Princes of Predation,
Thieves of Disorder

Andreas Bruvik Westberg
Written to the sound of Dire Straits
Acknowledgements

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Abstract

Why did pirate groups form along Somalia’s coast in 2005? And why had they nearly all dissolved a decade later? The aim of this PhD project is to investigate the phenomenon of Somali piracy. The project studies the coastal communities from which piracy has emanated from. Why did maritime predation become such a viral problem in central and northeast Somalia? What happened to these communities as hijacked vessels were brought in on a monthly basis? Finally, what are the solutions towards ending Somali piracy?

In this project Somali piracy is understood as a function of economic marginalization and insecurity. While these processes may be slow in undermining a community, the argument presented in the study is that piracy is a function of recent and relatively rapid economic and security regressions. The first groups purely dedicated to piracy in Somalia, from the villages of Harardhere and Hobyo, were not formed after a decade-long struggle against illegal fishing - or as coastal inhabitants frequently label them - pirate fishers. Rather, pirate groups formed after a sudden implosion of the economic and security environment of central Somalia’s South Mudug region. South Mudug piracy, therefore, was a function of sudden devastation; not slow-burning deterioration.
Resumé (in Danish)


1 Introduction

What I won’t believe ever, is that there are angry men who organize themselves so they can settle a score with those who have wronged them and receive some compensation which they can hand out to the people. Until now it’s never happened [here] and I don’t believe it will ever happen

Bandarbeyla fisherman speaking about Somali piracy (April 2014)

Perched atop majestic cliffs jutting into the Indian Ocean lies the small fishing hamlet of Aris. At the foot of the cliffs clings a far-stretching, monsoon-swept beach. Here local women operate ramshackle teahouses made of sticks and poles, wrapped in rugs and layers of polythene. When they’re not out fishing, the area’s fishermen frequent these teahouses, and are served a daily due of tea, chewing tobacco and fried fish. At the zenith of the fishing season the teahouses on the beach multiple in numbers on account of an influx of seasonal fishermen, and even some entrepreneurial women trying their luck.

There is little today to suggest that the eastern coastline of Somalia hosted pirates in the hundreds. The extraordinary transformation of Somalia’s Indian Ocean littoral into a string of pirate lairs and back again to fringe fishing villages, remains one of the least researched yet perhaps most fundamental developments in the violent saga of Somali piracy.

We know now that between 2005 and 2012 Somali piracy morphed into a strain of maritime predation that maimed huge swaths of the Western Indian Ocean. Hijackings were perpetrated in the heavily militarized seas of the Strait of Hormuz, in the southern reaches of the Mozambique Channel, and in the pelagic waters of the Seychelles Islands archipelago.

What gave rise to the extraordinary levels of piracy activities seen over the expanse of the Western Indian Ocean? What happened to coastal communities as hijacked vessels were brought in on a monthly basis? And why, a decade later, had pirate groups disappeared from the seas off Somalia? These questions are summarized in the overall research question of the study:

Figure 1.1: PhD research question

Why did pirate groups form along Somalia’s coast in 2005? And why have they nearly all dissolved a decade later?

1.1 Relevance and Contribution

One reason why it is important to investigate the appearance of organized piracy in central Somalia in 2005 is that its circumstances remains poorly understood. Current understanding of the origin of organized piracy in Somalia has been
hampered by incautious treatment of the timing of the escalation. Neglectful
demarcation of individual years have germinated into an ambiguous understand-
ing of when, and by consequence how and why Somalia suffered its first outbreak
of piracy. The absence of any pirate attacks off central Somalia in 2003 and 2004
challenges claims in the literature on the outbreak of piracy. The claims of pi-
rate groups in the area in 2003 or 2004 are set in sharp relief by the absence of
piracy activities. This discrepancy is revealing, and should force a re-think of
the timing and the origins. The implications are considerable. If the current
decline in piracy is incorrectly understood the situation me re-escalate due to
wrong remedies, harmful policies or simple neglect.

Second, we still lack a proper understanding of illegal fishing narrative. Sev-
eral studies (Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni 2010; Beri 2011; Marchal 2011;
Otto 2011; Weldemichael 2012; Weldemichael 2014) have suggested that illegal
fishing, or fishing piracy, feeds the local raison d’être of piracy. Yet the mech-
anism for how foreign fishing piracy induced the outbreak of organized Somali
piracy remain ambiguous. This study challenges several of the assumptions held
about illegal fishing. The problem of fishing piracy has existed for many years,
but the there are few instances of ‘defensive piracy’ as has been claimed in the
literature. Moreover, the study finds that many Somali stakeholders are active
and complicit in marine and maritime predation along the coast. Somalia has
a serious problem of illicit activities within the fishing sector, but some of this
is self-inflicted. Moreover, former pirates are now engaged in the illegal fish-
ing business. This calls into the question the ‘Robin Hood’ narrative repeated
dogmatically by many pirates, Somalis and commentators alike.

Third, the study of Somali piracy has built on a weak data environment.
The primary contribution of this study is empirical data and insights into So-
mali piracy, the coastal communities of central and northeast Somalia, and the
fishing-maritime sector at the tip of the Horn of Africa. The contribution is built
on field research carried out along and off the coast, and consists of testimonies
and observations from the area. However, the study remains only one of very
few to have engaged directly with the coastal communities in Somalia. Further
systematic research is necessary to move beyond the fragmented understanding
that remains of this isolated coastline. Perhaps at some point the literature on
Somali piracy may rid itself of some of the imaginative claims and hyperbole
that has plagued the field in the past ten years.

1.2 Structure of the Study

This study has been executed using a qualitative research design, based on field
research off and along the coast of Somalia, and a review of the main literature
on the subject. The study consists of four articles, presented through a project
framework, and covering an overall time frame between 1991 and 2015.

The first article (Chapter 5)i is a descriptive quantitative study of Somali
piracy between 1991 and 2014, examining dominant features and trends of So-

iMaritime Predation off the Horn of Africa: Introducing Somali Piracy Dataset, 1991-2014
mali piracy. It investigates the effect of the presence of privately-contracted armed security personnel and naval anti-piracy vessels on piracy. The second article (Chapter 6)\(^\text{ii}\), examines the outbreak of Somali piracy in 2005. It investigates why pirate groups began operating along the coast, and why they were based within the confined coastal areas of the central South Mudug region. The third article (Chapter 7)\(^\text{iii}\), explores the relationship between coastal communities and naval anti-piracy vessels. The study builds on field research aboard \textit{HDMS Esbern Snare} and in several villages in northeast Somalia. The fourth and final article (Chapter 8)\(^\text{iv}\), studies the impact of piracy on the local communities, and investigates the foundations of anti-piracy movements. It explores the role of Puntland’s Maritime Police Force in onshore anti-piracy operations, and addresses the debate on pirate group ‘capture’ of state institutions. It finds that pirate groups are much weaker and less influential than commonly perceived.

Figure 1.2: Overall study framework

The project framework presents the methodological design of the study (Chapter 2), a review of main literature on the subject of Somali piracy (Chapter 3), the four articles of analysis (chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8) and the conclusion (Chapter 9). The appendix in Chapter 10 includes a codebook for the dataset presented in Chapter 5.

\(^{\text{ii}}\)Bloodshed and Breaking Wave: The First Outbreak of Somali Piracy

\(^{\text{iii}}\)Anti-piracy in a Sea of Predation: The Interaction of Navies, Fishermen and Pirates off the Coast of Somalia

\(^{\text{iv}}\)Thieves of Disorder: Pirate Networks and Pirated Communities in Puntland
2 Methodology

The following chapter presents the methodological framework of the study, the qualitative research design. It also combines data-set observations (DPOs) from the author’s dataset of all pirate attacks between 1991 and 2014. The study is small-N, devoted to the study of a single case - piracy in Somalia. The research is holistic - being singularly devoted to a comprehensive examination of the phenomenon of Somali piracy. The study consists of ethnographic research, participant-observation, and field research. It is a real-life context study of a diffuse topic. The study's investigation employs triangulation, and examines the properties of a single phenomenon, Somali piracy. As such it is a textbook case study, as defined by Gerring (2007: 17). The strength of the study's results depend on the within-case processual analysis. A range of observations are made across the selected temporal spectre, 1991 to 2015, and investigation is made of 'key events', or 'historical junctures' of significant influence. The study seeks to establish how a sequence of causes led to a series of outcomes; notably the (1) the outbreak of piracy in 2005 and (2) the expulsion of pirates from local communities.

Why seek out key events in the processual analysis? Causal-process observations (CPO), to paraphrase Collier, Brady and Seawright (2010), are insights or pieces of data that provide information about context or mechanism. CPOs are vital towards obtaining 'inferential leverage' in within-case studies, offering a 'thick analysis'. Collier, Brady and Seawright (2010) allows for the analogy of a CPO being akin to a 'smoking gun', i.e. 'insight that is essential to causal assessment'. Causal-process observations may also have a significant impact on the design of further scientific inquiry into a case. Discovery of a compelling, singular causal-process observation may re-think the research expectations, even to the point of providing a novel correction of the direction of the overall study.

Awareness should also be aimed towards the exchange between causal-process observations and data-set observations. Analysis of data-set observations may reveal the need for inquiry into certain process information, i.e. causal-process observation(s). Keeping a lock on the interplay between data-set observations and causal-process observations may be particularly important in the study of phenomena such as maritime predation, given that the investigation of the on-shore environment is chosen as the point of inquiry. Indeed, a meticulous study of data-set observations for Somali piracy were important in situating 2005 as a potentially crucial junction. Surprisingly, review of the extant literature on Somali piracy did not naturally induce a focus towards that year. Different studies lent weight to different periods, sometimes based on a rudimentary review of attacks and hijackings statistics (i.e. data-set observations). Data-set observations, narrowed to the exclusive group of hijackings only, were also of significance in highlighting the geography of maritime predation along the Somali littoral in 2005. From this inference came the first puzzle of the study - why were most vessels hijacked in 2005 and 2006 brought to the central South

\footnote{In contrast to the ‘thin analysis’ achieved in data-set observations (DSOs)}
Mudug coastline?

Causal-process observations and data-set observations exchange can therefore combine to strengthen the overall study, notably the former’s expertise in explaining ‘tipping points’ of the latter (Tarrow 2010).

A causal-process observation does not cordially shake the researcher’s hand, neither naturally imbuing its meaning nor its weight to the processual analysis. Rather it must be dissected carefully to establish whether or not it is a ‘good snapshot’. A key focus for the ‘tipping point’ of piracy in 2005 was rapid economic degradation of the coastal areas, and is investigated in the article (Chapter 5). However, the underlying hypothesis of the article, that the twin destructions of local conflict and the 26 December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami formed a unique predatory environment in Hobyo and Harardhere, was only the last iteration of previous propositions. The initial proposition of the study was that drought, rather than conflict, led to the economic milieu in the South Mudug region between 2004 and 2006.

At this stage of the research there was no awareness that the South Mudug Suleiman vs. Sa’ad clan conflict even existed. No previous mention of the conflict existed in the literature on Somali piracy, and neither was it noted in the general literature on the Somali Civil War - perhaps naturally given the predisposition to analyze conflict in relation to key, strategic battlegrounds like Mogadishu, Kismaayo or Lascaanood. The 2004-2006 South Mudug conflict may have been a sideshow in the greater Somali Civil War, yet it proved to be violently destructive to the confined area on which it was waged. Indeed, the villages of Hobyo and Harardhere weren’t ‘far away from the fractions in the Somali civil war [sic]’ (Hansen 2009: 33), but were an active theatre of clan conflict.

The dawning realization that the area was in a state of bloodshed came slowly, and only after numerous re-readings of Burale (2005), who kept repeating in his tsunami aftermath survey that field access to Hobyo and Harardhere was impossible due to mined roads(!). Awareness of the high insecurity plaguing the area forced a profound impact on later inferences, highlighting the unique leverage exerted by a single causal-process observation.

2.1 Methodological Design

The research project has consisted of field research and participant-observation, as well as a broad range of online source material. Different research articles

Backwards tracing towards the origin of the conflict did reveal that initial tension had resulted from disagreement over water (and grazing) resources along the Suleiman and Sa’ad clan border areas. Yet restraint should be exerted in claiming the case as an example of drought-induced conflict. An example is Maystadt and Ecker (2014), who argue that droughts in Somalia fuel local conflicts, while Theisen (2012) points to socio-political considerations as the overriding catalysts for whether or not pastoral areas of East Africa and the Horn of Africa experience violent conflict. As noted in the first article (chapter 5), the actual deterioration of low-level tensions to militia battles came about after intentional targeting and assassination of clan elders; the type of authorities traditionally leading conflict mediation.

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within the study have employed different types of sources. The first article introduces the dataset on piracy, based on a compilation of thousands of individual pirate incident reports, online source material and confidential sources on hijackings and anchorages. The three subsequent research articles build substantially on field research interviews and participant-observation.

The study began by facing a gargantuan premise - the data available on Somalia is woefully fragmented and in many cases entirely inaccessible. While field research offered the most obvious source for the project, the premise - accessing the coastal communities - was exceedingly difficult to achieve. Not without reason, very few individuals have actually visited the coastal areas to collect information, most of them being local non-governmental organizations with the exception of a few journalists and the scholar Awet T. Weldemichael (2012, 2014).

However, research was the only option to achieve the data that the study’s research questions depended upon. In the existing data desert of Somalia, field research was a necessity. Wood notes that field research ‘[...] is often the only source of adequate description of social, economic, or political processes that are not evident in other documents.’ Perhaps even more importantly, notes Wood, ‘[c]lose familiarity with a well-chosen case may not only identify what appear to be key processes but also develop central concepts and relevant actors’.13

Field research practices aren’t governed by a standard template. Rather, practices within political science, and within its sub-fields, have varied considerably over time. Kapiszewski, MacLean and Read note that ‘[...] the stylized image some scholars have of a field research trip is actually less and less the norm’.14 Yet the flexibility of the field research method, exploring the finer grains of the case fabric, makes it susceptible towards yielding unlikely surprises. As Wood explains, ‘[s]uch surprises often come from the realization that research findings contradict the presuppositions with which the researcher went to the field’15

The study’s field research and participant observation built on a basic research design template - and was mostly semi-structured. The premise of my field research aboard the HDMS Esbern Snare, and the field research interviews conducted through my contacts in Puntland, was to gain as much information as possible about piracy activities, the socioeconomic environment of the coastline, and the maritime fishing and trade environment of the Somali littoral.

2.2 Data Collection

Numerous considerations, choices and decisions were made relating to data collection. The following sections examine the setting and access to the field. Identification of informants as well as numerous considerations (scientific, practical, security, and ethical) relating to the interviews will also be discussed.
2.2.1 Setting and Access

The setting of the data collection was a given - I needed to gain access to Somalia, in some way or another. The majority of informants used in the study were local Somalis, residing within the areas I studied. Information obtained from field research in Puntland came from a relatively closed, semi- or fully private setting. By contrast, participant observation and research committed the HDMS Esbern Snare were only quasi-private.

Data collected can be divided into various types. Some is location-specific: data particular to individual villages, or different maritime areas off the coast. Another type of data is temporal, either accessible in real-time, or data only available by interviewing informants about past events. Another category of data pertains to the military operations of the anti-piracy navies operating off the Horn of Africa, notably vessel movements, naval command communications and interactions, operational behaviour by the HDMS Esbern Snare during its voyage, and the within-vessel anti-piracy related activities of the crew.

The first part of the fieldwork was carried out in October 2013 aboard the Royal Danish naval vessel HDMS Esbern Snare, in the Gulf of Aden and the Somali Basin, and along the Bari, Karkaar, Nugaal, Mudug and Galgudud coastlines. The second part of the fieldwork was carried out between March and April 2104 in Puntland’s Nugaal and Karkaar regions. Additionally, I performed individual conversations and interviews with sources in Nairobi, Mombasa, Dubai and Stockholm.

2.2.2 Identification of Informants

Informants were identified on a continual, sometimes ad hoc basis. A list of preferred informants was prepared prior to the field research in Puntland. Most of these informants were not listed specifically, but were defined by position or social standing, such as ‘fishermen’ or ‘local officials’ in a given location. Some informants I had no prior influence to select - the six-man local authority group at Hobyo were all guests of the HDMS Esbern Snare. Neither did I select Hobyo for the location of the Local Leader Engagement. However, given the planning of field research in northeast Somalia the visits to Garacad and Hobyo were ideal for the breadth of data collection. Informants not part of the two main rounds of field research includes pirates, coastal eyewitnesses, security analysts and officials. Several of these informants have requested anonymity for personal and/or security reasons.

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 provide a chronological overview of conversations and interviews performed\(^{iii}\).

\(^{iii}\)Only cited conversations and interviews are listed, and do not include unused material.
While affiliated with the Royal Danish Defence College, I was nevertheless a civilian researcher. I anticipated that I needed to gain the trust and confidentiality of the crew. On the first day, while the vessel was preparing in Djibouti port, I tried to greet and speak with as many of the officers as possible. The task was made easier by HDMS Esbern Snare’s commanding officer’s invitation that I dine with the officers during all meals of the day for the duration of the voyage. There were very few hindrances, enabling me to engage in a ‘snowball’ approach - once I had made the acquaintance of some officers, new introductions and contacts followed.

During the field research several of the informants in Puntland were only picked a day prior to, and some even on the same day, as the date of the interview. A few interviews were also conducted by my research assistants where I had no prior knowledge, although we had agreed on the type of informants that should be sought out. Some residents in Eyl declined interviews after initial contact, which may have colored the general source material achieved. Whether non-responses were related to piracy, or other issues, was generally not possible to establish. In Bandarbeyla repeated attempts at obtaining an interview with the Mayor eventually failed. This appears to be less on account of his willingness to respond, and more a matter of time constraint. This had an impact on the initial attempt to capitalize on the ‘snowball technique’ in Bandarbeyla, seeking a new set of district officials respondents after speaking with the Mayor. 16

‘Financial incentives’, i.e. a monetary payment to induce a response, were crucial for several, but not all of the interviews; an element which it is difficult to ascertain the effect of, but which may have colored the responses. It is certain that some potential respondents, including the pirate ‘Boyah’, ultimately weren’t interviewed due to insufficient ‘incentive’. I reached out to Boyah in February 2014, with my research assistant acting as an intermediary. While Boyah was talked down from wild fees, I ultimately decided on indefinitely postponing the interview as we were in the final stage of preparation for the fieldwork.

Beyond financial contraints, temporal limitations had a significant influence on the selection of informants. Access to pirates was difficult, and did not meet the threshold initially planned for the study. By the time the study began, in August 2012, several months had passed since the last hijacking off the Somali coast. In the period 2012 to 2015 the number of attacks leveled out at a very low average. The first successful hijacking by Somali pirates since I had begun the study in 2012, occurred in March 2015. The was, therefore, a small pirate population, and by consequence extremely low chances of speaking directly with any remaining pirates operating along the coast. Access to imprisoned pirates was far likelier to achieve, and two locations were selected for potential interviews - the prisons in Garowe, Puntland and in Victoria, Seychelles. Both were eventually abandoned due to the relentless time contraints of the project.

The selection of informants was also hindered prior to and during the Puntland field project. Several field trips were carried out by my primary research assistant, based in Garowe, who was aided by colleagues both on the road and during pre- and post-field work. Originally I had planned that I carried out the
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<td>2009 eyewitness, Eyl</td>
<td>Interview, Nairobi 10.12.12</td>
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<td>(2) Naval officer</td>
<td>Royal Danish Navy</td>
<td>Conversation, ESSN (GoA) 16.10.13</td>
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<td>(3) No name (anon.)</td>
<td>Guard, Qandala</td>
<td>Conversation, Dhow (Garacad) 22.10.13</td>
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<td>(4) Hussein Salad Weheliye</td>
<td>Galnudug comm., Hobyo</td>
<td>Conversation, ESSN (Hobyo) 25.10.13</td>
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<td>(5) 'Jihan' (anon.)</td>
<td>Female inhabitant, Eyl</td>
<td>Interview, Eyl 22.03.14</td>
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<td>(6) Abdalla Nassir Camir</td>
<td>Fisheries dealer, Eyl</td>
<td>Interview, Eyl 22.03.14</td>
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<td>(7) Abdirizak Abshir Guled</td>
<td>Fisherman, Eyl</td>
<td>Interview, Eyl 24.03.14</td>
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<td>(8) 'No name'</td>
<td>District council member, Eyl</td>
<td>Interview, Eyl 25.03.14</td>
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<td>(9) 'Qhamul'</td>
<td>Mariner, Eyl</td>
<td>Interview, Eyl 25.03.14</td>
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<td>(10) Muse Osman Yusef</td>
<td>Mayor, Eyl</td>
<td>Interview, Eyl 26.03.14</td>
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<td>(11) 'Halimo'</td>
<td>Widow of deceased fisherman, Eyl</td>
<td>Interview, Eyl 28.03.14</td>
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<td>(12) 'Mohamed'</td>
<td>Father of missing fisherman, Eyl</td>
<td>Interview, Eyl 28.03.14</td>
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<td>(13) 'Ahmed'</td>
<td>Fisherman, Dhanaane</td>
<td>Interview, Dhanaane 01.04.14</td>
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<td>(14) 'Hassan'</td>
<td>Fisherman, Dhanaane</td>
<td>Interview, Dhanaane 01.04.14</td>
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<td>(15) 'Ali'</td>
<td>Elder, Baarweyn</td>
<td>Interview, Baarweyn 03.04.14</td>
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<td>(16) Suleiman Farris</td>
<td>Seafarer, Iran</td>
<td>Interview, Dubai 10.04.14</td>
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<td>(17) Issa</td>
<td>Seafarer, Somaliland</td>
<td>Interview, Dubai 10.04.14</td>
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<td>(18) 'Fuume'</td>
<td>Mariner, Bandarbeyla</td>
<td>Interview, Bandarbeyla 21.04.14</td>
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<td>(19) Multiple fishermen</td>
<td>Fishermen, Bandarbeyla</td>
<td>Tlf. with Bandarbeyla 21.04.14</td>
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<td>(20) Musse Ali Jama</td>
<td>Fisherman, Bandarbeyla</td>
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<td>(21) 'Hiraad'</td>
<td>Fisherman, Bandarbeyla</td>
<td>Interview, Bandarbeyla 22.04.14</td>
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Table 2.1: Overview of conversations and interviews
Table 2.2: Overview of conversations and interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>(22) 'Mohamed'</td>
<td>Interview, Bandarbeyla</td>
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<td>Fisherman, Bandarbeyla</td>
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<td>(23) Multiple fishermen</td>
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<td>Fishermen, Aris</td>
<td>Conversation</td>
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<td>(24) 'Ilyaaq' (anon.)</td>
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<td>Suleiman sub-clan pirate, Harardhere</td>
<td>Interview, Galkaayo</td>
<td>15.05.14</td>
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<td>(25) 'Mussa' (anon.)</td>
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<td>Security analyst, Garowe</td>
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<td>(26) 'Andrew' (anon.)</td>
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<td>Maritime security analyst, Kenya</td>
<td>Interview, Mombasa</td>
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<td>(27) 'Cabdille' (anon.)</td>
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<td>Isse Mahamoud sub-clan pirate, Garowe</td>
<td>Interview, Garowe</td>
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<td>(28) 'Rashid' (anon.)</td>
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<td>Security analyst, Garowe</td>
<td>Interview, Tlf.</td>
<td>23.08.14</td>
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<td>Security analyst, Kenya</td>
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<td>(30) 'Rashid' (anon.)</td>
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<td>(31) Abukar Ahmed Yusuf</td>
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<td>(32) Mohamed Ahmed Musse Walow</td>
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<td>Mayor, Gumbah</td>
<td>Interview, Garowe</td>
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<td>(33) Jana Mohamed Khurshe</td>
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<td>Mayor, Qandala</td>
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<td>07.09.14</td>
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<td>(34) 'Mussa' (anon.)</td>
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<td>Security analyst, Garowe</td>
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<td>17.09.14</td>
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<td>2008 eyewitness, Hobyo</td>
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<td>(36) 'John' (anon.)</td>
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<td>2010 eyewitness, Hobyo</td>
<td>Interview, Tlf.</td>
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<td>(37) 'Mahamed' (anon.)</td>
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<td>Government official, Puntland</td>
<td>Interview, Stockholm</td>
<td>06.02.15</td>
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</table>
work, visiting Puntland’s eastern coastline in-sync with the high-point of the fishing season, and accompanied with my research assistant and a Puntland state security team. However, after several months of planning we were forced to dismiss the plan due to the security situation. By early December 2013 Al-Shabaab had become increasingly active within Puntland, and had already orchestrated several terrorist attacks. The senior cleric in Puntland had been assassinated outside a mosque in Garowe. As a Westerner traveling in Puntland I would have not only been a target for ransom kidnapping, but also ideologically-motivated abduction. Moreover, the up-coming January 2014 Puntland presidential election made the political climate volatile. In early December 2013 an attack was launched against Puntland’s security forces, effectively scrapping the project due to security concerns. We were forced to re-adjust the time table, and began planning for an even more comprehensive fieldwork during spring 2014.

Losing several months of time in the PhD project was costly, as research interviews weren’t commence until March 2014. Worse, however, was the fact that the field research was pushed into the latter stages of the fishing season. By late April 2014 the coastal villages in the Nugaal and Karkaar regions were de-populating due to the incoming monsoon winds, and many lesser fishing camps along the coast effectively emptied. Rather than encounter bustling villages, we were forced to contend with areas of far fewer respondents than in the November-February high season. Moreover, maritime transport was made difficult on account of the tumultuous monsoon seas of the Indian Ocean. A traveler venturing off the road to Eyl or Bandarbeyla, trying to reach fishing camps along the rocky littoral of the Nugaal and Karkaar coasts, depends on the sea for transport. The plan was to connect with more distant villages in the Karkaar region, but the considerable distances and high fuel costs made it an untenable project, and was ultimately scrapped too in favor of transport on land.

2.2.3 Interview Considerations

Numerous considerations were necessary in relation to the field research carried out within Somalia. I faced two main tiers of consideration in this regard. The first tier was the working relationship with the local research assistants, whom I depended entirely upon to gain access to the coastal communities. During the planning of the field research I had to decide on how much information I wanted to divulge to avoid coloring the interviews they conducted on my behalf. I was in touch with my primary research assistant by telecommunication during the course of the fieldwork, limiting the control and oversight I could exert on the project. A second tier of consideration during the field research were the communities themselves. I had ethical responsibilities in engaging with communities that were economically vulnerable and situated in a relatively insecure area of the world. Moreover, as a scholar ‘looking in’ I had an ethical obligation to be

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*We spoke at length about security arrangements; particularly travel patterns and worse-case scenarios. The issue of trust was important, yet I was confident in the abilities and honesty of my colleague.*
upfront with the motivation of my research (an interest in their society), while simultaneously balancing against my wish to avoid discouraging their participation. All individuals interviewed in the coastal communities were informed about the purpose of the project, and about the identity of the study’s author. My research assistant was issued an English- and Somali-language document detailing the purpose of the project.

An aim of the project was, prior to its execution, to gain as broad an access as possible along the coast. My expectations for the amount of data that could be acquired were modest; only Weldemichael (2012, 2014) had performed a similar field research (in Eyl), and the project was therefore cutting into scholarly virgin territory by including the northern part of the Nugaal coast, and the Karkaar region that include the villages of Bandarbayla and Aris. My primary research aims were the origins, activities and effects of piracy along the coast. Yet focusing narrowly on this topic, I thought, would be counter-productive.

Translation was an unavoidable dimension of the field research. The optimum, as Fujii (2013) notes, is an ethnographic study cloaked with a researcher fluent in the area language.\footnote{Without fluency in the local language, she notes, ‘one is cut off from everyday life’.} The maximum allowed, however, was the use of a translator. While I speak neither Somali nor Arabic\footnote{A key concern during the field research was the extent of documentation, both written, photographic and videographic. The field research was carried out in areas with significant limits on the availability of electricity and internet- and telecommunication access. The project was executed on the understanding that photography and videography was desirable, but naturally restricted. It took hours to upload even modestly sized photographs, not to mention the sizes of videographic materials. To ease the strain of the field research operations,} my research assistant communicated to me in fluent English, verbally and grammatically. A sociologist by training, he had no trouble communicating in the appropriate scientific language, even providing valuable methodological input into field research process. Moreover, he was a native, and would not be unwittingly gravitating towards those who spoke English. All interviews were executed in Somali, and when conversations were carried out by phone, translation was (apparently) seamless. During my telecommunication with local residents I performed my greetings and salutations in Arabic. To lessen the distance between myself and them I wanted to show I was making an effort, and notably the Somali, much the same way as the Gulf Arabs, are a poetic society, prone to embellish their conversations with odic qualities. I cannot say I master this style very well. However, I did speak about my own background and why, on a personal level, I wished to carry out this project. The conversations were primarily courtesy calls, but they were also a way of bolstering credibility and standing of my research assistant.\footnote{\textit{The lingua franca} between the local communities and their northerly Arabian Peninsula neighbours. I had learned some phrases during my residence in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia between 2011 and 2012.}

\footnote{Being from a smaller sub-clan of the Majerteen, originating in the northwestern part of Puntland, it was my understanding that he was considered an \textit{outsider}, albeit a guest.}
we attempted to conduct as many conversations through telecommunication as possible. On a nearly daily basis, and sometimes several times a day, I was in contact with the field team. However, telecommunication was frequently impossible, and the line could be of extremely varying quality. We were constantly cut off, and frequently only one side could hear the other. When possible, communication included the latest observations, and particularly informal conversations that didn’t assume the form of interviews. It was also an opportunity for me to understand the daily livelihood rhythm of the coastal communities. Much information gathered remains memories and notes; while providing the author with much additional context, cannot achieve the scientific standard necessary to be used as source material. These weren’t direct observations, but third-party communications, and therefore limited in their applications.

The security dimension of this type of fieldwork was paramount throughout the research. Both I and my primary research assistant were mildly paranoid about the content of our conversations, the locations we spoke of and the individuals, groups and topics we mentioned. Monitored or not, we early agreed on speaking in code whenever we touched upon sensitive information. Moreover, my research assistant roamed and lived among the local communities, and frequently tried to limit or steer away from a topic if he judged the surroundings less than ideal, even uncomfortable. While a code language was used, I sometimes forgot our previous definitions of individuals, groups and terms, making some conversations frustratingly difficult to keep track of. The effect this had on the research is difficult to gauge, but there was certainly a necessity of continuously re-visiting topics to make sure I was understanding the exchanged information correctly. Admittedly, I became aware of a bias towards gleaning certain information to reinforce an existing view. This made it important to take notes of ambiguous information, which possibly could limit my subjective prejudice.\textsuperscript{19}

While carrying out interviews and observations aboard the *HDMS Esbern Snare*, a different set of considerations came into play. I was a civilian researcher aboard a naval vessel, yet while in communication with officials and fishermen I could not avoid the embedded nature of my fieldwork.

My participation in the boarding of an Iranian dhow at Garacad crystallized the embedded nature of my research. I boarded the dhow together with a small party of Danish mariners. I was free to observe and interact during the boarding, and could move freely around the dhow. However, I was also wearing a bullet-proof vest and helmet (which I asked permission to remove - and which was kindly granted). Aboard the dhow I greeted the Iranian fishermen, who had been asked to take their place at the aft of the dhow’s main deck. Along both port and starboard side were arranged two short lines hooked with drying fish. Besides the fish, the fishermen pointed to large cylinder-shaped containers, used for storing fresh water. Living quarters were all in the bow of the dhow, over which was situated the captain’s bridge and the bridge deck. The fishermen were in less than an optimal physical condition. Several were suffering from sores and rashes on their feet and legs. Indeed, given the size of the dhow I was slightly shocked that so many fishermen resided aboard it.
At the Local Leader Engagement at Hobyo I was also afforded the opportunity interact freely with the entourage from the village. I spoke at length with Galmudug’s District Commissioner once the formal talks had been finished. The conversation with the District Commissioner revealed some interesting insights into his understanding of the area. Only 3 kilometers to the south of Hobyo, he pointed out, the areas was ‘ungoverned and ungovernable’. Such was the state of the land all the way to the borders of Mogadishu, across an area he deemed mostly controlled by Al-Shabaab. In Hobyo the District Commissioner pointed out that the seasonal Deyr rains had been good. The pastoral lands in Hobyo district were rejuvenated, and pastoralists had arrived in the village with their animals. On the situation of the good rains, the District Commissioner happily announced that he had personally received a lot of credit from the area’s inhabitants.

More than anything, the exchange with the District Commissioner revealed to me the paradoxes of insecurity and daily life. On the one hand I had the impression that the security situation was much poorer than he would have liked it to be, despite the absence of pirates. On the other hand, the District Commissioner seemed at once to be hopeful of the future of the area, evidence in what I perceived to be important socio-economic indicators such as ‘good rains’ and ‘healthy (pastoralist) animals’. Yet drawing conclusions from such interactions must be made carefully. There was no doubt that the Hobyo entourage considered their area to be extremely underdeveloped and in need of significant investment. One of the final remarks made by the District Commissioner in my conversation with him was that "this land appears as it did when Allah created it. Nothing has changed." 20.

2.2.4 Interview Guide and Interviews

Interview guides were written for field research in Puntland. The guides were semi-structured, and were written thematically. During pre-planning the primary research assistant was encouraged to develop additional questions. Moreover, given the anticipation of the informal nature of interviewing there was an explicit motivation to let respondents speak relatively freely, and without too much structure. This wide-net approach produced extensive material which exceeded the initial expectations of the research. However, in all of the interviews the research assistant was instructed to channel the exchange towards pre-determined topics. These topics were all tied to sub-questions of the study - the origin of piracy, the socioeconomic environment of the coastal communities, and the security situation since the collapse of the state in 1991.

While some questions were tailored specifically towards piracy, most interviewees were asked to discuss their own lives and livelihood, as well as a broad set of questions ranging between security, the coastal economy, the fishing sector, the history of their community, relations with other communities and villages, culture and governance. I also had extensive conversations with 'Muse' about the execution of the interviews. How would local fishermen be approached? What types of questions were sensitive? What kinds of information should we...
not be asking for? 'Muse' pointed out to me, quite early on, that engaging in honest and productive conversations with coastal inhabitants usually required informal approaches build on trust.

Different types of questions were written prior to the field research, notably **probing**, **indirect** and **confirming/disconfirming** questions. The list below shows some of the questions posed to coastal informants,

![Figure 2.1: Interview question types](image)

**Probing question:** To your knowledge, if a local inhabitant took part in hijacking a vessel, what would his motivation be? Grievances towards illegal fishing vessels? Unemployment, loss of livelihood and/or economic desperation? Pursuit of 'easy money'? Taxation of the waters of Puntland?

**Indirect question:** Please give an account of the livelihood situation in this area.

**Confirming/disconfirming question:** Are there people from your community that are engaged as armed guards aboard fishing vessels?

The interview material obtained from the research was comprehensive in its overall quality, and several in-depth interviews yielded considerable information and detail. There appeared a palpable eagerness from several of the respondents towards providing thorough answers. In this regard my **positionality** as an 'outsider' appeared to work favorably, with several officials and fishermen keen to put issues on the record.²¹ There were also interviews plagued by short and even vague responses and insufficient follow-up questions. Application of the material has therefore varied significantly, with some responses relegated, to paraphrase Bleich and Pekkanen (2013), to the level of 'illustrations, [and] not as evidence'.²²

### 2.3 Causality, Concepts and Limitations

#### 2.3.1 Causality

The study seeks to investigate the outbreak of organized piracy in Somalia in 2005, and the reasons for the dissolution of most (if not all) pirate groups. In this study the dependent variable is broadly defined as the **pirate group**. The dependent variable conceptualizes the phenomenon under investigation, organized piracy. Two independent variables are defined: **insecurity** and **economic shock**. I also include a moderating variable, **obstructability at sea**. A rudimentary model of interaction may be drawn up to show the proposed explanation for organized piracy (see Figure 2.1).
The moderating variable acts as a *conditioner* on pirates’ ability to hijack vessels. By consequence it moderates the resilience (or survival ability) of a pirate group. Pirate groups depend on maritime predation to result in a payment of ransom for crew and/or vessel. The *obstructability at sea* variable is tricky because it may be defined broadly to include all buffers that pirates face when attempting hijackings, including vessel protection (such as the use of privately-contracted armed security personnel), naval anti-piracy operations and weather conditions. Focus is on the overall effectiveness of privately-contracted armed security personnel and naval vessels, and is explored in Chapter 5. Since the study does not provide an exhaustive examination of the moderating variable it only offers a limited understanding of its explanatory power.

**Figure 2.2:** Study’s hypothesized interaction model

*Chapter 6* investigates the impact of insecurity and economic shocks on the outbreak of piracy. *Chapter 8* examines the interaction of pirates and coastal communities. Piracy leads to more insecurity and further economic deterioration. The evidence from *Chapter 8* suggest a kick-back effect. The surprising aspect of this finding is how low resilience pirate groups have shown in the face of resistance by communities and regional security forces.

### 2.3.2 Validity

One can distinguish between *conceptual* validity and *measurement* validity. Conceptual validity is dependent on congruence between the indicators and the systematized concept. Measurement validity asks whether the operationalization and scoring of cases is reflective of the concept the researcher seeks to
Crucial in terms of measurement validity is an agreement between the investigated concept and the observations made in the study. To achieve this the background concept must be identified. The systematized concept is crystallized based on the background concept, and needs to be defined precisely. However, that does not necessarily mean narrowing the systematized concept too much. Should the systematized concept be too shallow, the overall ability to generalize is lessened.

Figure 2.3: Study’s flowchart of conceptualization and measurement
2.3.3 The Background Concept of Piracy

- If a Pyrate attack a Ship, and the Master for Redemption, gives his Oath to pay a Sum of Money, tho' there be nothing taken, yet it is Piracy by the Law Marine.
- If a Ship is riding at Anchor, and the Mariners all ashore, and a Pyrate attack her, and rob her, this is Piracy.

An Abstract of the Civil Law and Statute Law now in Force, in Relation to Piracy (1724)

In this study piracy is the background concept. Piracy captures a broad set of groups and practices, and must be crystallized into a systematized concept in order to score the cases. The systematized concept builds on a review of the background concept.

Article 101 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides the following definition of piracy,

“(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 by a 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;

(c) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b)”


“All person commits an offence if that person unlawfully and intentionally:

(a) seizes or exercises control over a ship by force or threat thereof or any other form of intimidation;”
The SUA Convention definition deviates from the UNCLOS definition in terms of 'private gain'. Any vessel taken by force or 'any other form of intimidation' is unlawful, notwithstanding whether or not it is committed for 'private gain'. Neither does it require that predation be committed on the high seas. Harrelson (2010) cites a previous definition of the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), which states that piracy is an,

“(...) act of boarding or attempting to board any ship with the apparent intent to commit theft or any other crime and with the apparent intent or capability to use force in the furtherance of that act”

The IMB definition does not distinguish between the high seas and territorial waters, and is therefore an ideal classification of acts committed by Somali pirates. However, currently the IMB has modified its definition to adhere exclusively to that of UNCLOS (1982). The non-discrimination of the maritime zones in the previous IMB definition reflects an older understanding of piracy, exemplified in Gosse (1950),

“A robber on the high seas, one who by open violence takes the property of another on the high seas, especially one who makes it his business to cruise for robbery or plunder; a freebooter on the seas; also one who steals in a harbour”

The definition does not distinguish between the high seas and territorial waters, and includes theft ‘in a harbour’. This definition specifies taking of ‘property’ and ‘theft’, while the original IMB definition included ‘or any other crime’ beyond ‘theft’. Thus it ‘does not make a distinction between a crime committed for private ends and a crime committed for public ends’.

Harrelson correctly notes that the UNCLOS (1982) definition of piracy bars a portion of Somali piracy activities from being classified as such. Acts committed within territorial waters (of any State) are defined as armed robbery. Or as Harrelson notes, ‘twelve miles is the determinate distance for classifying an attack as piracy’.

The SUA (1992) definition is perhaps the most fitting, as it ‘makes it a crime for any person to use force to seize or take control of a ship’. Notwithstanding the lack of the ‘piracy’ term, the act is one of maritime predation. Somali pirates are maritime predators, i.e. a band of individuals preying on other vessels at sea. The background concept of piracy, as an act committed by Somalis, may therefore be defined more narrowly as maritime predation.

2.3.4 The Systematized Concept: The Pirate Group

This study seeks to investigate the environment in which maritime predators, i.e. pirate groups, are formed. I move down from the broad definition of an

\footnote{According to Merriam-Webster predation is defined as ‘the act of preying or plundering’ (Merriam-Webster 2015)}
act of piracy, narrowing towards the aforementioned investigative focus to the systematized concept. What defines a pirate group? The broadest possible definition of a pirate group is that it must commit at least one attack at sea. However, this is impossible to measure. Therefore, a pirate group may only reasonably be defined by its capture of a vessel. Yet, the capture of no more than one vessel poses another problem; how can it be verified that the group that committed the hijacking was a pirate group? Chapter 6 details how many incidents of piracy in the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea between 1991 and 2004 appeared to be committed by groups engaging in paramilitary activities, smuggling and/or trafficking. This study is concerned with groups that are expressly formed towards the purpose of perpetrating piratical hijackings. Therefore, a single known incident of piratical hijacking does not qualify.

To quantify pirate group existence and activity the indicator must target the physical evidence of its occurrence. The most precise indicator of pirate group activity is the geographical determination of the location of hijacked vessels, i.e. the anchorage at which vessels lay during ransom payment negotiation. Establishing a registry on the anchorage of hijacked vessels also provides a proper indicator for the environment in which pirate groups operate. Villages used as anchorages (and nearly all vessels have been taken to a specific coastal settlement) may therefore arguably be equated with the location of pirate groups. Moreover, the individual village functions as a proxy for the sub-clan identity of individual pirate groups. Examination of the identities of individual pirates known to have committed specific hijackings are nearly uniformly equal to the identity of the village at which the vessel was anchored.

Therefore, by compiling a registry of the anchorages of hijacked vessels, the study has found a reliable score to investigate the hypothesized effects of insecurity and economic shock triggering organized piracy. The Somali Piracy Dataset presented in Chapter 5 is a registry of the anchorages of hijacked vessels. Chapter 6 studies the first outbreak of organized piracy in Somalia, based on the score defined above. Chapter 7 examines the interaction between (a) coastal communities that have acted as pirate anchorages and (b) naval anti-piracy vessels. Chapter 8 investigates the impact of piracy activities and ransom payments (in the most common pirate anchorages) on the host communities.

3 Review of State of the Art

Somali piracy as a phenomenon has fueled a plethora of academic literature and commentary on the subject. While unified in its focus on pirate attacks, the literature is distinctly disjointed in its analysis, concepts and data. The study of Somali piracy has not been dominated by any particular field within academia. Rather, a number of political scientists, economists, historians, sociologists and geographers - to name a few - have provided their analysis of Horn of Africa.

viii When several anchorages are used this is specified
piracy and the land from which it has originated - Somalia.

Among the included studies the majority have focused on the wave of pirate attacks off the Horn of Africa between 2005 and 2012. Why did pirate groups begin operating on a large scale during this period? Who were they, and where in Somalia did they come from? What relationship did they have with the coastal communities at which hijacked vessels were held for ransom negotiations?

Exploration of the state of the art on Somali piracy is best-served by distinguishing between two compartments of the phenomenon; the pirate groups that engage in maritime predation, and the coastal community environment in which they operate from. Analysis of pirate groups can be differentiated by their organization; as highly-organized militia groups, or simple fishermen cabals. Analysis of the coastal environment may be differentiated by whether the activity is understood as beneficial or parasitical. These two type classifications can be configured as a four-part typology, seen in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1: Typology of pirate group - community interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High org.</th>
<th>Beneficial</th>
<th>Predatory Militia</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tsvetkova (2010)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percy &amp; Shortland (2010, 2013)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>De Groot &amp; Shortland (2010)</td>
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<td>Marchal (2011)</td>
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<td>Murphy (2011)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shortland (2012)</td>
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<td>Shortland &amp; Varese (2014)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Low org.</th>
<th>Parasitical</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Hero</strong></td>
<td>Samatar, Lindberg &amp; Mahayni (2010), Klein (2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Thief</strong></td>
<td>Hansen (2009)</td>
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</table>

The literature’s treatment of piracy may be organized into four categories, or types. These aren’t solid classifications, but approximations of the general understanding of piracy espoused by individual studies.

**Pirate State** studies view pirate groups as highly organized and with a generally beneficial effect on their surroundings. Pirate groups are supported due to the high riches and employment opportunities afforded. Moreover, most

18Several studies cited in the articles do not provide sufficient analysis on the investigative focus of this study to merit inclusion in the literature review. This is a reflection of the heterogeneity of the field, for better or worse.
studies classified in this category assess pirate group’s strength to be significant and on par with state forces. Indeed, several studies within the Pirate State type view state entities in Somalia as infiltrated by pirates. Predatory Militia studies are similarly inclined towards understanding pirate groups as highly organized. However, these studies do not view pirate group’s operations as beneficial to their surrounding environment. Rather, pirate groups appear parasitical. Local Hero studies view pirate groups as lowly organized, akin to fishermen cabals and similarly loosely-affiliated groups. However, pirate groups are beneficial to their surroundings, garnering widespread support for their activities.

This study places itself in the fourth type, Local Thief. The study proposes that pirate groups are parasitical towards their local environment. Simply put, pirate groups predate on their surroundings. However, pirate groups aren’t highly organized entities. While individual pirates may have bonds to organized criminal networks and state officials, Somali piracy is not organized crime. Pirate groups are formed and dissolved easily, and pirates may slip from being predators at sea to rejecting the life of armed robbery. Even long-term pirate groups operate as shareholder associations of individuals engaging on their own voluntary basis. Some pirate shareholders are more equal than others, but they do not exert a warlord, mafia-style hold on their colleagues as is commonly argued by Pirate State and Predatory Militia studies.

3.1 First Type: Pirate State

A substantial number of scholars view pirate groups in Somalia as highly organized. Pirate groups are also viewed as enjoying a wide support base because it is argued that the activity is, and is perceived, as being beneficial to its environment. Tsvetkova (2010) holds that Somali pirates ‘are supported by influential clans, by members of the TFG, by Somali society and certain types of business communities in neighbouring countries. Influential clans and political authorities, including the central government, are charged to be both benefactors, and by consequence supporters, of the hijacking industry off the Somali coastline.

These studies make some important assumptions about the origin of Somali piracy, and its position along the coastline. The view that piracy is a highly organized industry, even to the point of being actively sponsored by state entities, suggests that piracy in essence is a political economic business. Most Pirate State studies also view piracy as a projection of the non-anarchic situation on land. Somalia is not viewed as an area of ungoverned spaces, but rather a warlord arena ruled by ‘stationary bandits’, or mafia-style criminal organizations with close bonds to political elites. Menkhaus appears to have initiated this view with this warning that Puntland could develop into ‘a pirate version of a narco-state’.

Pham (2010) assesses that pirate groups have ’succeeded in making a wide

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*Tansitional Federal Government*
variety of individual stakeholders’ in the piracy business. While wealthy businessmen ‘reap the largest share’, ransom payments are also spread out to the rest of Somali society, resulting in a ‘widespread buy-in’ to piracy activities. Everyone gets a cut of the proceeds, including government officials and Islamist groups. Ransom monies also end up abroad, fuelling the real-estate sector in Nairobi’s Somali-dominated Eastleigh district. Along the coast ‘pirate havens’ like Eyl and Harardhere enjoy construction booms. Pirates have established local exchanges, allowing individuals an opportunity to invest in future pirate ventures. Pham also holds to piracy to be a multi-clan business, allowing groups to operate ‘all along’ the Somali coastline.

De Groot and Shortland (2010) similarly hold piracy to be dependent on ‘moderate order’, rather than ‘moderate disorder’. Neither state failure nor anarchy is conducive towards ‘any business’ establishment reason De Groot and Shortland. Pirates need stability, infrastructure and markets to transform ‘loot into cash’. Even illegal entrepreneurial activities like piracy that involve ‘production, storage or sale of goods’ require an environment for ‘contracting’. In an environment where the security situation is worsened, piracy is likely to decrease. Likewise, an environment moving towards a more ‘peaceful settlement’, including greater autonomy for Puntland, may move pirate groups ‘into their sweet spot’.

Percy and Shortland (2010) also argue that higher stability in Somalia will be better business for the pirates. Somali piracy is organized criminality, and operate akin to mafia-style extralegal groups in Sicily. In their dependence on a stable contracting environment and support from corrupt state officials, pirate groups will be ‘even more successful’ by formalizing their ties with institutions and ‘local leaders’. Piracy should be expected to become increasingly entrenched in local society. Percy and Shortland’s organic pirate state perspective on pirate groups also draw them to the conclusion that they do not ‘prey on members of the community’. ‘Piracy harms outsiders, not insiders’ as its victims ‘are all external to Somalia’. The implications of this assessment are that there are no significant incentives to end piracy among Somalia’s communities, nor a wish by state institutions to combat the rent-providing activities of pirate groups.

Marchal (2011) too notes that Somalis view pirates as ‘genuine nationalists’, fighting off the foreign theft of Somalia’s national resources. Pirates operate as local ‘Robin Hoods’, spreading the benefits of ransom payments and boosting ‘local real estate’ and ‘consumption’. Marchal sees piracy as a natural extension of local ‘economy of protection’, with roots in taxation (the duco tax) of vessels that transited off the coast.

Pirate groups alignment with their respective sub-clans have made them a significant military force in Puntland. Support from the community and state institutions rest on conscious efforts towards building up a solid support network. Marchal differentiates Puntland pirates from groups operating in central Somalia. Pirates from Harardhere and Hobyo have been organized on the basis of traditional local militias, the mooryaan. South Mudug groups ‘do not employ much in the way or strategy or tactic’, but spend heavily on khat.
(also spelled qaat) and donate ‘generously’ to kinsmen. Shortland also points to resilient features of pirate groups, noting their conspicuous spending of ransom monies, and their adherence to social norms that dictate sharing of the resource pie. A significant portion of ransom monies are converted into Somali shillings, benefiting a broad net of stakeholders including casual labour and pastoralists. The sheer scale of ransom payments, holds Shortland, likely contributes significantly to the economic development of Puntland. Shortland finds growth in the electricity consumption of Garowe and Bosaso since 2008, and links this to the growth-inducing effects of ransom payments. Piracy’s impact is both positive and widespread, and actions against pirate groups may undermine the area’s local development. In agreement with Percy and Shortland (2010), Shortland concludes that political elites are unlikely to move against pirates given their financial contribution. ‘A military crack-down’, assesses Shortland, ‘would deprive one of the world’s poorest nations of an important source of income and aggravate poverty.’

Percy and Shortland (2013) reiterate previous perspectives on the organized criminal nature of pirate groups. The mafia-style resiliency of pirate groups make them a problem that are ‘at best difficult and at worst impossible to control’. The strength of pirate groups allows them to increasingly ‘capture’ local authorities. Pirate groups operate hierarchically, evidenced in their non-violent conduct both internally and outwardly. The conscious support-building approach of pirate groups, assess Percy and Shortland, means that ‘its victims are not members of the community.’

Shortland and Varese (2014) explain piracy in terms of Protection Theory (PT), drawn from literature on organized crime. The authors build on the mafia-type understanding of piracy advocated by Percy and Shortland (2010, 2013). The criminal business of piracy depends on ‘protectors’. The decision to protect piracy or not depends on what other forms of income the protector might benefit from. Moreover, an increase in external challenges towards ‘protectors’, defined as ‘local political elites’, drives them to supply increased protection to pirate groups. Shortland and Varese essentially argue that political elites in Somalia have used piracy as a political and financial tool. ‘Protection money was paid’, they allude,

“(…) to people in the Puntland administration and was used to fund the election campaign of Abdirahman Farole for the presidency of Puntland.”

Pirates were ‘welcome in Eyl when they were needed to fund a political campaign’. When this political aim was achieved piracy activities stopped, ‘and the political pork-barrel process was used to improve the economic situation of the clan instead’ (Shortland and Varese 2014: 757).

A system of political protection has also been made by Murphy (2011). He explains the outbreak of organized piracy in 2005 in terms of protection from political elites. The pirate investor Mohamed Abdil Hassan ‘Afweyne’ is used as a centerpiece figure within this narrative. Murphy argues that Afweyne had
a close relationship to former president of Puntland, Abdulahi Yusuf Ahmed. After the outbreak of piracy in 2005, writes Murphy, pirated vessels seemed to 'interchange between Harardhere, Hoboyo [sic] and Eyl'. While Hobyo and Harardhere lie outside the territory of Puntland, and belong to the Hawiye clan\textsuperscript{84}, Murphy draws the conclusion that the upshot of pirate attacks in early 2005, combined with the ascension of Yusuf to Puntland’s highest office in January of that year, seem an unlikely coincidence.

Murphy also links the further entrenchment of pirate groups along the coast in 2007 and 2008 with 'some level of cooperation and collusion developed between the Puntland political leadership and the [Puntland] security forces'.\textsuperscript{85} The minister of fisheries in Puntland, Ahmed Saed Nur, admitted in September 2008 that Puntland’s security forces were involved in piracy. Significantly, Murphy also underlines how the authority of Musse Hersi 'Adde', president of Puntland between 2005 and 2008, was 'weakened because he was not a member of the Eyl sub-clan'. Piracy became, according to Murphy, the opposite of 'a fraternity hiding in the midst of an otherwise law-abiding society'. Rather, it 'constitutes a significant part of the society', even 'a way of life'.\textsuperscript{86}

3.2 Second Type: Predatory Militia

Predatory Militia studies are similarly inclined towards understanding pirate groups as highly organized. Two studies by Anning and Smith (2012) and Beloff (2013) neatly capture the arguments of this type. These two studies do not view pirate group as beneficial to their surrounding environment. Rather, pirate groups appear parasitical.

Anning and Smith (2012) view Somali piracy as a transnational network with 'powerful Godfathers' based in the Gulf states of the Arabian Peninsula. Beloff (2013) views pirate groups as powerful entities within Puntland, noting that 'many Puntland officials are even scared to cross paths with the pirate businesses in fear of assassination'.\textsuperscript{87} Beloff claims their tentacles spread over much of the socio-political landscape of Puntland, including 'clan leaders, warlords, and the Puntland Government'.

Most studies tie their view of a highly organized piracy business into a broader network of powerful vested interests. Beloff spins this on its head, arguing that pirate groups formed from underdeveloped coastal areas, and gained such a financial standing that they are influencing other authorities in the region.

Beloff differs from the Pirate State explanation, however, in that he explicitly notes the negative impact on local communities in Puntland. Rather than alleviate economic underdevelopment, piracy has exacerbated it. Anning and Smith also note how local communities are harmed by piracy. Yet the Predatory Militia analysis, in similar style to Pirate State explanations, runs into trouble based on the insistence of the powerful tentacles of pirate groups. Elevating pirate groups into an organized, influential network exposes

\textsuperscript{84}And not the Majerteen clan of Abdulahi Yusuf Ahmed
them to the problem of communal anti-piracy efforts where pirates have been expelled. If the pirate groups’ reach is so deep and broad why have they mostly disappeared?

3.3 Third Type: Local Hero

Klein (2013) reframes Somali piracy as a 'subsistence activity', and challenges the organized crime label assigned to Somali pirate groups. 'Piracy', argues Klein, 'is a profit oriented, criminal operation undertaken by organised groups, but that makes it no more a 'business' than burglary or bank robbery'.\(^{88}\) Klein also takes note of the 'supply driven' dimension of piracy, separating it from 'demand driven' criminal businesses like illicit drugs, weapons, counterfeit goods or human trafficking.\(^{89}\) In other words, a dissolution of piracy activities would not send 'out price signals for new providers to respond to'.\(^{90}\) Pirate recruits are volunteers, not soldiers. The contractual, consenting basis of piracy operations also points to another significant dimension of Somali piracy. Rather than financed by powerful warlords or foreign investors, funding for piracy operations often comes from local businessmen.\(^{91}\)

Where Klein departs from the Local Thief type is in his insistence on the local support towards piracy.\(^{92}\) Illegal fishing practices aren’t merely grievances, but also an accepted explanation that outweigh the criminal aspect of ransom piracy.

“However distorted the corrective action may appear to outsiders, among coastal communities but also within the diaspora, the memory of pirate fishing is an effective neutralisation strategy.”\(^{93}\)

Klein insists characterizations of pirates’ spending, such as expenditure on prostitutes, should be re-read as derogatory references to ‘independent women’. Piracy is re-defining the cultural norms amidst ‘a situation of economic collapse’.\(^{94}\) Despite presenting piracy, essentially, as an accepted activity Klein argues that investments into the fishing sector are a higher priority than a maritime security regime off the coast. Klein’s reading of piracy as an unsophisticated activity leads him to the conclusion that it may be dismantled on the basis of alternative economic opportunities, even if they are less lucrative than hijacking vessels. High deaths rates among pirates calls into question the mantra that piracy is ‘low risk, high yield’. It is a high risk, low yield enterprise committed by pirates in a milieu of desperation.\(^{95}\)

The Local Hero understanding of piracy is shared by Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni (2010). Pirate groups are the result of resistance against foreign fishing vessels plundering Somali seas. Piracy is committed by locals, and specifically by fishermen. Somali fishermen are akin to the ‘bewildered radical peasant’, resisting the maritime crimes inflicted by external groups. Pirates are viewed favorably in their local environment, and most Somalis, argue Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni, ‘are astonished and unimpressed when they hear of the troubles ransom pirates have created’\(^{96}\).
3.4 Fourth Type: Local Thief

This study places itself in the fourth classification, *Local Thief*. Piracy is a parasitical activity to their local environment, and pirate groups predate on its surroundings. However, pirate groups aren’t highly organized entities. While individual pirates may have bonds to organized criminal networks, piracy is not organized crime. Pirate groups are formed and dissolved easily, and pirates may easily slip from being predators at sea to rejecting the life of armed robbery. Even long-term pirate groups operate as shareholder associations of individuals engaging on their own voluntary basis. Some pirate shareholders are more equal than others, but they do not exert a warlord, mafia-style hold on their colleagues as is commonly argued by *Pirate State* and *Predatory Militia* studies. Finally, studies classified under the *Local Thief* type view pirate groups not as resilient, influential organizations, but are easily swayed by the quicksilver ebb and flow of local support and resistance. Notably, all authors classified under the *Local Thief* type have written studies that are based on field research and/or interviews with local inhabitants and pirates within Somalia.

Hansen (2009) describes the average band of pirates as a ‘clan-based, low-tech group, consisting of former fishermen’\(^{97}\). Pirates, argues Hansen, are decentralized and ‘far from the advanced structures suggested by many observers’\(^{98}\). Pirates primarily recruit on a clan-basis, and an interviewed Hobyo pirate admitted that ‘clan is crucial, without it you cannot organize anything’\(^{99}\). Most pirate groups are organized around two financial models; the single investor or a group of shareholders. The latter type of group is the most common, while single investor groups usually consist of businessmen from the ‘mid-level’ strata in Somalia. Or as Hansen puts it, ‘not a small member, but not a member of the large trading families of Somalia either’\(^{100}\). The shareholder model actually consists of two different types, one resembling a ‘share holding company’ of participating shareholder pirates and the other an arrangement of external fund raising to fund the pirate venture\(^{101}\). Notably, the latter type does not include investors actually participating in the pirate venture\(^{102}\). In the former, however, ‘everyone brings his own food and guns’\(^{103}\).

Gjelsvik and Bjørgo (2012) describe similar arrangements in their survey study of eleven ex-pirates\(^{104}\). A former pirate explained how his group consisted of former fishermen where one pirate was *elected* to act as leader. Pirates usually divide into two groups, with one half mandated to hunt for vessels at sea, while the other half remain on land. The latter group frequently guards the vessel once it has been brought to anchor near land\(^{105}\). Gjelsvik and Bjørgo also find that most pirate groups are clan-based ventures, but stress that ‘exit’, i.e. disengagement from a pirate group, was normally made on an individual and voluntary basis\(^{106}\).

‘Just as in legitimate business ventures’, argues Weldemichael (2012), Somali piracy is in part built on ‘primordial ties’\(^{107}\). Pirate groups’ repertoires for ‘leveraging’ local communities built on clan and family ties, as well bribes and threats of violence towards ‘local elders’\(^{108}\). Like Hansen (2009) and Gjelsvik and Bjørgo (2009), Weldemichael finds that pirates are rudimentary organized
groups with relatively low levels of loyalty to the 'pirate cause'. Weldemichael (2014) builds on his 2012 study, and examines the interaction of pirate groups with local communities. Weldemichael argues that piracy is highly parasitical, and that this predatory behaviour eventually proved self-destructive to the support and supply for pirate group operations along the coast.

As early as 2008 pirate groups began undercutting their position in the coastal communities they operated from. Weldemichael argues that pirates’ spending was generally reckless, and ransom cash disappeared as quickly as it had arrived. Pirates’ own spending typically involved ‘khat, alcohol and other luxuries like cars and women’. Pirates were quick to amass high levels of personal debt, even before the ransom payment had been paid. Substantial operating costs to service the pirates and the hostages led to high levels of borrowing. Most of these items were bought on credit offered by local businessmen and shop-owners. The hostage takers, notes Weldemichael, ‘themselves became hostages of their creditors’. Unservicable debt was typically a result of failed pirate ventures, or ransom payment negotiations dragging out over many months and even years. One pirate had amassed a personal debt of US$300,000, but was left unpaid after his victim Syrian crew of the North-Korean flagged vessel RV Rim had overpowered him and his pirate colleagues, and fled the anchorage at Garacad. Similarly, pirates that lost control of the MV Iceberg I after its freeing by Puntland’s Maritime Police Force (PMPF), had managed to incur debts upward of $2.5 million in the two and a half years since the hijacking (Weldemichael 2014: 16).

High debt and disagreements over ransom payment distribution frequently spurred episodes of violence, and ‘pirates started to double cross each others’. ‘Prices of basic consumer goods’, notes Weldemichael, ‘started to rise sharply in the aftermath of the explosion of ransom piracy’. The combination of pirates uninhibited spending-sprees, and profit-maximizing shop owners that operated along the coast or in the pirate-frequented inland towns of Galkaayo and Garowe, pressed the prices to extreme levels. Debt-ridden pirates (after failed ventures) and individuals seeking to partake in the riches of hijacking, appears to have led to chronic problems of theft in the coastal areas. Weldemichael notes how private goods and infrastructure was frequently targeted. An Eyl fisherwoman interviewed by Weldemichael explained how she lost a vessel to the pirates, and caught another group ‘pulling her boat behind her truck and driving fast through [Eyl] Bedey’.

Weldemichael (2014) challenges the claim that Somalis have benefited from piracy. Rather, local communities, and in Puntland in particular, inhabitants have ‘suffered under [the] heavy weight of piracy’. Despite viewing the rise of piracy in terms of local resistance against illegal fishing, Weldemichael argues that piracy activities were parasitical on the fishing sector. Weldemichael views piracy and fishing as inversely proportional. Local coastal livelihoods were destroyed by activities and prices of consumer goods skyrocketed. Legitimate businesses were ‘scared away’ too. Moreover, piracy activities led to a deterioration of the social fabric.

Moreover, Weldemichael shows how pirate groups were kicked out of many lo-
cal communities after they began organizing resistance. Anti-piracy movements on land were also crucially aided by local security forces. Notably, Weldemichael relates how respondents in the central Somali town of Galkaayo informed him that 'however heavily armed, pirates would not stand and fight five determined police officers who confront them'. Weldemichael therefore argues that pirate groups, while armed with both weapons and cash, appeared to dissolve easily in the face of minimal resistance. Pirate groups do not appear to be resilient cabals, or 'clubs'.

4 Contents of the Thesis

This thesis consists of four articles that feed the analysis of the broader research question. Each of the following articles provide different approaches to understanding the formation of pirate groups, the coastal environment in which pirates operate and the significant decline in piracy seen by mid-2015.

4.1 Chapter 5 - Maritime Predation off the Horn of Africa: Introducing Somali Piracy Dataset, 1991-2014

The article that constitutes Chapter 5 introduces the Somali Piracy Dataset (SPD). The dataset provides a comprehensive registry of all Somali piracy incidents between 1991 and 2014. Among the dataset variables are included whether or not a vessel was hijacked, the use of privately-contracted armed security personnel (PCASP), naval vessel interception and the coastal anchorages of hijacked vessels.

During his visit to the fishing village of Eyl in 2009, journalist Jay Bahadur took note of the fact that 'Each time I had attempted to establish a piracy timeline – whether through [pirate investor] Boyah, members of his gang, or the people of Eyl – the dates seemed to change'. Confusion as to dates and the number of pirate attacks is not confined to the inhabitants of Eyl. The literature on Somali piracy also contains confusion (even disagreement) as to dates and figures. This inconsistency in the literature as to the quantification of piratical incidents has important ramifications for our understanding of causality.

An oft repeated claim within the literature is that the period 2003-2005 saw the emergence of Somali piracy off central coastal region, in Mudug. According to von Keyserlingk ‘organised, profit-driven Somali piracy gained prominence’ in 2004. Similarly Marchal claims that the ‘area of Xarardhere’ in the central region was ‘already the cradle of piracy’ in the same time period. Hansen asserts that piracy arose in the area in 2003. These statements appear at odds with the number of registered incidents, and which suggests that incidents first increased dramatically in 2005.

Correct analysis of Somali piracy hinges on a clear understanding of the timing and perpetrators of attacks. To remedy this problem I construct and present a dataset on all piratical incidents between 1991 and 2014. The dataset
enables understanding of individual incidents and the general trend: including timing, attack location and anchorage of hijacked vessels.

The article also explores the proposed moderating variable of obstructability at sea. The obstructability term is inspired by Ross (2003): A resource’s ‘transportation can be easily blocked by a small number of individuals with few weapons’\textsuperscript{125}. I propose, in agreement with Hansen (2009) that pirate groups engage in low-technology ventures. ‘Simple equipment’ like scaling ladders (to board the vessel) and readily available weaponry like AK-47s and rocket-propelled grenade launchers (RPGs) are usually all it takes to pin down the bridge command of a vessel and attempt boarding, \textit{given that a vessel travels without protection}. With protection I propose that obstructability is low. Pirate groups will have significant difficulties boarding a vessel if they are countered by armed security. The study equates obstructability at sea with PCASP and naval vessels, and does not include other potential variables like weather conditions or daytime/nighttime\textsuperscript{xii}.

4.2 Chapter 6 - Bloodshed and Breaking Wave: The First Outbreak of Somali Piracy

The article constituting \textit{Chapter 6} is forthcoming as a revised version in the peer-review journal \textit{Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies} 43(2) (2015). It investigates the first outbreak of organized piracy in Somalia. The study shows how pirate groups were formed in an area of Somalia with a negligible history of maritime predation. Pirate groups in Harardhere and Hobyo were formed in an environment of high insecurity and extreme economic shock.

The broader theoretical underpinnings of this argument are worth detailing. I draw on literature on group mobilization and predatory behaviour to shed light on the formation of pirate groups along the coast of Somalia. According to Eckstein (1980), the decision to engage in rebellion is equally a question of timing as it is of motivation\textsuperscript{126}. Motivation alone may not be a sufficient vehicle of mobilization towards achieving a change. Individuals seeking a transformation of the environment they inhabit must overcome odds stacked in favor of the status quo\textsuperscript{127}. Oberschall (1978) points to the necessary ‘enabling environment’ which allows change to be feasible\textsuperscript{128}. Central to group mobilization is the ‘opportunity structure’\textsuperscript{129}. Will piracy occur where it is feasible? Or should the question be re-framed towards the temporal: will piracy occur \textit{when} it is feasible?

Feasibility and timing are two key dimensions with regard to the outbreak of organized piracy. Commenting on the spark of a rebellion Zartman (2005) assesses that ‘the political entrepreneurs can rarely - indeed never - mobilize an entire population’\textsuperscript{130}. I hypothesize that two conditions need to be fulfilled simultaneously for mobilization into organized piracy to occur: insecurity and economic shock.

\textsuperscript{xii}This is a limitation
Lind, Moene and Willumsen (2009) show how 'opium production is caused by violent conflicts'. The study challenges the traditional explanation for opium production that emphasizes 'drugs-for-arms strategies'. This explanation assumes 'centralized power within rebel organizations or governments, where strong men organize the growing of illegal substances to finance military campaigns'. Lind, Moene and Willumsen argue a 'reverse mechanism', conflict-induced narcotics production. The explanation reflects a view of fragmented power as opposed to hierarchical. 'Local producers and leaders', note Lind, Moene and Willumsen, react with narcotics production 'not because they want to hoard cash to buy arms, but because the production decisions reflect a new social and economic situation, and a shorter time horizon'. Opium cultivation for farmers in Afghanistan is therefore a natural response to a chronically insecure environment. A key feature of this explanation is that the environment for production has altered.

This study builds on the theoretical rationale of Lind, Moene and Willumsen (2009) to account for local recruitment into and support of organized piracy. Two key mechanisms are specified. The first mechanism specified is that of high and lasting insecurity. Violence and insecurity induces populations to 'ignore the law', and deviate from pre-existing social norms. 'Social stigma', Lind, Moene and Willumsen point out, 'vanishes [and] expected punishments decline'. A decline in institutions responsible for social sanctions has a direct impact on the perception of punishment.

The second mechanism specified is that of economic destruction, including financial harm and rapid physical, infrastructure deterioration. Sudden financial loss and debt incurrence have a direct impact on the ability to continue production activities. Secondly, destruction of physical capital and infrastructure changes the rationale of production. Percy and Shortland (2010, 2013) repeatedly present 'anarchy' or 'moderate disorder' (which appear two different classifications, although they are used interchangeably in the studies) as entirely detrimental to the 'business environment'. Yet, highly insecure and conflicted environments may open up new and creative opportunities for economic activities. Underdeveloped areas are prone to favor lootable resources due to their characteristics of unskilled labour and relatively scarce capital. The effect of these two forces is the creation of an environment where individuals and groups engage in activities which they 'otherwise would be reluctant to be involved' with.

The article tests the explanatory power of the insecurity and economic shock hypothesis on the outbreak of Somali piracy. More specifically, the argument tested is that pirate groups first formed in an extreme environment of violence and economic destruction, both conflict- and tsunami induced. Once the first pirate groups began operating, the simple financial premise of their predation became readily apparent. In what I coin the South Mudug piracy model, pirate ventures were launched to achieve a significant ransom payment. Ventures were

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xiii Opium is more drought resistant than wheat, the main alternative crop, and opium does not require road transportation; the study explains.
continued until a hijacking was made, after which the vessel was commandeered back to the coastline to begin negotiations for ransom payment of the crew and vessel. The key to the viral nature of the South Mudug piracy model is that it involved investments into new attacks, achieved by a partial or whole funding from previous ransom monies. This opened up a completely new environment for piracy, and solidified the pirates’ activities within the coastal areas.

4.3 Chapter 7 - Anti-Piracy in a Sea of Predation: The Interaction of Navies, Fishermen and Pirates off the Coast of Somalia

The article that constitutes Chapter 6 is forthcoming as a revised version in the peer-review journal *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* 12(1) (2016). The article investigates the interaction between local communities in central and northeast Somalia and naval vessels engaging in anti-piracy operations along the coast. The study builds on data presented in Chapter 4, showing how naval vessels were faced with a considerable maritime security problem by late 2010. The focus of the study is how naval vessels modified their approach in engaging pirate groups, as well as the coastal bases from which pirates operate.

The interaction of naval vessels and local communities has scarcely been researched. Moreover, while the illegal fishing problem has received considerable attention, research on the local maritime environment has remained poor and under-researched. Most notable is the lack of first-hand accounts on the environment, including testimonies from local inhabitants, fishermen and mariners operating in the areas along the coast. I argue that the illegal fishing narrative casts a veil on the maritime predation along the coast committed by local Somali stakeholders.

4.4 Chapter 8 - Thieves of Disorder: Pirate Networks and Pirated Communities in Puntland

Weldemichael’s (2014) examination of the local effects of piracy, primarily in Eyl and Garacad, remains the only one to date. The article that constitutes Chapter 8 builds upon Weldemichael’s study, and expands the analysis to areas north of Eyl, including Bandarbeyla, Gumbah and Bargaal. The study finds that coastal communities were active agents in turning the areas into pirate lairs. A significant segment of the populations appear to have tapped into organized piracy on some level. Once a critical mass of ransom payments began flowing in, even more investment into the activity was made. However, ransom monies were often spent quickly and extravagantly. Despite a significant amount of money pouring into local community pockets, very little was actually re-invested in durable goods or infrastructure.

The piracy economy that developed brought huge debt onto the communities involved, based on the general assumption that investment into a venture

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*xiv* The online version of the article will appear in Fall/Winter 2015
would result in a future profit. However, this assumption proved wrong as a high number of ventures failed to achieve a hijacking. Moreover, pirates that already had committed a hijacking were often quick to spend on credit, prior to the payment of ransom. The debt levels and insecurity of community households prior to the outbreak of organized piracy worsened. Local communities themselves became the victims of piracy. The evidence suggest that reactions began once (a) local businesses approached insolvency and (b) theft of local community public and private goods reached intolerable proportions.

Notes

1. Author’s interview, 21 April 2014
2. Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni 2010; Beri 2011; Marchal 2011; Otto 2011; Weldemichael 2012; Weldemichael 2014
3. Gerring 2007: 17
4. Goertz and Mahoney 2012: 89
5. eds. Collier and Brady 2010: 184
6. eds. Collier and Brady 2010: 185
7. eds. Collier and Brady 2010: 185
8. eds. Collier and Brady 2010: 187
10. Wood 2007: 125
11. Collier and Brady 2010: 195
12. Collier and Brady 2010: 195
14. Kapiszewski, MacLean and Read 2015: 1
15. Wood 2007: 125
16. Bleich and Pekkanen 2013: 87
17. ed. Mosley 2013: 145
18. eds. Mosley 2013: 145
20. Author’s conversation, 25 October 2013
21. Cammett 2013: 127
22. Bleich and Pekkanen 2013: 85
23. Adcock and Collier 2001: 529
25. Johnson 1724: 425
26. Adcock and Collier 2001: 531
27. UNCLOS 1982: 60-61
28. UNCLOS 2011: 60-61
29. Buhler 1999: 63
30. Harrelson 2010: 293
31. SUA 1992: 224
32. SUA 1992: 224
33. Harrelson 2010: 293
34. Harrelson 2010: 294
35. Gosse 1950: 337
36. Gosse 1950: 337
37. Harrelson 2010: 295
38. Harrelson 2010: 300
39. SUA 1992: 303
40. Potgieter and Schofield 2010: 94
References


[6] Author’s interview, member of Eyl district council, March 25a, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Muse’


[8] Author’s interview, Mayor of Eyl, Muse Osman Yusef, March 26, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Muse’


[14] Author’s interview, Bandarbeyla fisherman ‘Hiraad’, April 22, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Muse’


[16] Author’s interview, Garowe security analyst ‘Rashid’, August 23, 2014


[19] Author’s interview, Mayor of Gumbah, Mohamed Ahmed Musse Walow, September 6, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Isse’

[20] Author’s interview, Mayor of Qandala, Jama Mohamed Khurshe September 7, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Isse’

[21] Author’s interview, Garowe security analyst ‘Mussa’, September 17, 2014

[22] Author’s interview, Puntland official ‘Mahamed’, February 6, 2015


5 Maritime Predation off the Horn of Africa: Introducing Somali Piracy Dataset, 1991-2014

This article introduces the Somali Piracy Dataset (SPD), featuring all piracy incidents off the Horn of Africa in the period 1991 to 2014. The dataset provides a comprehensive quantitative overview of Somali piracy, including data on hijackings, the use of privately-contracted armed security personnel aboard vessels, naval vessel interceptions, and coastal anchorage of hijacked vessels. Dataset entries include the number of pirate vessels involved in attacks, type and identity of victim vessels, geocoded locations and ransom payment figures for hijacked vessels. The dataset tracks every piracy-related incident of Somali origin since 1991, thus providing a unique research tool for scholars and policymakers concerned with maritime predation and insecurity off the Horn of Africa.

Keywords: piracy; security; maritime predation; Somalia; Horn of Africa

5.1 Introduction

This study adds to the quantitative literature on Somali piracy (Hansen 2009, 2012; Shortland and Vothknecht 2011; Coggins 2012; Percy and Shortland 2009, 2013; Marchione, Johnson and Wilson 2014). Studies by Hansen (2009, 2012), Shortland and Vothknecht (2011), Percy and Shortland (2009, 2013) and Marchione, Johnson and Wilson (2014) offer quantitative data on select temporal periods. Coggins’ (2012) dataset on global piracy (2000-2009) remains the most exhaustive to date on the case of Somalia, and is the only introduced dataset. This study offers a complete and unique collection of all recorded pirate incidents off the Horn of Africa between 1991 and 2014. The dataset contains entries on all piracy incidents up to December 2014, providing unique insight into the current environment of Somali piracy. The dataset offers a systematic overview of attacks at sea, presence of naval vessels and privately-contracted armed security personnel (PCASP), anchorage of hijacked vessels and the Somali clan geography along the coast. The dataset can be used to address a number of questions pertaining to the dynamics of Somali maritime predation. For instance, how has piracy evolved since the collapse of the Somali state in 1991? In what maritime areas have pirates been active? From which land bases have they operated from? What effect has the presence of naval vessels and PCASP had on piracy? The first section introduces the dataset and explores its source material. The second section offers an overview of its descriptive statistics, and explores some potential applications of the dataset for future research.

5.2 The Dataset

The Somali Piracy Dataset (SPD) includes all entries of pirate incidents between 1991 and 2014 that are likely to be perpetrated by Somali actors. The
dataset was created using monthly and annual reports produced by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).\textsuperscript{14} This data was cross-checked with Anti-Shipping Activity Messages (ASAM) produced by the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGIA).\textsuperscript{15,16} The latter was of particular importance in supplementing data pertaining to the first decade of incidents.

The use of these two data sources offers an important complement to Coggin's (2012) 2000-2009 dataset, which builds on the publications of the International Maritime Bureau's (IMB) Piracy Reporting Center (PRC). As pointed out by Coggin, the data may underestimate piracy against small, local ships and personal vessels uninvolved in international trade and, therefore, unfamiliar with the IMB/PRC.\textsuperscript{17} Both the IMO and NGIA organizations, and the latter in particular, supplements their industry reporting with additional incident sources.\textsuperscript{1}

Two key considerations during the dataset creation was verifying the predatory nature of reported incidents, and establishing the identity of the perpetrators. What incidents may be labeled piracy? Did the perpetrators originate from Somalia? With regards to the former the dataset builds on the definition of piracy previously provided by the IMB's PRC, and cited by Coggin (2012).\textsuperscript{ii}

Piracy is,

"An act of boarding or attempting to board any ship with the apparent intent to commit theft or any other crime and with the apparent intent or capability to use force in the furtherance of that act." \textsuperscript{18}

This definition is useful because it does not discriminate between acts committed on the high or territorial seas, unlike UNCLOS (1982). Rather it is defined on the basis of the perpetrator's intent, and not vessel geography.

After identifying the act the identities of the perpetrators is identified. Particular care is taken to filter out incidents of Somali origin from those of other nationalities. Several incidents reported in the Gulf of Aden (GoA) and the Red Sea during the 1990s and early 2000s appear to have been committed by

\textsuperscript{1}NGIA’s entry, reference number '2005-216', on the hijacking of the MV Semlow is an instrumental example of their incident data (It builds on six different sources). The full entry is included to demonstrate level of detail in NGIA reports: "The general cargo ship (SEMLOW) was hijacked on 26 Jun, while underway in position 04:47.6 N, 048:12.0 E, off Hobyo. Hijackers are demanding $500,000 to free the vessel and ten crewmen. The vessel was under charter of the UN World Food Program (WFP) and is carrying 850 MT of rice, donated by Japan and Germany, destined for Bossaso, Somalia. On 12 Jul, the UN WFP director warned the pirates that if the vessel, crew, and cargo were not released within 48 hours, then the WFP would blacklist the area of Haradheere and Hobyo for the next 10 years. Mohamed Abdi Hassan, the leader of the group holding the vessel, denied they were demanding ransom but rather simply guarding the seas against illegal fishing and dumping of toxic waste, and impounded the vessel because of improper documentation, [...] This is likely the same militia group responsible for the attempted boarding of M/V (TIMBUCK) and successful hijacking of a LPG tanker back in April [...] After 18 days of captivity, the LPG tanker and crew were released, unharmed upon receipt of ransom payment. All vessels should heed the IMB warning to stay as far as practical from the eastern coast of Somalia, particularly in the area off Haradheere and Hobyo."

\textsuperscript{ii}Currently the IMB simply refers to UNCLOS (1982)
non-Somalis. Moreover, the study excludes incidents with descriptions leaning in the direction of smugglers and human traffickers, who in some instances have engaged in opportunistic attacks at sea during their trans-GoA operations (as reported by the above sources).\textsuperscript{19}

5.2.1 Variables

The dataset includes Somali pirate incidents between January 1991 and December 2014, shown in Figure 1. The dataset was systematized in Stata, and in-program software was used for projecting figures and tables available in this article.\textsuperscript{20,21,22,23,24}

Figure 5.1: Pirate attacks off the Horn of Africa, 1991-2014

\textsuperscript{19}Predation density in Figure 1 denotes the concentration of pirate incidents within a single hexagonal cell. The map region grid consists of 35461 valid (maritime) hexagonal cells, between a latitude range of 30.362845, 96.38658 and longitude range of -30.833502, 30.219506.

\textsuperscript{20}Map distances are provided in kilometers (km). 10 kilometers is equivalent to 0.6214 nautical miles (nm).
A total of 1166 incidents are included in the dataset. Each pirate incident is provided a unique identification number. Every incident is coded as (0) for a non-threatening approach or (1) for a threatening approach. This study does not follow previous use in piracy literature that distinguishes between approach and attack as there are too many incidents where it is impossible to independently distinguish between the two in the reported data. Lacking data to specify this difference, any approach that is coded as threatening is subsequently referred to as a pirate attack in this article. Because it does not distinguish between the two this dataset may overreport the number of attacks. Likewise, other datasets may underreport the number of attacks.

When possible the nationality and type of victim vessel is provided. Victim vessels are distinguished according to their type: (1) yacht, (2) dhow, (3) fishing, (4) cargo, (5) bulk carrier, (6) special, (7) chemical tanker, (8) product tanker, (9) gas carrier, (10) vehicle carrier, (11) tug and (12) naval. Missing vessel type is coded as (-9). In every entry the presence or absence of privately-contracted armed security personnel is provided. This also includes the relatively few instances of onboard state security personnel. For every geo-coded incident I have measured the distance to land in nautical miles (nm). This measurement is built on the standard of tracing the minimum distance between the geo-coded location (incident) and the closest geographical point in central or northeast Somalia. Why have I chosen this method? Only a fraction of all piracy incidents have originated from southern and northwest Somalia. For the very few hijackings that have been committed the distance is measured to the relevant coastline. However, it makes little sense to trace the distances from the southern tip of Somalia when the acts are perpetrated by pirates operating from the central South Mudug region, as is nearly always the case for sub-equatorial attacks (see Figure 6). Again, disqualifying the southern and northwestern regions of Somalia may overstate the number of attacks originating from the central and northeast regions. However, based on the distribution of hijacked vessels I conclude that any exaggeration is slim and within an acceptable degree of measurement error.

5.3 Descriptive Statistics

The number of pirate incidents per year are reported in Table 4.1. As apparent from Table 4.1, the years 1991 to 2004 saw only a handful of pirate incidents per year. 2005 sees a sudden uptake in incidents, totaling 42. A brief hiatus in the escalation of piracy occurs in 2006. After 2007 the number of incidents increases every year until 2011. This year sees a record number of incidents off the Horn of Africa. The years 2012 to 2014 witness a clear reversal in the number of incidents. Table 4.1 shows how over 20 percent of all pirate incidents...
resulted in a piratical hijacking in the period 1991 to 2014. Most incidents involve predation by 1 or 2 pirate vessels.

Table 5.1: Descriptive statistics (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>10.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>18.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>19.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>23.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>8.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0) Approach</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Attack</td>
<td>1074</td>
<td>96.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hijack</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0) No hijack</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>78.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Hijack</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>21.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.2: Descriptive statistics (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of pirate vessels per incident</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) 1 pirate vessel</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>49.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) 2 pirate vessels</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>32.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) 3 pirate vessels</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>11.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) 4 pirate vessels</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) 5 pirate vessels</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) 6 pirate vessels</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) 7 pirate vessels</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) 8 pirate vessels</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) 9 pirate vessels</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) 10 pirate vessels</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The variable warship in Table 4.3 defines the presence or absence of a (military and/or coast guard) naval vessel that has an impact on the outcome of the pirates’ aggression. Arriving warships that do not change the outcome of a previously hijacked (or already safe) vessel are not counted as present. Put differently, the presence of a warship indicates that it has been within close vicinity during an incident, or that it has effected a different outcome (for example freeing the crew) on a vessel that was hijacked prior to its intervention. The presence of privately-contracted armed security personnel (PCASP) counts any presence of onboard guards (including those hired from sovereign states). Since 1991 a total of 162 warships were present during the incident. The number is somewhat higher for PCASP, which amounts to their presence during 208 piracy incidents.

Table 4.3 shows the frequency of predation committed against different types of vessels. Cargo vessels, bulk carriers, tankers and yachts constitute the most common victim of Somali pirates. The latter number is peculiar in relation to other lesser vessels such as dhows and fishing trawlers. Why are so many yachts attacked by pirates in comparison to dhows and trawlers? Both have low freeboards (just as yachts do), move at relatively low speeds, and present an easier target than chemical and product tankers. Perhaps yachts are seen as more lucrative targets for looting and in the potential ransom value of its crew.

Moreover, both are common vessels in the Gulf of Aden, the Arabian Sea and Somali basin. Indeed, this figure may suggest underreporting by both dhows and fishing trawlers.\(^\text{vii}\)

\(^{vii}\) Underreporting by fishing vessels may potentially be explained by illegal activities within Somali territorial waters. I specify territorial waters because Somalia did not possess a recognized Exclusive Economic Zone until 2014.
## Table 5.3: Descriptive statistics (3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Warship</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0) No warship intervening</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>84.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Warship intervening</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>14.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1113</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PCASP</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0) No PCASP present</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>81.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) PCASP present</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>18.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1117</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Victim vessel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Yacht</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>19.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Dhow</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Fishing</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>6.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Cargo</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>22.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Bulk carrier</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>17.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Special</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Chemical tanker</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>8.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Product tanker</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>16.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Gas carrier</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Vehicle carrier</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) Tug</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) Naval (warship)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1126</td>
<td>96.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.1 Pre-2005 piracy

Figure 4.2 shows all geocoded hijackings between 1991 and 2004 off the Somali coastline. This period is characterized by infrequent hijackings and an apparent randomness in anchorage of hijacked vessels. Hijacked vessels are brought to Eyl, Bosaso, Bolimoog, Ras Hafun, Kismaayo, Geesaley, Xabo, Bereeda, Bargaal, Garacad, El Maan, Mogadishu and Barawe. These anchorages are spread relatively uniformly across the temporal range. Most of these anchorages hosted a maximum of two vessels between 1991 and 2004, with the exception of Eyl (four registered vessels) and Bosaso (three registered vessels).

Figure 5.2: Hijackings off the Horn of Africa, 1991-2004

The period 2005 to 2007 shows a clear break from preceding years. Approximately the same amount of vessels were captured and commandeered to the Somali coastline during these three years as were in the entire period between 1991 to 2004. Figure 4.3 shows the significant shift in geographical location of pirate attacks during the 2005 to 2007 outbreak.
Nearly all hijacked vessels were captured by pirate groups operating from Harardhere and Hobyo in Somalia’s central South Mudug coastline, an area with no previous history of maritime predation. At least twenty-one vessels are brought to Harardhere (fifteen registered vessels) and Hobyo (six registered vessels), whereas a small minority are distributed between Kismaayo (three, of which all were captured in the same attack), Eyl, Xiis (a village in northwest Somalia - in the territory of the self-declared independent State of Somaliland) and Barawe.

5.3.2 Anchorage of Hijacked Vessels

Two innovations of the Somali Piracy Dataset is the inclusion of the anchorage of hijacked vessels and the clan identity of individual coastal communities. This allows researchers to follow in much closer detail the activities of individual pirate anchorages. Table 4.4 shows how piracy has clustered around a handful of anchorages, where the four coastal villages of Eyl, Garacad, Hobyo and Harardhere have clearly dominated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Xiis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Laasqooray</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Bosaso</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Qandala</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Dhurbo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Bandar Murcaayo</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Geesaley</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Xabo</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Bolimoog (Ras Filuk)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Aula</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) Bereeda</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) Tooxin</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) Bargaal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
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<td>(14) Ras Binnah</td>
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<td>3.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>(15) Hurdiyo</td>
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<tr>
<td>(16) Ras Hafun</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(17) Hul Anod</td>
<td>0*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(18) Aris</td>
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<td>(19) Bandarbeyla</td>
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<td>(20) Eyl</td>
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<td>20.33</td>
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<td>(21) Garacad</td>
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<td>(22) Dinowda Digdigley</td>
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<td>1.65</td>
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<td>(23) Ceel Dhahanaan</td>
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<td>(24) Hobyo</td>
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<td>13.74</td>
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<td>(25) Harardhere</td>
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<td>25.82</td>
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<td>(26) Mereeg</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(27) El Maan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(28) Mogadishu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(29) Barawe</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(30) Merca</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(31) Kismaayo</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4 shows the frequency and percentage of anchorages with regards to clan territory\textsuperscript{viii}. The three sub-clans Haber Gedir, Omar Mahamoud and Isse Mahamoud are overrepresented in the piracy statistics, compared to other sizeable and neighbouring sub-clans like Osman Mahamoud and Warsangeli. The Haber Gedir are a sub-clan of the Hawiye, which dominate central Somalia and the territory around Mogadishu. The Omar Mahamoud and Isse Mahamoud are both sub-clans of the Majerteen, which dominates northeast Somalia.

Table 5.5: Descriptive statistics (5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clan area of anchorage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Haber Gedir</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>41.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Omar Mahamoud</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Isse Mahamoud</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>21.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Osman Mahamoud</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Neutral (Heterogenous)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Ali Suleiman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Siwaqroon</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Other clan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{viii} Asterisk (*) for Hul Anod as the village has hosted at least two vessels. However these vessels have only been at anchor for a short time before being moved further north to the area between Ras Hafun and Ras Binnah. Indeed, for several of the vessels the sub-clan identity of the territory it was reportedly brought to has been noted in the dataset, but the specific anchorage hasn’t

Vessels taken to anchorages in Puntland have mostly been hijacked in the Gulf of Aden, as well as the Arabian Sea, Red Sea and areas off the north-east coast (see Figure 4.4). Despite lying almost as far south as Hobyo and Haradrhere, Garacad has predominantly hosted vessels captured above the 6th parallel north. This is most likely due to the fact that the Omar Mahamoud that inhabits Garacad is part of the Majerteen clan (which inhabit the territory north of Garacad, but not further south of it). Hobyo and Harardhere pirate groups are much more likely to predate in the Western Indian Ocean (as opposed to the Red Sea or Gulf of Aden) and below the 6th parallel north (see Figure 4.5).
Figure 5.4: Hijackings by Puntland pirates, 1991-2012
South Mudug pirate groups are notable in the longevity of their operations. Groups based in Harardhere and Hobyo have acquired ransom payments on a consistent yearly basis since early 2005. The descriptive statistics for the variable ransom reveals that Hobyo and Harardhere have acquired at least US$157.09 million in ransom payments, accounting for 45 percent of the total ransom figure in the dataset. However, this figure may be substantially higher on account of the number of missing observations (N=124) for ransom payments.

A second notable feature is the geographical extent of their operations. The high correlation between hijacked vessels captured below the 6th parallel north and the anchorages of Hobyo and Harardhere strongly implies their responsibility for a significant majority of pirate attacks in the greater Western Indian Ocean.
South Mudug pirates have, in relation to their Puntland counterparts, engaged in attacks across a significant area of the Western Indian Ocean. A majority of the long-distance attacks occurred in a relatively brief period between late 2010 and early 2011, maxing out at 2200 nautical miles.

5.3.3 Naval Vessel and PCASP Presence

Nautical vessels have intervened during 162 pirate incidents in the period 1991 to 2014, with most occurring subsequent to the initiation of major counter-piracy operations in 2008. The kernel density estimate in Figure 4.7 is useful towards modelling the relative frequency of naval vessel positions. As evident, naval vessels have mostly patrolled the Gulf of Aden, the Strait of Bab al-Mandeb, the Arabian Sea and the Strait of Hormuz. Far less incidents have involved naval vessel presence in areas further south in the Western Indian Ocean. Pirate groups run a lower risk of running into naval vessels in the Mozambique Channel, the Seychelles archipelago and the expanse of water east of Madagascar. A curious observation is the scarcity of recorded incidents involving naval vessels
between the 5th and 2nd parallel north, extending from Somalia’s central South Mudug region. Evidently, not a single pirate attack has been averted by naval vessels in the predation area directly east of the South Mudug region, extending as far as the Eastern Indian Ocean (see Figure 4.6 for reference). The effect of privately-contracted armed security personnel (PCASP) is easier to gauge.

Figure 5.7: Kernel density estimate of naval vessel positions, 1991-2014

Potgieter and Schofield (2010) argue that a shift in attacks from the Gulf of Aden to the Western Indian Ocean significantly worsened the likelihood of catching pirates. Falling rates in the vast expanse of the Western Indian Ocean, maintains Murphy (2011), cannot be explained by the presence of a few naval patrol vessels.\textsuperscript{24} Von Keyserlingk (2012) suggests that naval vessel presence in the Gulf of Aden simply had a ‘balloon effect’ on pirate attacks, shifting the operational area of pirates rather than supressing their activities.\textsuperscript{25} Moreover, naval activities in the Gulf of Aden may have pushed pirates towards enhancing their ‘organisational and operational methods’, making them more adaptable, versatile and resilient.\textsuperscript{26} Percy and Shortland (2013) also suggest that the continuation of pirate attacks since 2009 signalled the non-deterrence of naval
vessels. Pirates didn’t appear to be on the losing end amidst an increase in the geographical scope of operations.\textsuperscript{27} The Somali Piracy Dataset (SPD) can offer important insight into several of these questions. To what extent is the proposed ‘balloon effect’ from the Gulf of Aden and into the Western Indian Ocean a valid characterization? May we differentiate changes in piracy operational areas and attack patterns between individual anchorages? Were pirate attacks more or less likely to lead to a hijacking in areas outside the main patrol corridor in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea? There have been zero hijackings of vessels with PCASP aboard, implying a significant role played by armed guards in reducing the number of piratical captures in the last few years.

5.4 Conclusion

As a comprehensive record on all pirate incidents between 1991 and 2014 the Somali Piracy Dataset (SPD) offers a unique tool in the study of maritime predation off the coast of Somalia. The dataset allows scholars, researchers and policy-makers new and systematic insight into maritime predation by Somali pirate groups.

Other aspects of piracy activities are not captured by the dataset, highlighting the need for caution towards overreliance on incident data alone. The Somali Piracy Dataset cannot capture interdiction efforts by naval vessels occurring outside pirate attacks. This is particularly relevant to the feature of naval vessel absence between the 5th and 2nd parallel north. Naval vessel positions recorded in the entries may not correctly proxy the extent of activities in the area as it does not capture the interdiction rates of pirate vessels (including motherships). Neither does the dataset quantify communication and interaction between naval vessels and Somali coastline. Simply put; the recorded entries are all reactionary data, excluding measures taken by vessels in monitoring the periods preceding planned pirate campaigns.

Notes

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{1} Shortland and Vothknecht 2011
\textsuperscript{2} Coggins 2012
\textsuperscript{3} Hansen 2009
\textsuperscript{4} Hansen 2012
\textsuperscript{5} Percy and Shortland 2009
\textsuperscript{6} Percy and Shortland 2013
\textsuperscript{7} Marchione, Johnson and Wilson 2014
\textsuperscript{8} Piracy incidents in 1991-2008 in Hansen 2009
\textsuperscript{9} Piracy incidents in 1991-2011 in Hansen, 2012
\textsuperscript{10} Piracy incidents in 2008-2010 in Shortland and Vothknecht 2011
\textsuperscript{11} Piracy incidents in 2000-2011 in Percy and Shortland 2013
\textsuperscript{12} Piracy incidents in 2010 in Marchione, Johnson and Wilson 2014
\textsuperscript{13} Coggins 2012
\textsuperscript{14} IMO 1992-2014
\textsuperscript{15} IMO 1992-2014
\textsuperscript{16} NGIA 1989-2014
\textsuperscript{17} Coggins 2012: 606
References


6 Bloodshed And Breaking Wave - The First Outbreak Of Somali Piracy

Ten years ago Somalia suffered its first outbreak of piracy. In early 2005 pirates began appearing hundreds of nautical miles out at sea, attacking and hijacking vessels off the shores of central Somalia. However, the circumstances of this outbreak remain poorly understood. Why did these pirate groups originate from an area with a negligible history of maritime predation? This study explores the environment in which Somalia’s first outbreak of piracy occurred, and offers a critical re-think of its origins. Drawing on the author’s own extensive fieldwork as well as contemporary reports, the study shows how pirate ventures were launched after the December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami had obliterated the coastal economy. The tsunami coincided with the eruption of a deadly and highly destabilizing conflict, unprecedented for an area of Somalia that had remained relatively peaceful since the state collapse in 1991. The establishment of the South Mudug piracy model in Harardhere and Hobyo in 2005 laid the foundation for a decade of ransom piracy.

Keywords: Piracy; Conflict; Tsunami; Somalia; Horn of Africa

6.1 Introduction

In 2005 the number of pirate attacks off the Horn of Africa increased dramatically. Pirates began appearing hundreds of nautical miles off the eastern coast of Somalia, preying on vessels in the Indian Ocean. This new attack pattern represented a significant change from prior years, when pirate attacks had been sporadic and opportunistic. In earlier years attacks were limited to the coastal areas of the Gulf of Aden and the southern coast, and the anchorage of hijacked vessels was never focused off one village. Indeed, in the period between 1991 and 2004 piracy appears distinctly irregular, suggesting the absence of any groups purely dedicated to piracy. However, in 2005 newly-formed pirate groups launched repeated attacks against vessels passing the Horn of Africa. Captured vessels were commandeered to the South Mudug coastline, where pirate groups negotiated a ransom payment for vessel and crew. But why did ‘blue water’ piracy, defined in this study as distances of more than two hundred nautical miles from the coast, suddenly occur off an area of Somalia with a negligible history of maritime predation?

The outbreak of piracy in 2005 is a hitherto poorly understood phenomenon. Previous studies addressing the outbreak have linked it to the stability of central Somalia in 2005. However, the assumption of a stable and peaceful region has never been properly tested. Nor have previous studies soberly considered the local economic

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1This article is forthcoming in a revised version in the peer-review journal *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies* 43(2) (2015)
and security situation in central Somalia prior to and during the outbreak. This study offers a critical re-think of the outbreak of piracy. Pirate groups formed in a region plagued by a profound breakdown of security and significant disruptions to economic activity. Between 2004 and 2006 Somalia’s central South Mudug region was experiencing a destabilizing and deadly conflict, unprecedented in scope for a coastal area that had remained relatively peaceful since the state collapse in 1991. The conflict coincided with the December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, which wiped out the fishing sector in the South Mudug coastal villages of Hobyo and Harardhere.

The context of the 2005 outbreak of piracy is explored through new fieldwork material from central and northeast Somalia. Data collected through the author’s interviews and observations with and of local government officials, fishermen, and inhabitants from Harardhere, Hobyo, Garacad, Eyl, Bandarbayla and Aris re-thinks the first outbreak of piracy in Somalia. The study offers a review of piracy statistics off the Horn of Africa for the period 1991 to 2007, based on the author’s dataset on registered pirate incidents reported by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGIA). New data is provided from contemporary reports, shedding light on the socioeconomic and security environment along Somalia’s central and northeast coastline. Moreover, the study presents a comprehensive assessment of the impact and aftermath of the December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

The first section of the study examines the statistics for Somali piracy between 1991 and 2004, and shows how pirate groups never appear to have organized at any point during this period. The second section examines the timing of the 2005 escalation off Somalia’s central South Mudug region. The third section explores the hitherto obscure South Mudug conflict, revealing how it destabilized and marginalized the coastal villages of Hobyo and Harardhere. The fourth section examines the impact of the December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, and investigates its role in breaking down the coastal economy of northeast and central Somalia. The fifth section of analysis examines the escalation of piracy in 2005 and the establishment of the South Mudug piracy model. The study makes an explicit link between former fishing companies and new pirate ventures. The sixth section explains why the security and economic environment from 2005 and onwards was conducive to such a development in South Mudug. It also explains the break and subsequent re-emergence of pirate attacks between 2006 and 2007. Finally, the study explores the continuation and escalation of piracy after 2007, notably along Puntland’s coast. The study concludes with recommendations for future research within the field.

6.2 Irregular Piracy, 1991-2014

The following section explores the extent of piracy activities along Somalia’s coastline prior to 2005. The sudden and unequivocal collapse of the state in 1991 ushered Somalia into civil war. Yet the absence of a state did not equal an age of piracy. Indeed, there were as many hijackings between 2005 and 2007 as there were in the entire period between 1991 and 2004. Understanding why
piracy became a qualitatively different beast in 2005 is contingent on recognizing the irregularity of piracy in the preceding fourteen years. Pirate attacks were infrequent and opportunistic prior to 2005, and quite distinct from the organized and highly repetitive attack patterns observed from 2005 and onwards.ii

Indeed the first hijacking, of the vessel MV Naviluck, occurred as early as January 12th 1991. However the second did not take place until September 9th 1994, with the capture of the MV Bonsella. Between 1994 and 2004 there were thirty-two hijackings, and most occurred along the northeast coastline.5 Yet despite witnessing the daily traffic of one of the busiest shipping lanes on the planet, coastal northeast villages such as Xabo, Bolimoog and Alula hosted few pirate attacks in the 1990s and early 2000s. When attacks occurred from these areas they did so not due to the presence of organized pirate groups, but due to opportunistic chance.

Arguably, the defining characteristic of hijacked vessels in the period 1991 to 2004 is that they were slowly-moving and hugging the coastline. Most victims were by the nature of their vessels especially vulnerable to predation, and were commonly fishing vessels, dhows, yachts or lesser cargo vessels with modest maximum speeds and low freeboards.6 In this period there is never any concentration in time of attacks from one village. Rather, attacks are scattered somewhat randomly across several villages. When vessels were hijacked some were simply looted. Other vessels like the German-owned yacht Bambola appear to have been a misfortunate victim of opportunistic human traffickers crossing the Gulf of Aden. Many of the reports of pirate approaches have later been ascribed to human traffickers and smugglers. Others appear paramilitary in identity, and in 2001 the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency noted how repeated incidents were reported near islands in the southern Red Sea, subject to a dispute between Eritrea and Yemen.7 Indeed, a majority of the incidents in the Gulf of Aden that were reported in the late 1990s and early 2000s occurred close to the Yemeni coastline, where Yemeni paramilitaries have repeatedly operated to interdict smugglers.89

Eleven of the thirty-four vessels hijacked by Somali pirates between 1991 and 2004 were fishing trawlers and represent roughly a third of all hijackings.10 Recorded and anecdotal evidence of the level of illegal fishing in the 1990s are fragmentary, but the fishing defense narrative might hold some truth.11 Woldemichael ties piracy to general armed resistance by fishermen against a combination of the dumping of toxic and hazardous waste by foreign vessels, and towards illegal and unregulated fishing by Asian and European trawlers.12 According to Woldemichael the dumping of waste materials evoked ‘strong feelings among Somalis’, legitimizing a backlash.13 Murphy also contends that defensive piracy was committed by aggrieved local fishermen attempting to stave off foreign fishing vessels.14 Yet while fishing vessels figure more prominently than others, this narrative does not sit entirely well with the statistics.15

iiSee figure 7.1
The first two hijackings off Somalia were committed against non-fishing vessels. In fact, none of the first five incidents that are recorded between 1991 and 1994, including approaches, attempts and hijackings, were made against fishing trawlers.\(^{18}\) Moreover, the eleven fishing trawlers that were hijacked were also distributed relatively evenly across time.\(^{20}\) Marchal claims that when foreign fishing trawlers began arming themselves, local fishermen were forced to hire militia.\(^{21}\) Murphy and Weldemichael contend that fishermen purportedly received help already in the early 1990s from former coastguards.\(^{22}\) They captured trawlers that were illegally fishing within a few nautical miles from the coast.\(^{23}\) Such defensive attacks are what Weldemichael describes as a “legitimate local response that went awry.”\(^{24}\)

Moreover, there are reports of clan militias engaging in piracy by ‘taxation’.\(^{25}\) In 1997 the Taiwanese-flagged trawler MV Shen Kno II was captured by the Somali Salvation Democratic Front, the political organization that represented the Majerteen clan. The militia managed to extract USD800,000 for the ship’s release.\(^{26}\) Such instances have prompted the suggestion that the Majerteen clan has profited from a taxation regime due to its close proximity to international shipping lanes. This explanation ties into historical regimes of protection money that have existed in Somalia.\(^{27,28}\) However this appears too simplistic, and it doesn’t provide a satisfying account for the timing of organized piracy.

It also fails to explain why proximate sub-clans in the northeast like the Ali Suleiman, the Siwaqroon and the Osman Mahamoud numerically have been underrepresented in the piracy business. There is a discrepancy with this narrative in that piracy has been infrequent in villages like Xabo, Bereeda, Gumbah and Hurdiyo. This area, spanning the arc of Cape Guardafui, contains the richest
marine habitat off the Somali coastline. Here an upwelling of cold, nutrient-rich currents produces a particularly favorable environment for marine life. Fishermen’s complaints against illegal fishing have been vociferous, but these complaints did not translate into organized piracy in the 1990s nor in the early 2000s.

Another variant of the fishing defence narrative points to the role of coast guard ventures between 1998 and 2004. Coast guard activities and recruitment are argued to have facilitated the professionalization of maritime predation off Somalia. The coast guard argument builds, in part, on the illegal fishing narrative and the protection of maritime resources. Murphy explains how Puntland’s first president, Abdulahi Yusuf, established the Puntland International Development Company (PIDC) in mid-1999. The company was handed exclusive management of Puntland’s maritime resources, and in September 1999 they formed an agreement with the security company Hart Nimrod, establishing a maritime security force to enforce the oversight and protection of Puntland’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

In January 2000 the State of Puntland declared that all further fishing activities by foreign vessels was contingent on their possession of a valid fishing licence. Equipped with a single trawler converted into a patrol vessel, the Hart Nimrod-led maritime security force was tasked with patrolling an estimated 160,000 square kilometres of sea area. However, the company only caught one single fishing vessel, the Spanish-owned Albaco Cuatro, before its operations ceased in 2001. The basis of dissolving the venture remains unclear, although Murphy argues that it wasn’t lucrative enough for neither the administration nor Hart Nimrod. Yet in 2002 the Abdulahi Yusuf administration decided to form a new joint venture with the Somalia-Canadian owned company SomCan. SomCan boasted, according to Bahadur, a small fleet of six patrol vessels and a force of six hundred marines. The company appeared to take the sale and enforcement of fishing licences one step further, developing a model akin to a ‘maritime protection racket’.

Bahadur, Marchal and (in part) Murphy trace the formation of pirate groups to ‘these failed coast-guarding experiments; with few other opportunities for their skills, many ex-coast guard recruits turned to piracy’. Additionally, underlines Bahadur, ‘SomCan actively defended both foreign and domestic ‘licensed’ fishing vessels from local fishermen’. Anti-illegal fishing grievances were in this way fuelled by the Hart Nimrod and SomCan operations as they were little more than ‘private militia for the protection of commercial trawlers in possession of ‘fishing licences’.

A single incident, pertaining to the Thailand-owned fishing trawler Sirichainava 12, is frequently used as evidence. The Sirichainava 12 was seized on March 16th 2005, and is described by several studies as a hijacking. Whether it qualifies in line with conventional Somali piracy hijackings is an interesting question as it was seized by its own protection crew, employees of SomCan, who apparently were ‘provoked by the non-payment of

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\(iv\) Corresponding to the State of Puntland’s claimed Economic Exclusive Zone

\(v\) Although Murphy, to his credit, allows for some uncertainty
[their] monthly [USD]200 salary.' After seizing the vessel the employees demanded a fee of USD800,000 for its release.

In pointing to an amalgamation of protection rackets, predatory ex-security personnel and aggrieved fishermen the coast guard hypothesis presents a luscious narrative. Yet several core elements of the hypothesis look speculative and incoherent upon closer inspection. Firstly, protection rackets involving foreign illegal fishing trawlers were in existence in Puntland throughout the 1990s and the late 1980s. Smuggling, trafficking and protection of foreign vessels has in particular been practiced in Puntland’s Bari region, by the Ali Suleiman and Siwaqroon sub-clans in Qandala, Xabo and Alula along the Gulf of Aden coastline. These networks are still in existence. The Ali Suleiman clan, and notably the Biciidyahan and Awlyahan sub-clans within this clan, is noted for its dominance of fishing protection rackets. The author of this study witnessed first-hand in 2013 that Iranian fishing vessels, operating within Somali territorial waters, used privately contracted armed security personnel (PCASP) from Qandala. The coast guard hypothesis speculates that these same protection rackets fuelled the escalation of piracy. With regards to a mechanism even the motive appears tenuous. Moreover, reviewing the evidence on piracy activities suggests no such development. The period 1991 to 2004, and even 2005 to 2007, sees a continuity of irregular, unorganized piracy in Puntland. Regarding a verdict on this dimension of the hypothesis; the mechanism is ambiguous, and the effect is not observable.

Figure 6.2: Anchorage of hijacked vessels, 2005-2007
This ties into another dimension of the hypothesis; generally assuming that because some Puntland-based pirates were previously employed as coast guards, they also by consequence functioned as the pioneers of the earliest pirate groups. The assumption relies heavily on incidents such as the seizure of the Thailand-flagged fishing trawler Sirichainava 12. While this specifies a mechanism, the effect is absent, or at least not observable. Figure 2, showing the anchorage of hijacked vessels between 2005 and 2007, does not suggest that the Sirichainava 12 initiated a string of Puntland-based hijackings. Whereas Harardhere- and Hobyo-based pirates achieved a steady stream of hijackings over the two-year period, other anchorages (including Eyl) along the Puntland coastline exhibit the same irregular pattern that existed since 1991.\textsuperscript{vi} The third dimension of the hypothesis worth exploring is the attempt to reconcile its narrative with that of Hansen’s explanation for the outbreak of piracy. The next section explores this dimension in further detail.

6.3 Timing Of South Mudug Piracy

Current understanding of the origin of organized piracy in Somalia has been hampered by incautious treatment of the timing of the escalation. Neglectful demarcation of individual years have germinated into an ambiguous understanding of when, and by consequence how and why, Somalia suffered its first outbreak of piracy. This negligence has been the most obvious in the analysis of the appearance of pirate groups in Somalia’s South Mudug region.

Bahadur, Marchal and Murphy frequently reference Hansen with regards to the escalation of Somali piracy, yet the latter’s own study does not explicitly point to the coast guard narrative. Rather, Hansen’s seminal study on Somali piracy makes that argument that piracy before and after the outbreak was a matter of pre-mediation and relocation. The core claim articulated by Hansen is that Mohamed Abdi Hassan ‘Afweyne’ established a pirate group, the ‘Somali Marines’, in Harardhere in 2003. The pre-mediated choice of a village along the South Mudug coastline builds on Hansen’s rationale that the area offered peace and stability, argued to be conducive towards the engagement in piracy. Hansen describes how Afweyne saw ‘a good business idea’ in pirate ventures, choosing Harardhere because it was removed from the ‘fractions in the Somali civil war’. Hence, no entities could hinder or ‘tax’ the pirate ventures.\textsuperscript{50}

The claim of pre-mediation is combined with a claim of relocation. When pirate attacks surged off the central coastline it was due to the active recruitment of ‘pirate instructors’ from the northeast.\textsuperscript{51} Bahadur vividly repeats the narrative,

“As a boil festers before it bursts, the 2003-2006 Eyl-Harardheere alliance represented an incubation period for the Somali pirates, a time during which they gradually accumulated capital and experience, continually reinvesting ransom money in ongoing operations.”\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{vi}The last section of this study explores the shift from this pattern (an adoption of the South Mudug piracy model), and towards a general escalation of piracy in Puntland in 2008.
Piracy, according to Hansen, began in the Mudug region in 2003, and ‘exploded’ in 2004, leading to its first ‘golden age’. However, the glaring absence of any pirate attacks off central Somalia in both 2003 and 2004 presents a significant challenge to this narrative. Indeed, as the next figure shows, claims of the existence of Afweyne’s criminal pirate group in 2003 and 2004 are set in sharp relief by the absence of any crime. This discrepancy is revealing, and should force a re-think of the timing.

Figure 6.3: Anchorage of hijacked vessels, 1991 to 2007

There is no data basis towards pinpointing an escalation of attacks in neither 2003 nor 2004. On the contrary, the years 2003 and 2004 suggests the continuation of the same type of irregular piracy observed since 1991. Hijackings in 2003 consisted of two incidents of on-board looting, and one incident of a fishing vessel, the South Korean-flagged trawler Beira 9, being taken near the southern town of Kismaayo. In 2004 there were a total of two attempts along the entire eastern coastline of Somalia. The first attack resulted in the hijacking of an Egyptian-flagged fishing vessel within the port waters of the southern town of Barawe, while the second attack targeted a British-flagged yacht near the northeast village of Ras Hafun.54

The 1991 to 2004 statistics concerning central Somalia is even more telling, suggesting that the South Mudug coastline experienced negligible maritime predation in the fourteen-year period prior to 2005. There were three registered
piracy incidents off the Mudug coastline between 1991 and 2004, where the last incident had occurred on November 16th 2000. Therefore neither a gradual nor a sudden professionalization of piracy is observable from central Somalia in the period 1991 to 2004. So why did Somalia’s ‘blue water’ piracy originate from a coastline that had virtually no pre-history of maritime predation? What explains the creation of pirate groups in Harardhere and Hobyo in 2005? This study proposes that Afweyne indeed was one of the early investors partaking in South Mudug pirate ventures. The Harardhere-based pirate group was ground-breaking in its entrepreneurial approach to maritime predation. However, previous studies have not been able to account for, nor have they sufficiently scrutinized, the time and context of this period of piracy. Why were attacks launched in 2005, and not previous years? A fundamental weakness in previous treatment of the escalation is a lack of substantive discussion of the environment where pirates operated from. The following two sections situates the 2005 outbreak within abrupt and unprecedented changes to the security and socioeconomic climate of the South Mudug region.

6.4 South Mudug Conflict

The scale and importance of the conflict in the South Mudug region must be understood within the context of the local political geography. The area is inhabited by two main clans, the Suleiman and the Sa’ad, who are sub-clans of the Haber Gedir, which in turn is a sub-clan of the Hawiye clan. Absent governance in post-1991 Somalia, the clan structure has remained the only stable political institution in many areas in the country. Social and economic behaviour therefore appear heavily colored by clan considerations.

As seen in figure 4, the Suleiman sub-clan are the dominant clan in and around Harardhere, which lies roughly twenty kilometres from the sea. Harardhere is both a pastoral and a fishing village, hosting fishermen who operate from lesser fishing camps by the coast, notably Ceel Gaan, Ceel Huur and Faax. Hobyo overlooks the sea, and has a permanent population that mainly consists of Sa’ad pastoralists and fishermen, although the area surrounding it is dominated by the Suleiman clan.

The 2004-2006 South Mudug conflict was intensely local, yet also violent and destructive for communities involved. The conflict has received scarce attention in the literature on Somalia, and non-existent treatment in studies examining Somali piracy. Investigation of the conflict reveals that it originated in disagreement over resources between the Suleiman and Sa’ad clans. The resource exhaustion in the South Mudug area appears to have been akin to a slow train wreck, where a series of ecological disasters culminated in warfare. Contemporary reports reveal that severe drought had exhausted livestock resources in the region, and by early 2004 the Suleiman and the Sa’ad were engaged in a low-level scale conflict over water access. Importantly, such disputes aren’t uncommon in Somalia, and have been a regular occurrence since at least the start of the civil war. Indeed, the two clans in question are known for their frequent resource disputes, but have nonetheless usually managed to settle them
through traditional clan mediation.

In 2004 this traditional mechanism of mediation failed, with deadly consequences. Repeated stand-offs between Suleiman and Sa’ad pastoralists throughout 2004 led to deaths on both sides and an ensuing tit-for-tat cycle of revenge killings. Rather than return to normalcy, as has been the standard for such conflicts, the revenge killings escalated into assassinations of clan elders. Such assassinations targeted the very same individuals who traditionally have been responsible for mediating, and who normally prevent the violence from escalating beyond control. What began as a low-level conflict turned into warfare in November 2004 when several Suleiman clan elders were liquidated by rogue Sa’ad clansmen, who indeed had been on their way to a peace talks meeting with Sa’ad clan elders.

Figure 6.4: Overview of South Mudug region, 2004-2006

Between November and December 2004 the violence which had plagued the inland areas of South Mudug began spreading to the coastline around Hobyo and Harardhere. Both clans organized militias, and even clansmen residing in Mogadishu were providing additional funding, arms and equipment to strengthen their respective sides. Contemporary reports paint a picture of a conflict that quickly attained a sophistication higher than what could be normally expected from a local clan feud. Clan militia used satellite phones to share information on positions and movements, including tracking incidents of deaths, injuries, and property destruction. Moreover, the cynicism of the fighting manifested itself through the targeting of religious students and teachers, entrenching animosity between the two clans. In December 2004 at least one hundred and thirty people, including women and children, had been injured amidst fighting involving an estimated five hundred clan militiamen. The fighting led to massive displacements of people, and by the end of the conflict entire towns had been deserted. The final death toll was estimated to between three hundred and four hundred people between November 2004 and January 2006.
The economic effects of the South Mudug conflict (discussed further in later sections) were severe and location-specific, leading to price spikes and local supply shortages. Since the onset of the fighting in 2004 the area separating Hobyo and Harardhere from the interior had suffered ‘huge material losses’. The frontlines opening up in the bush land and desert areas along the coast cut Hobyo and Harardhere off from the only noteworthy road passing through central Somalia. Previous studies have argued that the relative peace and stability of central Somalia offered a conducive environment towards the establishment of pirate groups. Examining the local security environment reveals high and chronic insecurity over a fifteen- to sixteen month period. Indeed, the first act of piracy coincided with one of the deadliest battles between the Suleiman and Sa’ad clans. The insecurity created by the conflict may, however, have been less consequential for piracy had the tsunami not impacted.

### 6.5 The December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami

In the name of Allah, the city of Eyl was very peaceful and business was active. People got by and life was relatively good. The city’s biggest business sector was fishing. Most of the money of fishing came from lobster and sharks. Businesses did flourish and many people benefited from the fishing business.

Mayor of Eyl speaking about the pre-tsunami era (2014)

Investigation of the impact of the December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami is motivated by the fact that it preceded the 2005 outbreak of piracy by a few weeks. What effect did the tsunami have on economic behaviour? Previous studies of Somali piracy, notably Percy and Shortland (2009), Shortland (2011), Dua and Menkhaus (2012) and Dua (2013), have often ignored the effects of the natural disaster. Other notable studies, such as Anning and Smith (2012), Marchal (2011) and Murphy (2011b) have acknowledged the event, but provided little or no analysis of its consequence for piracy. Most notable is Hansen, who appears to dismiss its effects, finding no changes in poverty levels for the coastal region. However, this assessment is inherently problematic as it does not build on any substantial empirical data, nor does it discuss the impact of the tsunami on the economic behaviour.

The following section shows how the villages strewn along the central and northeast coastlines were (and still are) heavily dependent on the artisanal fishing sector. The study examines the effect of the tsunami on the fishing sector and local livelihoods in the South Mudug region, as well as the northeast coastline. The short-term effect of the tsunami was to remove the main source of income for inhabitants in villages like Hobyo and Harardhere. Indeed, tsunami-induced destruction of the fishing sector is the most likely cause for the dissolution of fishing companies, and the subsequent formation of pirate groups.
in 2005 and later years. The long-term impact of the tsunami on the fishing sector was near-terminal for some villages in the South Mudug region, while other villages in the northeast experienced a gradual, downward spiral. Conclusively, the December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami may be labelled a ‘black swan’ event, significantly shifting the trajectory of the coastal economy of central and northeast Somalia.\textsuperscript{87}

### 6.5.1 Breaking Wave

Everyone ran, they ran as fast as they could up the hill. People were screaming and terrified. It destroyed our houses. It destroyed our fishing nets and boats. It destroyed everything. The next days people tried to catch fish and lobster for food but there was nothing in the sea. The sea died

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Clan elder in Puntland (2007)\textsuperscript{88}

The December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami wave resulted from a magnitude 9.0 earthquake, originating two hundred and fifty kilometres southwest of the tip of Indonesia’s Sumatra Island (see figure 5).\textsuperscript{89,90} Clocking in as the world’s largest in the past four decades, the earthquake formed a huge shock wave, or tsunami, consisting of the vertical displacement of hundreds of cubic kilometres of water.\textsuperscript{91} As observed in figure 5, despite being 5,000 kilometres from the epicentre, districts in central and northeast Somalia were among the worst affected in the Western Indian Ocean. The figure reveals the endurance of the tsunami as it moved from the Eastern Indian Ocean and into the Western Indian Ocean, sustaining its high energy waves until the impact with the central and northeast coastline.

The worst-affected districts in Somalia (areas coloured black) received high and powerful tsunami waves (wave heights coloured a bright light green) similar to those in the seas around the earthquake fault line between Sumatra Island and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (see figure 5). On average the run-up height of the waves on land were five to nine meters, which resulted in extensive flooding as far as seven hundred meters inland.\textsuperscript{92,93} As seen from figure 5 the tsunami had the most significant impact on the 1,300 kilometre stretch of coastline between Harardhere and Ras Hafun, covering the central and northeast coastlines of Somalia. By comparison the northern Gulf of Aden coastline was virtually untouched, and southern Somalia suffered relatively minor damages. In total, an estimated eighteen thousand coastal households were directly affected by the incoming waves.\textsuperscript{94,95}
As evident in figure 5, UNOCHA found the districts of Hobyo and Harardhere to be among the worst affected in Somalia. As seen in the figure, these districts suffered high energy tsunami waves on the top end of the scale. A clan elder in Hobyo reported that the villages ‘were nearly wiped out’. In Kulub village, to the north of Hobyo, more than 200 houses were damaged by the wave, while an estimated forty-four fishing vessels were either lost or destroyed. The only existing storage facility along the central coast was obliterated by the tsunami wave, despite lying several hundred meters from the sea. Thousands of fishing nets, shark nets and lobster traps were destroyed. In a post-tsunami review of the central coastline, the destruction of property was noted as ‘high and visible’, and significantly higher than in southern Somalia.

In northeast Somalia the settlement of Ras Hafun suffered the single-most highest casualty toll for any village west of the Indian sub-continent, experiencing nineteen deaths and one hundred and sixty people missing. The village suffered the destruction of eight hundred and twelve houses, and lost one hundred and sixty two out of four hundred and fifty vessels. Bandarbayla suffered thirty-seven casualties, one hundred and two destroyed houses and one hundred and twenty damaged fishing vessels. According to one fisherman, the water levels destroyed forty percent of the village’s houses. In the Black Bay area, where Eyl is the dominant village, there were ninety-five bodies recovered, while eighty persons suffered injury. Reportedly forty-eight houses and forty fishing vessels were either partially or entirely damaged. In total an estimated two hundred and eighty people died from the tsunami on the northeast coast, as well as the destruction of six hundred and thirty fishing vessels, and eighty percent of all fishing gear.
6.5.2 Post-Tsunami Behaviour

The extensive damage incurred by the tsunami had a particularly destructive effect on the fishing sector, which represented around seventy-five to eighty percent of all fishing income along the central and northeast coastline. Post-tsunami behaviour appears to have been largely defined by a broken fishing sector, and the disengagement of a large section of the fishermen population. After the tsunami an international humanitarian response was initiated for affected districts in Somalia. However, the South Mudug region remained unique in its isolation from aid efforts. Violent clan conflict and impassable, mined roads meant that relief materials aimed to cushion the impact never made it to the coastal areas around Hobyo and Harardhere. A clan elder in Hobyo recalled bitterly in an interview that ‘when the tsunami struck, nobody helped’.106

Villages outside the South Mudug region, including Kulub and Garacad in the North Mudug region, received immediate relief for the first period after the tsunami.107 In the first weeks after December 26th 2004, the World Food Programme (WFP) provided hundreds of metric tons of emergency food aid.108 The WFP, United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and a host of other aid organizations provided equipment, vessels and housing. Fishing-related equipment were distributed, and a few fishing vessels were provided to a handful of villages.109110 The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) provided basic engine repair training for fishermen, and training courses in the handling and processing of fish.111 Efforts were also directed towards the organization of the fishing sector with the establishment of fishermen associations in Ras Hafun, Bandarbeyla, Eyl and Garacad.

Despite initial efforts, the actual long-term impact of the aid effort appear temporary and ultimately insufficient. While humanitarian aid offered to the northeast provided short-term relief, a district official in Eyl explained that it only temporarily stabilized the economic decline.112 According to the Mayor of Eyl,

“There were a lot of projects undertaken after the tsunami. There were a lot of aid agencies that did humanitarian projects during that time. What was planned for the tsunami victims, and what had reached [us] were two very different images. Some houses didn’t really last, they became dilapidated a few years later, either due to the bad quality or poor care. So that’s how it was.”113

Another official in Eyl, a member of the District Council, noted that,

“Then the industry was hit by the tsunami. The tsunami played a big role in destroying the livelihoods and the people did not get good recovery.”114

In the northeast fishing village of Aris, a settlement perched atop a cliff overlooking a white beach and the Indian Ocean, inhabitants used to live in
huts on the beach prior to the tsunami. These living quarters were washed away by the tsunami. After the event Save the Children constructed concrete housing units to replace the destroyed beach homes. However, conversations with fishermen in Aris in 2014 revealed that many of the houses had remained uninhabited. Fear of the sea has persisted in this community, and most of the houses are only used by the fishermen as storage rooms during the working hours. To feel secure these fishermen have opted to live in shacks at the higher elevations of the surrounding cliffs. Some of the original recipients have even sold the houses, and left Aris altogether. The case of Aris indicates the complexity of the coastal reaction to the tsunami disaster. Many households emigrated from the coastline, and may have experienced a ‘brain drain’ of fishing expertise in the subsequent emigration.

Several respondents claimed that those who stayed faced a fishing sector that was much less productive than previously. Prior to the tsunami fishermen along the coast had invested heavily in the sector, and much of this equipment, including portable fridges and nets, were stored on the beach when the tsunami impacted. One district official in Eyl reported that,

“Nowadays people cannot afford to buy vessels and gear from Dubai because they do not have capital. The engines that they are using right now are engines that they bought during the profitable days of lobster trade. So, that is how fishing used to be.”

Effects of the tsunami on the fishing economy weren’t limited to the flight of inhabitants and the destruction of physical capital, but also the marine environment inhabited by fish and lobsters species. Prior studies on Somali piracy have mentioned the depletion of marine resources in terms of overfishing, either by foreign trawlers or the local population. Field research by the author suggests that inadequate attention has been devoted to the effect of the tsunami on the coastal seabed. This appears to have had a direct consequence on the ability of coastal fishermen to sustain their livelihood. Respondents in several of the coastal villages noted how the tsunami had changed the geology along the coast,

“What is apparent is that many different types of fish, and a good percentage of lobster that was found before the tsunami, is not found currently. The tsunami destroyed the homes of marine life, [such as] the caves and holes they [lobsters] live in were buried with sand. So, a very big decline that is very hard to imagine and is very obvious. Many, many fishermen left the profession for other professions such as herding livestock and searching for work in urban dwellings.”

The Mayor of Eyl explained that by early 2006 the price of lobster had shrunk from USD30 to USD15, while shark fins had dropped from USD100 to USD50. The price fall appears to be partly attributable to the inferiority of the marine products sold by fishermen subsequent to the tsunami. Destruction of fishing assets led to a lack of proper storage equipment, and fishermen arriving
at the beach in the scorching Somali heat struggled to preserve their catches for export.

In the long term the post-tsunami delivery of fishing nets, hooks and lines appear, albeit unintentionally, to be treatment of symptoms rather than a sustainable solution. An inhabitant in Bandarbayla lamented how,

“Truthfully the natural disaster that hit Bandarbayla in 2004 had huge problems that people still haven’t recovered from. People became internally displaced after the output of the fishing industry declined, homes were destroyed, expensive equipment such as skiffs, nets, fishing boats [were] all destroyed.”

The decline in villages like Eyl and Bandarbayla was gradual, and suggests both short-term and long-term impacts on the coastal economy. The most notable structural change is found in the dismemberment of fishing companies (artisanal). In the context of individual villages along the coast, a fishing company can be everything from an elementary association of shareholder fishermen to a single-owned structure financed by businessmen of moderate wealth. These fishing companies, of which the former have been the most common, have offered an important organizing structure for everyday economic life. A fisherman in Eyl explained that,

“Fishermen are very organized, almost like a government. We are usually around 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10, depending whatever manpower is required. So there is one person that leads the team. And I’ve held every job in this group from the lowest rank to the highest rank.”

Weldemichael found that these fishing companies along the coast ‘never recovered from their losses’ after the tsunami. Several fishing companies simply went bankrupt, and those that remained ‘continued to operate on massive deficit’. Three lobster companies operating along the northeast suffered a fifty percent decline in lobster export figures in the aftermath of the tsunami. The Mayor of Eyl noted how,

“Private enterprises made huge sums of money from fishing up until the tsunami in 2004. It was not uncommon to see fishermen with just a net and a skiff achieving returns of USD3000 to USD5000 from just one fishing season. Fishermen with better equipment such as a mid-size fishing boat could make up to USD10,000 to USD15,000 in one fishing season. Leading up to the tsunami fishermen began investing into the fishing industry, but shortly after the tsunami hit, which wiped out their investments.”

The comments by the Mayor of Eyl suggests a level of asset loss that forced many companies into insolvency, and by consequence resulted in a massive layoff of fishermen. The dependency on fishing incomes to livelihoods along the coast is well illustrated in figure 6, and prior to the tsunami around ninety-five percent of coastal food consumption from fishing- or fishing-related income.
Only eight percent of income was derived from loans before the tsunami, yet after the tsunami roughly twenty percent of income came from fishing, while fifty-five percent came from loans. High debt levels and food insecurity forced around twenty to thirty percent of the total population between Garacad and Ras Hafun to emigrate, many of whom headed to urban centres like Galkaayo, Garowe and Bosaso. Testimonies from Mereeg (in Galguduud region to the south) suggested that many fishermen residing in Hobyo and Harardhere also disengaged, and left the area to seek employment elsewhere. Six months after the tsunami, less than thirty percent of the fishing sector labour stock had resumed fishing activities.

6.6 First Outbreak Of Somali Piracy

The review of the December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami suggests that a large portion of the coastal population were forced to disengage in 2005. The coastal areas depopulated in the period after the event, and left remaining inhabitants in a reduced economic state. Was such an environment conducive to piracy? This study finds an explicit link between a broken fishing sector and the creation of pirate groups. The first pirate venture from Somalia in 2005 was a simple adaptation of a pre-existing coastal business. The pioneering innovation of Afweyne’s pirate group in the form of the South Mudug piracy model offered a simple blueprint for viral predation. The following section discusses the outbreak of piracy in the period 2005 to 2006, and provides a context for its re-emergence in early 2007.
6.6.1 The South Mudug Piracy Model

Understanding pirate activities in 2005 should necessarily focus on the pioneering role of Mohamed Abdi Hassan ‘Afweyne’, and the characteristics of what may be called the South Mudug piracy model. Afweyne’s ‘good business idea’ wasn’t launched in a stable area of Somalia, but quite literally along the fault line of the South Mudug battlefield. Testimony from an informant from the Suleiman clan in Harardhere reveals that on the eve of Afweyne’s piracy career he was a shareholder in a company that specialized in fishing and livestock. The company appears to have been on the high-end of business enterprises operating in the Harardhere area. It possessed several ‘technicals’, i.e. customized vehicles armed with light weaponry, serving to protect its assets. Such a sophisticated protection regime is not common practice among coastal fishermen. The company owned several smaller vessels that engaged in shark and lobster fishing, and exported fish products and livestock to the Arabian Peninsula. In 2005 the activities of the company ceased when it suffered a substantial asset loss in the fishing sector. Based on this testimony, Afweyne’s company appears to have endured the same tsunami-induced loss that other fishing companies suffered.

Figure 6.7: South Mudug piracy model

Concurrent with this income loss the shareholders of the company formed the first pirate group. The innovation offered by Afweyne’s company was the establishment of the South Mudug piracy model. A basic overview of the model is observed in figure 7. Moreover, the model became the gold standard after which pirates engaged in maritime predation after 2005. The model pioneered by Afweyne’s company built on a shareholder structure, where several individuals came together to finance the pirate venture. This did not limit later pirate ventures from operating on the basis of other financial arrangements. Rather it proved to potential pirates, evident from the 2008-2009
pirate attacks, that whereas individually they could not harness the resources for a venture, they could collectively pool their resources together in return for a potentially lucrative payoff. As such, just as small tightly-knit clan groups were a recurring characteristic of fishing groups and companies, they became the main mobilizing vehicle for pirate ventures in Somalia after 2005.

The simplicity of the South Mudug piracy model was revealed in the earliest attacks committed off the central Somali coastline (see figure 8). The first pirate attack, against the Trust Dubai, was committed at a record-breaking 200 nautical miles from the coast. The attack, as reported by the ship, was perpetrated by a group of six pirates. Despite their small numbers the pirates were armed with ‘guns and grenades’. After pursuing the ship for a little less than two hours the pirates attempted to board, but were repulsed by the ship’s increase speed and evasive manoeuvres. A mere eleven days later an attempt was made on the bulk carrier Tim Buck. It too managed to escape its pursuers, although the Master of the ship died from a heart attack. A few hours later in the day pirates managed to successfully board and hijack the gas carrier Feisty Gas. After completing the hijacking, the pirates brought the ship to the shores near Harardhere. A month later pirates hijacked the Reef Malindi, which was also commandeered to Harardhere.

Figure 6.8: Pirate incidents off central and southern Somalia, March 2005 to May 2006

The third hijacking by Harardhere-based pirates involved the WFP cargo vessel MV Semlow on June 27th 2005. When the MV Semlow arrived on the coastline it was taken to the area between Faax and Ceel Gaan. The two fishing camps lie parallel to Harardhere, situated 20 km further inland. These would become the routine locations at which Afweyne’s pirate group anchored their victims. After its capture, Afweyne personally commented that the vessel was not taken for ransom, but to defend the seas from illegal fishing and toxic waste dumping. Shortly thereafter a clan elder in Harardhere announced that the
MV Semlow would be prosecuted for illegal entry into Somali waters. Indeed, contrary to their justifying claims, Afweyne’s pirate group ended up receiving a ransom payment of USD100,000 for the vessel’s release.

The hijacking of the MV Semlow was followed by a string of new attacks. Piracy activities coincided with continued fighting between Suleiman and Sa’ad clan militias, which left 43 people dead between late 2005 and early 2006.

Between late 2005 and early 2006 a new group had begun operating from Hobyo, and one of its victims was a fishing trawler captured fifty-five nautical miles off the coast. The South Korean-flagged trawler Dong Won No. 628 had been fishing tuna when on April 4th 2006 it was haplessly besieged, boarded and hijacked by a single pirate skiff. After the pirate group had commandeered the trawler and its 25-man crew back to Hobyo, one of the pirates charged that the ship had been fishing illegally. A Hobyo clan elder declared that the ship would be ‘fined’ for its illegal activities.

Figure 8 provides a graphic depiction of the pirate-infested waters off the South Mudug region up until May 2006. Indeed by January 2006 at least one hundred mariners were held captured aboard vessels anchored off the South Mudug coastline. At least half of all pirate attacks targeted vessels that were more than one hundred nautical miles from the coastline. November 2005 saw the use of a mother ship, significantly increasing the range of attacks. During this month where two attacks occurred at distances far exceeding two hundred nautical miles, and one approaching four hundred nautical miles (or roughly half-way to the Seychelles island archipelago). The number of monthly attacks remained at a consistent level throughout most of the period, although a decline in attacks (but not the rate of hijacking) is apparent after February 2006. On the one hand the capture of the Panama-flagged tanker Lin 1 and the South Korea-flagged trawler Dong Won No. 628 within the span of a few days could have signalled that piracy was spiralling out of control. Yet only a few weeks later pirate skiffs melted away from the area, and the South Mudug coastline went quiet. The wave of attacks that had occurred over a 13-month period ended as quickly as they had begun. Why did piracy activities cease? And why did they resume with such vitriol in early 2007?

6.6.2 Dormant Piracy Model

The cessation of pirate attacks in 2006 has commonly been explained in relation to the emergence of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in Somalia. The rule by the Islamic Courts Union consolidated security in central and southern Somalia in the latter half of 2006. According to Hansen, the strict Islamic code enforced by the ICU in Hobyo and Harardhere ‘ended piracy’. However, data on the local environment in the South Mudug area for this period suggests that it is more complex than previously perceived. The first observation is that the decline and eventual cessation of pirate attacks occurred prior to ICU rule. Indeed, the timing may be more persuasively linked to local security improvements unaccounted for in the extant literature. Positive security developments in the Hobyo and Harardhere area began with a comprehensive peace process between
the Suleiman and Sa’ad clans. The most significant accomplishments of this process took place in spring 2006.\textsuperscript{161}

On February 25th 2006 the Suleiman and Sa’ad clans signed a ceasefire, ending the major battles that had been waged since late 2004. By April clan militia were disengaging and roadblocks were removed. Suleiman and Sa’ad clan elder meetings were held at Ceel Huur, a fishing village situated almost exactly halfway between Hobyo and Harardhere, where focus was made on sharing water and grazing resources.\textsuperscript{162} Notably the same village had hosted the anchored MV Semlow roughly one year previously. The ceasefire also permitted a re-opening of the road to Galkaayo, allowing Sa’ad and Suleiman fishermen to resume some level of activity.\textsuperscript{163} By May 2006 pirate attacks had ceased entirely. When the ICU arrived in Hobyo and Harardhere in August 2006, there had not been a pirate attack launched from the region in over two months.\textsuperscript{164,165}

At Hobyo heavily armed ICU militia spoke to the village’s clan elders, before being allowed to enter.\textsuperscript{166} The peaceful manner in which the village submitted to the organization is a function of the clan constellation of the ICU. While the ICU officially was a movement of Mogadishu-based Islamic courts, it was also essentially a Haber Gedir-clan project, of whom the Suleiman and Sa’ad are sub-clans. Notably, both sub-clans exercised control over their own Mogadishu-based courts. Viewed through this lens, the arrival of the ICU merely reinforced a period of stability for the Haber Gedir clan as a whole.\textsuperscript{167} By August 2006 the South Mudug conflict had been resolved, and the region was ruled by a single political entity. How did this stability affect pirate activities?

### 6.6.3 Pirate Coast

The low number of incidents between May 2006 and December 2006 confirms the absolute fall in piracy during the last three quarters of 2006. It also speaks to a complementary relationship between the reconciliation of the Suleiman and Sa’ad and the stabilizing effect of the short-lived ICU polity. However, the state of the economy along the coast casts serious doubts on the extent to which small, incremental increases in security were enough to dissuade piracy in the medium- to long-term. The situation in Hobyo in mid-2006 does not suggest a community rebounding from conflict, but one on the fast-track towards an irreversible decline.\textsuperscript{168}

As such, this study proposes that the South Mudug piracy model merely lay dormant during a short interregnum.

Evaluating the merits of this proposition necessitates a look at economic behaviour along the central coast in late 2006. The most notable observation on Hobyo is that maritime trade appears to have ceased completely by mid-2006. Dhows were no longer arriving from regional ports, and this situation remain unaltered for the next few years.\textsuperscript{169,170} Many former residents had fled due to the South Mudug conflict, leaving only a few hundred individuals in the village.\textsuperscript{171} The disengagement of fishermen from Hobyo in 2005 had sent some up the coast to the area bordering North Mudug, while some also relocated to Mereeg along with fishermen from Harardhere.\textsuperscript{172} A Sa’ad clansman visiting the village in August 2006 noted that the once-thriving Hobyo was ‘quiet and depressed’.\textsuperscript{173}
Despite the cessation of the hostilities in the area, Hobyo appeared to have virtually broken its back.

Whether they were fishermen is uncertain, but on November 1st 2006 pirates from Hobyo reappeared in the seas off Somalia. A few weeks later the invasion of Somalia by Ethiopian forces resulted in the complete and surprising dissolution of the ICU polity. Concurrent with the organization’s territorial control evaporating followed a steady uptake in the frequency of attacks. Once the first vessels were successfully hijacked and anchored safely along the coast, the predation business appears to have gone viral. Between January and June 2007 pirates from Hobyo and Harardhere had attempted to board nine individual vessels, and managed to hijack six of them. In all, the two villages were responsible for hijacking at least seventy-five different vessels between 2005 and 2012, averaging one hijacked vessel per every passing month.

Analysis of the first outbreak of Somali piracy between 2005 and 2006 clearly accentuates the extent to which the 2007 piracy practices were a mere continuation of a new coastal business model (piracy). The South Mudug model served as a simple predatory framework upon which new groups were established. However, this study has shown how engagement into piracy must be viewed within the context of unprecedented disengagement from previous coastal livelihoods. The effect of the December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami over the long-term therefore appears particularly important in relation to the intensification of piracy activities. As observed in section 4, the fishing sector had represented the single-most important livelihood for villages along the central and northeast coastline.

For Hobyo the transformation appears extreme. Interviews with two eyewitnesses that were present in Hobyo in 2008 and 2010 illustrate how the former fishing village had undergone an extraordinary metamorphosis. An eyewitness that visited Hobyo in 2008 re-called how it had become, “(. . . ) entirely a pirate village. Everything, and everyone, was set up in support of piracy. The exception was a few older fishermen who were still active. It may have been because they couldn’t participate in such a frail, ageing condition.”

Another eyewitness visiting Hobyo in 2010 recalled how the village appeared lost on the coast, remarking that ‘it was the end of the world’. The road
from Hobyo to Galkaayo was observed as completely void and with ‘no economic activity’.178

The metamorphosis into pirate lairs by other tsunami-impacted villages, notably Eyl, appears to have begun in late 2007, and escalated in 2008. The December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami laid important groundwork in terms of destroying the fishing sector in Eyl. However, high levels of insecurity appears to be an imperative second condition for piracy to thrive; and for nearly two years northeast Somalia did not host the necessary levels of insecurity to foster large-scale predation. The escalation of piracy along the northeast coastline between 2007 and 2008 must, therefore, have occurred within the context of a sharp deterioration of the security climate. And there is strong evidence to suggest that this occurred.

Throughout 2007 the northeast region of Somalia, previously an oasis of relative calm, began a descent towards insecurity. The mechanisms for the deterioration of the environment are in no doubt complex, yet there appears to have been at least three factors at play. Puntland’s localized conflict with Somaliland, to the area west of Garowe, led to a serious drain on the financial strength of the state. The most dramatic consequence was its failure to fund services and pay its state-wide security forces.179 The second factor was a result of the December 2006 Ethiopian invasion of Somalia. After crushing the Islamic Courts Union militia in January 2007, Ethiopian forces arriving in Mogadishu attempted to create a political, and no less a physical space for the embedded entourage of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). But intense animosity between clan factions, and towards the Ethiopians, turned Mogadishu into a battleground.180 Between 200,000 and 300,000 people were displaced amidst ferocious shelling and fighting in the capital.181 What followed was a large-scale destruction of property and assets, and a massive nationwide displacement of people. Throughout 2007 Puntland received an influx of internally displaced people (IDPs) for which it was entirely unprepared for. Tens of thousands of IDPs from the southern and central areas around Mogadishu fled to Galkaayo and Garowe, and notably, the coastal areas.182 183 Finally, a third ingredient towards insecurity was Puntland’s spiraling hyperinflation, which significantly reduced the value of the Somali shilling, and by consequence undermined the local purchasing power.184

How did this impact the security situation? Figures on road banditry and kidnappings suggest predatory activity increasing at an alarming rate in 2007 and 2008.185 The number of car hijackings in Puntland, as reported by its police force, rose from ninety-two in 2006, to one hundred and seventy-two in 2007, and reached one hundred and eighty car hijackings in 2008.186 Kidnappings were attempted, notably against NGO workers visiting Maraye village, a few kilometers north of Eyl. Several NGOs operating in the Nugaal region began experiencing increased incidents of material and equipment theft while transiting through villages.187 The situation only worsened in April 2008, when the State of Puntland ceased paying wages to its security forces, and was reduced to controlling the north-south axis road between Galkaayo and Bossaso.188 Already suffering from a broken fishing sector, the coastal communities were therefore in a posi-
tion of extreme vulnerability towards engagement in predatory activities, both onshore and at sea. As discussed extensively previously in the study, the northeast coastal communities were suffering from high debt levels and widespread unemployment after the dissolution of fishing groups and companies.

The problem of piracy in Somalia, then, appears heavily intertwined with the state of the coastal economy, and the fishing sector in particular. Fishermen in Hobyo and Harardhere, and later along the northeast coast, might have been more immune towards recruitment into an uncertain and violent activity if the fishing sector had afforded some level of competitiveness. Communities along this littoral may have been able to punitively sanction and withstand the arrival of outsiders seeking to partake in a highly lucrative criminal activity. Low immunity is therefore linked with an inability to subsist off the seas. As such the tsunami significantly altered the relationship between coastal communities and the sea.

### 6.7 Concluding Remarks

The study attempts to offer critical and new insight into the origin of organized piracy in Somalia. The first groups purely dedicated to piracy in Somalia, from Harardhere and Hobyo, were not formed due to a decade-long struggle against illegal fishing. Nor were they the result of former coast guard employees banding together to predate on the high seas. Neither were pirates the inevitable spark on a long-burning fuse of poverty. The 2005 outbreak appears to have been borne out of a sudden implosion of the economic and security environment of central Somalia’s South Mudug region.

An assessment of the first months of the outbreak reveals two distinct forces at work. The central Somali region of South Mudug was not a stable area in 2005, but was suffering from the most violent conflict since the collapse of the state in 1991. Would-be pirate villages Hobyo and Harardhere lay in the heart of the area of conflict, hosting clashes between Suleiman and Sa’ad clan militia. However, conflict along the Somali littoral was not new, and had been a prominent feature of areas further south in Somalia in the preceding decade.

Maritime predation did not evolve out of clan conflict and insecurity alone, but was possible by the freak event of the December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The fact that there was negligible maritime predation from the South Mudug region prior to 2005 suggests a surviving, perhaps even relatively healthy coastal economy. Opportunistic attacks on passing vessels was exceedingly rare. While the invasive behaviour of foreign fishing trawlers is well-documented, and reiterated in many of the fieldwork testimonies, this did not translate into dedicated pirate groups. The December 26th 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was as catastrophic as it was unprecedented for coastal communities. The tsunami blitzed the fishing sector, leading to widespread disengagement from a livelihood that many coastal communities were unilaterally dependent on. In destroying the dominant livelihood for central and northeast Somalia, the tsunami contributed to a predatory environment that has served a decade of ransom piracy.

Critical analysis of the local environment in which piracy occurs forces the
scholar to acknowledge its rationale. However, this task is difficult to undertake given the inaccessibility of Somalia’s isolated littoral strip. Yet by focusing the prism to individual villages it is easier to gauge the spectral of factors that are conducive to piracy. Little has been written about the socioeconomic and security situation of the area where the first outbreak of piracy occurred. This is partly linked to neglectful treatment of time, leading to an ambiguous understanding of when, and by consequence why, attacks first began.

Equally, however, it is a function of the data wilderness of Somalia. Here the scholar wears the cloth of a wandering nomad, occasionally spotting a small rock or pebble, seeking to chisel out another piece of the puzzle. With this in mind the study’s original aim and main contribution has been empirical. Fieldwork testimonies and contemporary reports have yielded new data on the coastal communities in central and northeast Somalia. These are however only snapshots of the coastline. Further research into the outbreak of piracy is required. Researchers must undertake the arduous task of establishing a more accurate profile of the local, coastal environment in which piracy thrives. Moreover, further research should investigate the circumstances in which coastal communities disengage from piracy.

Notes

6. Author’s dataset op. cit.
7. National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (hereafter NGIA), Anti Shipping Activity Messages (hereafter ASAM), Reference number (hereafter No.) 2001-64.
8. NGIA, ASAM, No. 2002-12.
10. Author’s dataset op. cit.
12. Weldemichael op. cit. 110.
14. Murphy op. cit.
15. Author’s dataset op. cit.
17. Author’s dataset op. cit.
19. Author’s dataset op. cit.
20. Author’s dataset op. cit.
22 Murphy op. cit.; Weldemichael op. cit.
23 Weldemichael op. cit. 118.
24 Ibid.
25 Coffen-Smout op. cit.
26 Murphy op. cit. 13.
30 Ibid.
31 Yassin, M. “Somali Fisheries Development and Management”. Oregon State University. 1981. 3.
32 Murphy op. cit. 22.
33 Murphy op. cit. 22.
34 Murphy op. cit. 22.
35 Murphy op. cit. 23.
36 Bahadur op. cit. 64.
38 Marchal op. cit. 38.
39 Murphy op. cit. 23-25.
40 Bahadur op. cit. 66.
41 Bahadur op. cit. 19.
42 Bahadur op. cit. 67.
44 Author’s interview with (anonymized) member of Eyl District Council. Conducted jointly with researcher Maxamuud Muse. 25 March 2014.
45 Author’s interview with Garowe security analyst. 31 August 2014.
46 Author’s observation, Garacad. 22 October 2013.
47 Bahadur op. cit. 66.
48 Marchal op. cit. 37-38.
49 Author’s dataset op. cit
50 Hansen op. cit. 25.
51 Hansen op. cit. 25.
52 Bahadur op. cit. 35.
53 Author’s dataset op. cit.
54 Author’s dataset op. cit.
55 Author’s dataset op. cit.
57 PDRC op. cit. 8.
60 CRD, 2006 op. cit. 85.
61 Ibid.
63 CRD, 2006. op. cit. 85.
65 Ibid. 86.
66 Ibid.
71 Salad et al. op. cit. 16.
72 Ibid.
73 PDRC op. cit. 15.
75 Author’s interview with Mayor of Eyl, Muse Osman Yusef. Conducted jointly with researcher (anonymized) Muse. 25 March 2014.
76 Percy and Shortland op. cit.
78 Dua and Menkhaus op. cit.
79 Dua op. cit.
80 Marchal op. cit.
83 Hansen op. cit.
84 Ibid. 14.
86 Weldemichael op. cit.
87 A ‘black swan’ event signifies the onset of sudden, unprecedented and long-term changes to an environment.
91 Annunziato and Best op. cit. 8.
92 Fritz and Borrero op. cit. 221.
93 Ibid. 219-220.
94 Fritz and Borrero op. cit.
178Ibid.
183Menkhaus op. cit. 357-358.
184Hansen op. cit. 32.
187PDRC(a) op. cit. 1.
188Hansen op. cit. 32
Anti-Piracy in a Sea of Predation: The Interaction of Navies, Fishermen and Pirates off the Coast of Somalia

How do anti-piracy naval vessels engage with the coast of Somalia? Several studies have criticized the navies for being ineffective and butterfingered in their fight against pirates and in their engagement with local communities. Somali sentiments have also shown considerable scepticism towards the international naval effort, not least due to a feeling of double-standards towards foreign trawlers seen plundering the country’s resources. This study investigates the naval-coastal nexus along the Somali coast by drawing on field research off- and onshore. It finds that anti-pirates’ presence have had a considerable input in the decline in piracy. Moreover, they have been more engaged with local communities than is commonly perceived, and the two groups enjoy a degree of cooperation on maritime security issues. While anti-pirates are expected to show a tough stance against illegal fishing piracy, examination of the fishing sector reveals a significant amount of predation committed by local stakeholders. Competition for fishing sector rents, particularly over distribution of licenses, occurs both on the local, regional and national level. Bonds between some pirates, smugglers and officials threaten coastal community development and undermine their security. The study argues that Somalia’s predatory trap can only be broken when former pirate villages are engaged as equal partners in the local and regional blue economies.\(^1\)

**Keywords:** piracy; maritime security; illegal fishing; Somalia; Indian Ocean

Introduction

On a beach in central Somalia lays the shipwrecked corpse of the trawler *Shiuh Fu No. 1*. Formerly a Chinese tuna long-liner, its rusting remains signals an apparent warning to illegal fishing vessels to stay out of the area or accept the consequences. Yet the *Shiuh Fu No. 1* wasn’t captured off Somalia’s central Mudug region, or anywhere near the Horn of Africa. The 26-man trawler was hijacked on Christmas Day 2010 off the eastern coast of Madagascar. After boarding the vessel pirates commandeered it back to the Somali village of Hobyo over one thousand nautical miles away, corresponding to the distance between Key West and Manhattan. The fate of the Chinese trawler captures several principal issues of Somali piracy. In the month and year of its capture naval vessels deployed to fight piracy were experiencing huge difficulties in enforcing maritime security in the Western Indian Ocean. Anti-piracy vessels patrolling the Red Sea, Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden could not hinder pirates from hunting off Madagascar and Mozambique.

\(^1\)This article is forthcoming in a revised version in the peer-review journal *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* 12(1) (2016)
Piracy, many commentators pointed out, was a maritime crime problem that could only be solved on land. Others argued that the problem of illegal fishing remained an open wound for Somalia’s coastal communities, and was fuelling piracy. Naval anti-piracy vessels were believed to be engaging in an exercise of futility, neither hindering pirates offshore, nor engaging the roots of the problem locally.

Three years later and the situation appeared a piracy prevention miracle. By late 2013 pirate attacks had nearly vanished. At Hobyo the author of this study participated as an observing scholar in a naval Local Leader Engagement with the coastal authorities. Hobyo’s District Commissioner welcomed the absence of pirates, and stressed that coastal anti-piracy patrols increased the security of the village and had deflated previously ‘intolerable high prices’. Yet the coastal community felt helpless, the local authorities lamented, pointing to the presence of fishing trawlers within a stone’s throw of the shore. Indeed, the Shinh Fu No. 1, despite its haunting presence at Hobyo, remains a passive witness to fishing piracy off the Mudug coast.

While piracy has declined, the waters off Somalia remain a sea of predation. This study investigates the nexus between anti-pirates and various stakeholders operating in the environment. Based on interviews and observations both off- and onshore, the study attempts to provide new insight into the nexus between coastal communities, naval anti-pirates and various strains of predatory behaviour. Analysis of anti-piracy efforts along the coast finds that naval vessels have had a considerable input in the deterrence of pirates. Moreover, naval vessels are engaging with local communities on maritime security issues along the coast. Local fishermen and officials complain vociferously about the impact of illegal fishing to their livelihoods. Anti-pirates are expected to show a similar stance against the plundering of Somali waters. Yet the study finds that maritime predation is a more complex and locally-linked phenomenon than previous literature has indicated. Several Somali stakeholders are benefiting from various illicit and semi-illicit forms of predation. Some groups have clear transnational bonds and appear relatively organized. The study finds that naval vessels are finding it difficult to operate within the jungle of local groups engaging in licit and illicit operations. Moreover, even if foreign fishing vessels and anti-piracy navies were to leave, the coastal economic ailments would not disappear.

The first section of this study examines commentary on the navies’ abilities to deal with piracy, while the subsequent section discusses previous analysis on the role of illegal fishing. The third section explores the coastal engagement architecture adopted by naval vessels since 2011, and discusses the relationship between naval vessels and local communities. The fourth section examines the problem of illegal fishing, which is a recurring theme between naval vessels and coastal inhabitants. The fifth and final section investigates how the problem of illegal fishing contains important local spoilers, and highlights how naval vessels are operating in a sea of predation where pirates only constitute one element.
7.2 No End In Sight?

The Chinese-flagged fishing trawler Shiuh Fu No. 1 was just one of several victims of Somali piracy in December 2010. An even more ambitious capture than the Shiuh Fu No. 1 was the hijacking of the fishing trawler Vega 5 just off Beira, in southern Mozambique (see figure 1). By March 2011 the Vega 5 had made its way to the Arabian Sea, and was used by Harardhere pirates as a mother-ship for new attacks. The extraordinary reach of pirates suggested a maritime security problem spiralling out of control. Somali pirates certainly appeared as princes of predation at sea, unhindered by the presence of international navies. This understanding of pirates spawned several commentaries questioning the effectiveness of naval anti-piracy operations. Perceptions of a costly, militarized engagement by naval vessels led many to charge that anti-piracy operations were the wrong antidote to a land-based problem.

Pham argued that the capture-and-release policy of naval vessels had built an aura of impunity for pirates, effectively cancelling out the deterrence of anti-piracy operations (Pham 2010: 332). Bari noted that pirate attacks ‘continue unabated’ despite the presence of naval vessels (Beri 2011: 457). Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni were adamant that anti-piracy operations could neither contain nor eliminate piracy. Murphy questioned the ‘whole notion of deterrence’, suggesting that the entire rationale for naval presence may be called into doubt (Murphy 2011: 135). Naval vessels were facing the difficulty of patrolling the vastness of the Western Indian Ocean, constituting ‘two and a half million square miles’ of oceanic expanse (Murphy 2011: 136). Marchal concluded that naval operations could not exhaust piracy. And even if challenged, pirate operations would evolve into more violent, sophisticated ventures (Marchal 2011: 46).
Hansen has argued that offshore anti-piracy efforts are limited by the widespread availability of sanctuary in Somalia, suggesting pirates can merely ‘ride off the storm to try another day’ (Hansen 2009: 62). Anning and Smith also point to the problem of sanctuary, which naval vessels cannot solve in the long-term (Anning and Smith 2012: 29). Pham stressed that naval operations had failed to suppress piracy because the roots of the phenomenon persisted (Pham 2010: 326). Anning and Smith also hold that naval operations will have a ‘declining utility over the longer-term’ due to their illegitimacy in the eyes of the local coastal population (Anning and Smith 2012: 29).

Some studies point out that the problem is the inherent power imbalance between heavily militarized naval vessels and unarmed local fishermen. The ‘warlike’ approach confirms Somali suspicions of naval vessels (Marchal 2011: 47). Stressing this problem, Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni claim local fishermen ‘have been unable to go to sea as their boats have been shot at by naval forces’ (Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni 2010: 1390). Weldemichael, too, argues that local fishermen feared to set out to sea due to instances of mistaken identity by naval vessels (Weldemichael 2014: 10). Weldemichael notes that ‘Somali fishermen have lamented their lot in the hands of the international and
private anti-piracy forces’ (Weldemichael 2014: 34). Moreover, Weldemichael charges that the ‘incidence of fishermen getting killed or wrongfully arrested [...] is likely to be high’ because naval anti-piracy vessels operate ‘in the richer fishing grounds of the Somali coast’ (Weldemichael 2014: 34). Certainly, the assessments by studies that analyse naval anti-piracy operations paint a pessimistic picture, leaving much to be desired.

7.3 Local Heroes

Several studies have suggested that naval operations will remain ineffective so long as the problem of illegal fishing persists in feeding the local raison d’être of piracy (Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni 2010; Beri 2011; Marchal 2011; Otto 2011; Weldemichael 2012; Weldemichael 2014).

Beri argues that confrontations with foreign fishing vessels transformed ‘fishermen into pirates’ (Beri 2011: 454). Otto claims that vigilante groups’ levying of taxes spurred locals into an enticing low-risk, high reward business (Otto 2011: 46). Weldemichael also traces Somali piracy to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing which ‘wreaked on the coastal communities during the years of civil war’ (Weldemichael 2014: 4). According to Weldemichael the collection of fines ‘took a life of its own’, so that defensive piracy morphed into ‘epic levels of criminal ransom piracy’ (Weldemichael 2014: 4). Marchal points to the neglected moral economy of piracy after ‘decades of illegal fishing and dumping of toxic waste’. Somalis question the naval negligence of the problem of illegal fishing, and regard pirates as ‘genuine nationalists’ (Marchal 2011: 33).

Similarly, Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni trace the ineffectiveness of anti-piracy operations to the fact that the root of the problem, a defensive reaction against illegal fishing, has not been solved (Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni 2010: 1390). ‘Defensive’ and ‘predatory’ forms of piracy are not separable to local fishermen. Local fishermen are, therefore, akin to the ‘bewildered radical peasant’ that reacts to injustice. ‘Most Somalis’, claim Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni, ‘are astonished and unimpressed when they hear of the troubles ransom pirates have created’ (Samatar, Lindberg and Mahayni 2010: 1387-1389).

Hansen and Westberg reject the explanation of illegal fishing-induced piracy, challenging the narrative that local grievances have fostered pirate groups (as opposed to one-time, opportunistic attacks close to the shore) (Hansen 2009: 12; Hansen 2012: 524; Westberg 2015a). Moreover, pirates have always targeted non-fishing vessels’ reasons Hansen, disqualifying the argument that ‘defensive’ piracy evolved into a ‘predatory’ type (Hansen 2009: 10). However, Hansen still warns that the criminality of illegal fishing provides legitimacy locally (Hansen 2009: 12). Pham too, while charging that the ‘defensive’ narrative is contrived, suggests that pirates’ actions are ‘largely accepted by the populace’ (Pham 2010: 331). Schneider and Winkler appear to share this assessment; claiming anti-pirates will not gain local support unless the ‘Robin Hood narrative’ is undermined (Schneider and Winkler 2013: 186). Klein also charges that aggressive behaviour by naval vessels ‘reinforce Somali notions of victimisation by overseas powers’. ‘Multiple injuries’, notes Klein, ‘are easily collapsed into a
Critique of naval vessel actions and the failure to engage the roots of the problem of Somali piracy has spawned several recommendations. Hansen argues that naval vessels are limited by their lack of ‘onshore sources’ and inability to ‘cooperate with entities that de-facto hold power close to the pirate bases’ (Hansen 2009: 62). Anti-piracy operations must be ‘synchronized with land-based development programs’ (Anning and Smith 2012: 38). Beri adds ‘governance, rule of law [and] security’ to the list of priorities (Beri 2011: 458). Otto charges that local stakeholders need to be engaged to counter piracy effectively (Otto 2011: 50). Weldemichael argues that local gains must be capitalized on ‘to fortify local communities’ anti-piracy resolve (Weldemichael 2012: 123). Local efforts must include ‘setting up a coast guard service’ (Beri 2011: 462). Klein reasons that responses ‘are required on both land and water’, but should be development-centric rather than focused on law enforcement. Vessels should protect the Somali waters, not the merchant shipping lanes (Klein 2013: 95). This effort must run ‘in tandem with [a] sustained support for the fishing industry’ locally (Klein 2013: 95). Key in this regard is a ‘visible engagement with the key constituencies’ to shift the moral weight away from the pirates (Klein 2013: 95).

7.4 Anti-Pirates in Somali Waters

Principal recommendations from studies on Somali piracy is a focus on land-based solutions and a tackling of illegal fishing. What is notable is that several of the advocated changes to anti-piracy have been adopted by naval vessels in the past few years. The pirate attack distribution between 2010 and 2012 shows how naval vessels were responding to a geographically enormous maritime security problem. Naval vessels were reasonably well-positioned to interdict pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea. By contrast, further south in the Western Indian Ocean pirate groups from Harardhere and Hobyo could hunt with a relatively low risk of interdiction (see figure 2).

The threat posed by South Mudug pirates, as well Garacad pirates from the North Mudug region, appears to have been instrumental in reconfiguring anti-piracy operations\(^\text{ii}\). Beginning in early 2011, and intensifying in 2012, naval vessels moved to target pirates onshore and along the coastline. Rather than respond to pirate attacks at sea, naval vessels attempted to kill off pirate ventures in their planning and launching stages (Somalia Report, April 21, 2011; Somalia Report, May 14, 2011; Somalia Report, October 12, 2011; Somalia Report, December 1, 2011; Somalia Report, March 27, 2012; Somalia Report, May 15, 2012).

The interdiction architecture adopted since 2011 consists of a simple division of labour among the naval vessels. Whereas one half of naval vessels operate further out at sea or along the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor

\(^{\text{ii}}\)Nearly all hijacked vessels captured below the 6th parallel north between 2005 and 2012 have been anchored off the Mudug region (Westberg 2015b).
(IRTC) in the Gulf of Aden, the other half of vessels patrol designated sectors along the Somali coastline (Author’s observation, October 14, 2013). Attention is focused on the central and northeast coastlines (see figure 2), where nearly all pirate attacks have originated from. Vessels from NATO’s Operation Ocean Shield, EU NAVFOR’s Operation Atalanta and the U.S.-led Combined Task Force 151 participate in this architecture (CMF 2014; EUNAVFOR 2014; MSCHOA 2014; NATO 2014).

Figure 7.2: Somali pirate attacks and naval interdiction positions in the Western Indian Ocean, 2010-2012

High visibility along the coastline appears to have been one of the most effective means of deterring pirates. A naval vessel will typically spend a few days off a village, signalling its presence to the area. To maximize their visibility at a temporary anchorage vessels engage in daily coastal reconnaissance missions, realized through the use of helicopters and highly mobile rigid-hulled inflatable boats (RHIBs). Despite the low number of naval vessels actually patrolling the Somali seas, these deployments drastically increase their geographical influence. Testimonies and local reports suggest that the use of aerial reconnaissance air-
craft are the most noticed aspect of naval patrols. These aircrafts frequently provoke fear onshore, including among pirates (Somalia Report, April 21, 2011; Somalia Report, November 30, 2011; Somalia Report, May 15, 2012).

Several responses from the coast, as well as reports on pirate reactions in 2011 and 2012, show that coastal naval presence is a significant deterrent against piracy (Author’s interview, March 25a, 2014; Author’s interview, April 21, 2014). A new survey of jailed pirates by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Oceans Beyond Piracy (OBP) points in the same direction. In the responses of sixty-six jailed pirates, respondents held that the deterrent effect of naval vessels outweighed ‘any other counter-piracy activity’ (OBP 2015b: 1).

The deterrence and interdiction activities of naval vessels have been supplemented by improved Maritime Situational Awareness (MSA) along the coastal areas. Naval vessels are dependent on close communication with onshore stakeholders to establish an updated understanding of pirate locations and movements. The most common, non-classified collection of information is achieved through conversations with coastal inhabitants. NATO’s Operation Ocean Shield frequently refers to this interaction as ‘winning hearts and minds’, drawing on classic counter-insurgency terminology (Author’s conversation, October 16, 2013). A popular type of engagement is the Friendly Approach (FA). It is used to improve MSA, but also to establish a dialogue platform between the naval vessels and local fishermen (Author’s observation, October 17, 2013; EU NAVFOR, April 9, 2015). Local fishermen are asked to inform the naval vessels about potential movements of pirates. In return, naval vessels often supply aid kits, replenishments, repairs and other gifts. FA’s are supplemented with humanitarian aid to coastal communities, such as the Norwegian naval vessel HNoMS Fridtjof Nansen’s provision of medical aid to the villagers of Qandala. HNoMS Fridtjof Nansen’s commander noted that such assistance ‘builds trust and helps us to establish new contacts on shore’ (Naval Today, October 1, 2013).

Efforts are also made to avoid incidents of mistaken identity. In March 2014 a database for Puntland fishermen was launched aboard Operation Atalanta’s French naval vessel FS Siroco. The database is primarily an effort between the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and Puntland authorities, and has resulted in the registration of at least 3,600 fishermen in northeast Somalia (UN 2014: 13-14). The biometric system uniquely identifies individual fishermen, and facilitates ready identification for anti-pirates along the coast (UN 2014: 13-14). Puntland’s President Abdiweli Mohamed Ali ‘Gaas’ noted that,

“Not everyone at sea is a pirate, and not everyone at sea is a fisherman. That is why this database will help us to distinguish pirates from fishermen (FAO, March 27, 2014).”

Beyond offshore engagement with local fishermen, naval vessels engage in formal talks known as Local Leader Engagements (LLEs). These are meetings held with coastal district officials, police authorities and elders. Meetings are typically held aboard the naval vessels, and are held with significant coastal
settlements along the northeast and central coastline, notably Qandala, Ahula, Garacad and Hobyo (Author’s conversation, October 16, 2013). Notably, at the time of the author’s field research off the Horn of Africa, the village of Eyl had not hosted any LLEs. During later interviews this study’s author was struck by the significantly higher level of scepticism shown by Eyl respondents than other parts of the coastline. The lack of interaction between naval vessels and Eyl may potentially be a considerable factor in this.

At Hobyo, the author of the study participated in a LLE. Hobyo officials repeatedly emphasized that the naval presence off central Somalia was welcome, and it was claimed that the naval presence had forced pirate groups to operate in a more clandestine manner. Moreover, the assessment by Hobyo’s representation suggested that the naval presence had contributed to a modest increase in security (Author’s observation, October 25, 2013). Indeed the District Commissioner of Hobyo, who led the village’s entourage, explicitly noted that whereas pirates were now discouraged, they could potentially return in the event of a naval departure (Author’s observation, October 25, 2013).

How have local communities reacted to increased naval vessel interaction? The sample of respondents reveals a range of perceptions. Some respondents clearly had negative experiences, which have been documented in local reports from the area (Somalia Report, 26 March, 2012). A Bandarbyla fisherman charged that naval vessels came to the ‘fishing grounds at night, as fishermen slept’, disarming them and threatening them. These fishermen were brave, the inhabitant reasoned, but were overwhelmed by ‘better weaponry and [more] number than the fishermen’ (Author’s interview, April 22, 2014). Family members of two Eyl fishermen believed that they had been the victim of naval violence. In total three fishermen had been navigating out from the Black Bay on May 1, 2011, when ‘a naval vessel in the area began chasing their skiff’ (Author’s interview, March 28a, 2014; Author’s interview, March 28b, 2014). After having gone missing for thirteen days one of the fishermen, Abdiqadir ‘Dadir’ Ali Nur Tayasir, washed up on the beach at Gabac in the Black Bay with his hands and legs tied with ‘plastic handcuffs’. The widow of the fisherman detailed how one foot had been severed by the plastic clip, and the body ‘swelled up beyond belief’ (Author’s interview, March 28a, 2014). Another respondent was the brother of the deceased, as well as being the father of one of the two missing fishermen, Mursal Mohamed. He lamented that,

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“We don’t know what to think! Sometimes we tell ourselves that they are being held in a foreign prison somewhere. But if they were imprisoned, then we [think we] would have heard something. (Author’s interview, March 28b, 2014).”

Both next-of-kin respondents reported struggling with severe emotional loss, as well as having lost an important livelihood income from fishing (Author’s interview, March 28a, 2014; Author’s interview, March 28b, 2014). Allegations of intimidation and violence have also been made by inhabitants in Qandala, Alula, Bargaal and Gumbah (Somalia Report, October 7, 2011; Somalia Report, April 20, 2012; Ali 2014: 5).

However, other respondents were positive in their perception of anti-pirates, and had personally interacted with naval vessels. Village officials interviewed pointed to productive cooperation with anti-pirates. An official from Qandala explained that they cooperated with naval vessels on ‘illicit operations in the territorial waters’ (Author’s interview, September 7, 2014). This was confirmed by an official from Bargaal, who noted that the village made contact with the naval vessels ‘when there is a threat’ (Author’s interview, September 2, 2014). Closer anti-piracy cooperation was requested by the Mayor of Gumbah, who suggested the establishment of ‘monitoring instruments to closely follow what’s going on in the high sea’. The Gumbah official also requested local employment opportunities in anti-piracy operations (Author’s interview, September 6, 2014). Higher trust levels between local communities and naval vessels appear to be the result of focused efforts to communicate directly with the area. While the field research only affords snapshots of the sentiments of the coast, it does challenge the oft-repeated narrative of uniformly fearful locals. The depiction of naval vessels as stumbling, violent actors in Somali seas appears at least partly erroneous.

7.5 Contested Waters

These months, years – they’ve been worse than ever. The fishing trawlers increased their activity a whole lot, and people are complaining a lot. They [the trawlers] are shooting at people because they’re afraid that they’re pirates! They worry about thieves, but they are the thieves

Mayor of Eyl speaking about illegal fishing

(2014)

The fall in piracy attacks has accentuated other strains of maritime predation. Illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, or fishing piracy, appears a significant competitor to coastal communities. Several testimonies point to high, local expectations towards the capacity of naval vessels to monitor and combat fishing piracy. These testimonies reflect an expectation that anti-piracy interdiction should be accompanied by an equally harsh stance against foreign trawlers.
Local communities display significant grievances over the invasive behaviour of foreign fishing vessels (Horseed Media, March 23, 2014; Garowe Online, February 24, 2015; Goobjoog, March 21, 2015). The re-flourishing of illegal fishing activities off Somalia’s coastline may be one of the unintended effects of the decline in piracy. Indeed, several testimonies from the coast showed suspicions and fears towards the naval vessels themselves, perceiving the anti-pirates to be butter-fingered and even hostile in their handling of fishermen. Some view naval vessels’ presence as an indication of protection of fishing trawlers under the guise of anti-piracy operations. Others appear more conciliatory, and allow that offshore naval presence needs to be transformed into local governmental monitoring and patrols in the medium- to long-term.

A UN report estimates that ‘several hundred’ vessels may be operating off Puntland’s coast alone (UN July 2013). An indication of the extent of IUU fishing off the Somali coast may be judged by a 2015 report co-authored by the Federal Government, Puntland, Galmudug and Jubbaland states. The report confirms the claim by one coastal official of an increase in fishing activities in the last two-three years (IOTC 2015: 3; Author’s interview, March 25a, 2014). AIS data from seven Chinese-flagged fishing vessels registered their long-line movements between March and April 2015 at a range of 100 to 250 nautical miles off the Mudug and Galguduud littoral (IOTC 2015: 6). AIS data from two South Korean-flagged vessels, Butiyalo 1\textsuperscript{vii} and Haysimo 1\textsuperscript{viii}, show trawling off the coast between Ras Mabber\textsuperscript{ix} and Ras Goree\textsuperscript{x} (IOTC 2015: 9-10). Moreover, the AIS track of the Thailand-registered fishing vessel Poseidon, alleged to be operating illegally, shows it trawling within a few nautical miles of the South Mudug coast (IOTC 2015: 12-13).

The AIS signals of a variety of trawlers reinforce allegations made by coastal communities. One of Eyl’s district officials charged that ‘when the season began, the whole ocean was alight’ (Author’s interview, March 25a, 2014). Another official remarked that the decline in piracy had not only led to a resumption of the artisanal fishing industry, but equally opened the floodgates for illegal fishing (Author’s interview, March 26, 2014). A fisherman in Dhanaane spoke with resignation about the problem,

“They are here pretty much every night. Here by the flock. They’re not scared of us. There are millions of fishing nets, lobster nets and equipment that are missing from us (Author’s interview, April 1, 2014).”

Several Hobyo officials whom the author spoke with repeatedly underlined the devastating impact of fishing piracy on the coastal livelihoods. From Hobyo fishermen regularly observe the silhouette of trawlers out at sea. And when venturing along the littoral waters, the area’s artisanal fishermen frequently come

\textsuperscript{vii}Formerly Ithhus No. 7.
\textsuperscript{viii}Formerly Ithhus No. 9.
\textsuperscript{ix}Ras Mabber is a headland just south of Bandarbayla village, Karkaar region, Puntland.
\textsuperscript{x}Ras Goree is a headland just west of Qandala village, Bari region, Puntland.
into contact with Yemeni and Iranian vessels, which compete for the same demersal fish species. An Eyl fisheries dealer complained that ‘there is no power or ability to contain them’, calling for aid from local authorities and the international community (Author’s interview, March 22, 2014). An official in Gumbah village charged that vessels from East Asia possessed ‘mini-factories’ (Author’s interview, September 6, 2014). A mariner from Eyl described how Yemeni vessels operated when they arrived off the Black Bay area.

“When they reach Eyl, they stay 15 to 20 nautical miles out where they can see the city and lay their nets to fish. And then they bring out their skiffs. […] So while they are there they begin fishing, and they amass a huge amount of stolen fish (Author’s interview, March 25b, 2014).”

A 2015 Somali report states that anti-piracy naval vessels ‘could have an important role to play’ to end these activities. The report noted with apparent regret that EU NAVFOR’s Operation Atalanta anti-piracy unit, the Spanish patrol vessel Rayo, ‘passed a few miles away’ from the unlicensed Chinese-flagged trawler Lu Qing Yuan Yu 105 (IOTC 2015: 14). Somali suspicions of naval neglect are aroused by the fact that EU NAVFOR’s Operation Atalanta specifically includes a mandate to ‘monitor fishing activities off the coast of Somalia’ (IOTC 2015: 15). Some coastal dwellers were less diplomatic in their communication. An Eyl inhabitant reasoned that naval vessels had the technology to monitor and interdict foreign fishing vessels.

“They know how many vessels are in our waters, at any given time. They know the details of their travels and their transit. (Author’s interview, March 24, 2014).”

The fisherman assessed that a minimum intervention by ‘Western countries’ would have a maximum effect on illegal fishing. Vessels wouldn’t steal ‘a twig from Somali waters’ if statements against the activities were made (Author’s interview, March 24, 2014). The perception, often verging on the conspiratorial, also leans towards understanding inaction as criminal complicity. The Mayor of Eyl did obviously not trust naval vessels, speculating that the ‘vacuum ships’ (illegal fishing vessels) were aided by ‘the Navy or NATO or whatever kind of international navy that’s out there’ (Author’s interview, March 26, 2014). Another allegation of (Western) foreign theft was succinctly exemplified by a religious elder residing in Wadi Nugaal. He did not reside at the coast, but was adamant in his conviction. ‘Pagan white thieves’, thundered the elder, should be ‘put to death by law’, rather than being ransomed (Author’s interview, April 3, 2014). The elder declared forcefully that,

“The youth went to ransom the ships and the white thieves as retaliation to the open plunder of their wealth. However, the white man’s double standards and looting is not new. And how quickly they were to label us pirates! It’s a joke.’ (Author’s interview, April 3, 2014).”
Despite significant anger against illegal fishing, some respondents pointed out that piracy is wrong whatever the circumstances (Author’s interview, March 24, 2014; Author’s interview, March 26, 2014). Comments by Eyl’s Mayor also cast doubt on the proposed mechanism of illegal fishing-induced piracy. When confronted about piracy prior to 2005 the Mayor could only remember the episode of the July 2001 hijacking of the Kenyan-flagged fishing vessel Bahari Kenya. Most of the vessels are heavily armed he pointed out, equipped with ‘50 caliber guns’. Rather than recount the arms-race narrative that often is cited in the literature, he acknowledged that fishing vessels had been generally unapproachable (Author’s interview, March 26, 2014).

Indeed, while grievances fuelled by foreign resource theft appear commonplace, the issue is a complicated one even among Somalis. Foreign fishing vessels in Somali waters are only one of several maritime predators in the area. Indeed, several of the respondents indicated that it was known locally that maritime predation possessed several home-grown strains. The following section explores the various types of marine theft that occur among Somali stakeholders. It also analyses the role of anti-pirates within the web of licit, illicit and semi-illicit activities that intersect at the local, regional and transnational levels.

### 7.6 Blurred Lines

Naval anti-piracy vessels negotiating Somali waters have to contend with the blurred lines of what is licit and illicit. A Yemeni vessel trawling the seas between Ras Hafun and Bandarbyla, as witnessed by the author, suggests an obvious candidate of fishing theft (Author’s observation, October 20, 2013). However there are several types of illicit and semi-illicit activities carried out by foreign vessels. Notably, some of these vessels have bonds to Somali stakeholders. One official in Eyl gave the distinction between licit and illicit offshore activities as two distinct categories. ‘Pirate fishers’ are Yemeni vessels that engage in fishing along the coast, and which bring their stolen catches to Yemeni markets. A second category, provided access by Puntland’s Ministries of Fisheries and Marine Resources, buy fish products delivered to them by local fishermen (Author’s interview, March 25, 2014).

However, this distinction misrepresents the extent of maritime predation by Somali stakeholders on one another. An Eyl fisherman and mariner that had participated in the trade in Yemen and Oman explained that for every Yemeni vessel in the sea there were at least two local Somali guards providing security. Guards employed aboard Yemeni vessels were also from Eyl, he claimed (Author’s interview, March 25b, 2014). However, Eyl’s Mayor said he wasn’t aware that any of the village’s inhabitants worked as armed guards aboard foreign vessels (Author’s interview, March 26, 2014). The Eyl mariner claimed that many of the Yemeni-flagged vessels are rented by Somalis. These vessels buy directly from the local fishermen, and sell ‘for three times the price they got it for’ (Author’s interview, March 25b, 2014). The Eyl mariner charged that traders ‘weigh fish on scales that are corrupt’. Fish brought to Mukalla in Yemen is ‘sold and resold to vendors’, and often shipped to Saudi Arabia

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This system, claimed the mariner, was only possible due to local corruption.

‘The ones that take the most haram [forbidden] money’, noted the mariner, ‘are the Somalis here [in Eyl]’ (Author’s interview, March 25b, 2014).

Vessels arriving from Yemen, Oman, Iran and Iraq are ‘offered protection for a certain price’. Protection deals also include small arms smuggling, particularly from the Yemeni ports of Qusay’ir, ash-Shihr and Bir Ali (Author’s interview, March, 25b, 2014). There are several cases that indicate that facilitation of these protection deals are performed by officials within Somalia. This remains a controversial and sensitive topic, but illustrates that predatory activities is not a case of external predation only. Examination of fishing license deals made in the Federal Government in Mogadishu and by Puntland officials in Garowe and Bosaso point to troubling irregularities.

In July 2013 the Minister of Natural Resources, Abdirizak Omar Mohamed, signed an exclusive, 15-year deal with Somalia Fishguard Ltd., mandating it to oversee the fishing licensing and conservation of all fisheries resources off Somalia (Reuters, February 18, 2015; MOF 2014). Beyond the exceptional powers given to the company, they were awarded an ‘extremely high share’ of fish licensing revenue. Initially, Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Mohamud Olow Barrow, explained that Somalia Fishguard and the Federal Government would ‘co-manage a bank account’ for obtained license and penalty fees (Barrow, August 26, 2014). Later, however, Barrow labelled the deal invalid and claimed the signatory minister Abdirizak Omar Mohamed had no such power (Bloomberg, December 23, 2014). Similarly, the South Korean-flagged trawler Poseidon, which had been tracked and then arrested on January 11, 2015, was released ‘in mysterious circumstances’. The vessel had been granted to fish off the coast by the Attorney-General of the Federal Government, Ahmed Ali Dahir. However, subsequent to the release of Poseidon, the Auditor-General, Nur Farah, accused Villa Somalia of interference and of threats during his investigation into the case. According to Nur Farah, the vessel was clearly engaging in illegal fishing (Somali Agenda, January 21, 2015).

In similar style to the Somalia Fishguard deal, the new Puntland administration opted in April 2015 to grant a company the exclusive mandate of patrolling the territorial waters against illegal fishing. The company Somali Security Service (SSS) is owned by Abdiweli Ali Taar, who is from the same sub-clan as Puntland’s president (Horseed, April 22, 2015; Garowe Online, April 23, 2015). Taar was head of the defunct maritime security company SomCan, which previously was mandated with the sale and enforcement of fishing licenses in Puntland. The new mandate is therefore remarkable given his prior failure to operate within the anti-fishing sector (Westberg 2015a). SSS’s arrival on the maritime security stage is also surprising given the Puntland Maritime Police Force’s (PMPF) proven track record of anti-piracy operations, and intercepptions of fishing vessels suspected of operating illegally (Horseed, March 4, 2014; 109

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xiVilla Somalia is the name designating the Presidential Office of the Federal Somali Government in Mogadishu.
Controversy on fishing licenses also surrounds a high-ranking official in Puntland, the Minister of Finance Shire Haji Farah. Coastal inhabitants appear to be keenly aware of this issue. A Bandarbeyla mariner claimed that Farah operates ‘about 10 trawlers [that are] fishing in Puntland waters’ (Author’s interview, April 21, 2014). Two analysts in Garowe independently provided incriminating evidence of illicit deals between Shire Haji Farah and the four South Korean-flagged fishing trawlers previously described (Author’s interview, August 29, 2014; Author’s interview, September 17, 2014). This was confirmed in an investigate report by Al Jazeera shortly thereafter (Al Jazeera, September 24, 2014).

The trawlers have previously been suspected of illicit activities, as far back as May 2009 (UN 2011: 40). Shire Haji Farah’s collaboration is facilitated through his brother, Isse Haji Farah, who runs the company ARA Fisheries in Dubai (Author’s interview, August 29, 2014; Author’s interview, September 17, 2014). Fishing licenses for three of the four vessels, the Ixthus No. 7, Ixthus No. 9 and Beakyang 37 allow for ‘two hundred tons’ of daily unspecified fish catch.

Responding to charges of illegal fishing Puntland’s Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources stipulated that ARA Fisheries and its sister company North East Fishing operate within the law. Moreover, the Deputy Minister insisted that the vessels and the companies ‘have been doing [so] legally for [a] long time’ (Ali, June 14, 2014). However a letter from the head of the fishing license committee, Abdirahman Kulmiye, requested South Korea’s Ministry of Ocean and Fisheries to instruct ‘its flagged vessels [to] cease all fishing operations and leave our waters’ (Kulmiye, August 12, 2014; Author’s interview, August 29, 2014). The letter is explicit in the illegality of the fishing trawler operations, noting that the licenses ‘did not officially originate from the Government of Puntland’.

“Due to the Moratorium which is still in place, all industrial fishing activities are currently prohibited in the totality of Puntland EEZ without exception. As the chairman of the licensing committee of the Puntland Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, I can confirm that my committee has not approved or recommended the issuance of any industrial fishing license since the moratorium came into force. (Kulmiye, August 12, 2014).”

Shortly thereafter Puntland’s President presented a decree to South Korean authorities that Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources Abdinuur Cilmi Maamud is the ‘authorized signatory’ of all fishing license issuances. The letter states that the four trawlers are operating legally through their deals with ARA Fisheries and North East Fishing (Gaas, August 18, 2014). The fact that it directly undermines the fishing license committee letter is notable. Several members of the committee were reported to reject the trawlers’ operations (Author’s interview, August 29, 2014). Strangely, a few weeks later the President changed course again and declared illegal fishing a ‘natural disaster’, followed by a prompt order that the four trawlers report to Bosaso port (Raxanreeb June 2, 2014; Al Jazeera, September 24, 2014).
Semi-illicit fishing deals in Puntland constitute only part of the predatory environment. The criminal fishing protection racket operated by former pirate Isse Yulux suggests both coastal roots and links to Puntland officials. Isse Yulux was a pirate shareholder in a string of hijackings, including the Panama-flagged cargo vessel Dover, the Danish-flagged yacht ING, the U.A.E.-flagged product tanker Jubba XX, the Panama-flagged chemical tanker Royal Grace and the Liberian-flagged tanker Smyrni (Somalia Report, March 6, 2012; Somalia Report, June 6, 2012). However, Isse Yulux later publicly disavowed piracy, and has since been a key shareholder in an illegal fishing cabal (Horseed, March 7, 2014; Somalia Report, March 6, 2012; Author’s interview, August 23, 2014).

Isse Yulux’s shareholder cabal purportedly recruits from the Bari region ‘at US$50 per head per voyage’, and includes a transnational network with connections to Yemen, U.A.E., Oman and Iran (UN, July 2013, p. 101). A Garowe security analyst also charged that Isse Yulux is engaged in arms smuggling from Yemen, purportedly in partnership with a smuggler identified as Sahan Yaxye (Author’s interview, August 23, 2014). To maintain his presence in the Bari region, Isse Yulux is alleged to have bribed several high-ranking officials within the Awlyahan sub-clan of the Ali Suleimanxi. This includes former Governor of Bari region Ibrahim Artan ‘Haji Bakin’, current Governor of Bari region Abdisamad Mohamed Galan and internal affairs advisor Abdullahi Ahmed Eid (Author’s interview, May 22, 2014; Author’s interview, August 23, 2014). The latter has denied the allegation as political smearing (Author’s interview, May 22, 2014).

Yet distrust of the activities of high-ranking officials within Puntland appears to be shared by colleagues, and not only external parties (Kulmiye, August 12, 2014; Author’s interview, February 6, 2015). The Mayor of Eyl recounted that the head of the fishing license committee, Abdirahman Kulmiye, had told him that only ‘two or three’ of the licensed fishing vessels possessed valid permits (Author’s interview, March 26, 2014). Another high-ranking official within Puntland’s administration raised questions as to why the post of the Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources was awarded to an individual with an apparent complete lack of interest in developing the fishing sector (Author’s interview, February 6, 2015). The same minister has signed off on at least three of the fishing licenses that have caused controversy within Puntland (Maamuud, 2014a, Maamuud, 2014b; Maamuud, 2014c). Indeed, multiple independent sources name the same officials, suggesting a degree of nepotism and rent-seeking within the fishing sector.

To the extent that home-grown cabals exist they present a direct threat to fishing livelihoods along the coast. Moreover, they cloud the environment for anti-piracy and anti-fishing organizations. In such a climate, it is perhaps unsurprising that naval anti-piracy vessels seem to find it difficult to combine anti-piracy with anti-illegal fishing operations.

Contrary to claims of naval dereliction, foreign fishing dhows are frequently

xiThe Awlyahan are a sub-clan of the Ali Suleiman, which is a sub-clan of the Majerteen. Isse Yulux hails from the Biciidyahan sub-clan of the Ali Suleiman.
asked by naval vessels to accommodate inspection. The inspection of an Iranian-flagged dhow at Garacad reveals how difficult identification and verification can be (Author’s observation, October 22, 2013). Boarding of the vessel revealed a crew of twenty Iranian fishermen and a two-man Somali security team. Confronted about their service, the Somali security team acknowledged they were from Qandala, and from the Ali Suleiman sub-clan. Moreover, one of the guards admitted he would collect his wage in Bosaso after disembarking. Yet the two security guards were generally vague about the circumstances of their hiring. Some of the Iranian fishermen volunteered that they had acquired a fishing permit from an agent in Dubai. The permit was presented, and revealed the mark of Puntland’s Ministry of Fisheries (Author’s observation, October 22, 2013). However, there was no immediate way of verifying the authenticity of the license. None of the individuals could identify the name of the agent. As dhow inspections are voluntary, there was little else to do for the naval vessel but note the contact details of the Qandala security team and conclude the visit.

Arguably, the link between former pirates and illegal fishing activities off the coast raises serious questions about the credibility of the Robin Hood narrative. A recent hijacking off central Somalia illustrates that pirates still assume the guise of fisheries protection. Two fishing dhows FV Siraj and FV Jabber captured off Ceel Huur on March 21 2015 appeared at first to be apprehended by local authorities (IOTC 2015: 4; OBP 2015a: 1). Confusion as to the identity of the perpetrators surfaced after the Hobyo administration appeared to take responsibility. Three days after the capture the administration announced that vessels found fishing illegally would ‘face the wrath of the law’. Hobyo’s District deputy commissioner Bashir Abdi Adow claimed that Iran, from where the dhows originated, had been notified of the capture (Kobciye, March 24, 2015). In hindsight local and external authorities have agreed that the incident was a piratical hijacking (Horseed, March 26, 2015; IOTC 2015). Moreover, the hijacking has been linked to pirate financier and leader Mohamed Garfanje who has previously operated in Hobyo (CGPCS, July 8, 2015). A second incident in April 2015 again raised the issue of predation. Hobyo authorities detained another Iranian fishing dhow, the FV Aresh. Two individuals in the 19-man crew were arrested on suspicion of gillnetting a large catch of fish, and ‘brought to the Hobyo police station for questioning’. The district court of Hobyo found the pair guilty of illegal fishing, and sentenced the individuals to pay a US$100,000 fine before the dhow was released (IOTC 2015: 4).

As shown in this study, competition with foreign trawlers presents an economic challenge to artisanal fishermen. However, illegal fishing remains as much a veil of justification as it being the principal driver of local economic insecurity. No immediate access to port infrastructure (there are none between Harardhere and Qandala), lack of proper storage facilities, artisanal overfishing within the littoral seas and highly unequal market access to the principal markets on the Arabian Peninsula are just as debilitating. These problems and the home-grown strains of predation may reveal the real limits of naval anti-piracy operations.
7.7 Conclusion

Field research by the author provides new empirical insight into an area that remains under-researched, despite the momentous interest it has spurred over the last decade. Exploring the relationship between anti-piracy naval vessels and the coastal communities of Somalia suggests that it is more complex than is commonly perceived. Investigation into the environment in which anti-pirates operate shows varying levels of animosity and trust between naval vessel and fishing villages along the coast. Some fishermen and officials see naval vessels as perpetrators of excessive violence in Somalia’s backyard. Others are more favourable in their perception, acknowledging the impact of naval vessel’s presence on the decline in piracy activities.

Coastal communities in Somalia appear committed against the return of piracy, yet are equally angered by the invasive behaviour of foreign fishing vessels. Anti-piracy vessels are expected to show an equally tough stance against fishing pirates as they have demonstrated towards ransom pirates.

However, research into the fishing sector reveals that a significant amount of predation is committed by local stakeholders, including officials. Competition for fishing sector rents, particularly over fishing license distribution, appear to undermine coastal livelihoods. Moreover, it worsens the ability of anti-piracy naval vessels to dissolve surviving pirate groups and undermines their ability to counter illegal fishing practices. Despite a closer engagement with Somalia, naval vessels are confronted with national, regional and local stakeholders that project vastly diverging interests, some of which are predatory. This study finds that home-grown interests in the country’s marine resources aren’t necessarily accompanied with a concern for its artisanal fishing communities.

Notes

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120 Author’s interview, 25 March 2014 op. cit.
121 Author’s interview, 21 April 2014 op. cit.
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141 Murphy, 2011(a) op. cit. 80.
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[10] Author’s conversation, Galmudug commissioner for Hobyo district, Hussein Salad Weheliye, October 25, 2013
[13] Author’s interview, member of Eyl district council, March 25a, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Muse’


[15] Author’s interview, Mayor of Eyl, Muse Osman Yusef, March 26, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Muse’


[18] Author’s interview, Dhanaane fisherman ‘Ahmed’, April 1, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Muse’


[21] Author’s interview, Bandarbeyla fisherman ‘Hiraad’, April 22, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Muse’

[22] Author’s interview, Garowe security analyst ‘Mussa’, May 22, 2014

[23] Author’s interview, Garowe security analyst ‘Rashid’, August 23, 2014


[26] Author’s interview, Mayor of Gumbah, Mohamed Ahmed Musse Walow, September 6, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Isse’

[27] Author’s interview, Mayor of Qandala, Jama Mohamed Khurshe September 7, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Isse’

[28] Author’s interview, Garowe security analyst ‘Mussa’, September 17, 2014

[29] Author’s interview, Puntland official ‘Mahamed’, February 6, 2015


8 Thieves of Disorder: Pirate Networks and Pirated Communities in Puntland

Strapped to the weather-beaten tip of the Horn of Africa, the infamous village of Eyl once reigned as a favoured lair for Somali pirates. The arrival of newly hijacked vessels in the deep bight of Eyl’s Black Bay conjure images of cash-flush coastal dwellers merrily going about their ways. Yet rather than enrich fishing villages such as Eyl, piracy actually deteriorated an already marginalized coastline. This study shows how pirates became parasitic thieves of disorder, spurring widespread community grievances. It explores the onset of anti-piracy campaigns in Eyl and coastal villages in northeast Somalia, resulting in resistance, sabotage and expulsion of pirate groups. Drawing on fieldwork from Somalia’s northeast coast, this study offers new insight into the relationship between piracy and its coastal environment.

Keywords: Piracy; Anti-piracy; Somalia; Horn of Africa

8.1 Introduction

Literature, commentary and policy-making presenting solutions to the predicament of Somali piracy usually argue that it must be solved on land. Given the near unanimous agreement on the land-based nature of the problem it is surprising how little attention has been given to understanding the coastal environment in which pirates have operated. Neglect of the coastline has germinated into some adventurous suggestions by studies on Somali piracy, the most notable of which is the claim that this illicit activity only harmed outsiders, not insiders. How does this claim fare against Somalia’s first anti-piracy campaign? In Eyl pirate groups were told to pack up and leave as early as 2009. In Bandarbeyla pirates were similarly expelled. Several later grassroots movements against piracy in Puntland have achieved similar results.

This study investigates the anti-piracy campaigns that were carried out in northeast Somalia. Extensive fieldwork focusing on the coastal communities in Puntland provides new insight into their livelihoods and relationship with pirates. The study also examines piracy activities based on the author’s review of piracy statistics off the Horn of Africa for the period 2008 to 2014, compiled from reports by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGIA), naval records and open source material. Moreover, the study presents a comprehensive list of contemporary reports documenting piracy activities and their effects on the coastline.

Rather than thrive, most communities came out as clear losers from an activity that morphed into a parasitic enterprise. Pirates engaged in wild-eyed spending, fuelled by the opulence of ransom payments, leading to inflation and

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insecurity. The study finds that there were growing incentives among communities to end piracy activities. Moreover, even smaller fishing hamlets such as Aris had economic interests that were worth protecting from piratical parasitism. Interestingly, this flies in the face of the accepted wisdom that Somalia’s coastal communities simply toil in endless poverty. Ultimately pirate groups were sabotaged, hindered and even dismantled by community efforts. By 2012 pirates found themselves restricted to fringe slivers of the northeast littoral and facing a rapidly declining recruitment pool.

The first section explores the extant literature on the effects of piracy on coastal communities. The second section explores the hijacking statistics and anchorage locations for pirate groups operating in northeast Somalia. Capturing the effect of resistance on piracy relies on understanding the social geography of piracy operations. The third section explores the ransom money spending of pirates, and finds that wasteful consumption constituted a significant part of their expenditures. The fourth section investigates the effects of piracy on coastal communities, followed by an analysis of the anti-piracy campaigns that developed along the littoral. The study concludes with recommendations for future research within the field.

8.2 Review of Extant Literature

Several influential studies have claimed Somali piracy harms outsiders, not insiders.iiiiv Percy and Shortland find that the victims of Somali piracy aren’t found in the local communities. Rather, the victims of piracy are all external. Local authorities, by this logic, have ‘little incentive to clamp down on pirate behaviour’.v Moreover, pirates have provided jobs, which ‘neither the state itself nor the international community have been able to provide’v. Dua and Menkhaus similarly hold that piracy is tightly knit with the local communitiesvii. Shortland and Varese acknowledges moral and religious objections towards piracy, but charge that these qualms are overridden by ‘extreme local poverty and underemployment’.viii Percy and Shortland also suggests that the local economy would not exist without piracy. Beyond providing employment, piracy is seen raising investment capital, the local income level, and reducing poverty through the redistribution of ransom payments. In truth, there is ‘little incentive for local Somalis to end piracy’.ix

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ivIbid., p. 21.
vIbid., p. 19.
An earlier study by Shortland examines the impact of ransom payments on Puntland, and finds ‘developmental effects’ for the semi-autonomous polity. According to Shortland, ‘piracy appears to lead to widespread economic development’, although the study and a later revised version concedes that development in coastal communities such as Eyl and Hobyo is largely absent. Shortland concludes that a land-based solution to piracy in Somalia means ‘replacing piracy as a source of income to relevant local communities’.

Hastings, Jablonski and Oliver challenge several assumptions about the effects of ransom payments on Puntland’s economy. They argue that piracy ‘reduces the relative competitiveness of other sectors’. Pirates tend to invest in non-tradable goods, including provisions for pirates and hostages, communications, the narcotic drug khat and expensive land vehicles. Moreover, some pirates re-invest parts of their ransom payment into new ventures, requiring additional expenditure on skiffs, fuel, weaponry, and boarding equipment. Pirates’ investments and consumption creates high inflation and crowds out the export sector, coined the ‘Tortuga Disease’.

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10Ibid, p. 2.
11Andreas Bruvik Westberg, ‘Somalia’s pastoral heart: understanding drivers of insecurity’, Strategic Insights, 49 (December 2013), pp. 4-6.
13Ibid., p. 19.
14Tortuga Disease is a term coined after the eighteenth century pirate lair on the island of Hispaniola (modern-day Haiti).
However, while the study offers important critique about the effects of piracy on alternative, licit sectors of the economy, it contains significant data flaws that appear to invalidate its findings.\textsuperscript{xix} While the study aims to study the effects of Puntland piracy ransom payments on the Puntland economy, the author’s erroneously include Somalia’s South Mudug region. This inclusion is not corrected for when the study analyses ransom payments with economic and market data in Puntland. By conflating the ransom payments from hijacked vessels held at Hobyo and Harardhere (see figure 1), the study grossly overstates the effects of ransom payments on Puntland’s economy.\textsuperscript{xxi} Indeed, Hobyo and Harardhere have accounted for more than half of all known ransom payments, with at least USD193.65 million paid to pirate groups operating from these two South Mudug villages.

Nevertheless, the question remains whether piracy operations and ransom payments in Puntland have led to harmful effects akin to the ‘Tortuga Disease’. This study proposes that piracy in Puntland indeed has been parasitic. However, in attempting to capture the effect of the activity, and determine to what extent it has been parasitic, studies must force their focus upon local coastal communities where piracy is found.

### 8.3 Pirate Networks in Northeast Somalia

The following section investigates piracy activities carried out in northeast Somalia. Understanding the effects of piracy on the coastline necessitates an overview of the identity, location, extent and temporal variation in piracy activities. The study chooses the Nugaal and Bari regions as case studies. The two

\textsuperscript{xix}Ibid., p. 5.
\textsuperscript{xxi}The results of the study must necessarily be discounted due to data invalidity.
regions have hosted an estimated 70 percent of all hijacked vessels in Puntland, captured in the period between 2008 and 2012.

In terms of coastal geography, there are a few points worth observing with relevance to pirate identities, operations and the pirates’ relationship to coastal communities. The Nugaal and Bari regions form the northeast territory of Somalia. They encompass most, but not all of the territory of the semi-autonomous State of Puntland. Significant pirate anchorages in the Nugaal region and the Bari region are the villages of Eyl, Bandiappey, Ras Hafun, Hurdiyo, and Bargaaal. Other minor anchorages, often being fishing hamlets, smaller camps and even remote headlands appear in figure 1.

Piracy activities in Eyl and the Black Bay area were intense, yet brief. At least 30 vessels were hijacked and anchored in the Black Bay between January 2008 and July 2009. Pirates in Eyl usually operated based on the shareholder model, although financial arrangements involving single investors (often fundraising) certainly was practiced as well. After financing a venture, Eyl-based groups would launch pirate ventures at significant distances from the coastline, targeting the shipping lanes in the Gulf of Aden, or ‘Pirate Alley’. Many of these pirate ventures were launched from the northern coastline, after pirates from Eyl had smuggled themselves discretely up the main Bosaso road connecting the Nugaal region to the Gulf of Aden.

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**Notes:**

xxii This article includes the Karkaar region as a southern part of the Bari region, as is often done. To avoid too much confusion, the study tries to point out the name of the villages in question when possible, rather than a generic reference to ‘region’

xxiii Interview, pirate, Galkayo, 15 May 2014


Pirate ventures would involve repeated attacks until pirates managed hijack a vessel (see Figure 8.2). Vessels that arrived in the Black Bay area were either anchored directly off Eyl or adjacent to smaller fishing camps such as Dhanane, Qulule, Arrindire and Gaba’a. As a pirate community the Black Bay area hosted several individual pirate groups, and took the form of a loose, informal network. A few pirate groups engaged in repeated and successful hijackings of vessels, often re-investing a certain portion of their ransoms into new attacks. These groups engaged in what may be termed regular, continued piracy activities, run by individuals that persisted in their piracy occupation, while others simply joined for one-off ventures. Variations in single investor versus shareholder pirate ventures naturally influenced ransom payment distribution. There were at

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xxix The author’s dataset, ‘Pirate incidents off the Horn of Africa, 1991-2014’, is an unpublished review of all piracy activities off the Horn of Africa between 1991 and 2014. The dataset includes all registered pirate approaches, attacks and hijackings carried out by Somali-based actors, including information on coordinates, weather data, hijacked vessel anchorage, ransom payment and date of release. A large portion of the dataset is compiled from the registries of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGIA), while a significant minority hails from naval records and open source material.

xxx Ibid.


xxxi Bahadur, ‘Pirates, inc.’.


least two sizeable pirate groups operating in Eyl, identified through key investor and shareholder pirates Mohammed Abdi Garaad and Abdulkadir Musse Hirsi Nur. These pirates have not only financed operations, but also facilitated recruitment of pirates. Moreover, the shareholder organization of most pirate groups offered a flexibility in attaining new investors and recruits.

Whereas the pirate network present in the Black Bay area and the Nugaal region was dominated by a single sub-clan, Bari region piracy has mostly been a patchwork of smaller sub-clan groups. Key pirate investors and shareholders Isse Yulux, Abshir Gardheere, Gacan Barwaqo Mohamed Gani, Nur Ashir and Liban Abdirahman Aragosta all draw from the three sub-clans that dominate the Bari littoral, the Osman Mahamoud, the Siwaqroon and the Ali Suleiman sub-clans. The heterogeneous make-up of Bari pirates is also reflected in the diversity of anchorages, and the way in which hijacked vessels have been moved fluidly along the littoral.

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40. Bahadur, The pirates of Somalia – inside their hidden world, p. 77.
42. Mohammed Abdi Garaad is of mixed-clan lineage, with his patrilineal line hailing from the Isse Mahamoud sub-clan in Eyl, and his matrilineal line hailing from the Suleiman sub-clan of the Haber Gedir in Harardhere. Infamous pirate negotiator Abdi Saed Bafe Looyaan is Garaad’s cousin, and has engaged as a negotiator for both Nugaal- and Mudug-region pirate groups, including abovementioned Eyl-based pirate Abdulkadir Musse Hirsi Nur.
43. Bahadur, ‘Pirates, inc.’.
45. Ibid., p. 37.
46. Author’s observation, Bandar Murcaayo, 17 October 2013.
50. Moreover, pirates participated from smaller sub-clans such as the Dishiishe, Ugadh Suleiman and Ismael Suleiman (the latter two being in the same sub-clan family as Ali Suleiman). However, given the fact that none of these sub-clans have a dominating presence along the Qandala – Bandarbeyla coastline they have had little impact on the choice of anchorage.
Bari region piracy activities based on South Mudug piracy model principles began in 2008, and vessels were hijacked up until mid-2012. Moreover, Bari pirates also adopted a common practice by South Mudug pirates involving the use of mother ships to raid shipping lanes exceeding 800 to 1000 nautical miles from the Somali coast. Vessels hijacked at sea were often commandeered to the villages of Bandarbeyla, Bargaal and Ras Hafun. Ras Binnah, a small cape south of Bargaal, offered another favoured point of anchorage. The heterogeneity of the Bari pirate network proved to be a strength in avoiding interdiction and arrest by Puntland’s security forces. The hijacked vessel JNG, a Danish-flagged yacht, offers an example of the shifting anchorages used by Bari pirates, and how the vessel and hostages were moved frequently. During their captivity, the hostages of the JNG were taken to areas dominated by all three abovementioned sub-clans. With a greater number of options in terms of anchorage, pirates were able to extend the time of ransom payment negotiation, and appeared to be able to resist capture in the medium-term.

Notably, piracy involving opportunistic maritime predation near the coastline began in the Bari region as early as 1991. This type of irregular piracy, defined by the absence of groups purely dedicated to piracy, lasted until early 2005. What may be termed regular piracy, built on the South Mudug piracy model principles, was initiated by the shareholder pirate group linked to Mohamed Abdi Hassan ‘Afweyne’ in Harardhere in early 2005 (Westberg 2015).

Author’s dataset.

Ras means headland in Arabic, and may be translated into the word cape. Cape Guardafui is Ras Asir in Arabic, while Ras Filuk and Ras Hafun respectively mean Cape Elephant and Cape Surrounded (or the Surrounded Cape on account of the droplet shape of the peninsula).


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8.4 Ransom Payment Opulence

Tens of millions of U.S. dollars of ransom payments landed in the pockets of Black Bay and Bari pirates in the period between 2008 and 2013. Excluding missing ransom payment data for at least 13 vessels, the minimum amount of ransom payment obtained by Black Bay pirates between 2008 and 2009 stands at USD30.68 million. Likewise, excluding missing ransom payment data for at least 9 vessels, the minimum amount of ransom payment obtained by Bari region pirates between 2008 and 2013 amounts to USD35.05 million. While some of the cash from the ransom payments was re-invested into new pirate ventures, a majority appears to have been spent on non-tradable goods such as mobile communications, khat and alcohol, social gatherings, housing and expensive land vehicles. Hansen notes that during some ventures the primary reward to the first pirate to board a vessel was the gift of a Land Cruiser. A Black Bay pirate explained how,

“As soon as the ship gets to its destination, the party is already on, the money is already flowing. No one knows when the ransom will come. It could take one month, two months, three months. But [the pirates] want to have fun, they want a car now.”

Credit provided to pirates, both before, during and after the exchange of ransom payment for hostages, led to ‘debt-fuelled spending binges’. An Eyl inhabitant noted that,

“In the end, they paid double for whatever they bought on credit. A Land Cruiser would have cost them USD16,000 or USD17,000. If they wanted a house, the regular price might have been USD20,000, but for them it was USD30,000 or USD40,000.”

Debt obligations attained by pirates often involved a re-payment of USc50 for every USD1. Items bought on credit were therefore in reality twice as expensive. Expensive land vehicles such Toyota Land Cruisers with four-wheel drive were popular among pirates, and remain a favoured purchase for cash-flush individuals in Puntland. Khat consumption appears to have been a particularly costly expenditure for pirates in the Black Bay area, with pirates

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[i] The last ransom payment to Bari pirates, for the Liberian-flagged tanker Smyrni, was paid in 2013 immediately prior to its release.
[ii] Author’s dataset.
[iii] Author’s dataset.
[iv] Author’s dataset.
[viii] Bahadur, ‘Pirates, inc.’.
[x] Interview, Somali mariner, Issa Mohamed, Dubai, 17 April 2014.
attaining khat debts amounting to tens of thousands of US dollars.\textsuperscript{lxvi} An eyewitness present in dying days of Eyl’s piracy era noted that such consumption would quickly burn out individual pirates’ ransom earnings.

“Theyir subsequent binges – made possible by the almost limitless credit extended to them by anyone with anything to sell – would have made the most reckless subprime mortgage look like the model of fiscal responsibility.”\textsuperscript{lxvii}

A crewmember and hostage aboard the Antigua- and Barbuda-flagged cargo vessel \textit{Victoria} also noted how members of the pirate group were buying khat for upwards of USD40 per kilogram.\textsuperscript{lxviii} The extravagant khat consumption meant that the pirates,

“Wouldn’t sleep for thirty or forty fours at a time. The supply boat came three times per day to bring [the khat]. There was only one pirate who didn’t chew: the cook. But in the end, even he started.”\textsuperscript{lxix}

The significant piratical expenditures on non-tradable goods points to the general low re-investment into the local community. One pirate admitted that ‘the money comes and goes quite easily’.\textsuperscript{lx} Grotesque spending resulted in one pirate declaring that he had bought a total of six Land Cruisers during his piracy career. The pirate detailed how he would buy a new one every time the old one broke down on Somalia’s punishing roads.\textsuperscript{lx}i The opulent splurge of ransom payments by pirates also contains traces of a debased logic. Some pirates have openly declared the money obtained from piracy as ‘haram’, or forbidden, and hence argue towards the futility of spending it ‘legitimately’. An Eyl pirate who had renounced his former activities declared that,

“I did a course in welding, and I plan to start a garage business to earn legitimate money. Money through piracy is illegitimate, ‘haram’. It is money you have not worked for. I say to [other pirates] repent to Allah. Quit piracy, and reform yourselves.”\textsuperscript{lxxii}

Not all pirates, however, engaged in reckless behaviour and spending. A pirate from the North Mudug region revealed how the ‘rampant social breakdown’ in Puntland was not seen in the village of Harardhere. The pirate ascribed the relatively controlled situation in Harardhere to the presence of the radical Somali Salafist terrorist organization al-Shabaab, noting that,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{lxvi} Bahadur, The pirates of Somalia – inside their hidden world, p. 196.
\item \textsuperscript{lxvii} Ibid., p. 197.
\item \textsuperscript{lxviii} Ibid., p. 217.
\item \textsuperscript{lxix} Ibid., p. 211.
\item \textsuperscript{lx} Roble, ‘How pirates spend their ransom money’.
\item \textsuperscript{lxxi} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{lxxii} Abdi, ‘An interview with a former pirate’.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
“You had to take your khat to a nearby village and hide out at your house, and do whatever you had to. You couldn’t do these things in public. Pirates from that area [Harardhere] were known to stash their money abroad, which Puntland pirates usually did not do.”

The pirate also described how inflation in Harardhere did not reach the ‘mind-boggling levels’ of Puntland, crediting Al-Shabaab for controlling ‘their market’. Interestingly, in neighbouring Hobyo, situated just north of Harardhere, high inflation as well as insecurity caused by pirate-induced proliferation of weaponry became a significant and enduring problem for inhabitants. Notably, Al-Shabaab’s sphere of influence in the South Mudug region stopped just shy of the southern borders of Hobyo, largely on account of the clan divide in the area between the Suleiman and Sa’ad sub-clans of the Haber Gedir.

8.5 Parasitic Piracy?

The following section documents how the brief tenure of Black Bay pirates must be understood in context of the destructive impact their activities had on the coastal communities in the area. A similar dynamic is present in the Bari region, although it appears more fragmented and occurring over a longer period of time. In both areas initial support for piracy transformed into anti-piracy campaigns. Piracy rarely led to new employment opportunities, nor did it significantly boost the coastal economy. Rather, it undermined an already brittle fishing sector, which has been the dominant livelihood income source for coastal inhabitants. Resistance towards piracy forced pirate groups to operate at less favourable locations, and eventually dismembered the pirate networks’ ability to operate on the basis of a kidnap for ransom model.

The most surprising finding found by the study is that while communities such as those in the Black Bay were already economically marginalized prior to the outbreak, piracy achieved the feat of pushing these communities into an even more peripheral position. Despite reports of a ‘sweet life’ in the Black Bay area, piracy became parasitic on the local community, as it did in the area in and surrounding Bargaal.

The wave of criminality that engulfed Puntland in 2008 was epitomized by the pirate frenzy in Eyl, joined by a good percentage of Eyl youth and residents. Young inhabitants in Eyl saw the lucrative returns of piracy ransoms,

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lxiii Interview, pirate, Garowe, 29 July 2014.
lxiv Ibid.
lxxv Author’s observation, Hobyo, 25 October 2013.
lxxix Interview, member of Eyl district council, Eyl, 25 March 2014.
“So you know when a young man is out of work and he sees a man just like him, making all that money. Well, he will try to get what the other man has got. So that’s how it started.”

By the end of 2008 Eyl was morphing into a pirate village in similar vein to Hobyo in Somalia’s central South Mudug region. The Black Bay area hosted a fleet of hijacked vessels throughout 2008. In the early months of the piracy craze in Eyl, a significant segment of the community appears to have willingly partaken in the business. Business owners and traders alike, as well as fishermen (a large majority of whom were unemployed), joined or supported piracy operations launched from the Black Bay area.

However, the influx of ransom cash pouring into the pockets of Eyl-based pirates didn’t appear to benefit the community. Rather, as recounted by its inhabitants, the area began suffering from a negative spiral of disorder caused by vengeful murders of ransom, destructive social behaviour and ‘very many other problems’. The narcotic drug addiction of the khat have also contributed to pirate in-fighting, as observed by hostages.

This type of in-fighting increasingly spilled over to general piracy-induced insecurity in coastal villages. Pirates were condemned for killing locals, and for escalating smaller clan feuds into deadly clashes. At Bargaal pirates were observed by local inhabitants to often engage in gun-fights with one another over ransom payments and khat products. Pirates operating at Bargaal, Ras Binnah and Ras Hafun also engaged in carjacking of each other’s vehicles after ransom payment disagreements.

Faced with growing insecurity pastoralists at Dhanane in the Black Bay gave up their fishing activities, complaining how,

“They [the pirates] even used to steal our goats, though that doesn’t happen as much anymore. There used to be more pirates here, but now there is only one ship left [the Marathon]. This will be the last one, inshallah [God willing].”

Fishermen and inhabitants of Eyl lamented as pirates were observed driving their land vehicles ‘night and day’ through the village. In the view of one local official at Eyl,

1 Interview, Mayor of Eyl, Muse Osman Yusef, Eyl, 26 March 2014.
2 Interview, member of Eyl district council, Eyl, 25 March 2014.
5 Ibid.
9 Bahadur, The pirates of Somalia – inside their hidden world, p. 239.
“The residents became fed up with these arrangements. Some people hated them in their hearts, some became vocal and spoke against it.”

While social ills related to piracy are mentioned in several former pirate villages, there is a notable emphasis on the worsening economic insecurity. Several villages experienced the problem of skyrocketing prices due to the inflation from ransom money. Common items like bread, tea and sugar were suddenly sold at exorbitant prices. The sudden influx of ‘huge amounts of US dollars’ resulted in exasperating exchange rate fluctuations. The Mayor of Eyl recalled how the economy collapsed,

“After piracy hit the coast, and pirates had received ransoms, inflation hit an all-time high. […] Many businessmen who had shops here moved their commerce elsewhere. Being strict Muslims they did not want to deal in forbidden money, and enable piracy.”

Murphy correctly suggests that pirates in Eyl managed to build up a support base, witnessed through the credit splurge offered by local businessmen. However, this phenomenon was extremely short-term as many businessmen that had provided credit to pirates through loans increasingly found themselves in an untenable situation as debtor pirates began defaulting. Both opulent consumption and the high rate of pirate venture failure led to quick insolvency for a generally resource-scarce business community. The credit borrowing appears widespread in the Black Bay area, and was also a practice which occurred after hijacked vessels had been anchored off Eyl and its surrounding satellites. Pirates would acquire diverse items on credit, awaiting the payment of ransom money as kidnapped crew and vessel were held at anchor. One Eyl inhabitant noted that,

“These actions of debt defaulting by the pirates worsened the poverty situation among the residents.”

Such testimony from Eyl challenges the assumption made by Dua and Menkhaus that credit extensions from local merchants led to debt obligations which fuelled further pirate ventures, and ‘embedded piracy firmly within the economic life’. Rather than reinforce the relationship in the long term, it weakened the status of pirates, and arguably demonstrated the frailty of their activities.
“Everyone is trying to call them [the pirates], trying to ask them for money. So they go and lock themselves inside a house and turn of their phones. Maybe they come out after ten days, when they have to, but then they’ll go right back in. Everyone is chasing them.”

In Eyl, Bandarbayla, and Bargaal piracy had a particularly damaging effect on the fishing and shipping sectors. Inhabitants engaging in the fishing sector were fearful of operating at sea. Pirates lost at sea were often former fishermen, leaving affected families with a serious income gap. In Gumbah, inhabitants bemoaned the theft of several fishing vessels by pirates. The plight of a former fishermen who had fled to Yemen as a refugee captured the sense of helplessness that permeated the fishing communities,

“My father taught me fishing when I was nine years old. I was in the business for more than four decades[,] but I had to quite it because my boat which I inherited from father was forcefully taken away by a group of pirates.”

Exploring the effects of piracy on the fishing sector reveals how it also has led to serious losses to coastal shipping. This appears to be one of the most significant, albeit underreported aspects of piracy. The coastal economy’s high dependency on the artisanal fishing sector is mirrored by its absolute reliance on the sale of their marine catches to the Arabian Peninsula. Around eighty percent of marine products caught along the coast are sold to markets in Yemen, Oman and the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), while the remaining catch is transported by vehicle to Bosaso, Garowe and Galkaayo, where they again are re-directed by air to Yemen and the U.A.E. This dependency on the Arabian Peninsula as a market for marine products exposed the communities to threats to the dhow shipping sector. Indeed, local maritime transport between Bargaal and the port of Bosaso was affected by piracy to the extent that the service was shut down.

The shipping sector involves dhows transiting the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea, with voyages ranging upward of hundreds of nautical miles. During the past decade Yemeni dhows have arrived approximately once per month at Bandarbayla and Eyl, bringing fuel and food products to the villages, and returning with fish products. In Bandarbayla local fishermen spend about five to six weeks to haul in a fishing catch that matches the carrying capacity of arriving dhows, averaging ten to eleven tons. The threat from piracy to this trade was immediate as soon as attacks began massing in the Gulf of Aden and

xcvii Bahadur, The pirates of Somalia – inside their hidden world, p. 199.
2 Mohamed and Omar, ‘Pirates to blame for clan warfare, says elders’.
3 Interview, Mayor of Eyl, Muse Osman Yusef, Eyl, 26 March 2014.
4 Ibid.
5 Somalia Report, ‘Into the heart of the pirate lair’.
6 Focal group conversation, Bandarbayla fishermen, Bandarbayla, 21 April 2014.
south-western area of the Arabian Sea. Indeed, the hijacking of dhows therefore had the most unintended of consequences, maiming the same coastal villages where pirates operated from. Absent the arrival of dhows, fishermen along the coast had few to no options available in earning a living. Testimony from Eyl suggests that these violations were viewed as so serious that they threatened to virtually shut down the fish trade.\textsuperscript{cvi}

8.6 Piracy Dismemberment

Those two ships are the last ones here, and I think they are very close to being freed. Everyone in Eyl will be happy to see them go

\textsuperscript{\underline{Eyl elder speaking to Jay Bahadur (2009)}}\textsuperscript{1}

Eyl's awakening against piracy was the first of its kind along the Somali coast. This resistance later spread to villages such as Bandarbayla and Bargaal in the Bari region. Resistance against piracy built on a wide array of local grievances involving economic, social and religious sentiments, and in combination with one another. An elder in Garowe deplored the pirates' introduction of a new norm of public consumption of alcohol, observing how 'it has become so common that even the livestock herders in the reserves drink it like water'.\textsuperscript{cvii}

In an aggrieved sentiment a local official in Eyl re-called how,

"With the advent of this sinful practice, came along a multitude of other sinful habits. These practices were hated by the people of Eyl so much."

\textsuperscript{cviii}

In Eyl anti-piracy sentiments spurred local, punitive measures aimed to heighten the operational cost for pirates. The Mayor of Eyl explained how the village began advocating against piracy through traditional elders and religious leaders, followed by economic sanctions against the pirates.\textsuperscript{cix} One such economic sanction involved local businesses refusing to provide credit and goods to pirates. Such goods also included vital fuel purchases that are central to pirate raids.\textsuperscript{cx} An active campaign of denying pirates the opportunity of renting houses and storage facilities was followed up by local sabotage, involving the theft of boat engines and other equipment from pirate skiffs.\textsuperscript{cxicxi} Coinciding with sabotage came local attempts to bar further recruitment towards participation in piracy activities. In both Eyl and Bandarbayla local village officials

\textsuperscript{cvI}Interview, member of Eyl district council, Eyl, 25 March 2014.
\textsuperscript{cvii}Yahya Mohamed, 'The real costs of piracy on locals', Somalia Report, 27 March 2011.
\textsuperscript{cviii}Interview, member of Eyl district council, Eyl, 25 March 2014.
\textsuperscript{cix}Interview, Mayor of Eyl, Muse Osman Yusef, Eyl, 26 March 2014.
\textsuperscript{cx}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{cxi}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{cxicxii}Interview, member of Eyl district council, Eyl, 25 March 2014.
organized mass protests against piracy.\textsuperscript{cxiii} The Mayor of Bandarbeyla advocated to the village’s inhabitants that they withhold their youth from the pirate groups, and declared to the village that.

\textit{“We will give the pirates [a] hard time. Bender Beyla will not be used as a home for illegal activities.”}\textsuperscript{cxv}

By June 2009 pirates’ position in Eyl had become underwhelmed and untenable. Only two vessels were left in the Black Bay. Moreover, one of the hijacked victims, the Netherlands-flagged cargo vessel Marathon, was forced to anchor at Dhanane, located at the southern fringe of the Black Bay.\textsuperscript{cxvi} Despised by Eyl’s inhabitants, many pirates mostly confined themselves to the safe vicinity of their hijacked prizes, and only going ashore under the cover of darkness.\textsuperscript{cxvii} The Mayor of Eyl recounted how,

\textit{“Slowly pirates had to move on to areas where people would sell to them.”}\textsuperscript{cxviii}

In northern Bari pirates appear to have offered more resistance. Whereas the eviction of pirates from the Black Bay was a relatively non-violent and efficient communal phenomenon, several areas of Bari saw violent and prolonged confrontations with local inhabitants. Fishermen in the village of Gumbah attempted to dislodge the pirates operating in the area, but ended up in several gun battles that resulted in fishermen casualties. The Mayor of Gumbah noted that one fisherman in the village was paralyzed on the lower part of his body, and unable to walk.\textsuperscript{cxix} In Bargaal the local administration formed an anti-piracy militia, and repeatedly clashed with pirate groups over the enforcement of a ban on khat products to pirates.\textsuperscript{cxx} An elder in Bargaal’s anti-piracy campaign lamented how,

\textit{“We have told the pirates in our loudest voice [that] they are not welcome in Bargal, but they have no ears. They are deaf and arrogant. They only know how to do haram [forbidden] things. […] They are thieves [sic], and their hands should be cut off, as Allah says in the holy book.”}\textsuperscript{cxxi}

Situated just south of Cape Guardafui, the fishing village of Bargaal has been a significant pirate anchorage and waypoint for hijacked vessels commandeered along the Bari coastline. Yet in February 2011 the village began an

\begin{itemize}
\item[cxiii] Said Ismail, ‘Protests against pirates in Bender Beyla’.
\item[cxiv] Interview, member of Eyl district council, Eyl, 25 March 2014.
\item[cxv] Said Ismail, ‘Protests against pirates in Bender Beyla’.
\item[cxvi] Bahadur, The pirates of Somalia – inside their hidden world, p. 224.
\item[cxvii] Bahadur, ‘Pirates, inc.’.
\item[cxviii] Interview, Mayor of Eyl, Muse Osman Yusef, Eyl, 26 March 2014.
\item[cxix] Interview, Mayor of Gumbah, Mohamed Ahmed Musse Walow, Garowe, 6 September 2014.
\item[cxx] Somalia Report, ‘Into the heart of the pirate lair’.
\item[cxxi] Sucaad Mire, ‘Local residents furious at pirates for bringing vessels to Bargal’; Somalia Report, 21 February 2012
\end{itemize}
anti-piracy campaign to dislocate pirates. Initially the village demanded that all pirates cleared the area within a three-day period. However, within the next two weeks pirates hijacked two additional vessels. After ignoring the demands of the village leadership, the pirates were confronted with Bargaaal’s own anti-piracy 80-man strong militia. Checkpoints were established and the militia seized pirate equipment and vehicles, and after several armed clashes the pirates finally were forced to withdraw. However, the withdrawal involved no further movement than relocation to the headland of Ras Binnah, located nine nautical miles away at the southern fringe of the Binnah Bay.

Anti-piracy campaigns like the one carried out in Bargaaal proved to be beginning of a period of sustained pressure on pirates in the area. Even in neighbouring Qandala, a fishing settlement belonging to the same Ali Suleiman sub-clan as Isse Yulux, Yemeni fishermen were offered safety by village officials. By the latter half of 2011 Bari region pirates appear to have been increasingly reliant on moving vessels to peripheral points along the coast. And by 2012 the overlapping pressures of different coastal villages together with operations by the U.A.E.-funded Puntland Maritime Police Force (PMPF) had begun severely limiting pirates’ freedom of movement. Vehement anti-piracy sentiments in the major fishing villages meant that Eyl, Bandarbeyla and Bargaaal were no-go areas for anchorage and supply provisions. An official in Bandarbeyla recounted how,

“Last month we detained pirate investors in Qardho city and then we accelerated our movements against pirates in Bandarbeyla. We will continue the anti-piracy operations until we remove pirates from all of Puntland’s regions.”

When forced to relocate, pirates began moving hijacked vessels moved to anchorage such as Bolimoog, a fishing village hugging the inaccessible headland of Ras Filuk. The small bay southwest of Ras Filuk offers both a refuge during the southwest monsoon season, and the headland provides a clear overview of the surrounding territory for holding pirates. Yet these remote areas made it difficult to sustain kidnappings over time.

As such, the eviction of pirates from Ras Binnah appears as a game-changer in the Bari region. The natural anchorage at the bottom of the cape, in Binnah

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cxxiii Somalia Report, ‘Into the heart of the pirate lair’.
cxxv Somalia Report, ‘Into the heart of the pirate lair’.
cxxxi Somalia Report, ‘Pirates move Dover, Jubba XX, Danish hostages’.
cxxxii Author’s observation, Xabo, 18-19 October 2013.
Bay, combined with its high-altitude, panoramic headland offered a protective area for pirates.\textsuperscript{cxxxiv,cxxxv} Moreover, Ras Binnah is ideally situated in the no man’s land of the intersecting borders of the clan quartet of the Ali Suleiman, Ismael Suleiman, Siwaqroon and Osman Mahamoud sub-clans. Initially, these features meant that the local militia in Bargaal were unable to clear Binnah Bay completely of pirates. Moreover, attacks on pirate groups aboard anchored hijacked vessels presents an almost insurmountable challenge for villages that barely have access to larger maritime vessels such as dhows.

There is strong evidence to suggest that the role played by the PMPF offered the critical mass necessary to evict pirates from their anchorages. This expulsion came as a result of region-wide and concerted attacks on the pirate anchorages, occurring between 2011 and early 2012.\textsuperscript{cxxxvi,cxxxvii} At Ras Hafun the PMPF arrested several notable Bari pirates from the Osman Mahamoud sub-clan who had been part of the Isse Yulux pirate group.\textsuperscript{cxxxviii,cxxxix} PMPF forces were aided by local inhabitants’ tips of pirates’ identities, movements and locations.\textsuperscript{cxl} Operations were launched on anchorages, as well as confronting pirates at inland towns and villages.\textsuperscript{cxli} These operations against pirates by the PMPF were intensified with the dual hijackings of the Danish-flagged yacht ING and the Panama-flagged cargo vessel Dover in February 2011, followed up by the capture of the U.A.E.-flagged product tanker Jubba XX. Growing resistance against piracy in Bandarbayla spawned an attack by PMPF at Hul Anod, forcing pirates to evacuate the area as an anchorage and move northwards.\textsuperscript{cxlii} Indeed, the shifting anchorages of the last vessel to be hijacked and ransomed along Somalia’s northeast coastline, the Liberia-flagged tanker Smyrni, personifies the extent to which pirates were shunned by coastal villages.

Hijacked by the Isse Yulux pirate group in the Gulf of Aden on May 15th 2012, the Smyrni was initially commandeered southwards to Hul Anod.\textsuperscript{cxliii} At this remote hamlet inhabited by the Ali Suleiman sub-clan, with no notable infrastructure and poor provisional access, the pirates held the vessel for only a short time. Entry of the PMPF into areas near Ras Hafun and Hurdiyo effectively cut off their possibility of acting as anchorage. Given the few options available, the pirates moved the vessel northward to Ras Binnah. At Ras Binnah the vessel was attacked by the PMPF, and literally chased away from the cape that had acted as a safe anchorage site in previous years. Given little respite, land-based pirates that were part of the Smyrni hijacking group were attacked

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item \textsuperscript{cxxxiv} Somalia Report, ‘Pirates move Dover, Jubba XX, Danish hostages’.
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\item \textsuperscript{cxxxvi} Somalia Report, ‘Pirates claim hijacking of Italian vessel’, 23 January 2012.
\item \textsuperscript{cxxxvii} Robert Young Pelton, ‘Pirate leader Isse Yulux on the run’, Somalia Report, 3 June 2012.
\item \textsuperscript{cxxxviii} Somalia Report, ‘Weekly piracy report’.
\item \textsuperscript{cxxxix} Robert Young Pelton, ‘Puntland captures seven suspects in Hafun’, Somalia Report, 27 May 2012.
\item \textsuperscript{cx} Interview, member of Eyl district council, Eyl, 25 March 2014.
\item \textsuperscript{cx} Somalia Report, ‘Puntland attacks Yulux pirate group again’, 6 June 2012.
\item \textsuperscript{cx} Somalia Report, ‘Into the heart of the pirate lair’.
\item \textsuperscript{cx} Somalia Report, ‘Weekly piracy report’.
\end{thebibliography}
 Attacks on several of their traditional anchorages forced the pirate group to take the Smyrni around Cape Guardafui, to the northern Gulf of Aden coastline. At Dhurbo the Smyrni found its final anchorage, and lay as close as possible to Isse Yulux’s home base, Bandar Murcaayo, without actually being anchored off it. The unorthodox choice of Dhurbo, at which there appears to have been no previous anchored pirated vessels, personified the fringe slivers of littoral available to pirates by mid-2012.

8.7 Concluding Remarks

Exploring the effects of Somali piracy on the coastline of Puntland suggests that it is far more parasitic and destructive to its immediate surroundings than previously assumed. Rather than enrich the coastal economies, piracy led to their deterioration. Ransom payments obtained from hijacked vessels were spent carelessly, and contributed to inflation and insecurity. In the end, an enterprise that attracted significant numbers of youth and local businessmen soon found itself planting the seeds of its own self-destruction. In Puntland, community after community in some of the most notable pirate lairs rose up to disrupt, sabotage and hinder piracy activities. Several fishing villages managed to expel pirates, rendering their operational environment more challenging.

Importantly, several of the anti-piracy campaigns appear to have depended on the operations of Puntland’s Maritime Police Force (PMPF). Successive Puntland administrations have received allegations of links and support with and to pirate groups. The operations of the PMPF against pirates in Bargaal, Ras Binnah, Ras Hafun, Hul Anod and Bandarbeyla appears to challenge some of these allegations. Interestingly, even if the former Farole administration in Puntland had some sort of links with pirate groups, its administration period saw the eviction of pirates from villages between Garacad and Bargaal.

Future research into the local effects of piracy should focus on the villages of Hobyo and Harardhere. These two villages represent the cradle of organized piracy in Somalia. Information from the area suggests that the presence of Al-Shabaab in Harardhere has had some sort of moderating effect in comparison to the excesses of piracy seen in Puntland. Whether this is a valid statement is too early to say. However, the strict religious code implemented by Al-Shabaab may foreseeably counter destructive behaviour from excessive khat consumption, social pleasure and alcohol. Of particular interest is whether the Al-Shabaab socio-religious regime can offer antidotes to inflationary spending and other financial problems associated with piracy.

\(^{cxliv}\) Somalia Report, ‘Puntland attacks Yulux pirate group again’.
9 Conclusion

Why did Somalia suddenly develop a serious problem of maritime predation? The focus of this study has been an investigation of the phenomenon of Somali piracy. Research has been divided into four articles that separately explore aspects of the phenomenon. Figure 9.1 below shows the study’s overall research framework. The individual articles of the study feed into the overall research question, Why did pirate groups form along Somalia’s coast in 2005 And why had they nearly all dissolved a decade later?

Figure 9.1: Overall research framework of study

Insecurity and economic shock work together to form predatory environments. In Chapter 6 the study found clear evidence of high and chronic insecurity in the area where pirate groups formed. During the first twelve months of South Mudug piracy the region was experiencing deadly and destructive conflict. Harardhere and Hobyo were situated quite literally in the battlezone between the Sa’ad and the Suleiman. This finding challenges the claim that pirate groups thrive on ‘moderate disorder’\textsuperscript{12}. Moreover, it discredits the assumption that pirate groups ‘chose’ the South Mudug region for its attractive qualities as a stable area, removed from the ‘fractions in the Somali civil war’\textsuperscript{3}. Pirate groups appear to thrive in insecure and ungoverned spaces. Such a milieu favors predatory behaviour as social sanctions on illicit behaviour are lowered. Insecure, lawless areas foster acceptability towards the use of violence to gain an economic advantage.

The study attaches considerable weight to the impact of the tsunami on the fishing sectors on the eastern coast. Impact of the December 26 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was a ‘black swan’ event for the coastal fishing economy. The tsunami’s economic shock effects on the fishing economy of the Mudug, Nugaal,
Karkaar and Bari region were severe. The tsunami brought about destitution and insolvency on an area that was nearly unilaterally dependent on the fishing sector. Dissolution of fishing groups appears to be directly linked to establishment of pirate groups. Arguably the organized piracy activities that occurred after 2005 built on a pre-existing coastal business.

Many of the respondents interviewed along the coast spoke of illegal fishing as a serious crime committed against their livelihoods and Somalia. Chapter 7 showed how destructive these activities are perceived, and the sheer scale of the problem along the coastline. However, there is little evidence to suggest that illegal fishing mobilized Somalis into organized piracy. When asked about the primary cause behind the fishing sector disintegration, many of the respondents pointed to the tsunami. Some respondents also claimed that illegal fishing caused piracy, while later rejecting the claim that individuals engaged in piracy did so because of illegal fishing! The inconsistencies in several of the testimonies provided some important insight into the grievance narrative that is widely cited by Somalis and commentators alike.

Moreover, the investigation into illegal fishing in Chapter 8 reveals a significant problem of self-inflicted predation along the coast. Some Somali stakeholders engaged in the marine industries do not necessarily appear to have the interests of coastal communities at heart. Transnational links between fishing companies from the U.A.E., Iran, South Korea and Somali officials appear in several instances to be transgressions against Somalia’s fishing communities. Rent-seeking in the fishing licenses regimes appears to be a problem both on the regional and national level: notably the contracts entered with private companies towards the monitoring and enforcement of fishing rights.

How resilient are pirate groups? Chapter 8 found that local grassroots efforts in Eyl, Bandarbeyla and Bargaal led to the relatively quick expulsion of pirate groups. Pirate groups appear to have a low level of cohesion and loyalty ‘to the cause’. Moreover, the anti-piracy operations committed between 2009 and 2012 challenge the Pirate State literature’s insistence on corrupted state institutions. Pirate groups have not exhibited the advanced mode of organization often attributed to them. As pointed out by Weldemichael (2014), when pirates are faced by security forces they tend to buckle under pressure.

Neither do pirate groups appear to behave as mafia-style organizations. The wasteful spending associated with Somali pirates is not indicative of a state-like or militia-like structure built on discipline. Many pirates acquired significant debt even before the crew and vessel were ransomed. Moreover, once pirates failed to acquire ransom money they were at the mercy of their creditors. In this regard, pirates like Mohamed Abdi Hassan ’Afweyne’ and Isse Yulux appear to be the exception to the rule of most pirates. These individuals diversified into other economic activities, and could afford to bribe officials from their sub-clan to avoid capture. Most pirates have not shown that ability.

Findings on the fishing protection deals made by Somali stakeholders, notably officials, suggests a complicated environment of maritime predation. However, the investigation in Chapter 8 did not show mafia-style organized crime, but opportunistic rent-seeking by individual officials. These relations may be
profitable, but not necessarily resilient. Yet this remains a difficult terrain to investigate. At what point may we say a state institution has been ‘captured’? Some pirates like Mohamed Abdi Hassan ‘Afweyne’, Mohamed Garfanje and Isse Yulux appear to have enjoyed some form of political protection. This is the essential conundrum that is Somalia. Does a relation between Isse Yulux and Puntland officials in the Bari region signify state-sanctioned political protection, or clan-based relations based on shared financial interests, as opposed to subversion of state institutions? Future research on Somali piracy must look closer on the links between officials and pirate groups, and examine the extent of cooperation (or lack thereof) between these two types of stakeholders.

9.1 Coastal Outlook: Assessing Future Immunity Towards Piracy

Looking beyond Somalia’s piracy problem, it is clear that the coastline suffers from several fundamental flaws. One of the most obvious income challenges is that too many artisanal fishermen are attempting to sell the same produce through the same low-capacity export system. In 2010 one hundred and twenty Yemeni dhows shuttled an estimated three thousand, six hundred tons of fresh fish per month, equaling twenty eight thousand, eight hundred tons per annum\(^4\). The tonnage is remarkably low given that the catch was the accumulation of the combined service of over three thousand fishing vessels. Over the course of a year a local fishing vessel in Puntland service a mere 9 ton of fish to arriving dhows. By contrast, the average purse-seine vessel may haul in twenty tons of fish \textit{per day}\(^5\). Indeed, the tonnage is not a reflection of the exhaustion capacity of local fishing vessels. Rather, catch brought to shore by fishermen simply rots away before it reaches its intended markets.

A clan elder and fisherman at Dhanaane explained that the village operated with at least fifty vessels, but were burdened by rudimentary tools and isolation. The problem wasn’t necessarily a lack of fish, but that of storage. All fish caught by Dhanaane fishermen had to be transported by sea to Eyl. One Eyl-based vessel would infrequently venture across the Black Bay to reach Dhanaane, and buy an average of eleven tons from the village’s fishermen. But the capacity of the vessel was far below that of the produce caught by village’s fishermen. ‘If you deliver twice [to the boat]’, the Dhanaane respondent noted, ‘they will tell you that the boat is full’ (Author’s interview, April 1a, 2014).

Another fisherman in Dhanaane reiterated the point of storage, noting that ‘when we have our catch [of fish], what’s left of what we consume rots and is thrown out\(^6\)’ Dhanaane had no electricity as of the time of the field research, and were unilaterally on a single mechanic residing in Eyl for any problems with the vessel engines (Author’s interview, April 1a, 2014). The village exemplifies coastal communities beyond the main settlements (like Eyl and Bandarbegyla) that are burdened by heavy isolation and a lack of infrastructure, while being entirely dependent on fish products for their income\(^7\).

While the coastal areas are significantly underdeveloped compared to some of the cities in Somalia, there are nuggets of evidence from the coast that sug-
gest that some communities may be turning a corner. The United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Alternative Livelihoods to Piracy (ALtP) project, a partnership with Puntland’s Ministry of Labor, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Education, has been targeting youth in Eyl since 2012. One hundred youth in the village are receiving education and training in ‘basic social skills, peacebuilding, rule of law, civic education, literacy and numeracy.’ Courses are held on vocational training and rehabilitation of infrastructure, as well as the provision of ‘small grants and start-up kits to establish businesses or trades’\(^{8}\). According to UNDP’s own numbers, five hundred youth were enrolled in the programme in 2014, and financial grants amounting to US$150,000 were distributed\(^{9}\).

Financial provisions to local youth and entrepreneurs may be one of the single-most important initiatives undertaken along the coastline. The formation of pirate groups along the coast between 2005 and 2008 was largely possible because the high number of insolvent (and dissolving) fishing companies in the face of unservicable debt. As such, small grants distribution may have an important role in reversing the finances-starved position of the licit sector. A U.S.-based NGO, Somali Family Service (SFS) is currently providing ‘micro-grants and business training to Garowe fish vendors’\(^{10}\). In partnership with the UNDP, the NGO has implemented a project in Garowe that has provided small grants to at least one hundred and fifty fish vendors. Beyond providing immediate employment to local Garowe inhabitants, the development of fish businesses and structures in Garowe may drastically shorten the isolation of fishing communities in Puntland to the marketplace\(^{11}\). Local fish markets may cancel out a significant portion of the waste and income loss associated with the undercapacity of Arabian Peninsula dhows in servicing the coastline.
10 Appendix

10.1 Somali Piracy Dataset (SPD) codebook

The following is a codebook for the Somali Piracy Dataset (SPD), version 1.0. The incident data consists of monthly and annual reports produced by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and incident reports produced by the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGIA). The first round of data collection built on the monthly and quarterly reports issued by the IMO, in the series 'Reports on Acts of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships'. This data was cross-checked with the NGIA’s Anti Shipping Activity Messages registry (ASAM).

List of variables in the Somali Piracy Dataset (SPD)

- 1. *Vesselno:* A unique identification number for every victim vessel
- 2. *Date:* The reported date (day/month/year) of incident
- 3. *Year:* The year of the incident
- 4. *Incident:* The reported encounter with a vessel, coded as either non-threatening (0), or threatening (1)
- 5. *Hijack:* The outcome of the incident, coded as either no hijack (0), or hijack (1)
- 6. *Pirvessel:* The reported number of pirate vessels involved in an incident, coded as either (1) pirate vessel, (2) pirate vessels, (3) pirate vessels, (4) pirate vessels, (5) pirate vessels, (6) pirate vessels, (7) pirate vessels, (8) pirate vessels (9) pirate vessels or (10 (or more)) pirate vessels
- 7. *Warship:* The absence (0) or presence (1) of a naval vessel (military or coastguard, and including airborne vessels) in close proximity during the incident.
- 8. *PCASP:* The absence (0) or presence (1) of privately-contracted armed security personnel (or other security forces, such as state units) aboard the victim vessel
- 9. *Typvessel:* The industry type of the victim vessel, coded as yacht (1), dhow (2), fishing (3), cargo (4), bulk carrier (5), special (6), chemical tanker (7), product tanker (8), gas carrier (9), vehicle carrier (10), tug (11), naval vessel (warship) (12) or missing (-9).
- 10. *Natvess:* The flag-state nationality of the victim vessel
- 11. *Latitude:* The reported latitude of the incident at the initiation of the encounter.
• 12. **Longitude**: The reported longitude of the incident at the initiation of the encounter.

• 13. **Landdist**: The distance, measured in nautical miles (nm), from the geocoded position of the incident and to the most proximate point of land in central or northeast Somalia. When identity of anchorage of hijacked vessel is given, the distance is given from the most proximate point of that region. Distances from northwest or southern Somalia are excluded except in rare instances of confirmed identity of pirates linking them to these areas.

• 14. **Anchorage**: Reported anchorage of hijacked vessel, coded as Xiis (1), Laasqooray (2), Bosaso (3), Qandala (4), Dharbo (5), Bandar Murcaayo (6), Geesaley (7), Xabo (8), Bolimoog (9), Alula (10), Bereeda (11), Tooxin (12), Bargaal (13), Ras Binnah (14), Hurdiyo (15), Ras Hafun (16), Hul Anod (17), Aris (18), Bandarbeyla (19), Ely (20), Garacad (21), Dinowda Digdigley (22), Ceel Dhahanaan (23), Hobyo (24), Harardhere (25), Mereeg (26), El Maan (27), Mogadishu (28), Barawe (29), Merca (30), Kismayyo (31), Not applicable (Denoting instances where hijacking did not occur) (.a), Mothership (Undefined identity) (.b), Missing location (.c), Looted (but not taken to anchorage) (.d), Missing (Missing data) (.e), Mothership unknown (Suspected, but unconfirmed status as mothership) (.f), Mothership Ely (Victim vessel not anchored, but confirmed capture by Ely-based pirates) (.g), Mothership Hobyo (Victim vessel not anchored, but confirmed capture by Hobyo-based pirates) (.i), Mothership Harardhere (Victim vessel not anchored, but confirmed capture by Harardhere-based pirates) (.j), Rescued (.k), Abandoned (.l), Anchorage Mudug (Victim vessel anchored at any point along the Mudug coastline, but identity not confirmed) (.m), Anchorage Bari (Victim vessel anchored at any point along the Bari coastline, but identity not confirmed) (.n), Anchorage Somalia (Anchored at any point along the Somali coastline, but identity not confirmed) (.o).

• 15. **Clan**: Clan identity of individual anchorages, coded as Haber Gedir (1), Omar Mahamoud (2), Isse Mahamoud (3), Osman Mahamoud (4), Neutral (An anchorage located on a territory of ambiguous clan domination) (5), Ismael Suleiman (6), Ali Suleiman (7), Siwaqroon (8), Other (Other sub-clans in Somalia) (9), Missing (No data) (a.), Not applicable (Victim vessel not anchored along coastline) (.b).

• 16. **Ransom**: Reported ransom payment figure, given in US$. Missing figure coded (.a), and not applicable status coded (Vessel was not ransomed) (.b).

**Notes**

1Bahadur, The pirates of Somalia – inside their hidden world, p. 225
References

[1] Author’s interview, Mayor of Eyl, Muse Osman Yusef, March 26, 2014, conducted with aid of researcher ‘Muse’


