

## First Hijacking of a Merchant Vessel by Somali Pirates in Five Years.

This attack reinforces the need for vessels to follow Best Management Practices (BMP) within the High Risk Area.

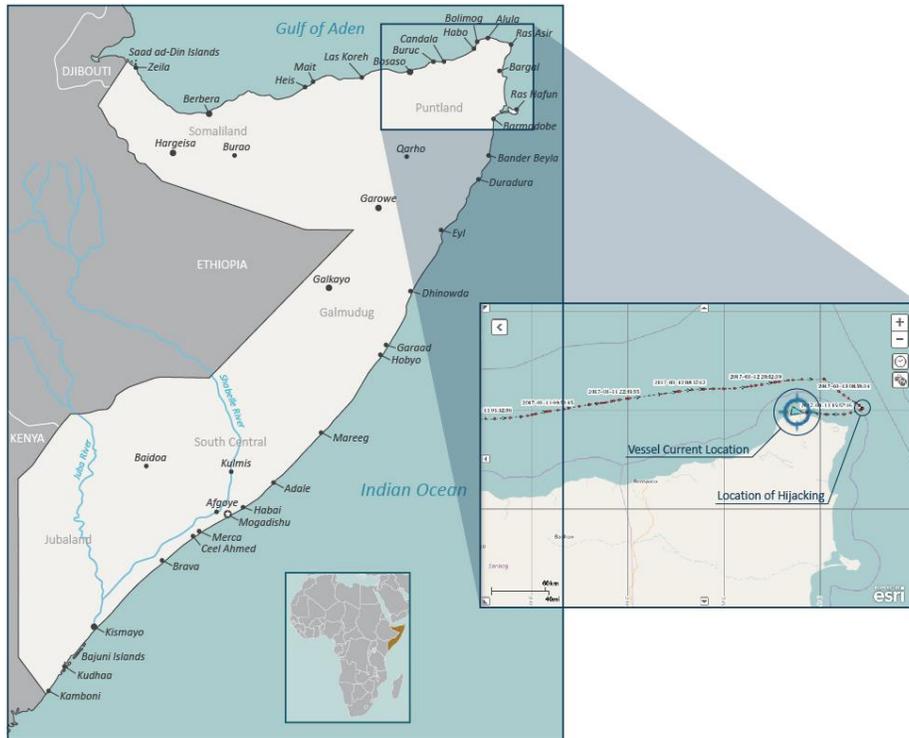
**MARCH 14, 2017—Nairobi, Kenya** - On 13 March 2017 Somali pirates hijacked the *MT ARIS 13*, a tanker vessel en route to Mogadishu from Djibouti. The ship was seized approximately 18 km off the northern tip of Somalia.

This incident marks the first hijacking of a merchant vessel since the height of Somali piracy in 2012.

Details of the *MT ARIS 13*:

- Crew consists of eight Sri Lankans
- Owned by Panama-based company, Comoros flagged, and United Arab Emirates managed vessel
- Carrying a cargo of gas and fuel
- Not registered with the Maritime Security Center for the Horn of Africa, an organization that registers and tracks commercial traffic in region

The *MT ARIS 13* reported that it had been approached by two skiffs, with weapons sighted on one of the boats. The vessel soon dropped communication and was reported by EUNAVFOR to have been hijacked by pirates. It was then taken to the coastal town of Caluula in Somalia's Puntland state.

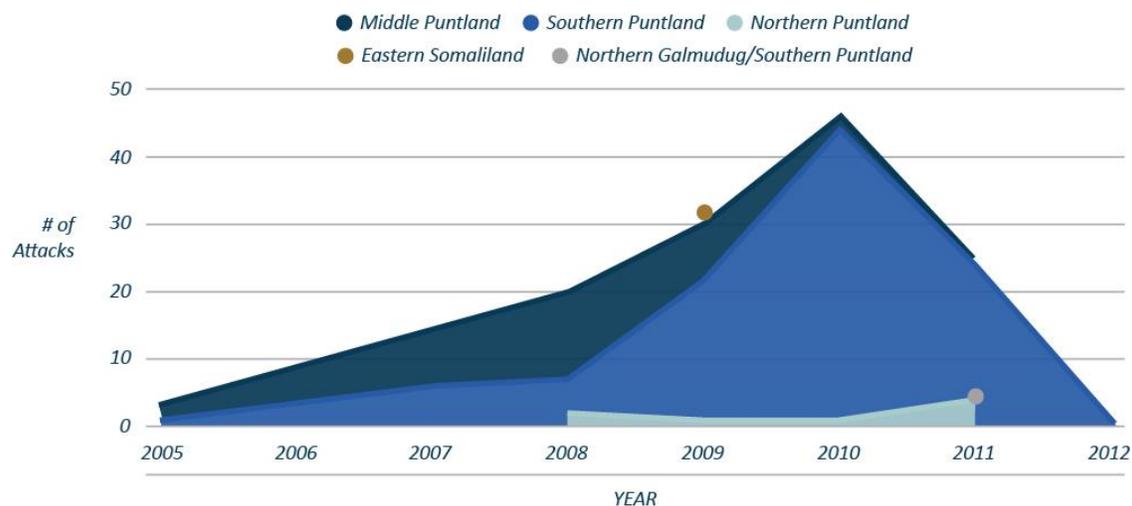


Area where the *MT ARIS* was hijacked off the coast of Somalia. Map credit: Oceans Beyond Piracy/One Earth Future.

The *MT ARIS 13* was preparing to cut through the Socotra Gap between the tip of Somalia and the island of Socotra. This route is frequently used as a cost- and time-saving measure for vessels traveling down the east coast of Africa despite the threat of piracy. Additionally the *ARIS 13* has a low freeboard of only three meters and was moving at a slow speed of five knots. These factors made the vessel an easier target for pirates, who typically board ships with ladders from fast moving skiffs. This attack reinforces the need for vessels to follow shipping industry Best Management Practices (BMP) within the BMP specified High Risk Area.

The group claiming responsibility for the vessel's capture belongs to the Majerteen/Siwaaqroon sub-clan, led by the pirate Jacfar Saciid Cabdulaahi.

### SOMALI PIRACY ATTACKS BY REGION (2005-2012)



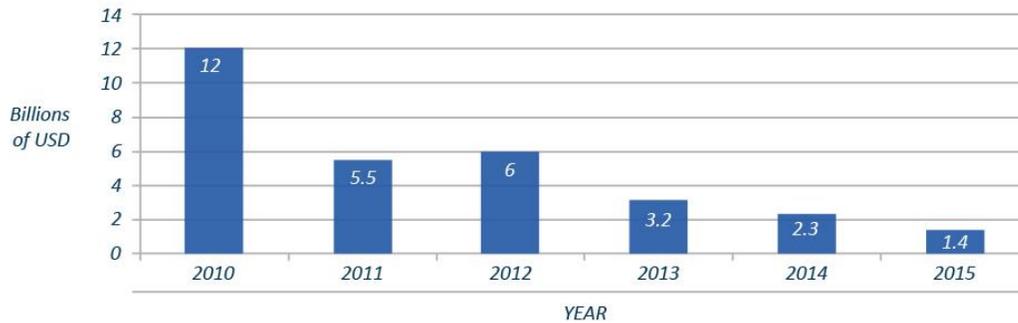
*The number of pirate incidents occurring off the coast of Somalia from 2005 to 2012. Graphics: Oceans Beyond Piracy/One Earth Future*

While this incident marks the first major hijacking since 2012, it does not yet indicate a large-scale return of Somali piracy. However, Somali pirates have still been quite active in recent months. Oceans Beyond Piracy's State of Maritime Piracy Report indicates the following:

- The number of reported failed attacks and suspicious incidents rose in 2016.
- Armed security teams deterred 11 attacks in 2016.
- The *Muhammadi*, attacked on 22 November 2015 roughly 250 nm off Eyl, is the last known hijacking incident in the region.
- On October 22, the *CPO Korea*, a UK-flagged chemical tanker, was approached by a skiff of armed men who exchanged fire with the security team.
- In addition to the eight Sri Lankans on the *MT ARIS 13*, Somali pirates are still holding eight seafarers from the fishing vessel, the *Siraj*, who were captured on 26 March, 2015.

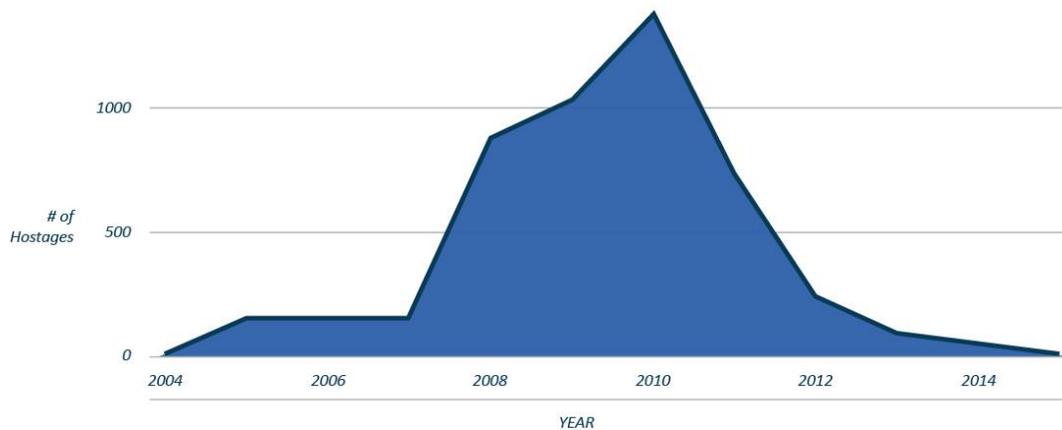
Piracy has diminished since 2012, largely due to mitigating efforts at sea by international naval forces, adherence to industry Best Management Practices, and the use of private security. However the situation in Somalia that originally permitted piracy to flourish has not changed. This has left the door open for other forms of maritime crime, such as smuggling and trafficking. There is a need for continued vigilance against piracy and other forms of maritime crime in the region.

### ECONOMIC COST OF SOMALI PIRACY (2010-2015)



*A large reduction in the spending towards the mitigation of Somali piracy in the years since 2010. The 2016 analysis of the economic cost of Somali piracy will be available from Oceans Beyond Piracy in May. Credit: The State of Maritime Piracy 2015, Oceans Beyond Piracy.*

### SEAFARERS TAKEN HOSTAGE (2010-2014)



*The graph shows the number of seafarers captured throughout the years of Somali piracy. Since the year 2000, almost 5,000 seafarers were taken hostage by Somali pirates. At the height of Somali piracy in 2010, there were over 1,000 seafarers being held hostage at the same time in Somalia. Credit: Oceans Beyond Piracy.*

For more information on the attack please contact John Steed, Oceans Beyond Piracy’s Horn of Africa Regional Manager, at +254 722 322 364/[jsteed@obp.ngo](mailto:jsteed@obp.ngo) or Ben Lawellin, Oceans Beyond Piracy’s Project Manager for the Horn of Africa at +1 720 274 8236/[blawellin@obp.ngo](mailto:blawellin@obp.ngo).

For more information about One Earth Future and its programming please contact Debra Havins at 1-303-533-1712 or [dhavins@oneearthfuture.org](mailto:dhavins@oneearthfuture.org).



**About One Earth Future Foundation and Oceans Beyond Piracy:** OEF is a self-funded, private operating foundation seeking to create a more peaceful world through collaborative, data-driven initiatives. We focus on programs that enhance maritime cooperation, create sustainable jobs in fragile economies and our research actively contributes to thought leadership on global issues. As an operating foundation, One Earth Future provides strategic, financial and administrative support allowing our programs to focus deeply on complex problems and to create constructive alternatives to violent conflict. OBP was launched in 2010 as OEF's first implementation program to encourage and support the development of a long-term, sustainable and peaceful solution to maritime piracy through engaging all relevant maritime stakeholders.

###