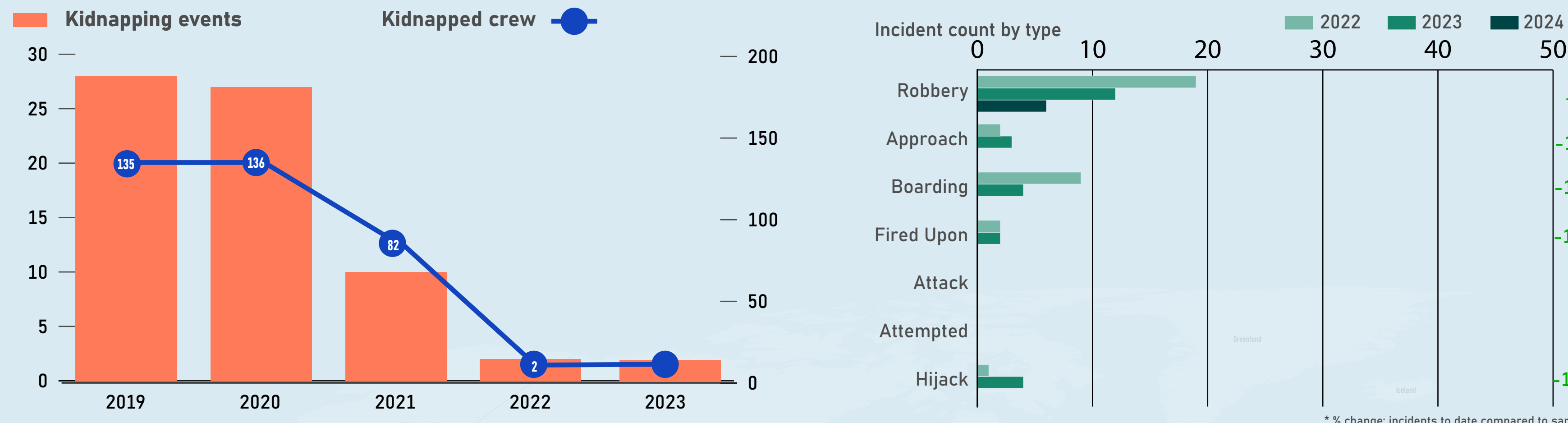
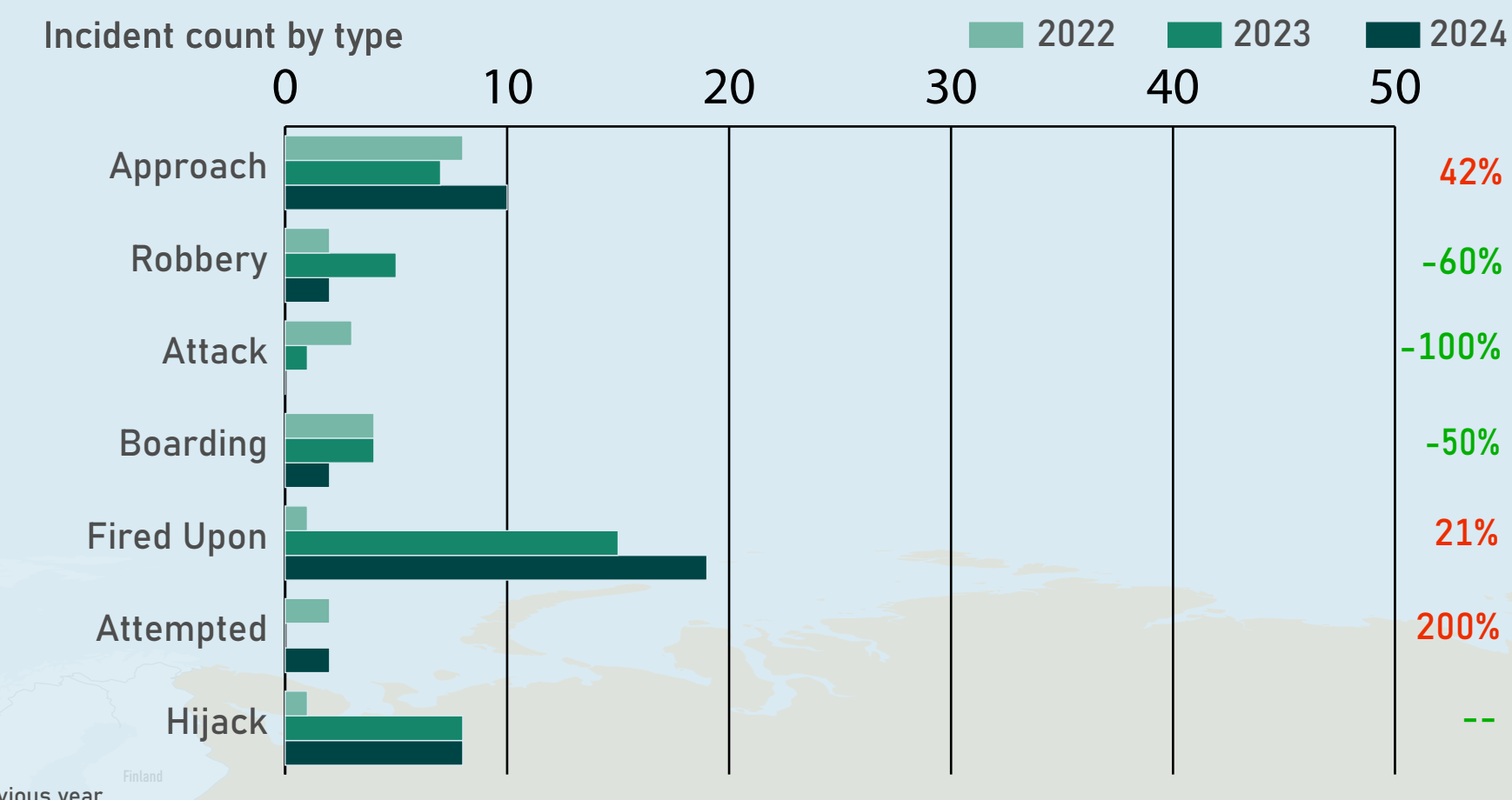


Sign up

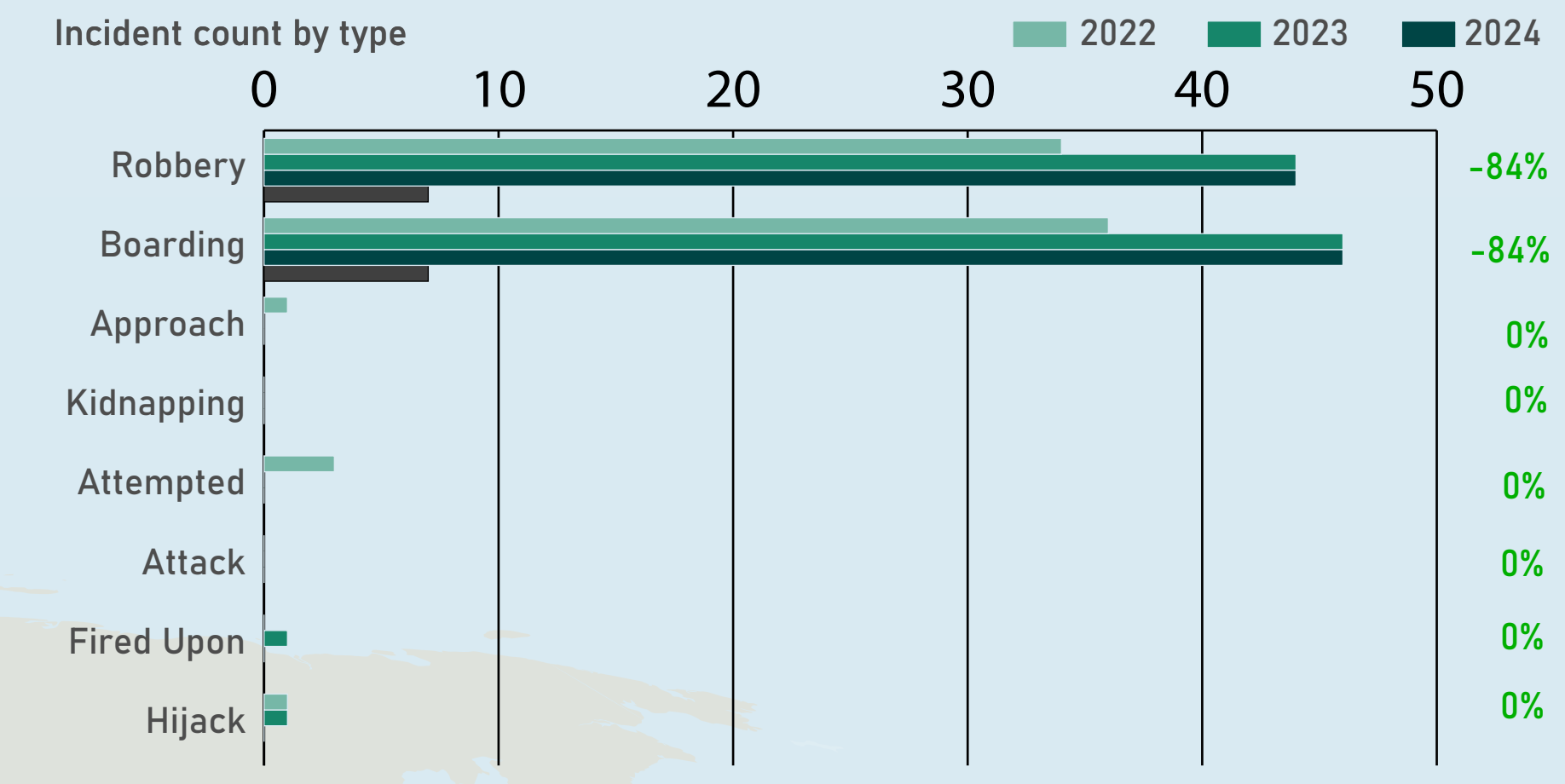
## West Africa



## Indian Ocean



## South East Asia



**Indian Ocean - Houthi activity**  
EU Naval Force Operation ATALANTA has advised commercial shipping to sail at least 150 nm east of the current traffic route to avoid attacks from Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). The recommendation follows an incident where a UAV targeted MSC Orion southeast of Socotra Island, confirming that attacks can occur up to 800 nautical miles from Houthi-controlled areas in Yemen. EUNAVFOR recommends establishing an alternative sea route, following BMP5 recommendations, reporting incidents, random speed and course changes, and implementing a stricter AIS policy.

As previously reported by Dryad Global, the Houthis have the capability and resources to broaden their attacks on commercial shipping. In recent months, incidents have indicated an expansion of their operational area into the Indian Ocean. Iran's deployment of the SHAHD MAHDAVI to the southern hemisphere on 04 March 2024, is expected to provide C2 and support to the Houthis, just as the BESHAD did in the Gulf of Aden and Bab-el-Mandeb. The vessel can launch ballistic missiles and transport attack drones and helicopters to support Houthi missions. Overburdened Allied naval forces may struggle to protect commercial shipping this far out in the Indian Ocean. To mitigate the threat, Allied naval forces would greatly benefit from increasing their presence in the region.

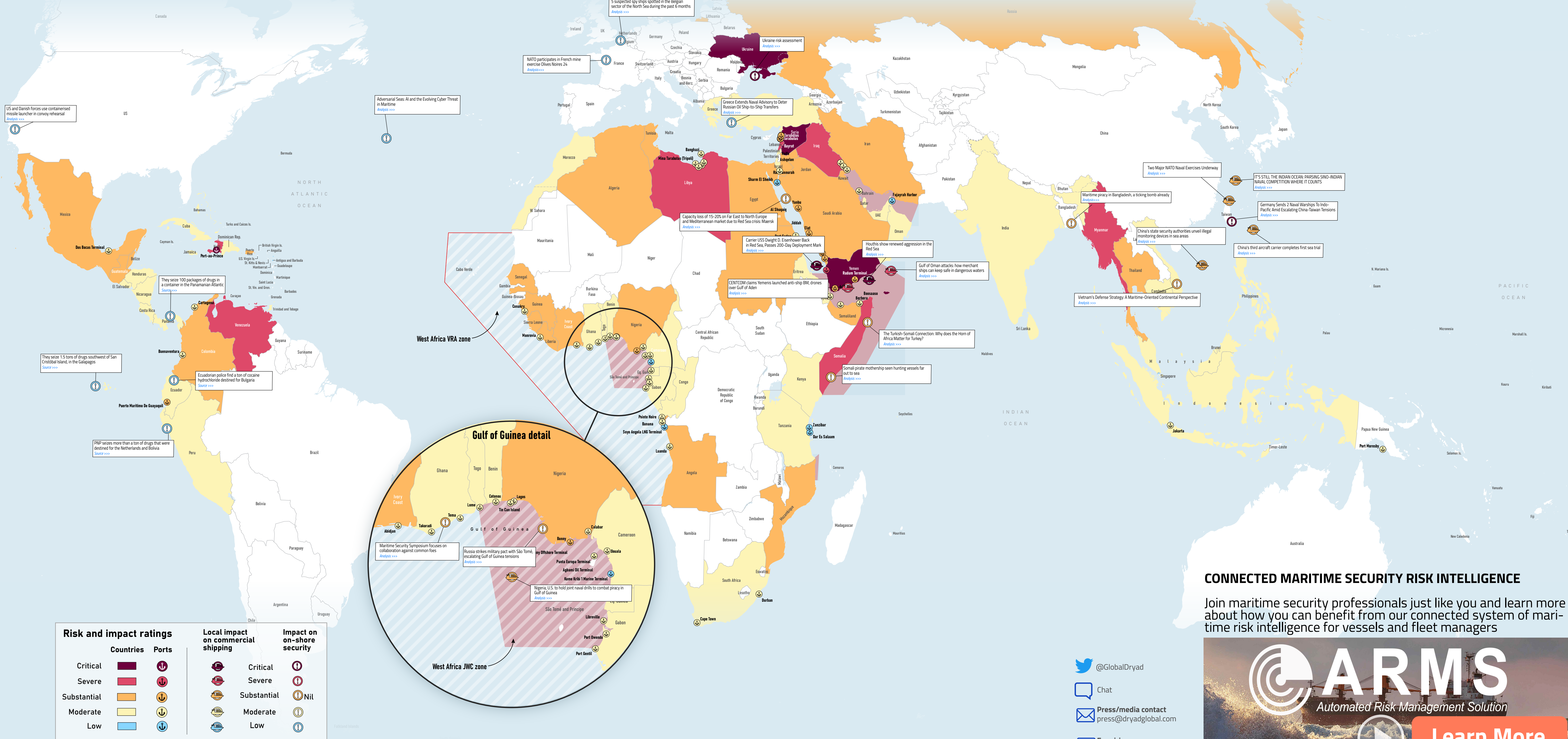
**Suez Canal - Egypt**  
The Suez Canal has seen a significant decrease in shipping traffic, with traffic more than halving between mid-December and the first of April. This decline has resulted in a significant revenue loss for Egypt, totaling \$1.2 billion by late March 2024. The situation is attributed to rising insurance, fuel, and wage costs, which are fueling fears of a new wave of inflation as ships are forced to take longer routes around Africa's southern tip, adding 14 days to transit time.

Two Egyptian bulk carriers were delayed in Russian ports due to a lack of required documents. One of these ships was able to leave the port of Novorossiysk on 03 May 2024, after a significant delay, while the other ship carrying wheat for Egypt was still awaiting documents as of the latest update. This situation has been complicated further by issues with Russian wheat pricing, which has impacted shipping operations. Egypt heavily relies on wheat imports to meet domestic demand, with a substantial portion going toward its extensive bread subsidy program. Delayed shipments could cause a wheat shortage, resulting in higher prices for bread and other wheat-based products. Food security is inextricably linked to political stability in Egypt. Any significant disruption in wheat supply, followed by an increase in bread prices, could result in public discontent and protests.

**South China Sea**  
The Philippines has accused China of building an artificial island in the South China Sea, specifically in Sabina Shoal, within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone (EEZ). In response to an ongoing maritime dispute between the two countries, the Philippine Coast Guard has deployed ships to monitor and deter such activities. China denies the accusations, claiming that its activities in the South China Sea are within its sovereign rights and dismissing Philippine claims as "groundless." The dispute reflects broader tensions in the South China Sea, where multiple countries have competing territorial claims, and China has been building extensive land reclamation and military facilities on several islands. The Philippines has pledged to maintain a presence to prevent Chinese reclamation activities.

The attempted militarization of the South China Sea has resulted in confrontations, standoffs, and increased conflict risk over the last year. Territorial disputes have the potential to disrupt fishing operations and impede resource exploration, thereby affecting the economies of neighboring countries. Militarization also influences how international law is interpreted and applied, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Permanent Court of Arbitration's decision in favor of the Philippines in a case against China highlighted the significance of UNCLOS in resolving maritime disputes. China's continued militarization raises questions about the effectiveness of international law in resolving such conflicts.

China's actions have caused geopolitical realignments, with countries seeking external support. The United States has increased its military presence in the region, conducting Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) to counter China's territorial claims.



Cartography: Steven Bernard, Senior Visual Journalist at The Financial Times

### CONNECTED MARITIME SECURITY RISK INTELLIGENCE

Join maritime security professionals just like you and learn more about how you can benefit from our connected system of maritime risk intelligence for vessels and fleet managers

[@GlobalDryad](#)  
[Chat](#)  
[Press/media contact](#)  
[press@dryadglobal.com](mailto:press@dryadglobal.com)  
[Enquiries](#)  
[enquiries@dryadglobal.com](mailto:enquiries@dryadglobal.com)

**Learn More**