

Theft, Robbery, and Piracy at Sea (TRAPS)

Justin V. Hastings

University of Sydney

National University of Singapore

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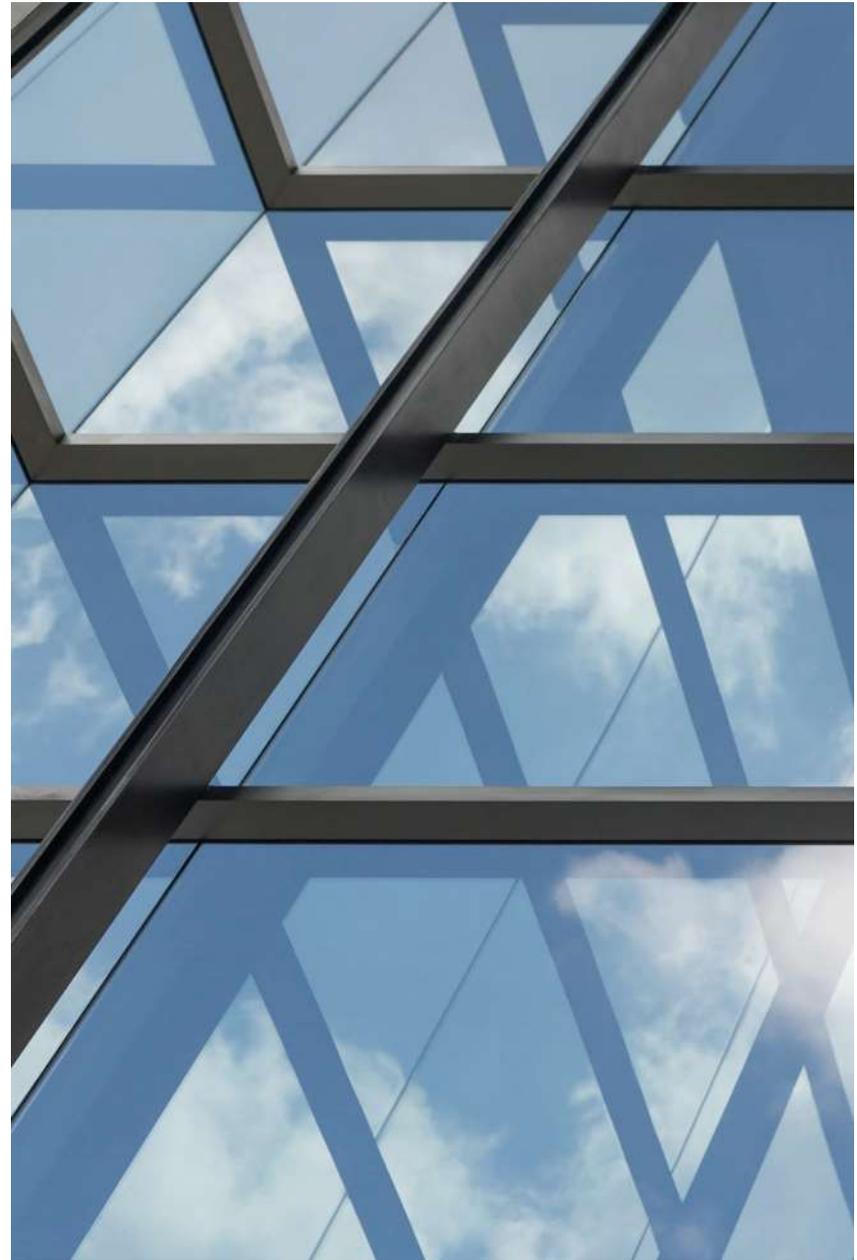
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Outline

- 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> |
| <i>Punctuated incident</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maritime piracy (Robbery) - Maritime piracy (Ship/cargo seizure) - Maritime piracy (Kidnap for ransom) - Maritime terrorist attacks - Attacks on critical infrastructure <p style="text-align: center;">(I)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hazardous waste dumping/pollution - IUU fishing - Illicit seabed mining <p style="text-align: center;">(II)</p> |
| <i>Flow</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking by sea <p style="text-align: center;">(III)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smuggling by sea - Sanctions evasion by sea - Illicit migration by sea - Stowaways <p style="text-align: center;">(IV)</p> |

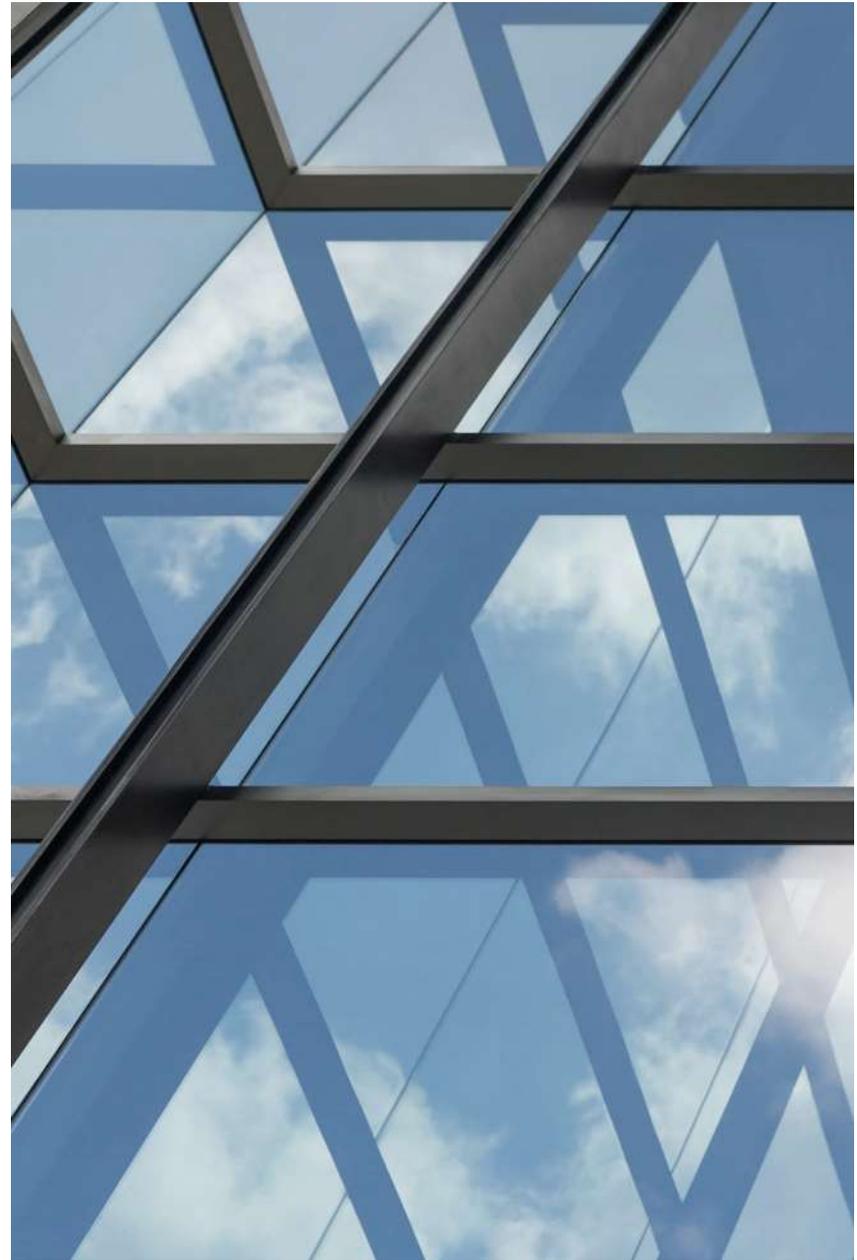
TRAPS definitions

- 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).”

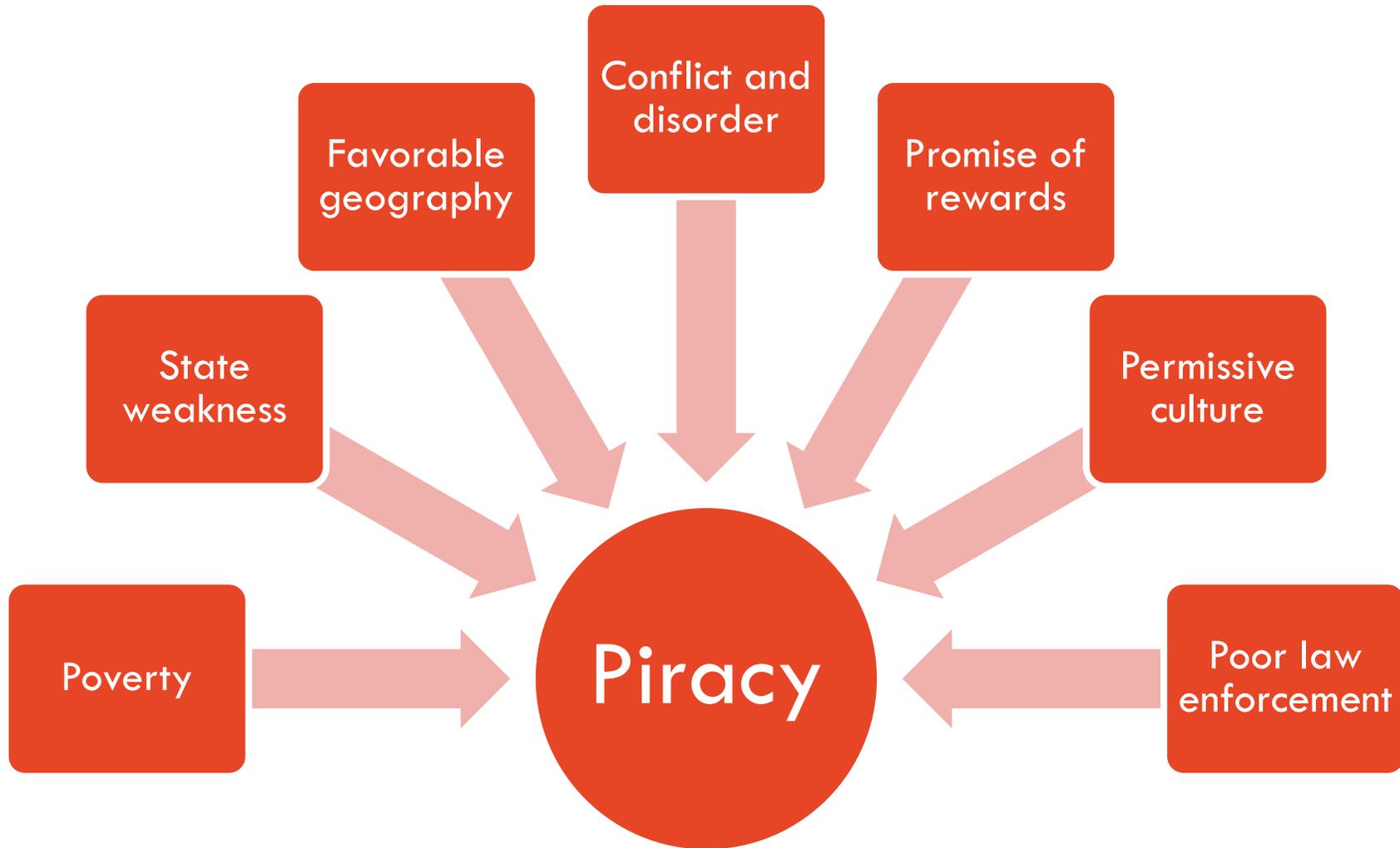
Typology of TRAPS

| | | Force | |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | <i>No use of force or threat of force</i> | <i>Use of force or threat of force</i> |
| Profit mechanism | <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) |

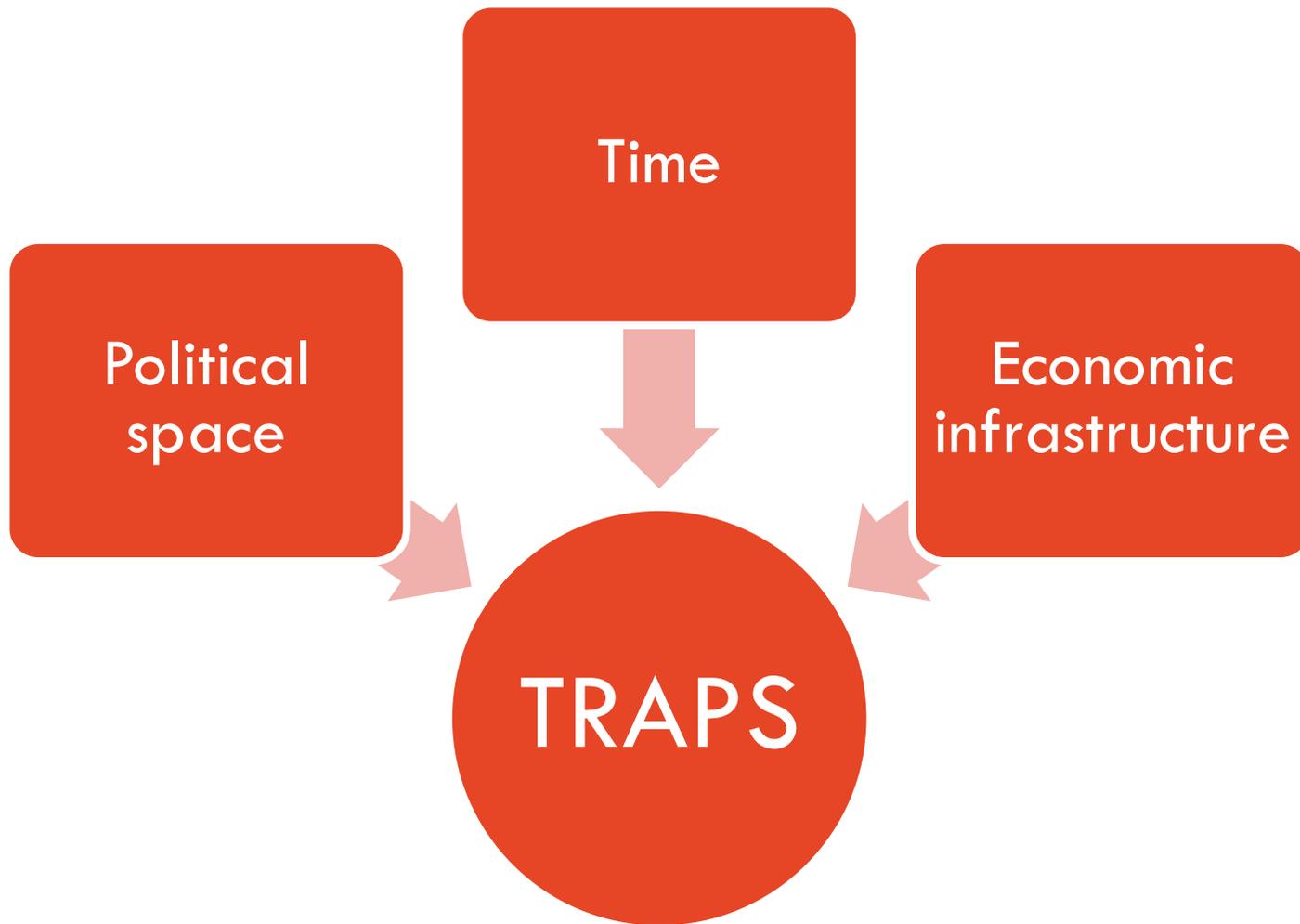
Factors in piracy and counterpiracy



Causes of piracy



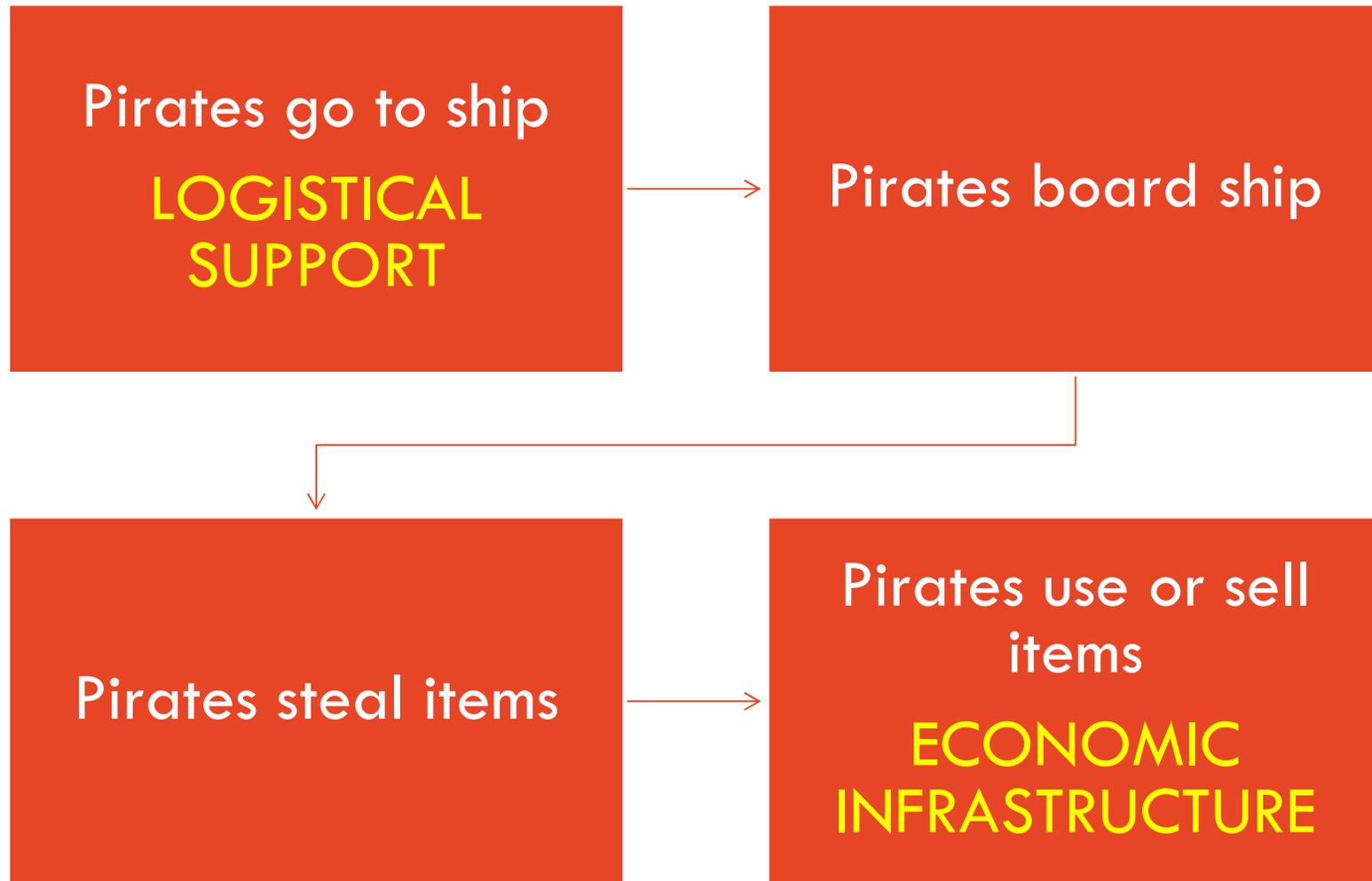
Factors for a successful TRAPS attack



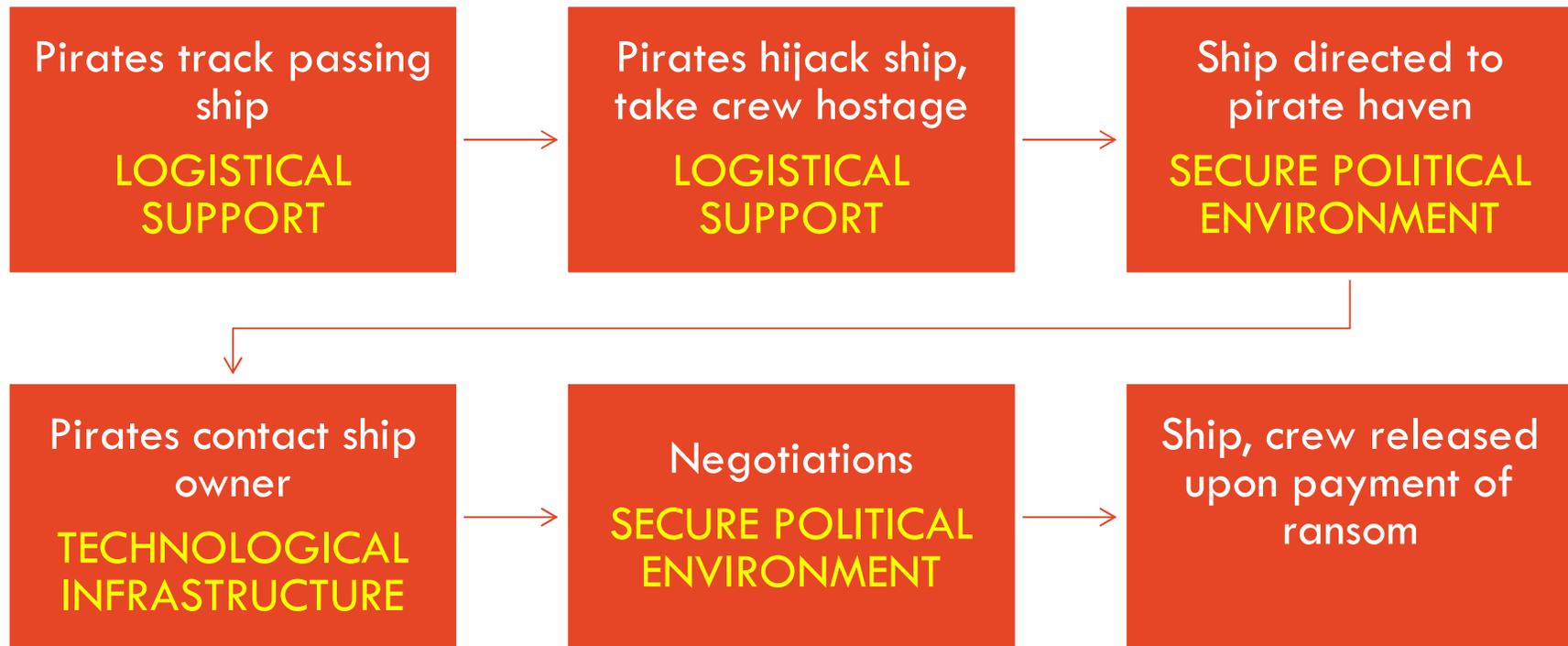
Factors in TRAPS

| | Political space | Time | Economic infrastructure |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Theft/ robbery | 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 |
| Ship/cargo seizure | 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 |
| Kidnappings for ransom | 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 |

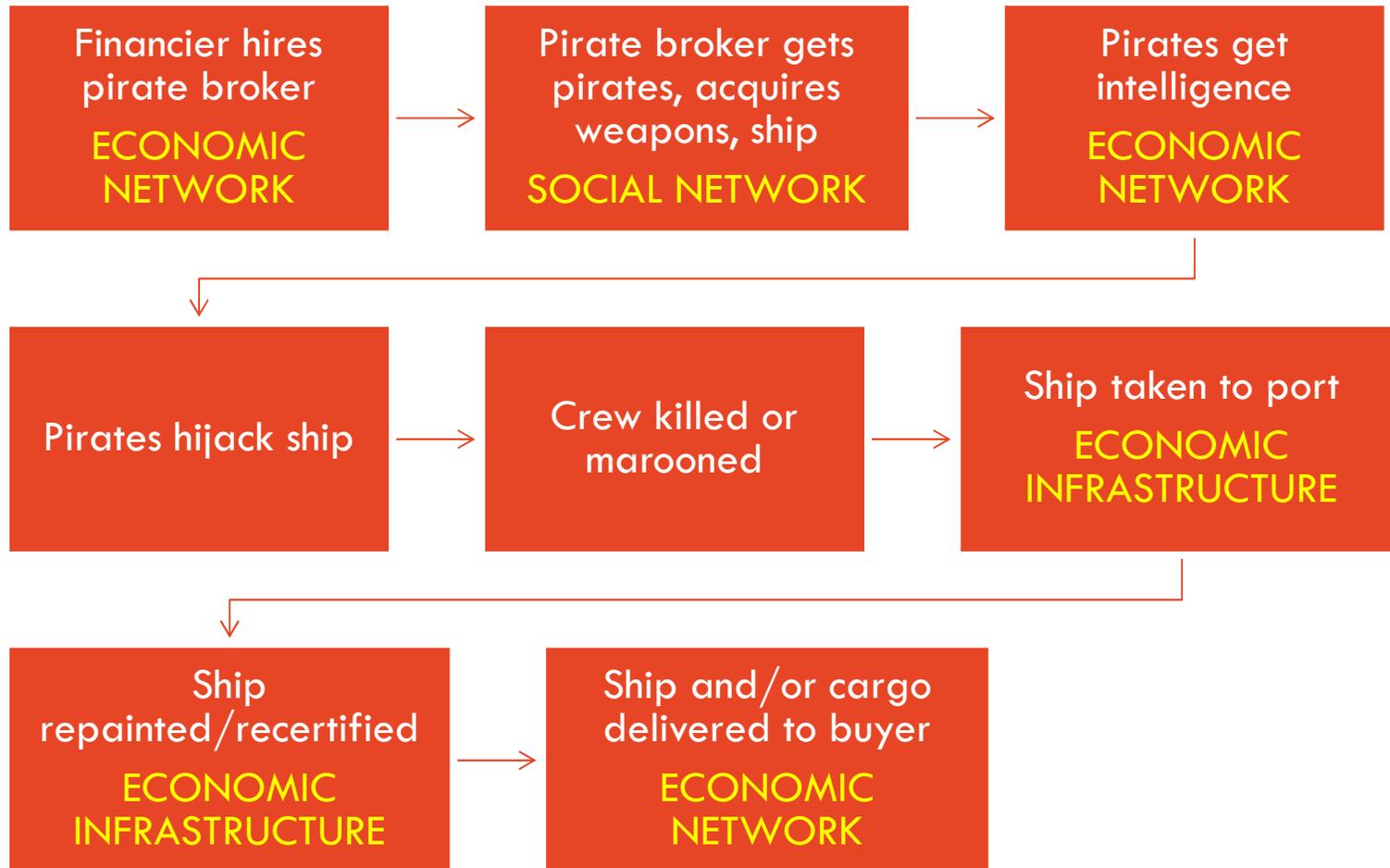
Logistics of theft



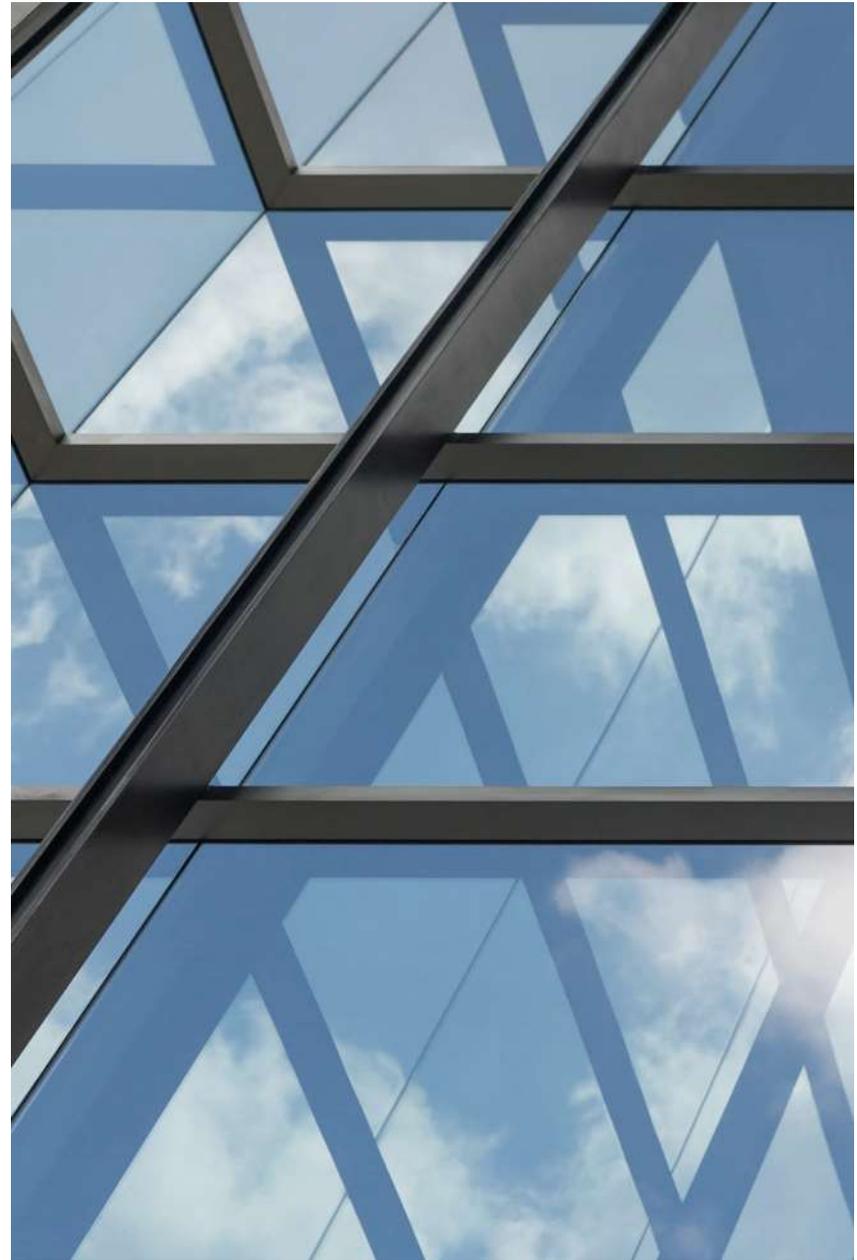
Logistics of kidnappings for ransom



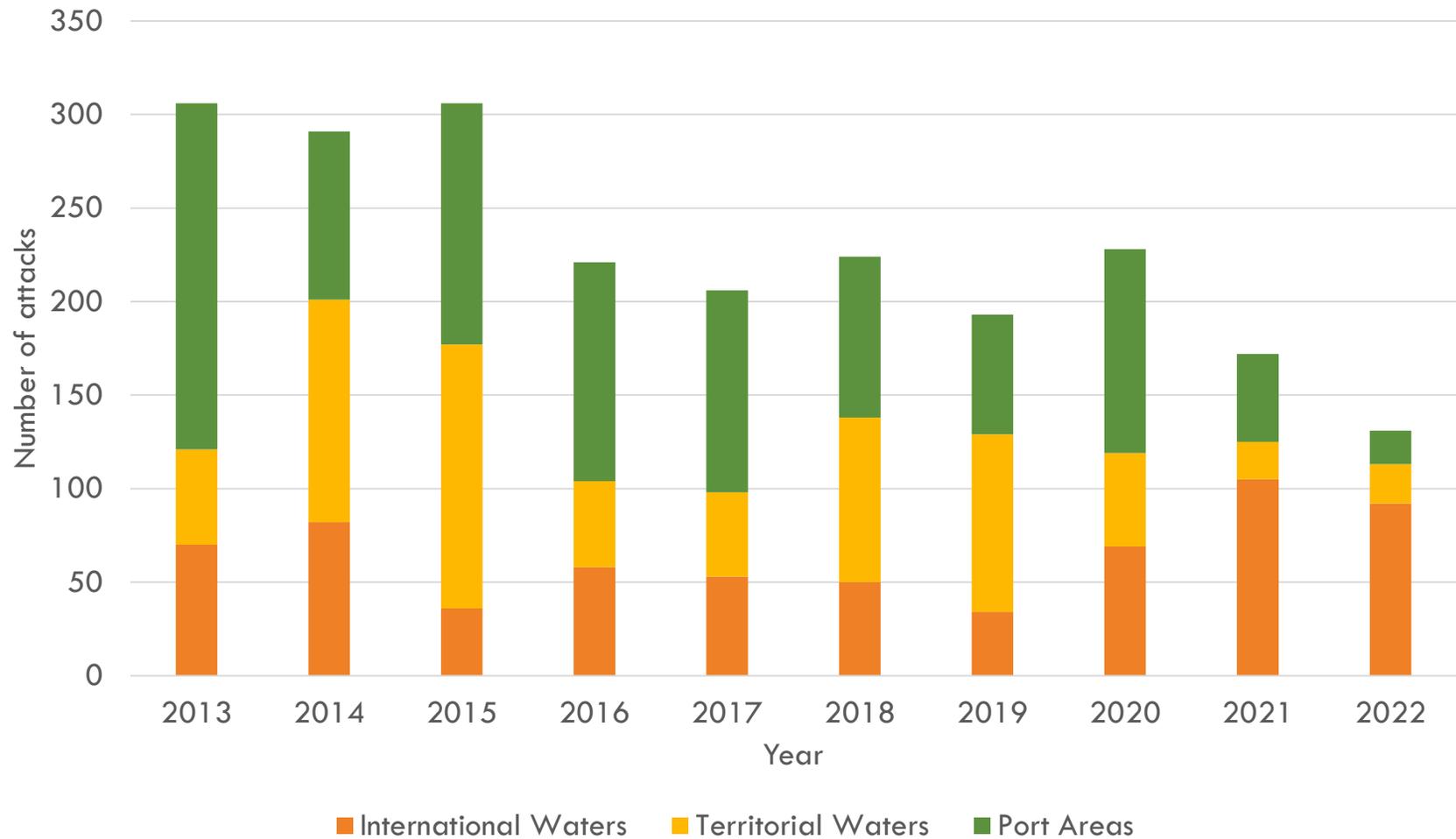
Logistics of ship/cargo seizures



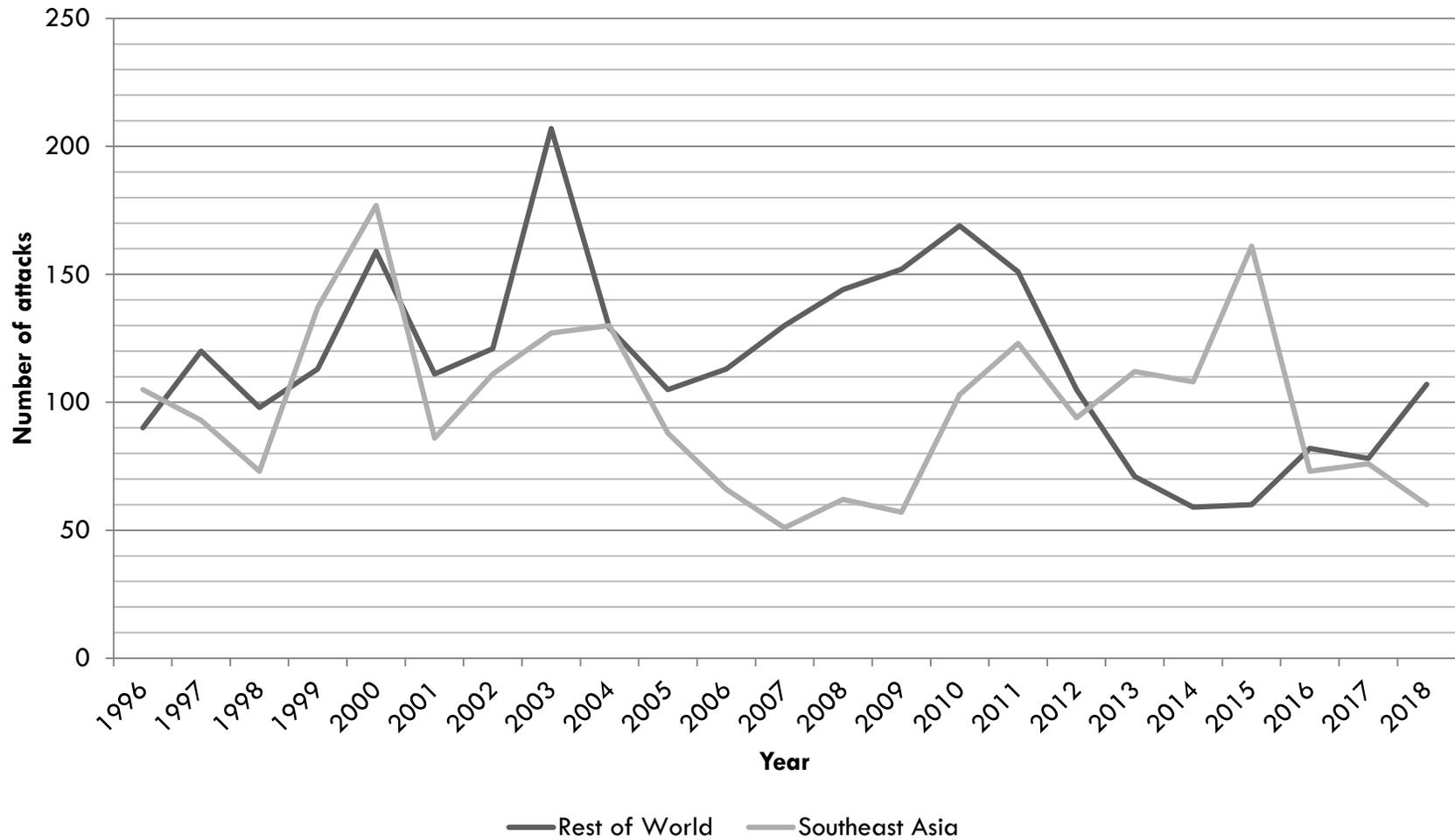
Southeast Asian piracy in comparison



Worldwide attacks by zone (2013-2022)



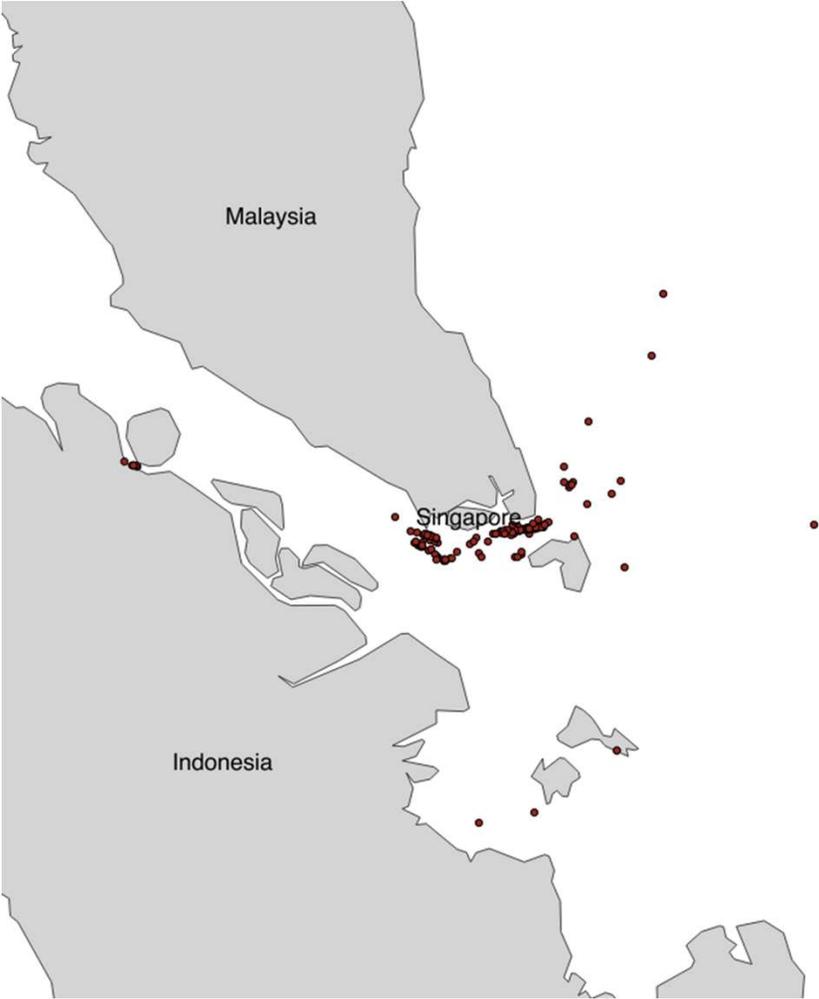
Southeast Asia piracy attacks v. Rest of world (1996-2018)



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 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Location of incident | | | | | | |
| <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 |
| Status of ship when attacked | | | | | | |
| <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 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Weapons used by attackers | | | | | | |
| <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 |
| Parts of ship raided | | | | | | |
| <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 |
|---|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Number of persons involved in the attack | | | | | | |
| <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 |
| Consequences to the crew | | | | | | |
| <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

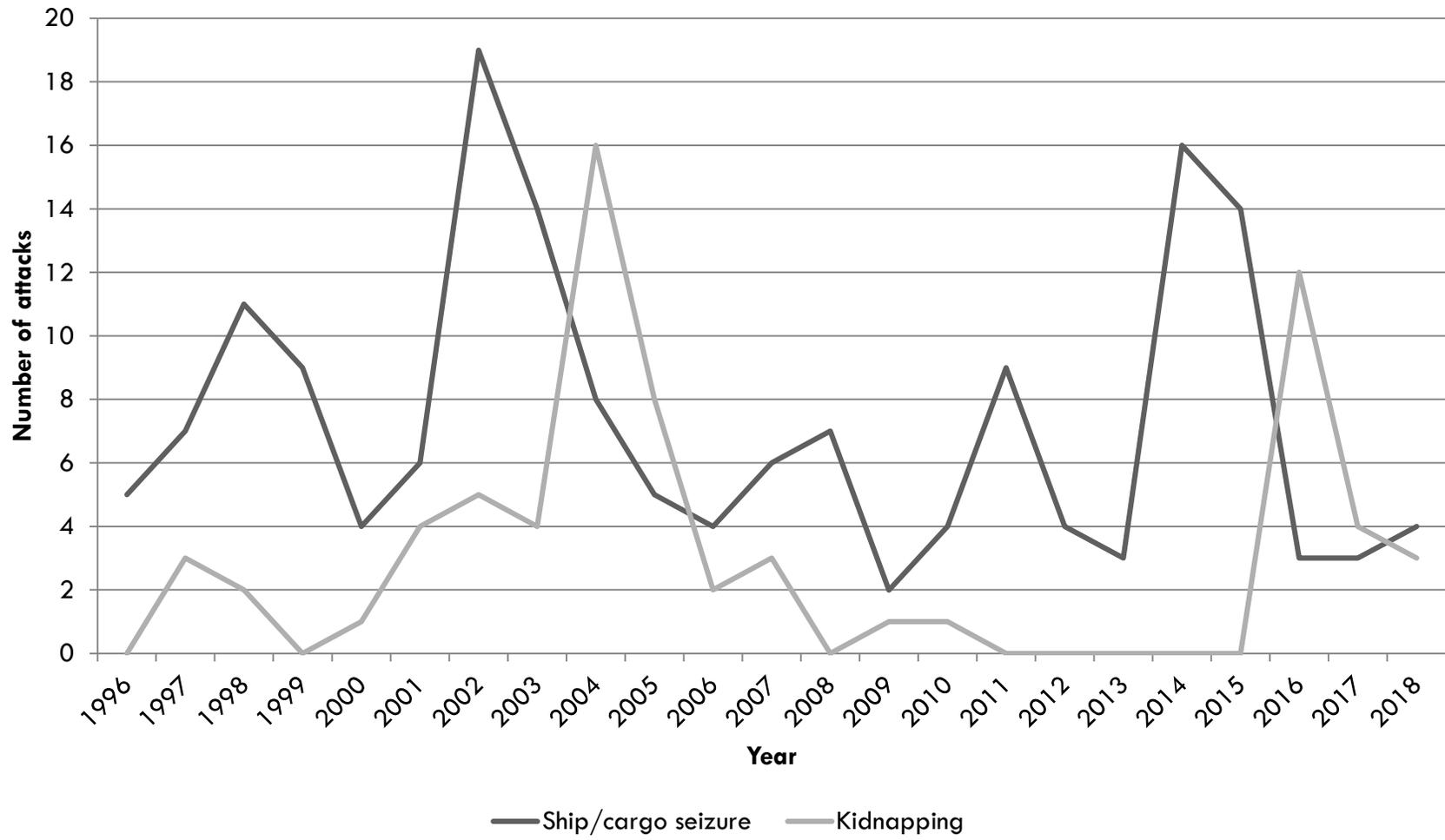
Close political space

- 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

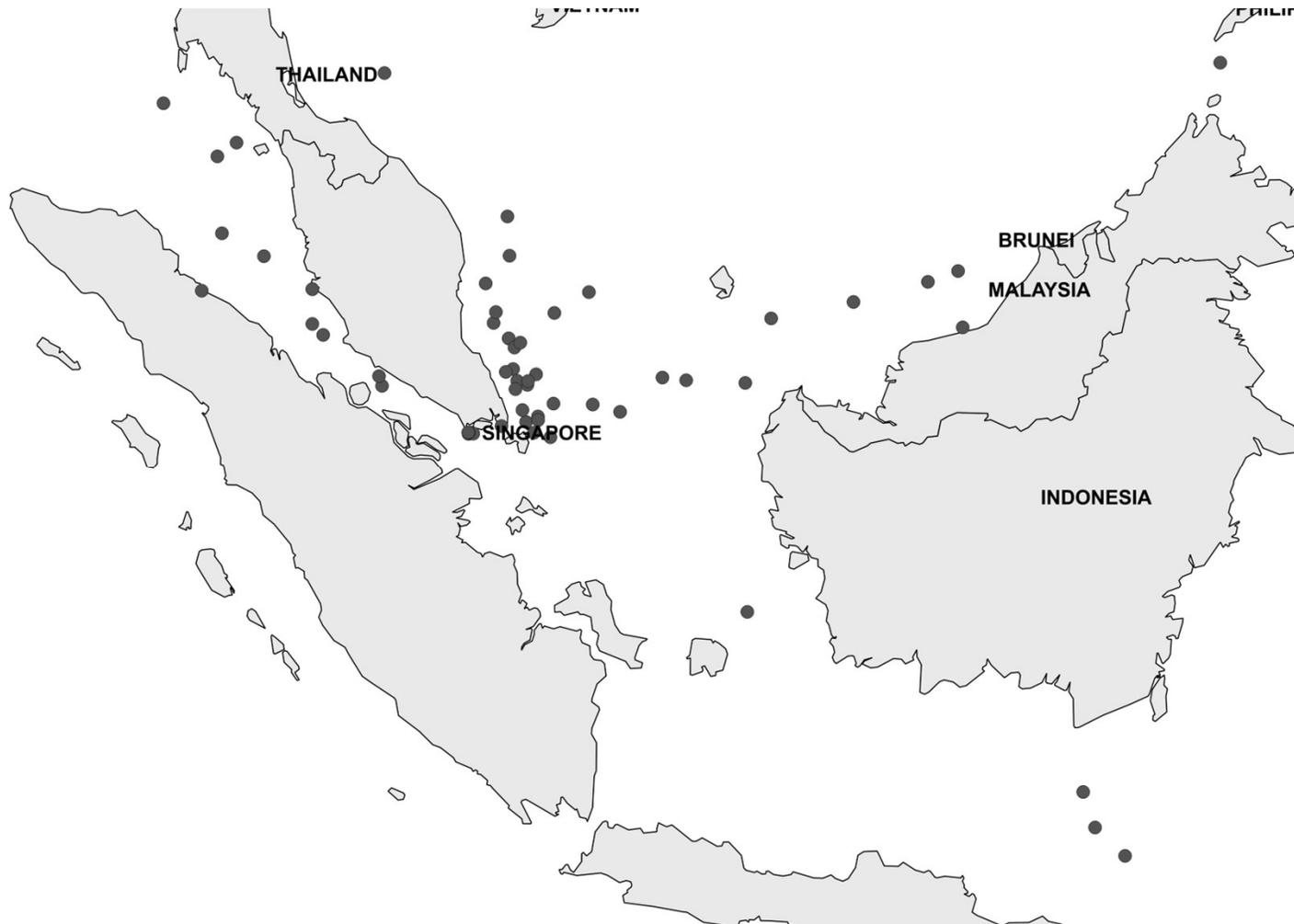
Decreased
time/political
space

- 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

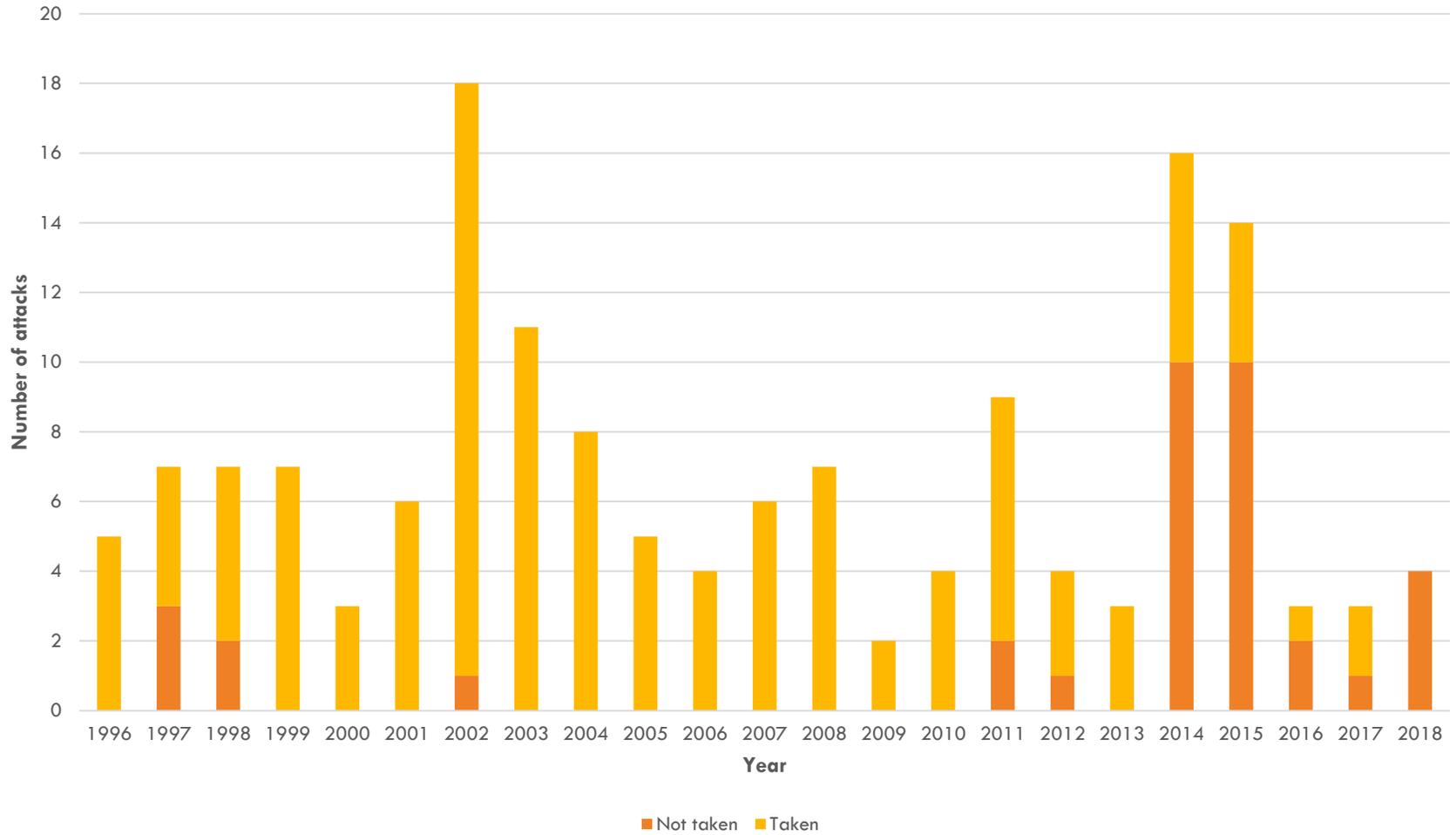
Ship/cargo seizure locations in western Southeast Asia, 2007-2018



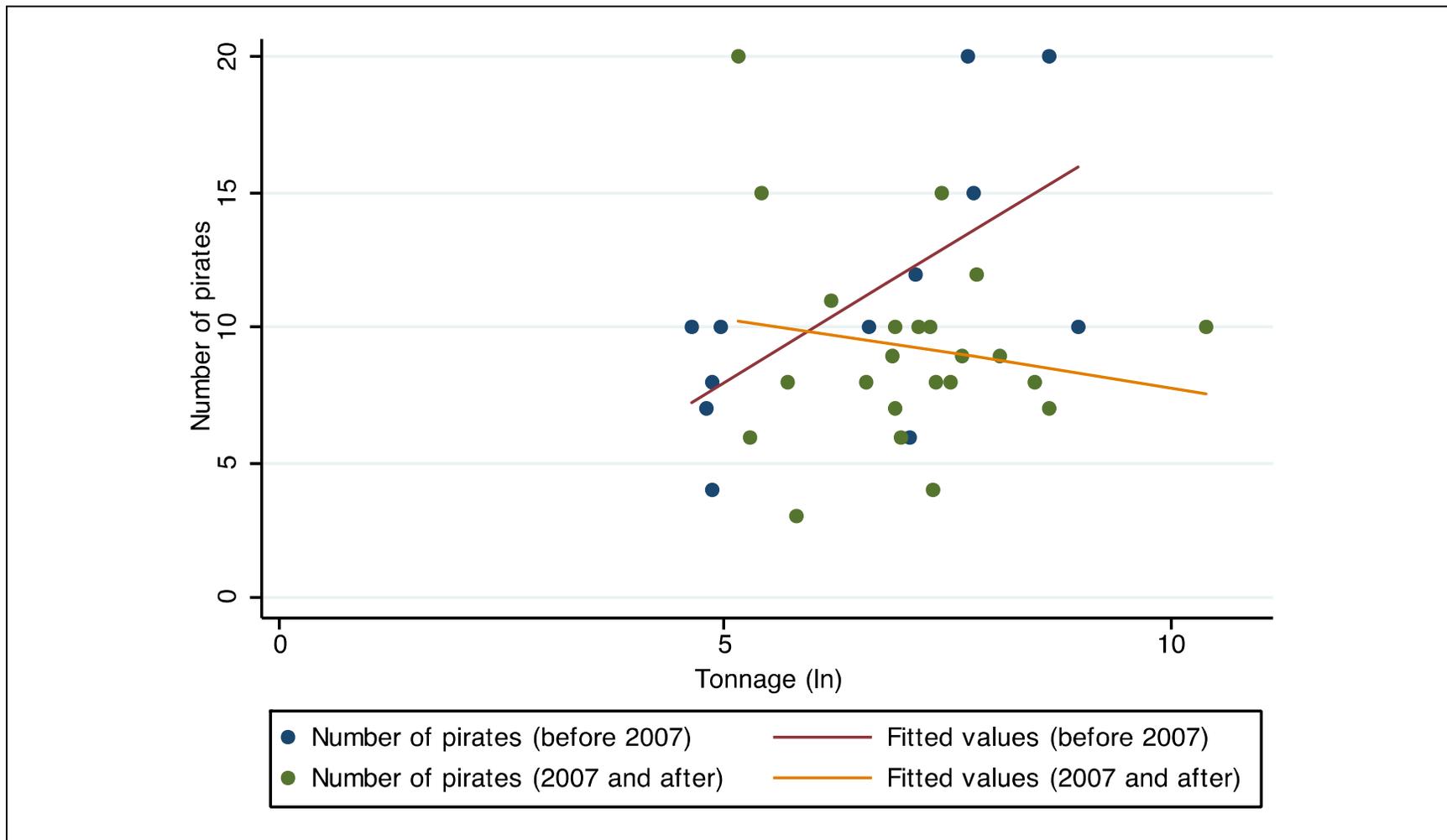
Type of ships attacked (Ship/cargo seizures)

| 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 |

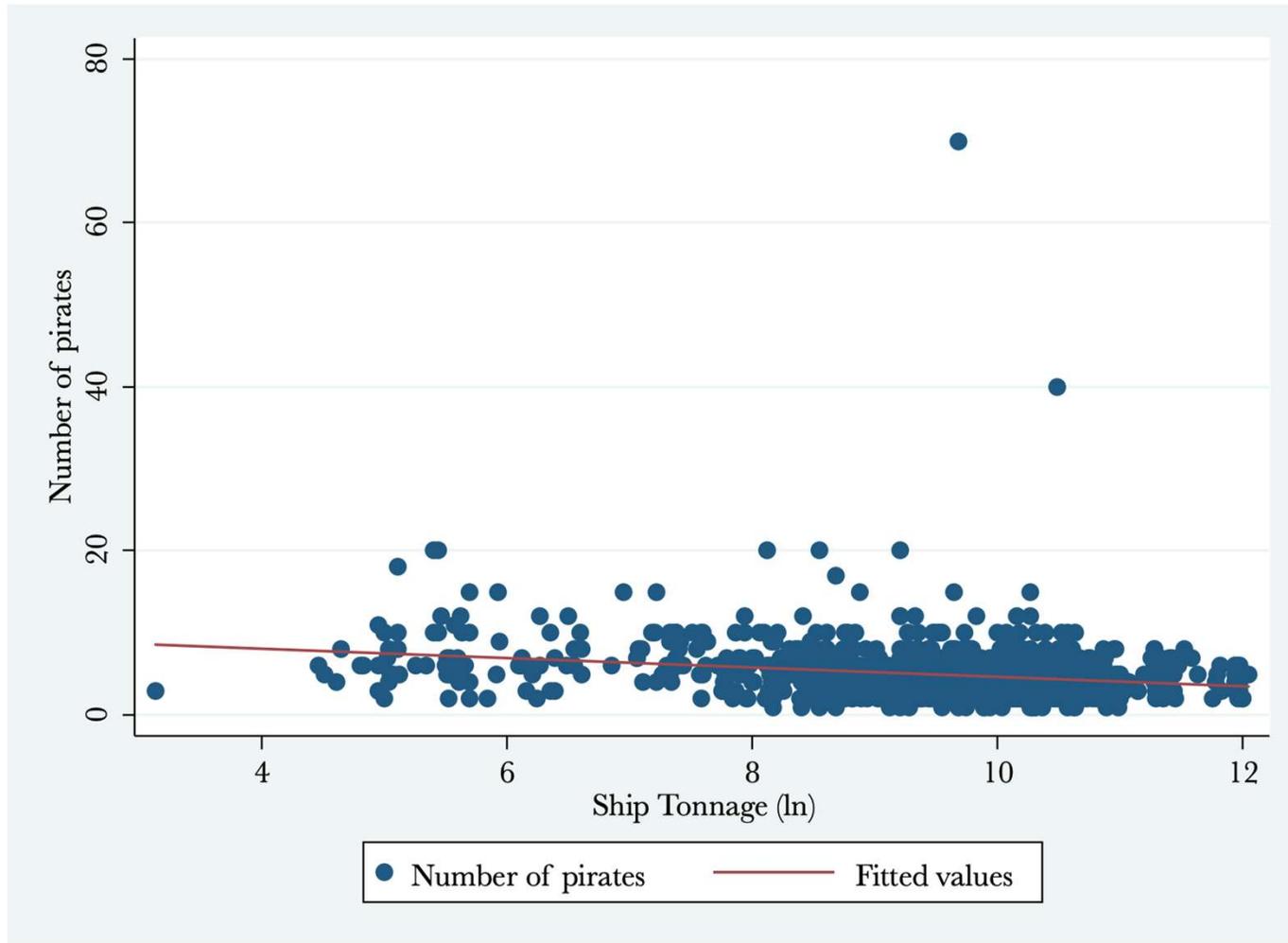
Ship/cargo seizures, ships taken/not taken



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

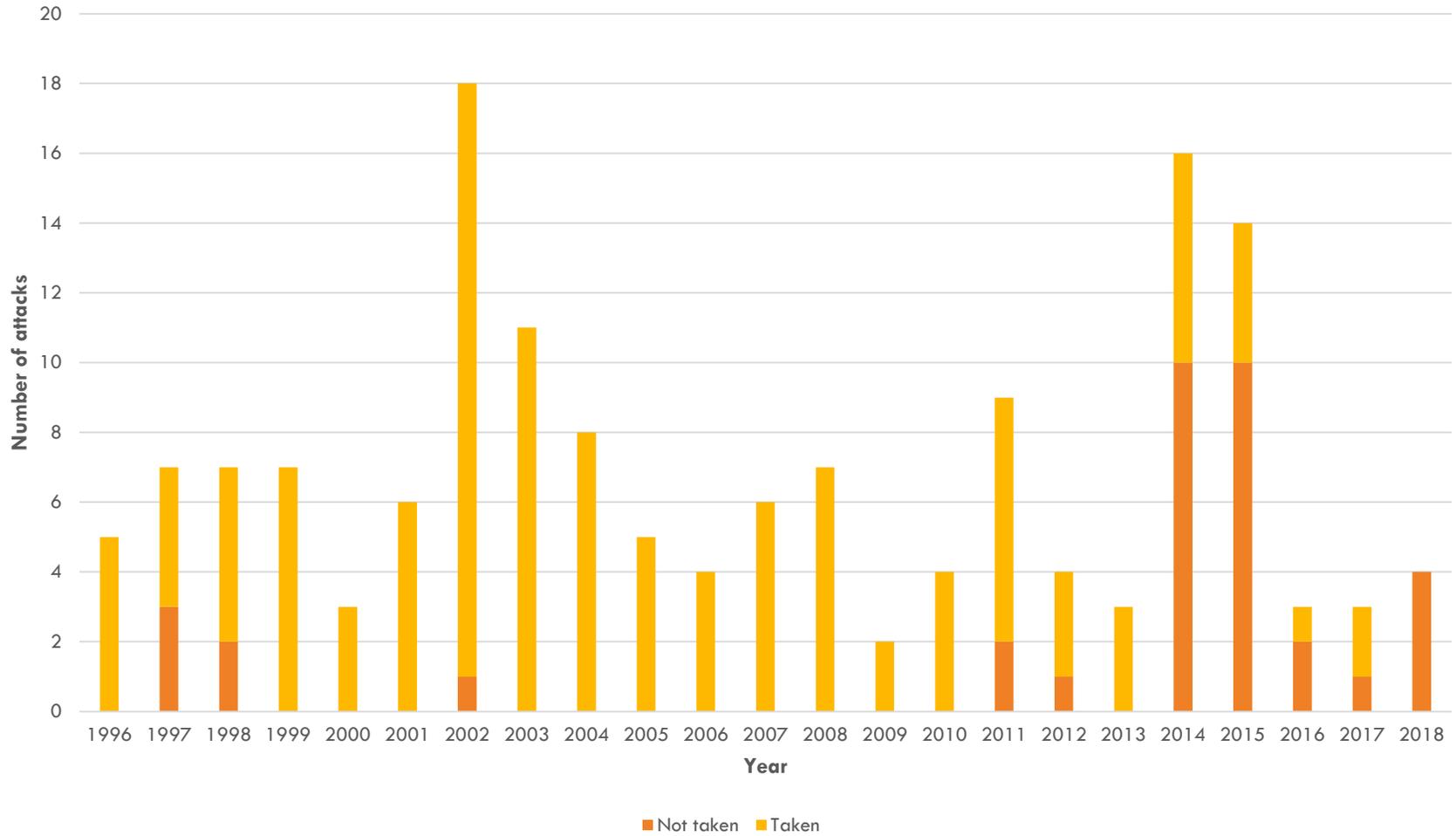
Decreased access to economic infrastructure

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

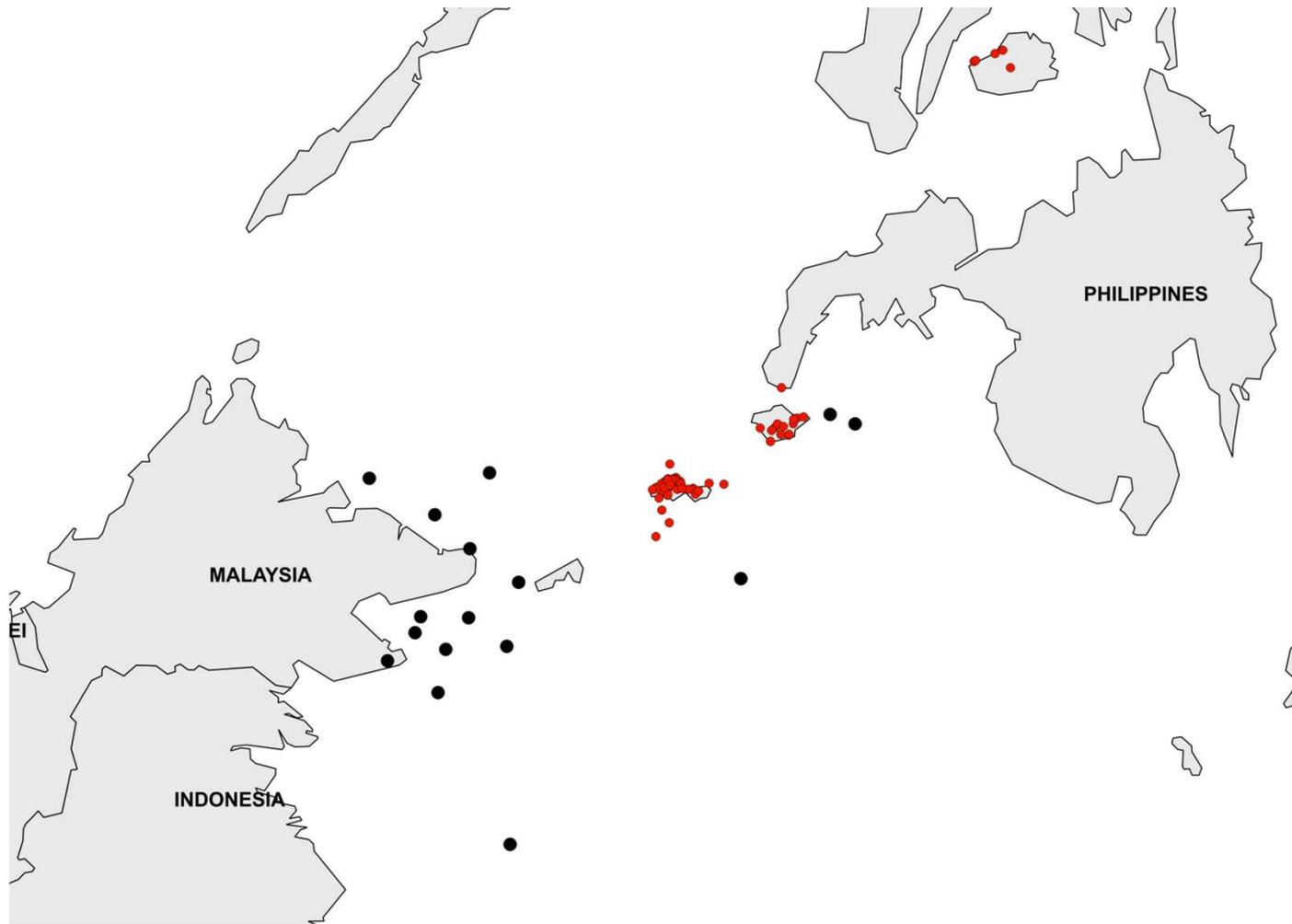
Type of ships attacked (Kidnappings)

| 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 |

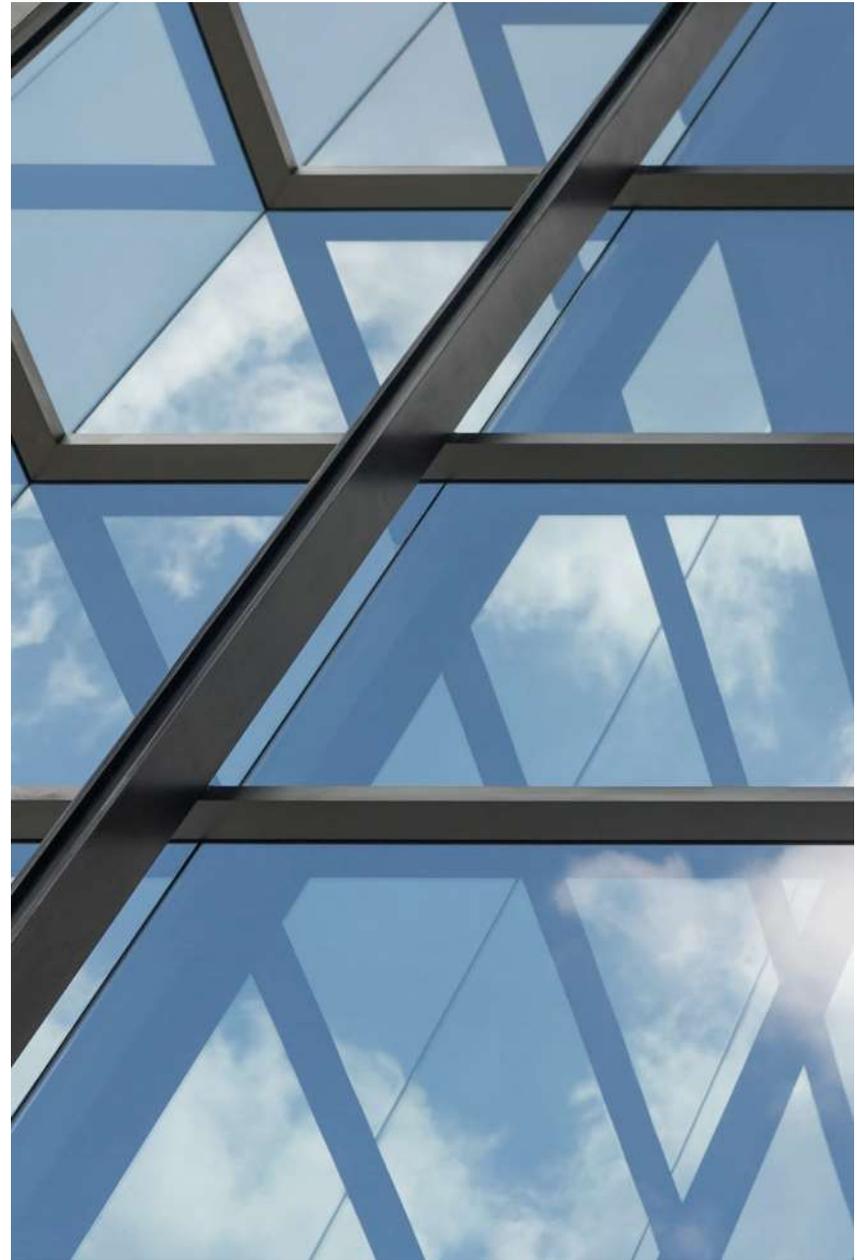
Kidnappings, ship taken/not taken



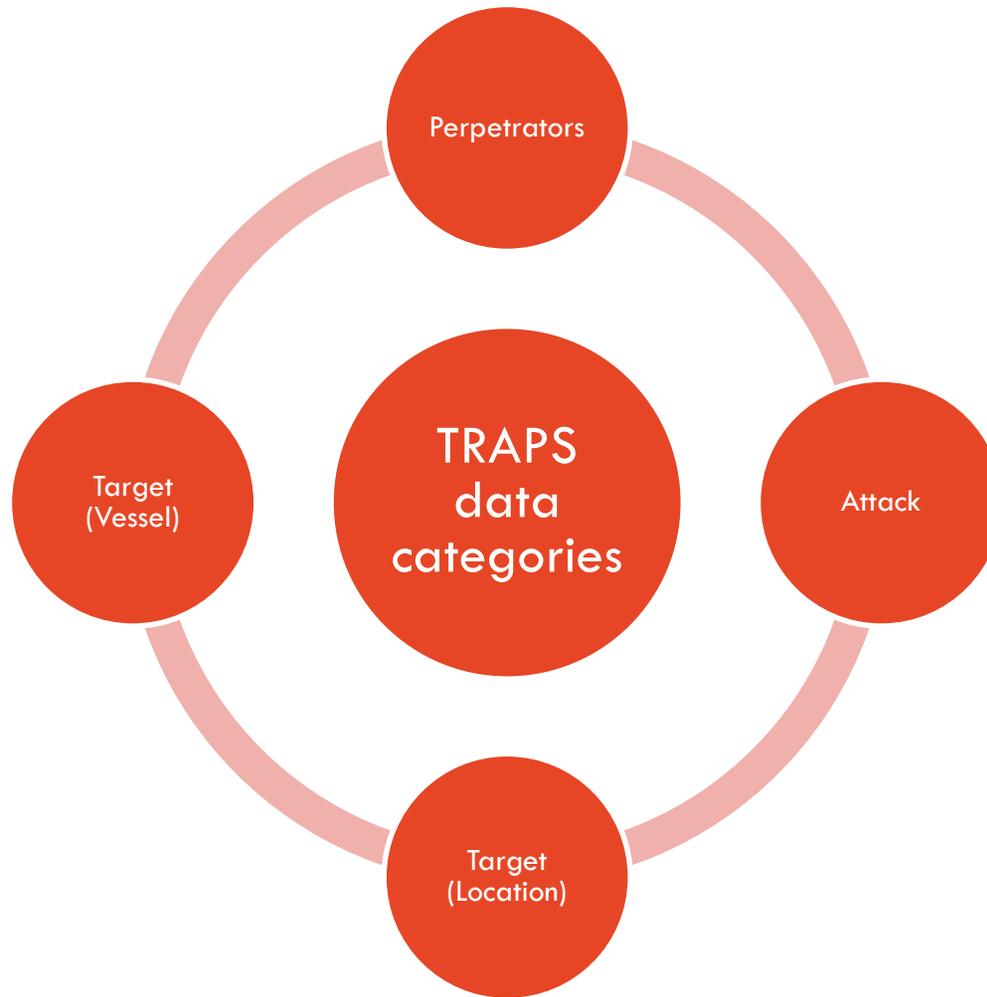
Kidnapping for ransom, ASG attack locations in eastern Southeast Asia, 2007-2018



TRAPS data



TRAPS data categories



TRAPS data across different sources

| | International Maritime Organisation | ReCAAP | International Maritime Bureau |
|---------------------|---|--------|----------------------------------|
| Target | | | |
| 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 |

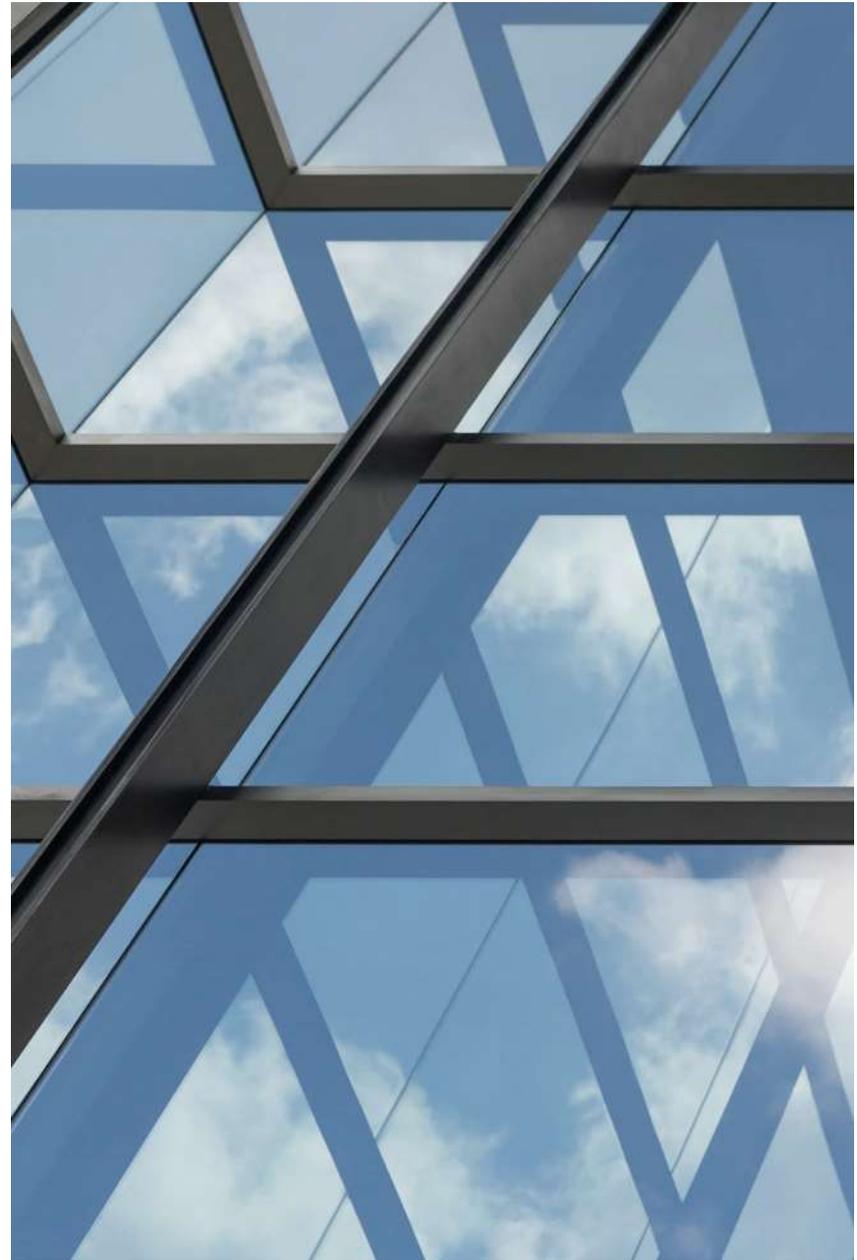
TRAPS data across different sources

| | International Maritime Organisation | ReCAAP | International Maritime Bureau |
|-----------------------|--|------------|-------------------------------|
| Attack | | | |
| 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 |
| Source data | Member states, IMB | Member states, shipping companies, ships | Shipping companies, ships |

Case studies



“New” cargo seizures? Sinhin 5 / Sinhin 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?