



INTERPOL

## OPERATION 30 DAYS AT SEA 3.0

### KEY FINDINGS

of a global enforcement operation targeting onshore and offshore offences  
leading to marine pollution (2020-2021)



January 2022

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTERPOL would like to thank the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation for its generous financial support to the INTERPOL Global Pollution Enforcement Programme. This allowed INTERPOL to promote the enforcement capacities and operational engagement of Official Development Assistance recipient countries in fighting marine pollution crimes.



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*Front cover image: This image provided by NCB Jakarta to INTERPOL illustrates an inspection of ship dismatlement on the shores of Indonesia coordinated by NCB Jakarta in the framework of Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0.*

## Key Findings

Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0 was the third INTERPOL global enforcement Operation targeting marine pollution. It aimed at enhancing the global law enforcement response to pollution crimes leading to marine pollution, with the ultimate objectives of improving sea quality and tackling criminal networks involved in these crimes.

The Operation was conducted by 67 countries worldwide and internationally coordinated by INTERPOL, in consultation with its Pollution Crime Working Group, and in cooperation with Europol and FRONTEX in the European region. It followed a first Operation 30 Days at Sea conducted in October 2018 and a second edition in October 2019. Building on lessons learned from this last edition, Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0 paved the way for a revised global strategy, introducing an intelligence phase followed by a tactical one.

Although this Operation took place in the challenging context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the level of participation, engagement and results by member countries reached unprecedented levels for INTERPOL pollution enforcement operations: 38,138 inspections were conducted and 5,607 offences were detected. Overall, 642 suspect companies and 632 persons of interest were identified.

The analysis of operational results highlighted three key findings.

- The results of Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0 were significantly higher than the previous editions;
- Inspections have increasingly focused on land-based targets and suspect waste shipments;
- The extended intelligence collection and analysis phase implemented for the first time in the Operation 30 Days at Sea series, proved effective in bearing several positive results.

Most inspections focused on illegal discharges of plastic, oil, waste and other pollutants into rivers and other inland waters. These illegalities also accounted for the majority of offences reported for Operation 3.0. While this emphasis on land-based and river pollution for inspections was consistent with the findings from the previous edition, the results regarding offences indicate a shift from the previous Operations in 2018 and 2019.

Findings from the Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0 confirmed the conclusions from the previous two operations regarding the profile of offenders: companies remain a central actor in cases of marine pollution. Previous editions of Operations 30 Days at Sea also found that this criminal activity rarely occurs as an isolated environmental offence: in 2020-2021, marine pollution crimes remained strongly connected with other forms of crime, including, but not limited to, organized crime, financial crime, fraud and illegal mining.

In this third edition of the Operation, traditional waste trafficking routes from Europe to Africa and Asia, as well as from Northern America to Asia, remained prevalent trends. Consistently with previous operational results, some countries also reported a number of cases involving transport

of waste within Asia and within Europe. Other routes were identified during this edition but the absence of more information did not allow to determine whether the cases identified were isolated incidents or indicative of a new trend to smuggle waste.

Despite global trends, regional priorities vary considerably to address the threat of marine pollution. While operational reports from Africa and Europe remained consistent with those from the previous editions of the Operation, reports from other regions suggested a shift in the type of violations investigated and detected.

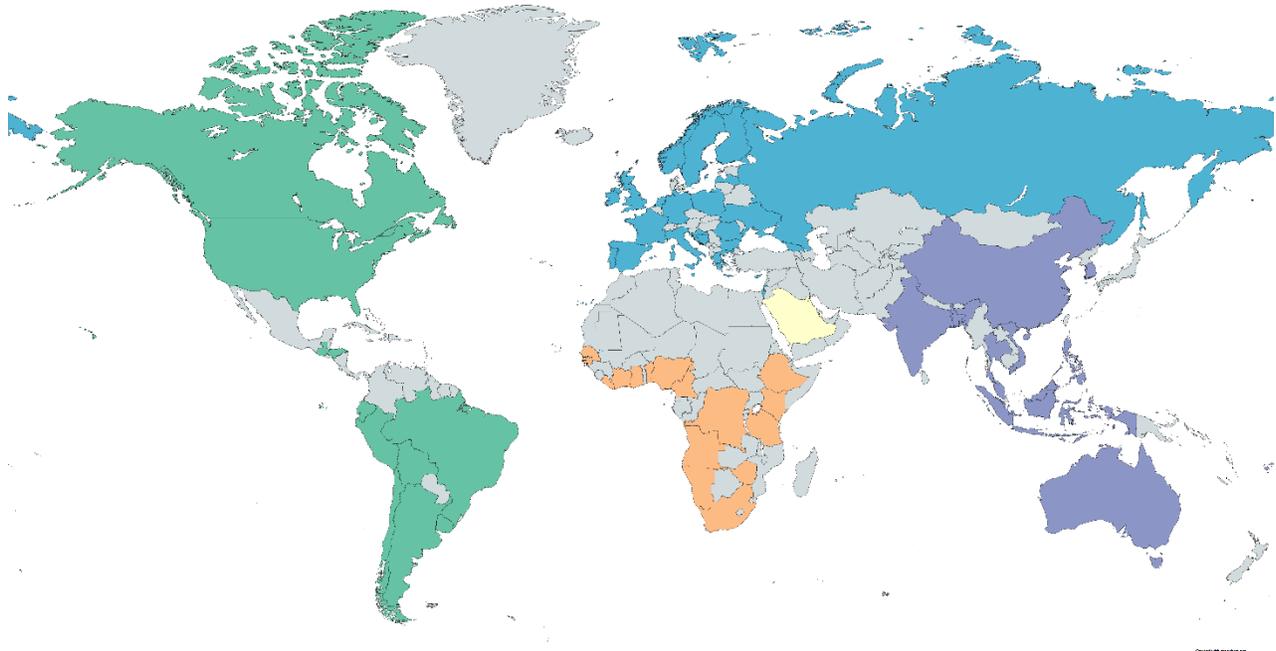
### **Strategic recommendations**

This analysis, coupled with post-operational feedback provided by participating countries, allowed to outline a number of strategic level recommendations to strengthen marine pollution enforcement in the medium-long term:

1. Continue to monitor and support ongoing investigations of cases detected during Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0.;
2. Organize follow up operation(s) starting from 2022, based on results observed in Operation 3.0 and taking into account the evolving situation of the COVID 19 Pandemic;
3. Further develop strategic analysis to inform planning of future operations;
4. Deliver additional specialized training in preparation for future operations;
5. Further improve countries' operational coordination and cooperation through regular operational meetings and expertise sharing.

## Strong Global Participation

Some 300 national law enforcement, environmental and maritime agencies from 67 countries took part in Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0, which confirmed the steady increase in participation rate since the start of this yearly marine pollution operation series in 2018<sup>1</sup>.



Map 1: Participating countries in Operation 30 Days at Sea 3

## Steady Growth of Results During the Operational Series

Since the beginning of this operational series in 2018, there has been a steady growth in the number of participating countries, actions undertaken and offences uncovered in each Operation, as illustrated in the table below. Overall, the operational series 30 Days at Sea (2018-2021) has exposed almost 11,000 marine pollution-related offences through more than 70,000 inspections globally. The results of the latest iteration of the series, Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0, were significantly higher than the previous editions.

Key indicators	30 DaS 1.0 (2018)	30 DaS 2.0 (2019)	30 DaS 3.0 (2020-21)	TOT 2018-2021
Participating countries	58	62	67	n/a
Participating agencies	250	249	300	n/a
Inspections	15,446	17,715	38,138	<b>71,299</b>
Offences detected	1,507	3,789	5,607	<b>10,903</b>

Table 1: Comparative and cumulative results of Operations 30 Days at Sea 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0

<sup>1</sup> There were 58 participating countries in Operation 30 Days at Sea 1.0 (2018) and 62 participating countries in Operation 30 Days at Sea 2.0 (2019).

## Prevalent Offences Differ Across Regions

While marine pollution crime displays some global trends, enforcement priorities and challenges vary greatly across regions. This calls for an interpretation of the operational results from a regional perspective, based on the most prevalent offences reported by each regions over the years:

	Africa	Americas	APAC	Europe	MENA
Oil spills and MARPOL violations	●●	●●	●●●	●●●	●
Coastal pollution	●●			●●	●●
River pollution	●	●●	●	●●	
Illegal discharges into river from mining activities		●			
Illegal plastic use		●		●●●	
Illegal sewage treatment		●		●●	
Waste trafficking			●	●	

- Results from Operation 30 Days at Sea 1.0 (2018)
- Results from Operation 30 Days at Sea 2.0 (2019)
- Results from Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0 (2020-2021)

*Table 2: Most prevalent offences reported by regions under Operation 30 Days at Sea 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0*

## Operational Partnerships as a Key Strategic Approach

### THE INTERPOL POLLUTION CRIME WORKING GROUP

Since the first edition of the “Operation 30 Days” series, the Executive Board of the INTERPOL Pollution Crime Working Group (PCWG) has been supporting the Operation by providing both strategic and expert technical advice, through bi-weekly conference calls and other regular exchanges, as well as through the delivery of specialized training on marine pollution investigation organized by INTERPOL.

In particular, during the 3.0 operational cycle, the PCWG has supported the development of specific capabilities related to: oil fingerprint library; drones oil sniffing technology for the detection of MARPOL Annex VI violations; oil blending; and shipbreaking investigation. Specialized discussions on these topics have occurred during a number bilateral and small multilateral virtual meetings.

Furthermore, PCWG members have been involved in some concrete cases detected during the Operation. For instance, South Africa was involved in an INTERPOL Investigative Support Team (IST) with Malaysian counterparts on a case of waste trafficking.

### EUROPEAN UNION PARTNER AGENCIES

In line with the previous editions of this Operation, INTERPOL, Europol and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) were **partners in the coordination of Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0** in the European region, in cooperation with the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA).

In Europe, the Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0 is one of the three operational activities within EMPACT Environmental Crime Operational Action (OA) 2.5 under the Operational Action Plan (OAP) 2020 and OA 2.3 of OAP 2021. Such action plans are undertaken in the framework of the EMPACT cycle 2018-2021, of which environmental crime is a priority. EMPACT is the

European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats, a permanent instrument of the European Union to address threats posed by organised and serious international crime.

Frontex acts as action leader for OA 2.5 (2020) / 2.3 (2021), with INTERPOL and Europol being co-leaders.

During the Operation, these partnerships provided significant additional support to participating countries in Europe.

**Frontex:**

Frontex maintained coordination among OA 2.3/2.5 partners throughout the operational period, including through regular partners' meetings. Frontex also actively participated in all operational planning and post-operational meetings relevant to Europe and provided operational support to participating countries from the European region, including:

- Access to Frontex services (including Eurosur Fusion Services) based on countries requests, operational plan, and defined targets;
- The deployment of Frontex aerial assets and other Frontex co-financed aerial and naval assets in the Mediterranean Sea, Adriatic Sea and Black Sea in joint operation and multipurpose maritime operation according to the patrolling schedules and based on risk analysis;
- The provision of potential marine pollution sighting forms to EMSA according to relevant procedures.

**Europol:**

Europol, through AP EnviCrime, supported participating countries in the European region with tactical, operational and strategic support services throughout 30 Days at Sea 3.0, including but not limited to:

- Operational and strategic analysis, including support to concrete cases;
- Access to the SIENA secure channel for information sharing;
- Mobile offices for on the spot support and virtual command posts (VCP);
- Access upon request to Universal Forensic Extraction Devices (UFEDs).

**EMSA:**

EMSA primarily supported the operation in Europe by providing access to the CleanSeaNet service. CleanSeaNet is the European satellite-based oil spill monitoring and vessel detection service, hosted by EMSA since 2007. It analyses satellite images mainly acquired by SAR sensors, but also from optical missions. The main objectives of the service are to detect possible oil on the sea surface including illegal discharges of mineral oil; to identify possible polluters; and to monitor the spread of oil during maritime emergencies.

CleanSeaNet service statistics during the operational phase (1-31 March 2021):

- Total number of images delivered by CleanSeaNet service: 590
- Total number of possible oil spills detected: 367
- Total number of alert reports sent to the coastal States by CSN: 223
- Total number of alert reports sent to the coastal States by CSN that include information on possible polluter: 102
- Average number of possible oil spills detected per million km<sup>2</sup>: 3.24
- Area covered by CSN service (million km<sup>2</sup>): 113.11

► **ABOUT INTERPOL**

INTERPOL is the world's largest international police organization. Our role is to assist law enforcement agencies in our 195 member countries to combat all forms of transnational crime. We work to help police across the world meet the growing challenges of crime in the 21st century by providing a high-tech infrastructure of technical and operational support. Our services include targeted training, expert investigative support, specialized databases and secure police communications channels.

► **OUR VISION: "CONNECTING POLICE FOR A SAFER WORLD"**

Our vision is that of a world where each and every law enforcement professional will be able through INTERPOL to securely communicate, share and access vital police information whenever and wherever needed, ensuring the safety of the world's citizens. We constantly provide and promote innovative and cutting-edge solutions to global challenges in policing and security.



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