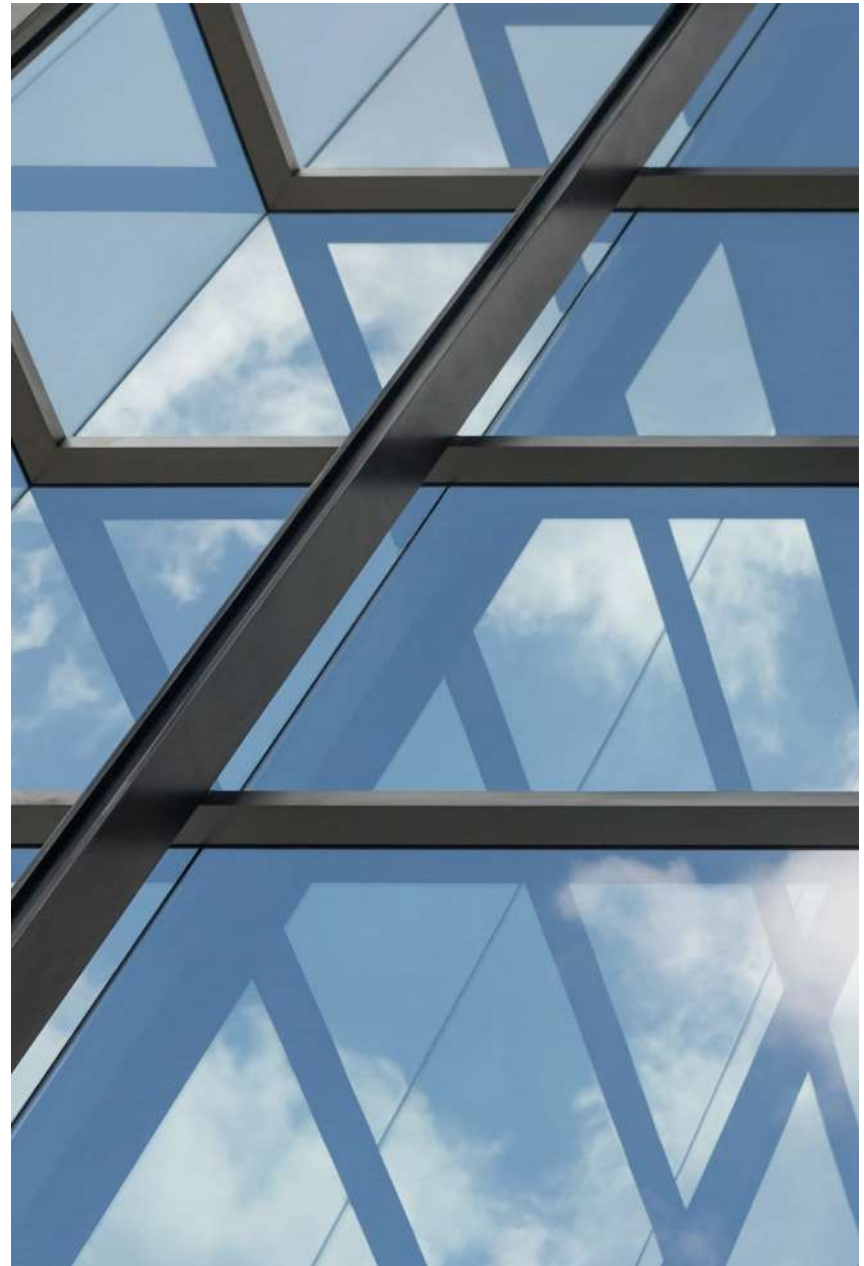
## TRAPS definitions

- Theft – Stealing without coercion
- Robbery – Stealing through coercion (force or threat of force) in port areas or territorial waters
- Piracy (UNCLOS Article 101)
  - “Piracy consists of any of the following acts:
    - a. **any illegal acts of violence or detention**, or any act of depredation, committed **for private ends** by the **crew or the passengers of a private ship** or a private aircraft, and directed: i. **on the high seas**, against another ship or aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft; ii. against a ship, aircraft, persons or property in a place **outside the jurisdiction of any State**;
    - b. any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft;
    - any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).”

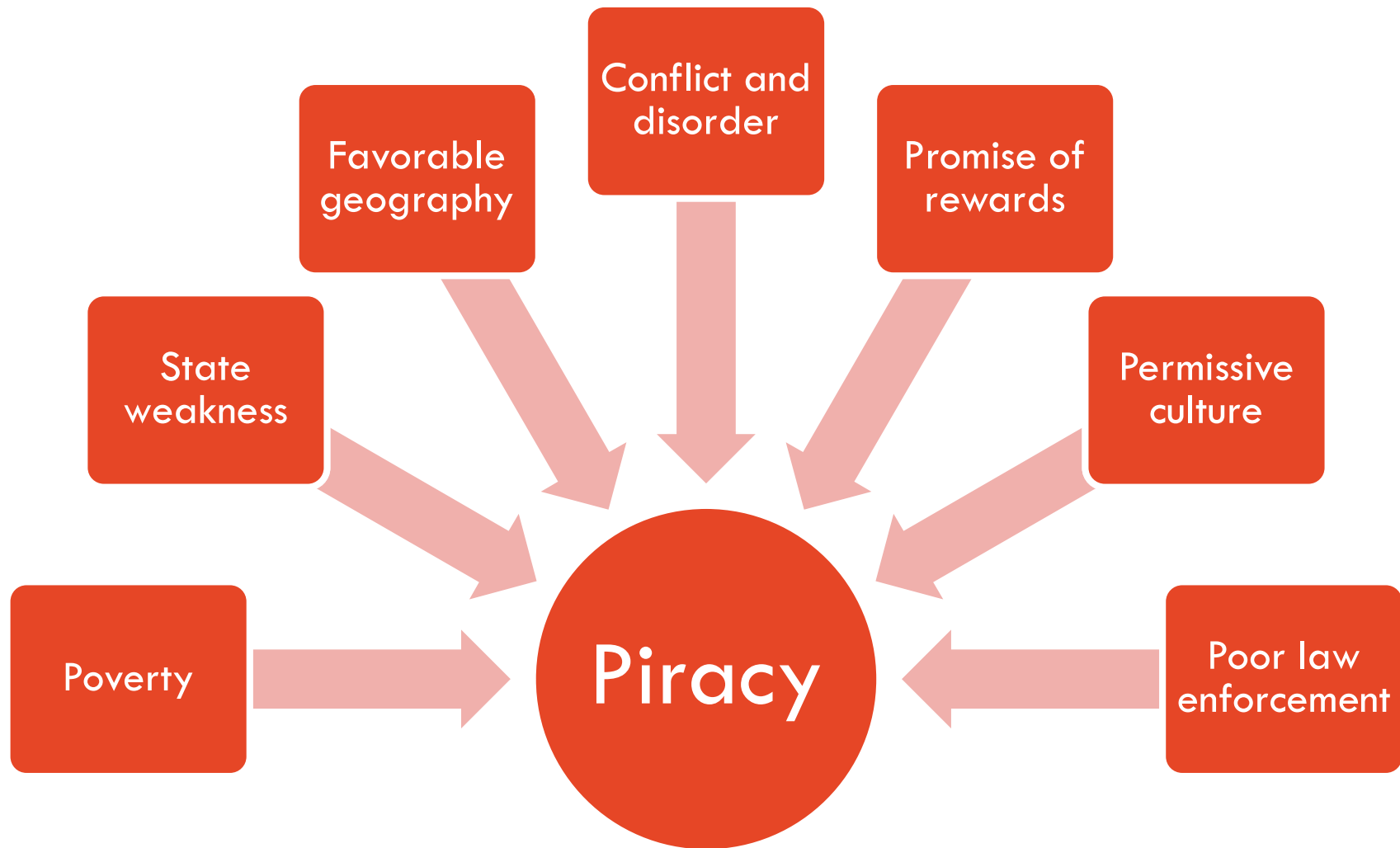
# Typology of TRAPS

		Force	
		<i>No use of force or threat of force</i>	<i>Use of force or threat of force</i>
<b>Profit mechanism</b>	<i>Using, selling stolen goods</i>	Theft	Piracy/Robbery at sea
	<i>Using, selling ship, cargo</i>		Piracy/Robbery at sea (Ship/cargo seizure)
	<i>Ransom payment for ship, crew, cargo</i>		Piracy/Robbery at sea (Kidnapping for ransom)

## Factors in piracy and counterpiracy

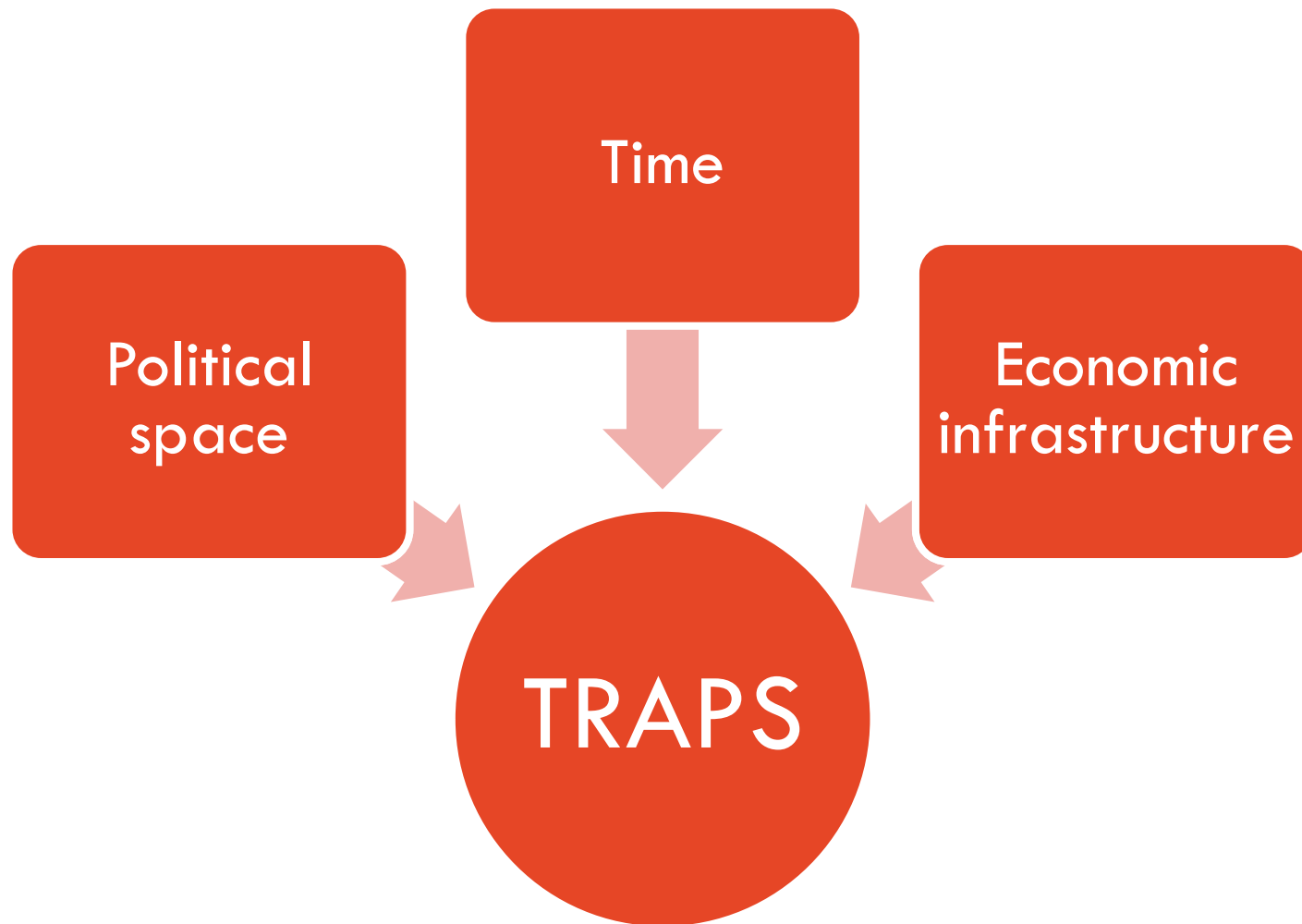


## Causes of piracy





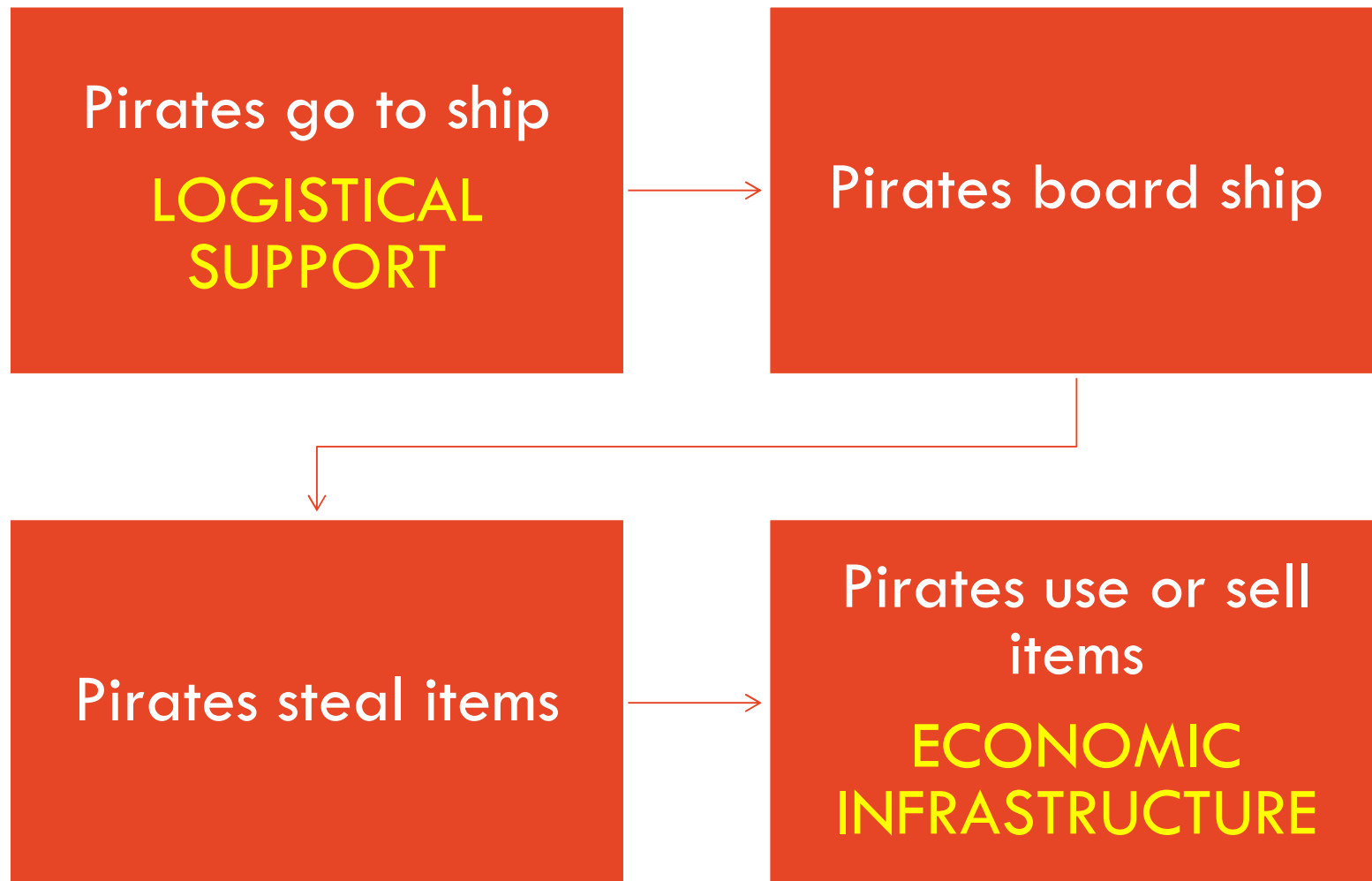
## Factors for a successful TRAPS attack



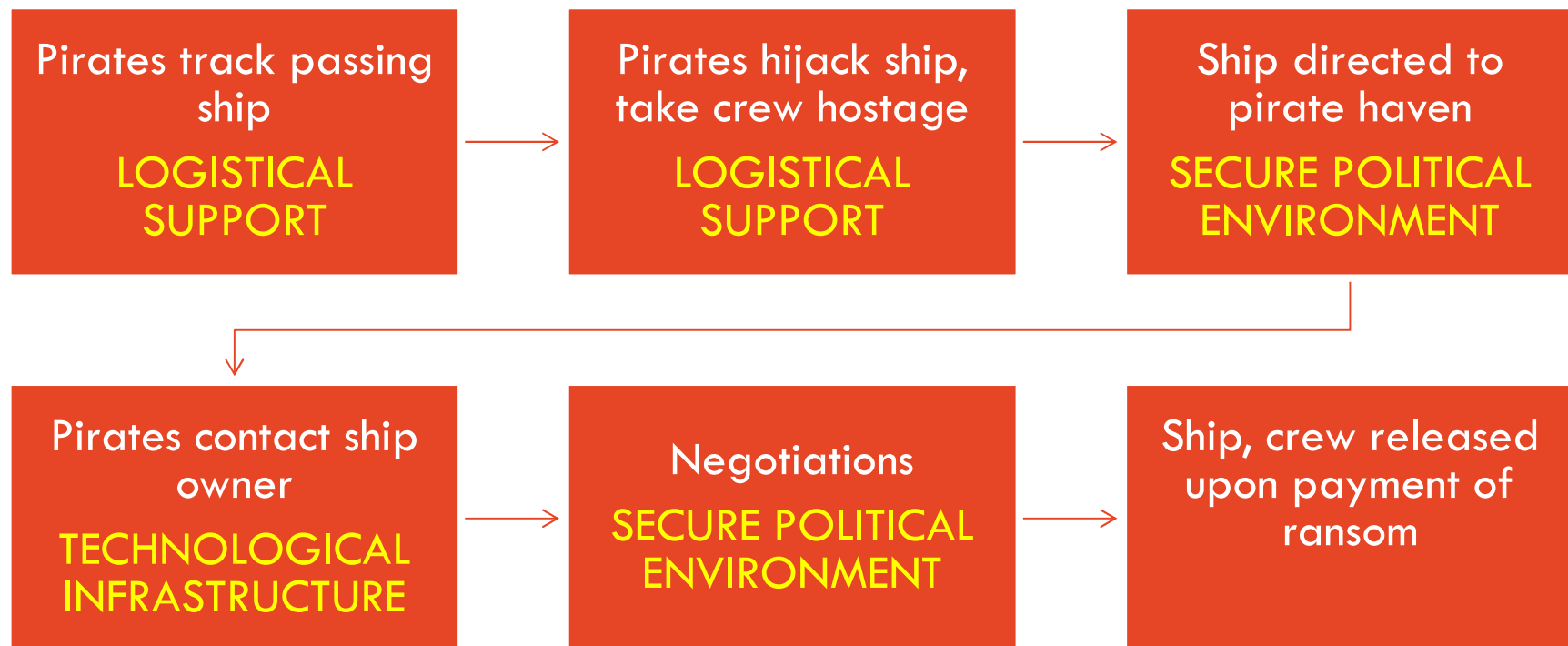
## Factors in TRAPS

	Political space	Time	Economic infrastructure
<b>Theft/ robbery</b>	Authorities without the resources to stamp out theft entirely; multiple jurisdictions in close proximity	Very little time to steal items, rob crew	Markets, ships to absorb items stolen
<b>Ship/cargo seizure</b>	Authorities that won't ask questions	Little time to disguise ship, offload cargo	Port facilities to accept, hide ship and cargo; market large, sophisticated enough to absorb stolen ship, cargo
<b>Kidnappings for ransom</b>	Elites who are fragmented enough to be co-opted, strong enough to deliver security during negotiations	Significant time to negotiate ransoms	Suppliers for piracy equipment, maintenance of pirates, hostages, and crew during negotiations

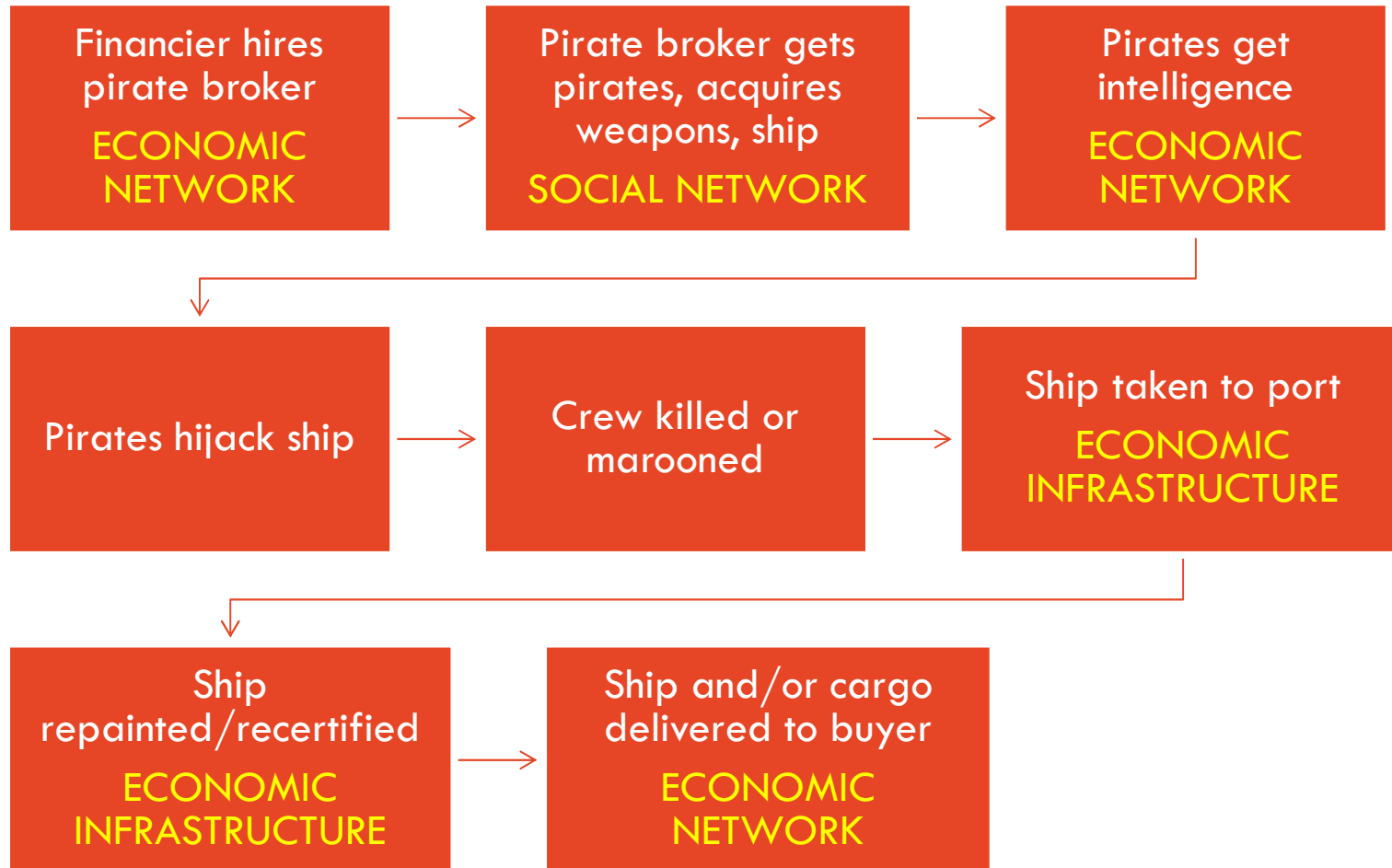
## Logistics of theft



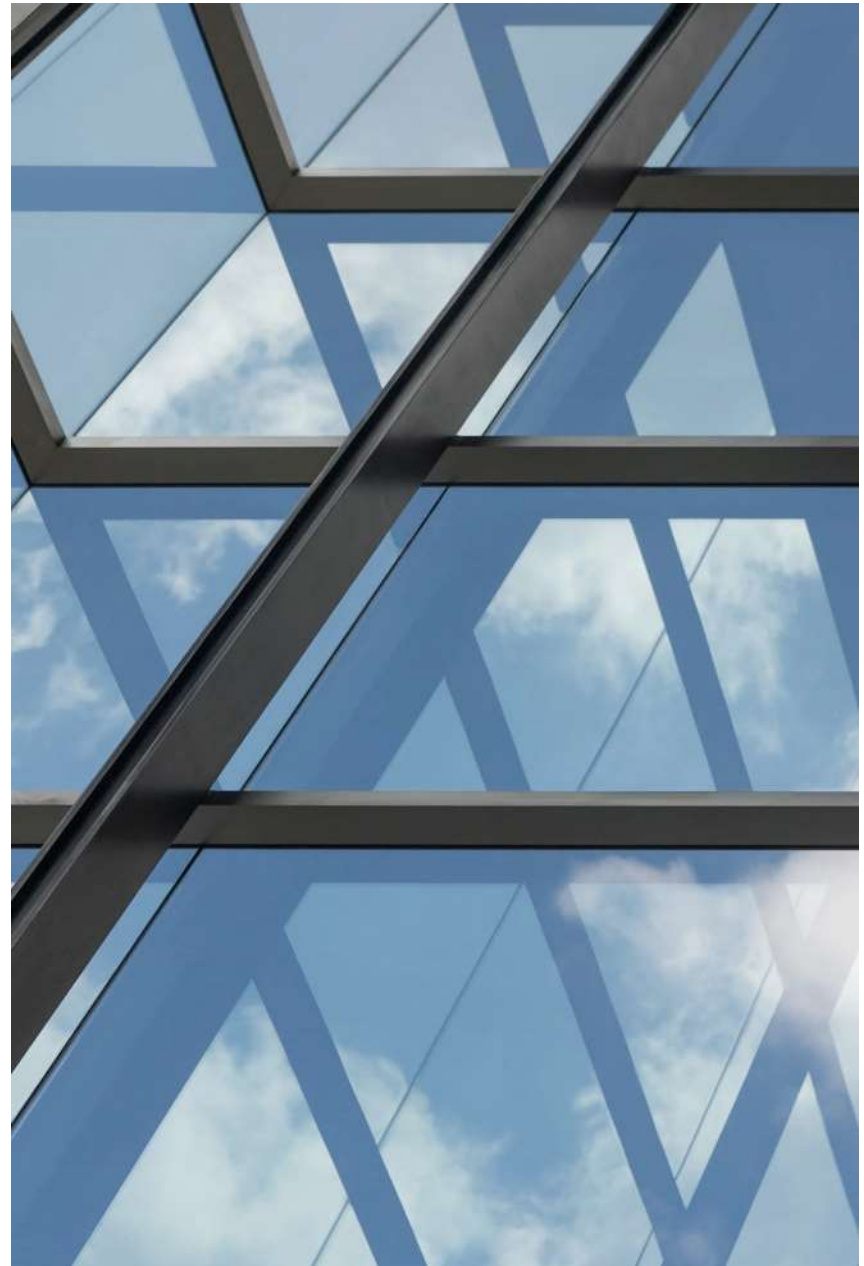
# Logistics of kidnappings for ransom



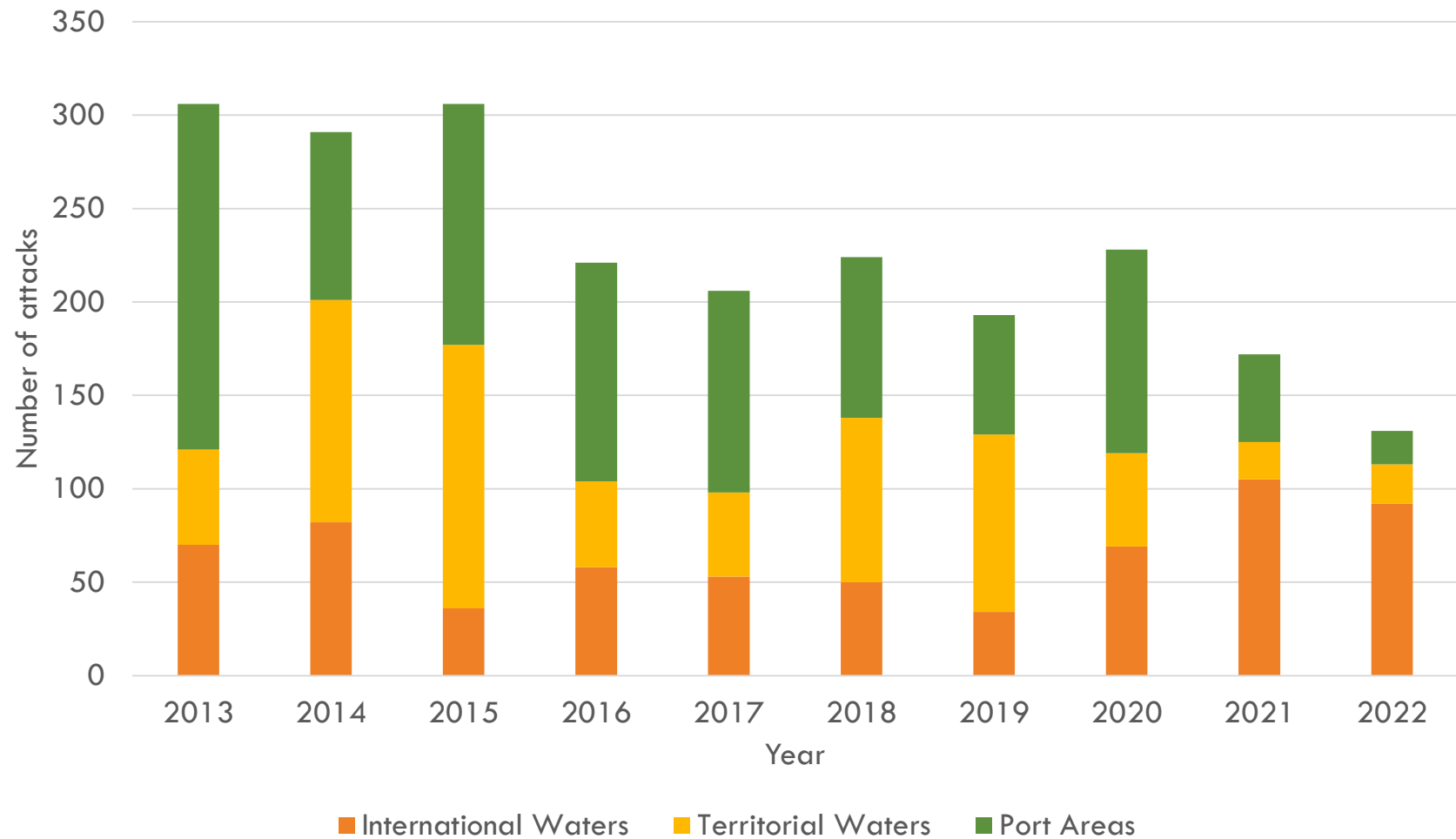
# Logistics of ship/cargo seizures



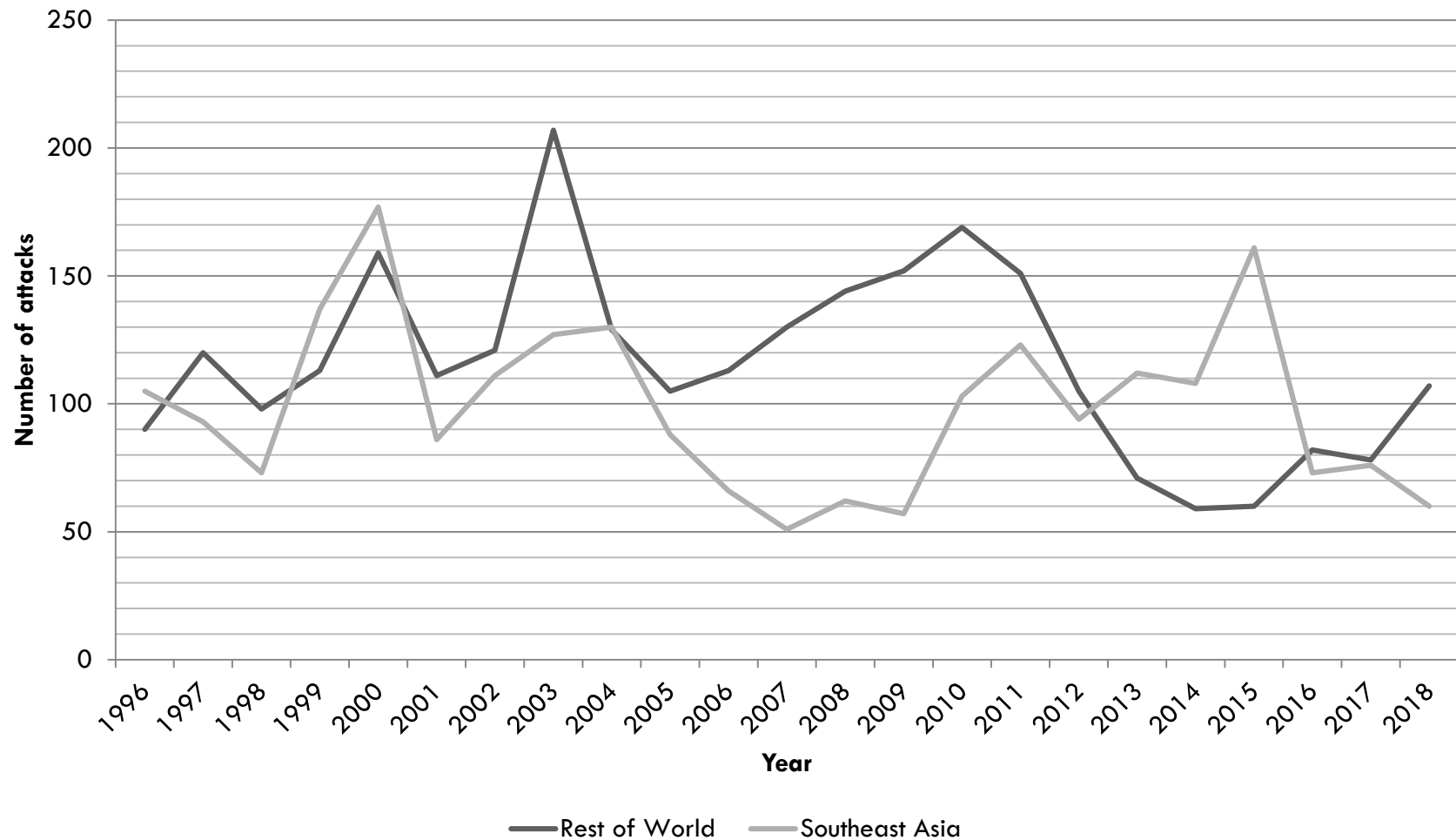
## **Southeast Asian piracy in comparison**



## Worldwide attacks by zone (2013-2022)



## Southeast Asia piracy attacks v. Rest of world (1996-2018)

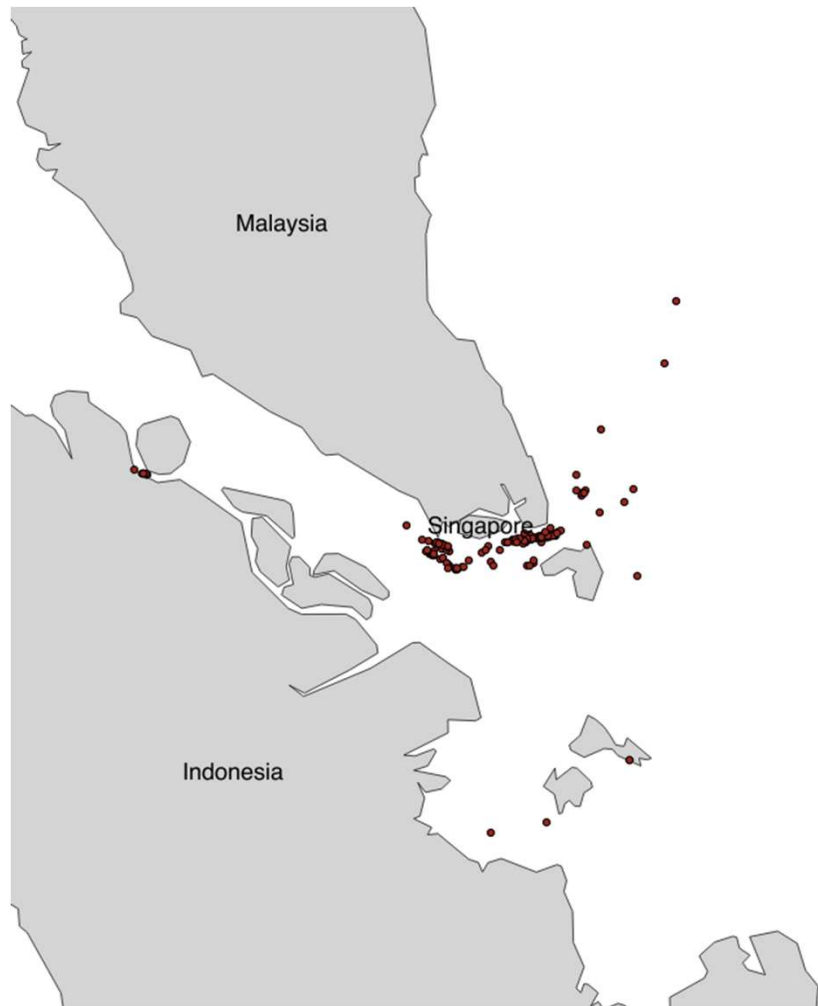




# Southeast Asian piracy attacks (2019-2022)



## Southeast Asian piracy attacks (2019-2022)



## Southeast Asian piracy in comparison (2013-2022)

	South China Sea	Malacca Strait	Indian Ocean	Arabian Sea	East Africa	West Africa
<b>Location of incident</b>						
<i>International waters</i>	97	153	18	3	4	156
<i>In territorial waters</i>	140	238	40	10	5	86
<i>In port area</i>	298	103	108	27	21	157
<b>Status of ship when attacked</b>						
<i>Steaming</i>	119	333	22	11	3	144
<i>At anchor</i>	385	140	135	26	22	222
<i>Not stated</i>	26	14	7	2	4	29

## Southeast Asian piracy in comparison (2013-2022)

	South China Sea	Malacca Strait	Indian Ocean	Arabian Sea	East Africa	West Africa
<b>Weapons used by attackers</b>						
<i>Guns</i>	60	16	5	0	1	93
<i>Knives</i>	122	160	55	2	10	33
<i>Rocket-propelled grenades</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1
<i>Other</i>	14	16	10	1	1	9
<i>None/not stated</i>	287	284	87	35	17	238
<b>Parts of ship raided</b>						
<i>Master and crew accommodation</i>	30	14	6	0	1	28
<i>Cargo area</i>	13	12	1	0	0	11
<i>Store rooms</i>	168	62	56	13	9	41
<i>Engine room</i>	45	152	9	0	0	4
<i>Main deck</i>	147	108	48	17	7	92
<i>Not boarded</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Not stated</i>	102	124	34	10	8	187

## Southeast Asian piracy in comparison (2013-2022)

	South China Sea	Malacca Strait	Indian Ocean	Arabian Sea	East Africa	West Africa
<b>Number of persons involved in the attack</b>						
<i>1-4 persons</i>	204	262	58	11	17	131
<i>5-10 persons</i>	117	139	39	7	3	93
<i>More than 10 persons</i>	12	5	14	1	0	13
<i>Not stated</i>	177	86	48	20	9	146
<b>Consequences to the crew</b>						
<i>Actual violence against the crew</i>	86	75	22	0	2	77
<i>Threat of violence against the crew</i>	127	55	40	2	7	44
<i>Ship missing</i>	2	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Ship hijacked</i>	18	4	0	4	2	27
<i>None/not stated</i>	255	217	84	30	15	147

## Counterpiracy measures in Southeast Asia, 2004-2007

### Decrease time

- Faster response times
- Information sharing
- Ship tracking changes

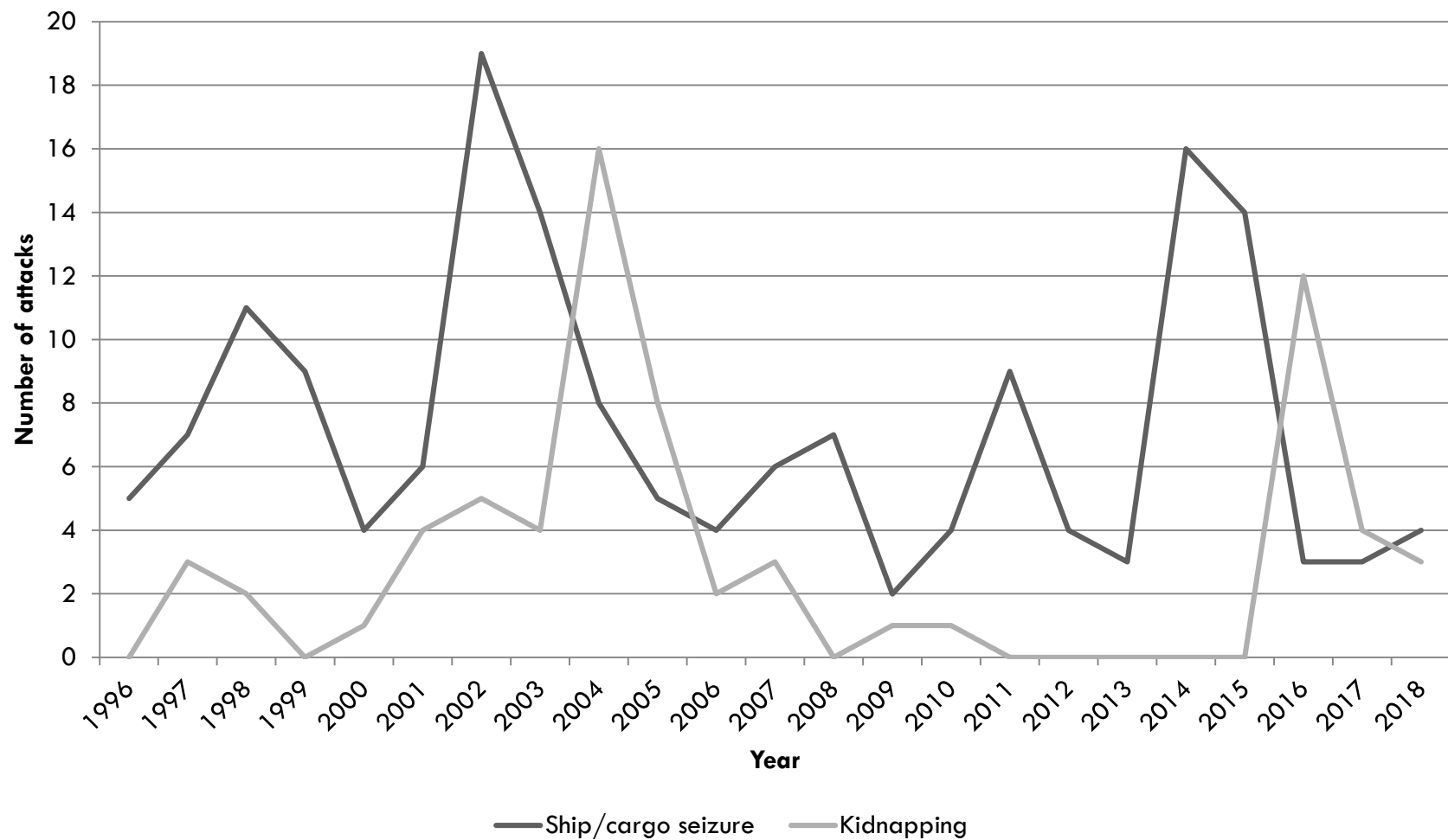
### Close political space

- MALSINDO
- Ship registration requirements
- Ship tracking changes

### Close off access to economic infrastructure

- Ship registration requirements
- Ship tracking changes
- Better vigilance in markets, ports

# Sophisticated piracy attacks in Southeast Asia, 1996-2018



## Adaptation by ship/cargo seizure syndicates, post-2007

Decreased  
time/political  
space

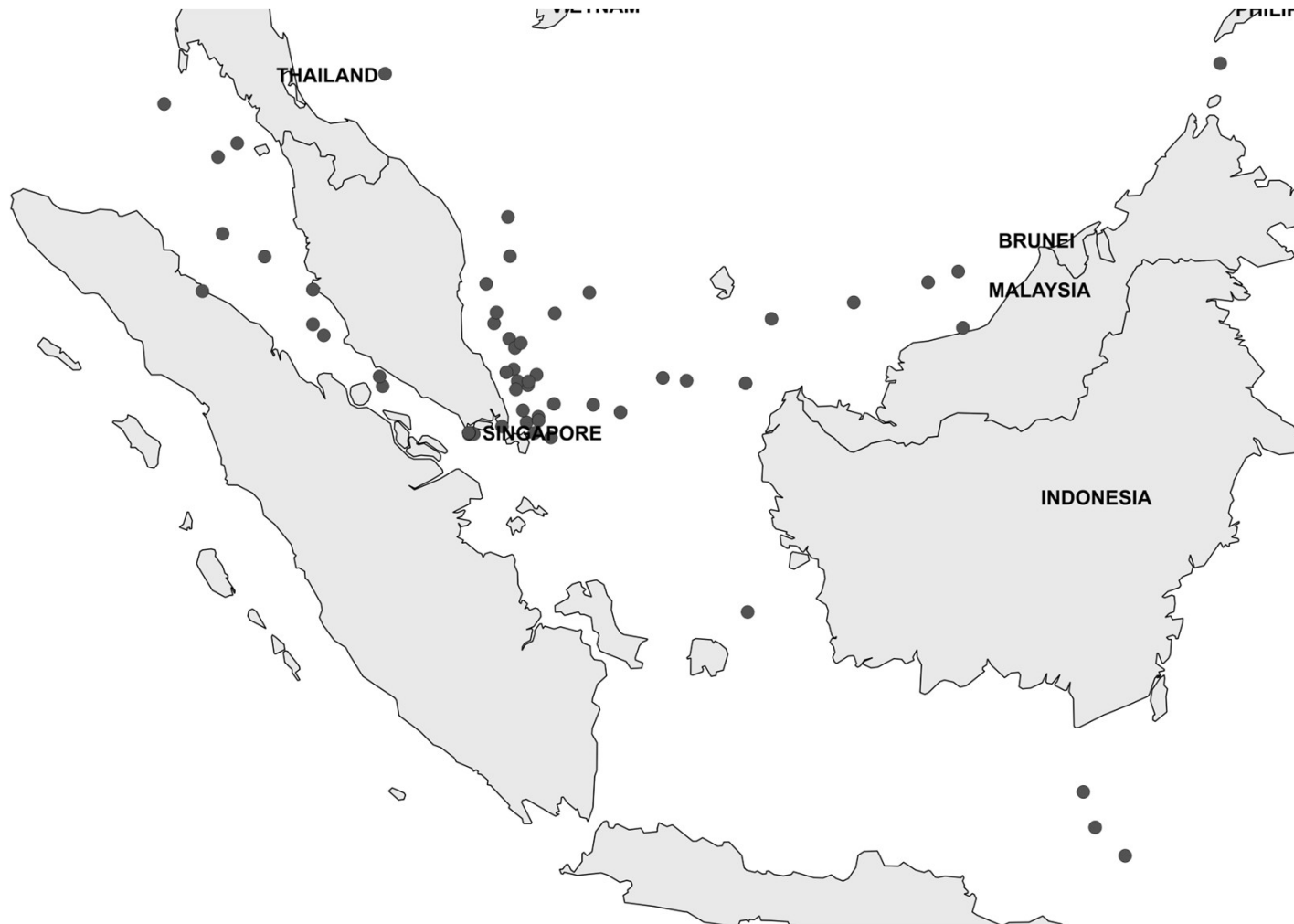
- Pirates are only on board long enough to siphon oil onto their own tanker
- Repainting ship at sea to give pirates more time
- Allow hijacked ship to continue to be tracked

Less access to  
economic  
infrastructure

- Difficult-to-trace commodities (oil) are taken and sold
- Ignore value, size of ship → no need to hold ship in port



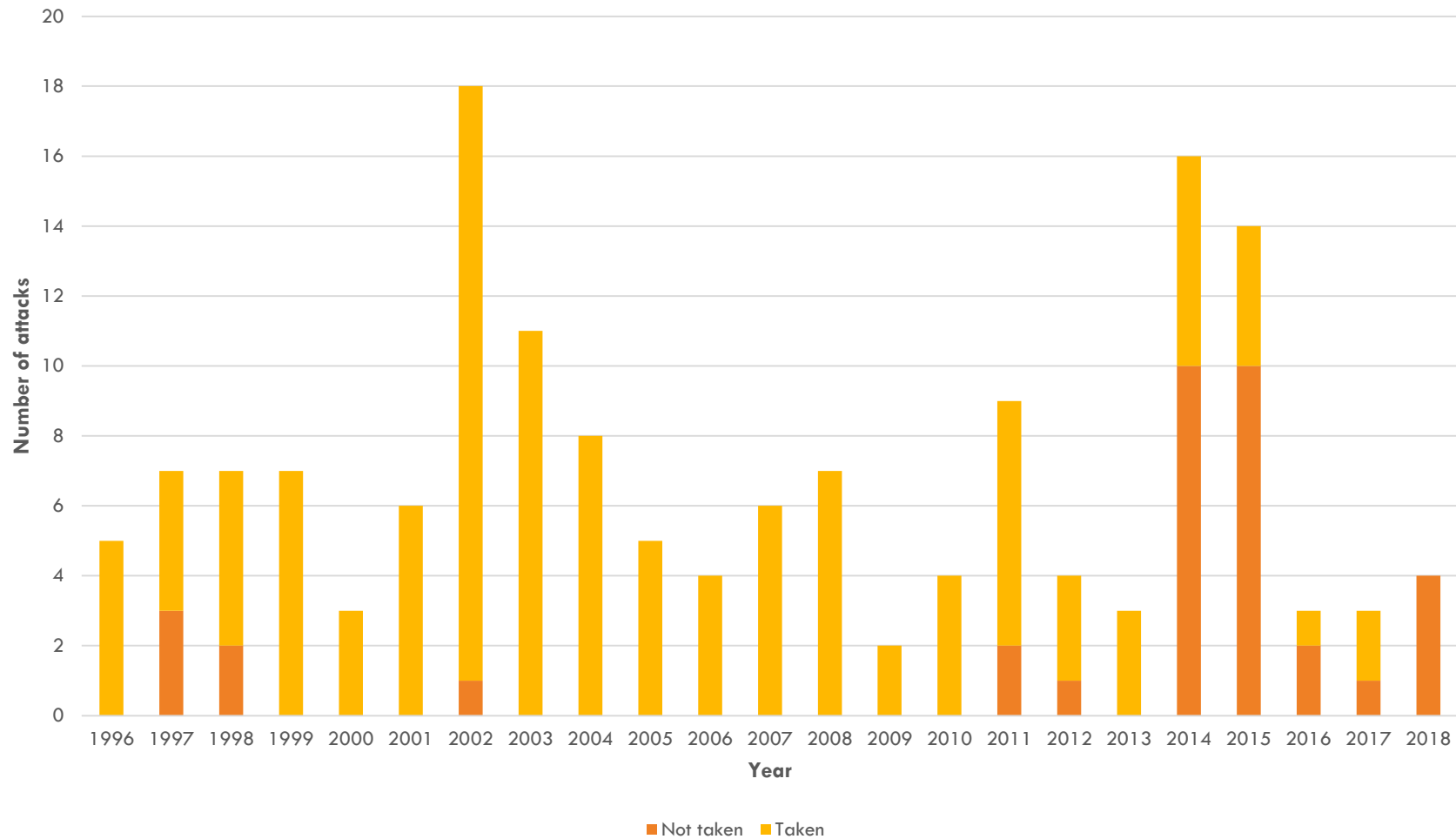
## Ship/cargo seizure locations in western Southeast Asia, 2007-2018



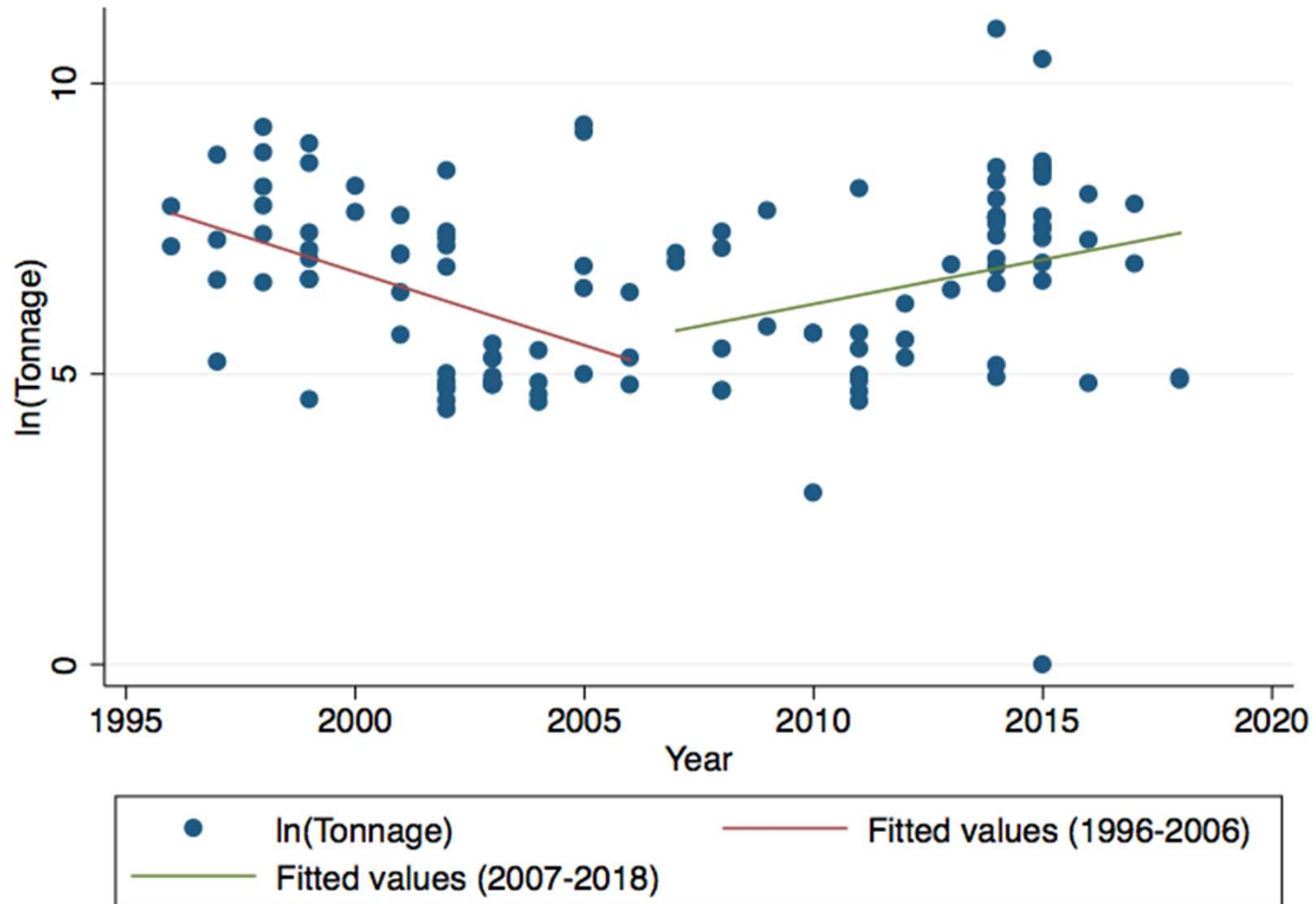
## Type of ships attacked (Ship/cargo seizures)

Ship type attacked	Ship/cargo seizures	
	1996-2006	2007-2018
Cargo	15	0
Carrier or Tanker	20	37
Fishing	18	10
Passenger	4	0
Tug and/or Barge	30	28
Miscellaneous	5	0

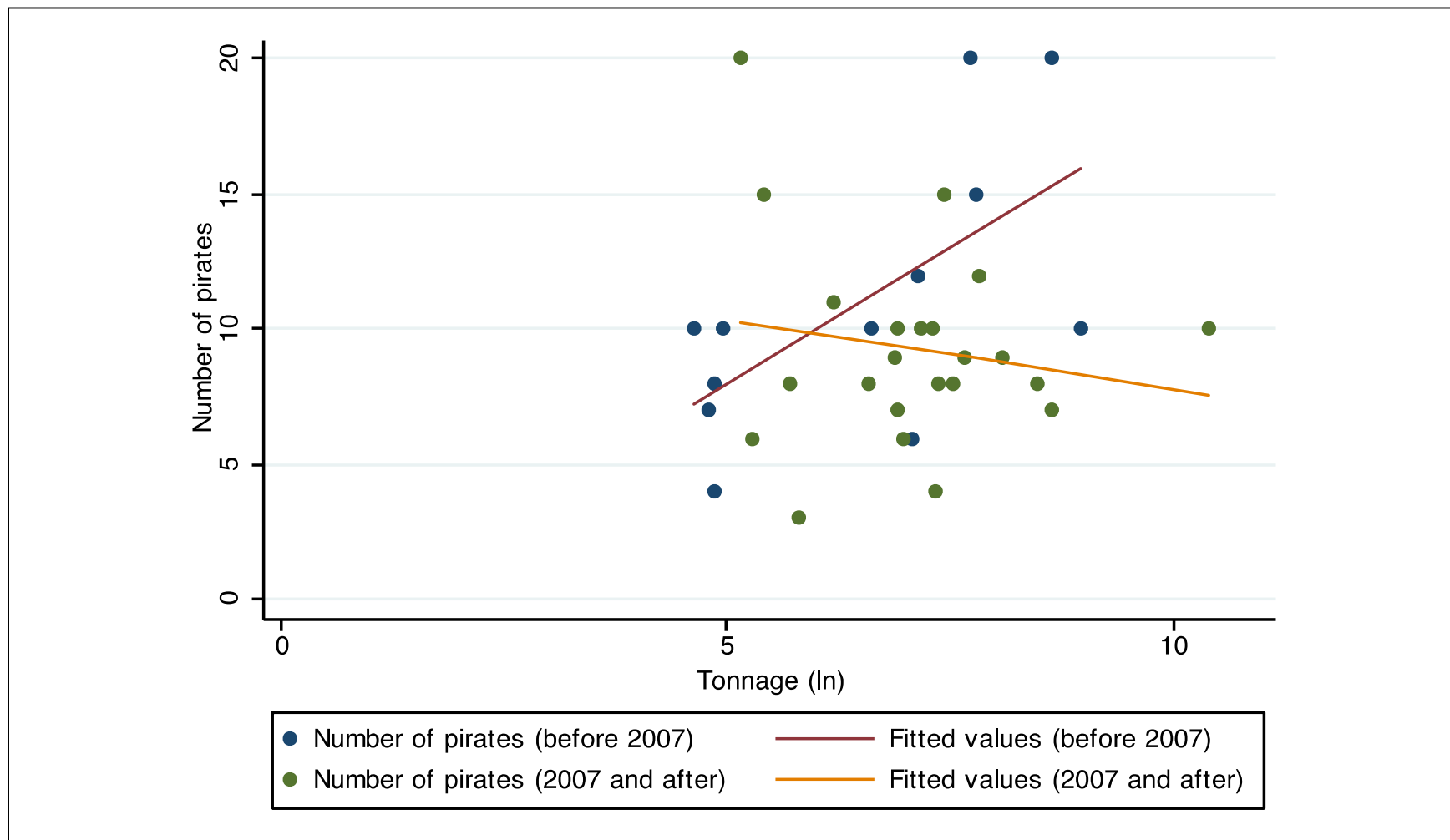
## Ship/cargo seizures, ships taken/not taken



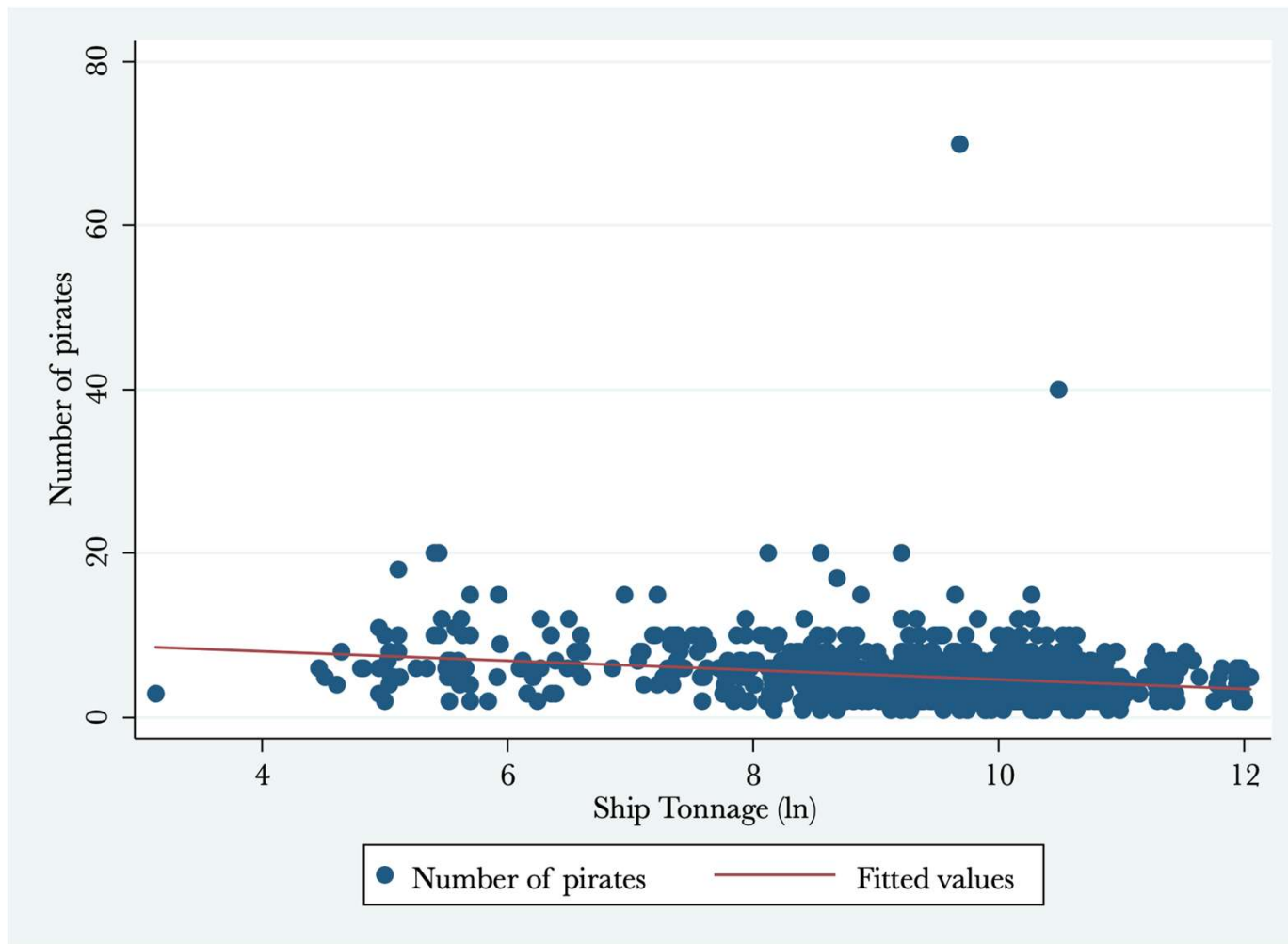
## Tonnage in ship/cargo seizures over time



## Number of pirates v. tonnage (ln) in ship/cargo seizures in Southeast Asia (before, after 2007)



## Number of pirates v. tonnage (ln) for thefts/robberies in Southeast Asia (1996-2018)



# Adaptation by maritime kidnapping syndicates, post-2007

## Decreased time

- Take crew and leave ship → pirates are more difficult to track
- Negotiations are concluded in relatively short periods of time

## Decreased political space

- Operate out of areas where they have small amounts of territorial control
- Operate using stealth rather than local elite cooptation

## Decreased access to economic infrastructure

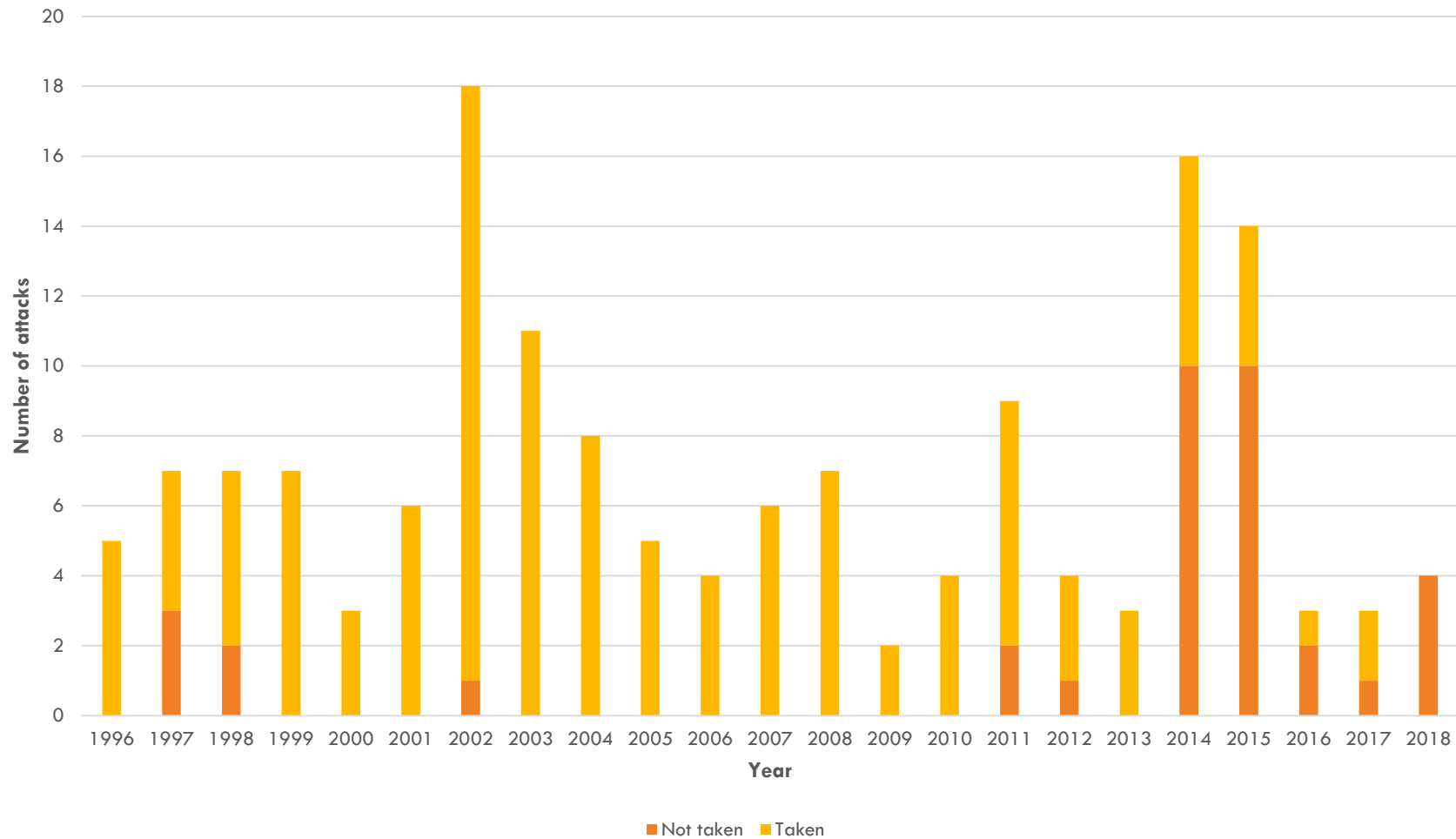
- Take crew and leave ship → no need to maintain ship
- Use pre-existing equipment and suppliers for insurgency

## Type of ships attacked (Kidnappings)

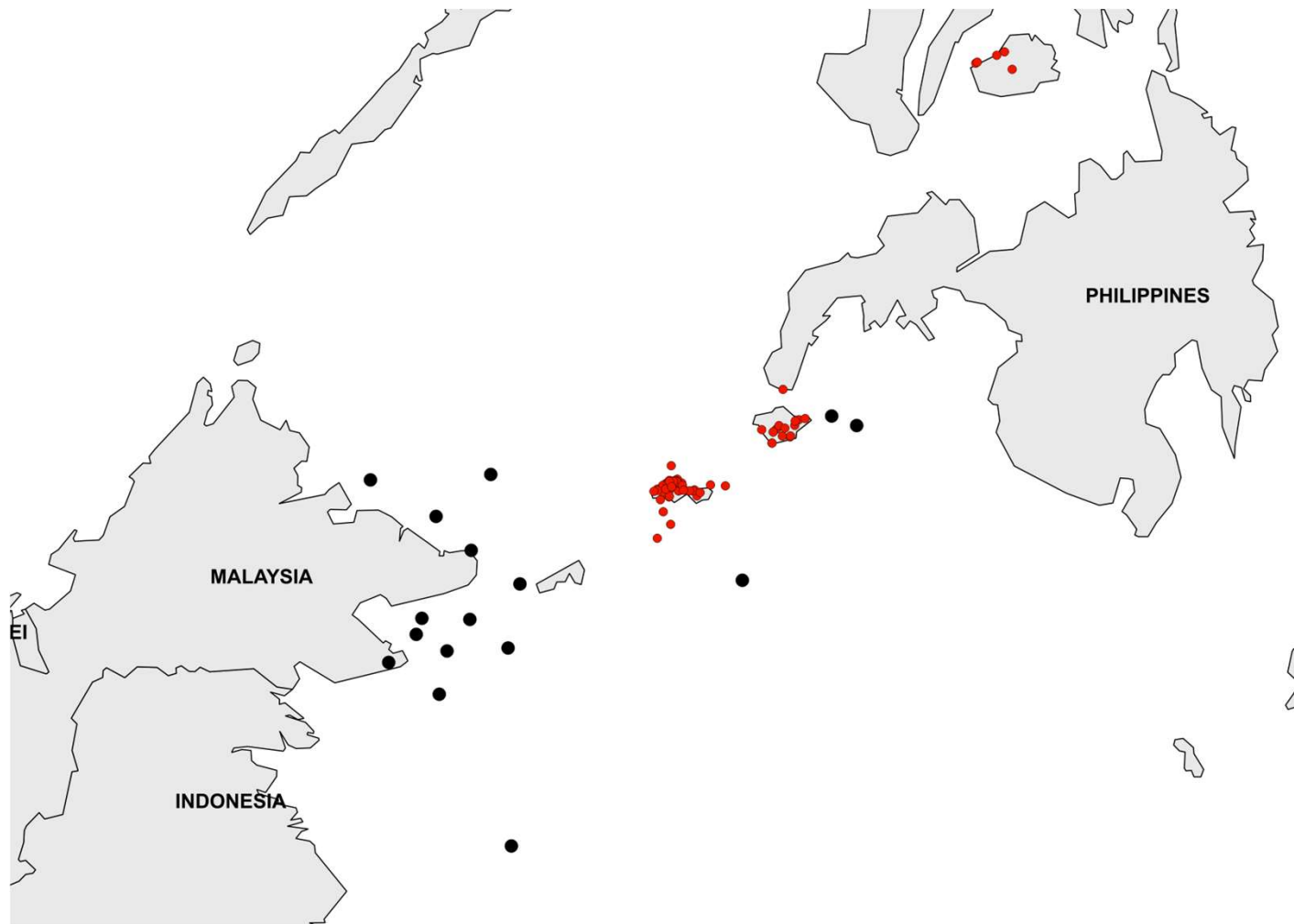
Ship type attacked	Kidnappings	
	1996-2006	2007-2018
Cargo	7	3
Carrier or Tanker	7	2
Fishing	13	9
Passenger	2	0
Tug and/or Barge	13	10
Miscellaneous	3	0



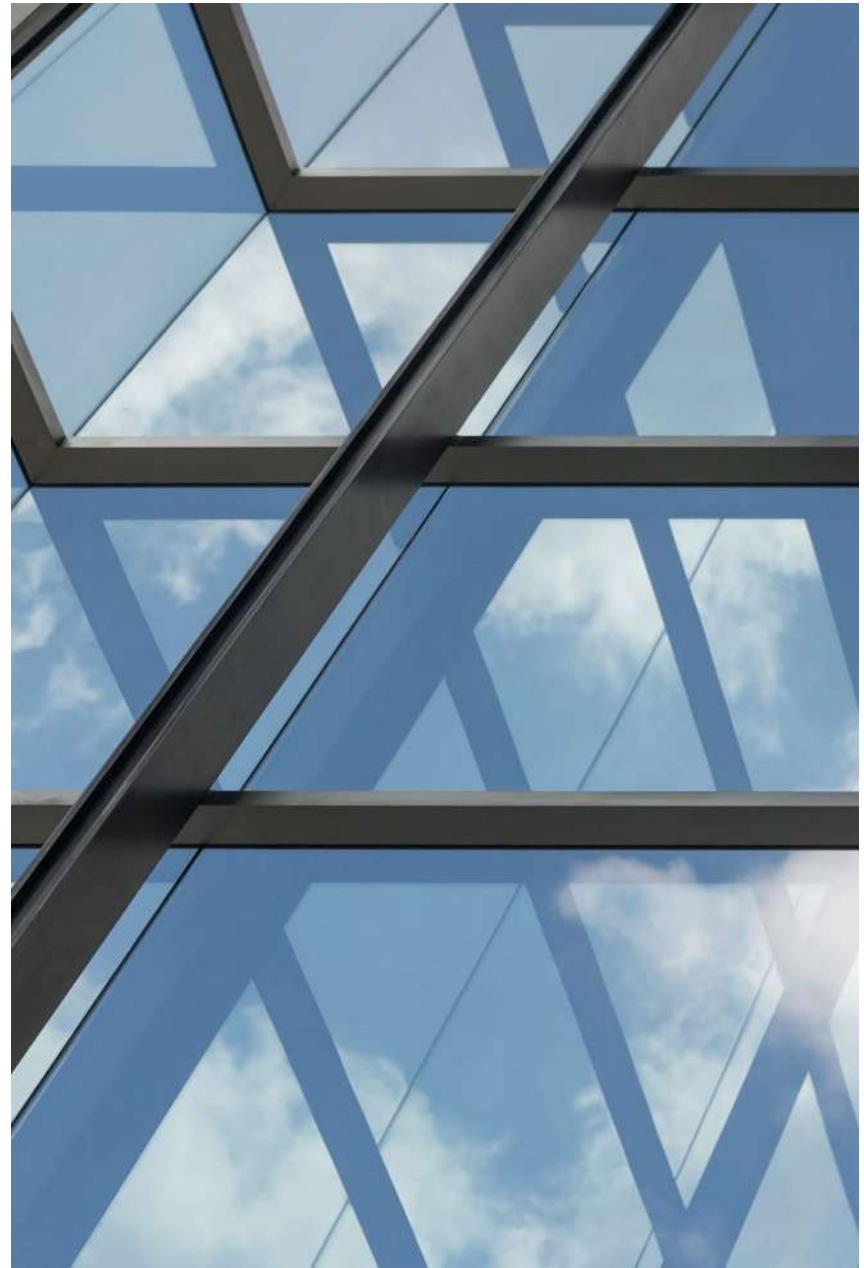
# Kidnappings, ship taken/not taken



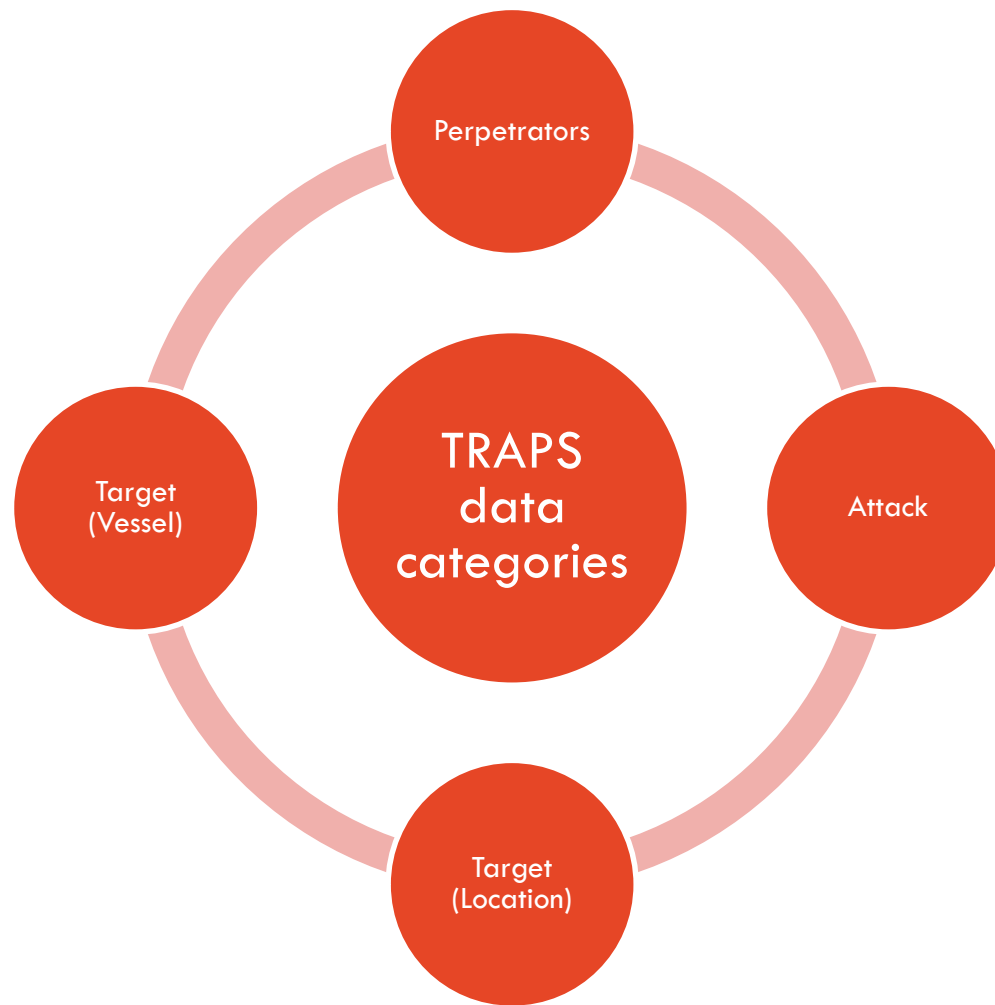
## Kidnapping for ransom, ASG attack locations in eastern Southeast Asia, 2007-2018



## TRAPS data



# TRAPS data categories



## TRAPS data across different sources

	International Maritime Organisation	ReCAAP	International Maritime Bureau
<i>Target</i>			
Ship name	Yes	Yes	Yes
Flag country	Yes	No	Yes
Owner country	No	No	No
Owner company	No	No	No
Registration number	Yes	No	Yes
Tonnage	Yes	No	Yes
Ship type	Yes	Yes	Yes

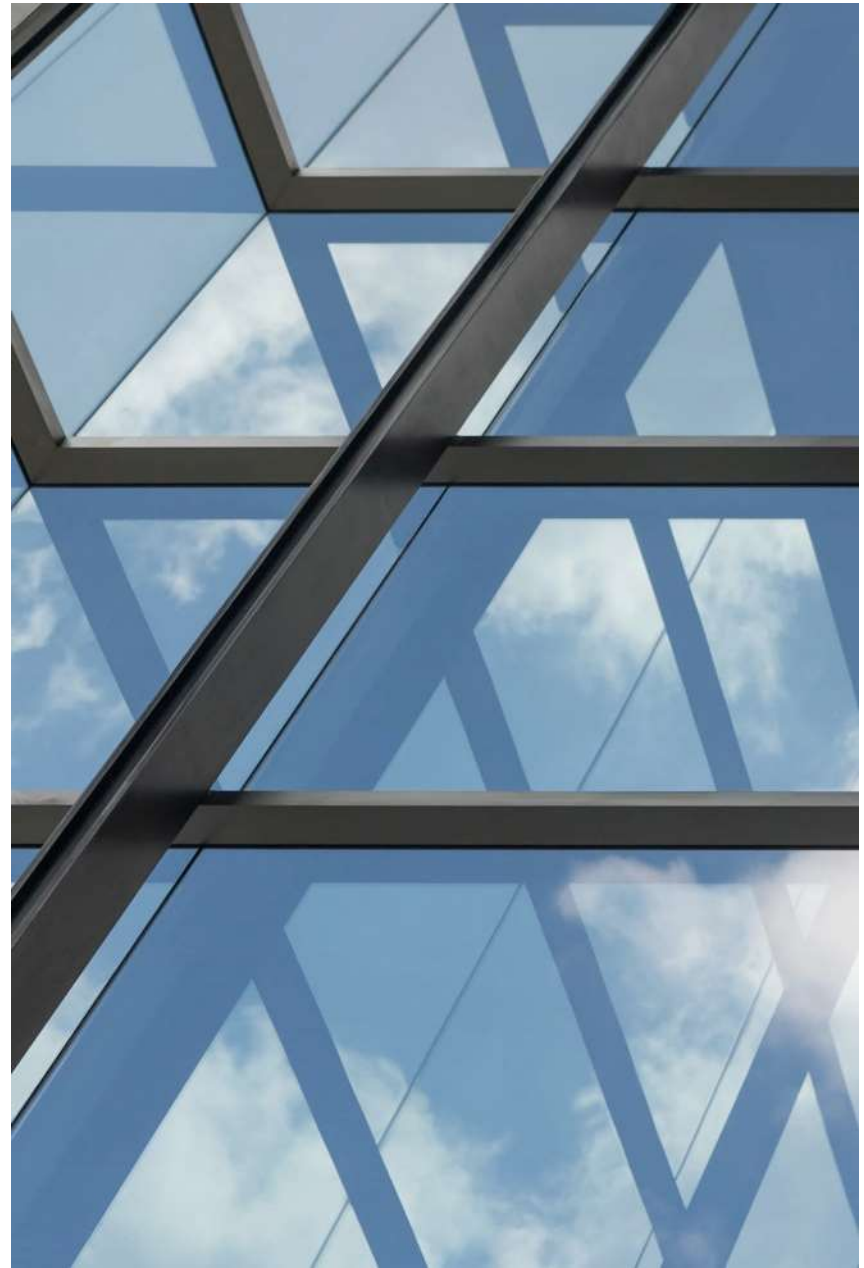
# TRAPS data across different sources

	International Maritime Organisation	ReCAAP	International Maritime Bureau
<b>Attack</b>			
Date	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time	Yes	Yes	Yes
Location Coordinates	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maritime zone	Yes (International, territorial, port)	No	No
City/Province name	Yes	Implicitly	Yes
Country name	Yes	Implicitly	Implicitly
Status of ship	Yes	Yes	Yes
Actual or attempted	Yes	Yes	Yes
What was stolen	Yes	Narrative	Narrative
Consequences for crew	Yes	Yes	Narrative

## TRAPS data across different sources

	International Maritime Organisation	ReCAAP	International Maritime Bureau
<i>Perpetrators</i>			
Nationality	No	No	No
Number of attackers	Yes	Yes	Narrative
Weapons used	Yes	Yes	Narrative
Weapons fired	Narrative	Narrative	Narrative
<b>Source data</b>	Member states, IMB	Member states, shipping companies, ships	Shipping companies, ships

## Case studies





## **“New” cargo seizures? Sinhlin 5 / Sinhlin 6, 5 January 2023**

- “While underway, the master of the tug boat towing an unmanned barge reported to Singapore VTIS on VHF Channel 10, that at about 1452 hrs, 10 perpetrators boarded the barge. At about 1510 hrs, the perpetrators managed to escape with some scrap metals.
- The tug and the barge continue their voyage en-route from Kuching, East Malaysia to Port Klang, Malaysia.
- At about 1650 hrs, the master again reported to Singapore VTIS on VHF Channel 10 that there was a second unauthorised boarding by eight perpetrators. The perpetrators escaped from the barge at about 1712 hrs with some scrap metals.
- The crew were not injured during the incidents.”

## Theft: Zeno, 8 November 2020

- “While underway, three perpetrators were sighted in the engine room. The alarm was immediately raised and a search on board the ship was conducted. There was no confrontation between the crew and the perpetrators. At about 2305 hrs, the master updated Singapore VTIS via VHF that there was no further sighting of the perpetrators on board. Some ship equipment including a sounding rod, an oil sampling rod, a portable breathing apparatus, portable instruments for measuring ullage and a portable spray painter were stolen from the engine room. The crew was not injured. The RSN’s MSTF and Singapore Police Coast Guard were informed; and the Malaysian and Indonesian authorities were notified. A safety navigational broadcast was initiated to alert mariners.”

## Robbery: Golden Houston, 14 December 2022

- “While underway, the master reported to Singapore Vessel Traffic Information System (VTIS) that three perpetrators armed with knives were sighted in the engine room. The perpetrators escaped upon the activation of ship's general alarm by the alert crew.
- A search on board was conducted with no further sighting of the perpetrators. During the incident, the 2nd engineer was tied, blindfolded and pinned down to the floor for about 10 min. He managed to release himself later and informed the chief engineer. The 2nd engineer did not sustain any injuries.
- The Singapore Police Coast Guard boarded the ship for a search on board upon her arrival in Singapore. At 1223 hrs, the ship was cleared with no sighting of the perpetrators on board. Some engine spare parts and the mobile phone of the 2nd engineer were stolen. The crew was safe.
- A safety navigational broadcast was initiated. The Republic of Singapore Navy's (RSN) Maritime Security Task Force (MSTF) and Singapore Police Coast Guard were notified. Information of the incident was shared with the Indonesian authorities.”

## Kidnapping: Atlantic Princess, 31 May 2021

- “While underway, the fishing vessel was approached, fired upon and boarded by pirates in a small craft. The pirates stole crew personal belongings, kidnapped five crews and escaped. Ghanaian Navy was notified, and a patrol boat was dispatched to escort the fishing vessel back to Tema. On 30.06.2021, ECOWAS MMCC Zone F confirmed that the five kidnapped crew members were safely released on 28.06.2021.”

Comments? Questions? Criticisms?