



Exposing the Gap Between PRC Rhetoric and Illicit Maritime Activity: Summary Report

Memaparkan Kesenjangan antara Retorika dan Aktivitas Maritim Ilegal RRT: Laporan Ringkasan

English and Bahasa Indonesian Translation

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Abstrak

Laporan ini mengamati kesenjangan yang tampak jelas antara kebijakan dan retorika Republik Rakyat Tiongkok mengenai perannya dalam lingkungan maritim transnasional dan aktivitas terlarang yang dilaporkan telah dilakukan oleh para aktor RRT. Aktivitas maritim ilegal yang diduga dilakukan oleh para aktor RRT menimbulkan kerugian ekonomi dan lingkungan pada negara-negara pesisir, melanggar kedaulatan negara tersebut, dan merugikan warga negara tersebut. Dugaan aktivitas ilegal ini bertentangan dengan retorika resmi Beijing yang menunjukkan dukungan bagi hukum, peraturan, dan norma maritim internasional. Untuk mengembangkan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang kontradiksi nyata ini, CNA memeriksa 15 kejadian saat para aktor PRC dituduh melakukan aktivitas ilegal antara tahun 2018 dan 2021 di wilayah maritim di sekitar Asia Tenggara, pesisir Atlantik di Afrika, dan negara-negara Kepulauan Pasifik. Dalam semua kecuali satu kasus, Beijing berusaha meminimalkan dampak negatif terhadap citra Tiongkok dengan membantah atau mengaburkan tuduhan bahwa para aktor RRT terlibat dalam perilaku ilegal. Strategi RRT untuk menyangkal dan mengaburkan perilaku buruk ini sangat mengganggu dan dapat menciptakan kesan bahwa, Beijing secara terang-terangan melanggar hukum, aturan, dan norma-norma internasional, bukan mengakui dan menangani perilaku ilegal dari beberapa aktor RRT.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

In recent years, persons, vessels, and corporations based in or tied to the People's Republic of China (PRC) have reportedly engaged in illicit maritime activities around the globe. These alleged illicit activities are at odds with Beijing's stated policies about how PRC actors should behave in the transnational maritime domain. According to these policies, PRC actors should do the following while operating in the transnational maritime domain:

- Abide by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), under Article 94 of which, flag states such as the PRC are responsible for (1) ensuring that vessels flying the PRC flag comply with the maritime laws to which Beijing is a party, and (2) holding violators accountable.
- Abide by local laws and regional frameworks
- Combat illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing
- Safeguard the marine environment

To develop a better understanding of the contradictions between Beijing's official rhetoric and the illicit international maritime activities of PRC state and nonstate actors, CNA examined 15 cases in which PRC actors were accused of carrying out illicit activities in the maritime domain between 2018 and 2021. The incidents occurred in the maritime areas surrounding Southeast Asia, the Atlantic coast of Africa, and the Pacific Island countries. Our key findings are discussed below.

Key findings

Some PRC actors are engaged in a variety of illicit international maritime activities around the world. Among the 15 cases we examined, PRC actors were accused of being involved in the following types of illegal activities in violation of multiple national, regional, and international laws, regulations, or provisions:

- Engaging in illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing practices that threaten ocean ecosystems and sustainable fisheries
- Intentionally ramming foreign vessels, damaging the vessels and endangering their crews
- Using forced labor aboard fishing vessels and engaging in human smuggling

- Discharging marine pollution from vessels and land-based sources, harming the marine environment and injuring local citizens
- Tampering with electronic tracking or monitoring devices to “go dark” so that vessels can engage in illicit activity without being tracked
- Illegally entering and operating in other countries’ jurisdictional waters

The most frequent offenders are commercial fishing vessels belonging to the PRC’s vast distant water fishing (DWF) fleet.

- The PRC has the largest DWF fleet in the world, and its vessels operate in waters around the globe. These vessels receive sizeable state subsidies and are subject to PRC government oversight.
- PRC-flagged fishing vessels were implicated in 13 of the 15 cases of illicit maritime activity examined for this study. At least two incidents allegedly involved government vessels—a PRC coast guard vessel and a survey ship.
- Our analysis found that some PRC-flagged DWF vessels are reportedly responsible for serious labor abuses and for ramming and sinking smaller foreign fishing boats, both leading to fatalities.

There is a persistent gap between PRC rhetoric and the illicit behavior of PRC actors in the transnational maritime domain.

- This gap was apparent in all 15 cases examined for this study.
- Beijing promotes the narrative that the PRC is a responsible global actor that effectively governs its DWF fleet and other oceangoing vessels.
- Government officials and media also seek to portray the PRC as a source of welcome investment in foreign fisheries and fishing industries, particularly in Africa. They describe PRC economic activity in other countries’ fishing sectors as “win-win,” “mutually beneficial,” and intended to benefit local economic development.
- These narratives stand in contrast to the recently reported illegal activities of some PRC actors.

Beijing’s public responses to allegations of illicit activity by PRC actors suggest that it is trying to shape public discussion in ways that minimize any negative impact on the PRC’s image.

- In response to allegations of wrongdoing by PRC actors, PRC officials and media often remained silent in a possible attempt to downplay the incidents.
- In other cases, PRC officials and media publicly denied the allegations, sometimes going as far as lodging counteraccusations intended to shift blame or discredit their accusers.

Beijing’s efforts to downplay and deny allegations of illicit maritime behavior by PRC actors appear to contradict credible reports of bad behavior.

- In the cases examined for this study, the alleged illicit activities were reported by foreign authorities, nongovernmental organizations, and media. Reports often included supporting data from maritime domain awareness technologies, fishing logbooks, first-person interviews, and video or photo evidence.
- In the face of such evidence, Beijing's responses create the appearance that, rather than acknowledging and addressing the behavior of some PRC actors, Beijing is publicly subverting international rules, laws, and norms.

Ringkasan Eksekutif

Pengantar

Dalam beberapa tahun terakhir, banyak orang, kapal, dan perusahaan yang berbasis atau terikat dengan Republik Rakyat Tiongkok (RRT) dilaporkan terlibat dalam aktivitas maritim ilegal di seluruh dunia. Semua aktivitas terlarang ini bertentangan dengan kebijakan yang disampaikan Beijing tentang bagaimana para aktor RRT seharusnya berperilaku di wilayah maritim lintas negara. Menurut kebijakan-kebijakan ini, aktor-aktor RRT harus melakukan hal-hal berikut saat beroperasi di wilayah maritim lintas negara:

- Mematuhi Konvensi Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa tentang Hukum Laut (UNCLOS), berdasarkan Pasal 94 yang menyatakan bahwa negara-negara bendera kapal seperti RRT bertanggung jawab untuk (1) memastikan bahwa kapal-kapal yang mengibarkan bendera RRT mematuhi undang-undang kelautan yang mana Beijing merupakan salah satu pihaknya, dan (2) membuat para pelanggarnya bertanggung jawab.
- Mematuhi hukum setempat dan kerangka kerja regional
- Memberantas penangkapan ikan yang ilegal, tidak diatur, dan tidak dilaporkan (IUU)
- Melindungi lingkungan laut

Untuk mengembangkan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang pertentangan antara retorika resmi Beijing dan aktivitas maritim internasional yang ilegal dari para aktor negara dan non-negara RRT, CNA mengkaji 15 kasus di mana para aktor RRT dituduh melakukan aktivitas ilegal di wilayah maritim antara tahun 2018 dan 2021. Insiden ini terjadi di area maritim di sekitar Asia Tenggara, pesisir Atlantik di Afrika, dan negara-negara Kepulauan Pasifik. Temuan utama kami dibahas di bawah ini.

Temuan utama

Beberapa aktor RRT terlibat dalam berbagai aktivitas maritim internasional yang ilegal di seluruh dunia. Di antara 15 kasus yang kami kaji, para aktor RRT dituduh terlibat dalam jenis aktivitas ilegal berikut ini yang melanggar hukum, peraturan, atau ketentuan nasional, regional, dan internasional:

- Terlibat dalam tindakan penangkapan ikan secara tidak ilegal, tidak diatur, dan tidak dilaporkan (IUU) yang mengancam ekosistem laut dan perikanan yang berkelanjutan
- Sengaja menabrak kapal asing, merusak kapal, dan membahayakan kru mereka
- Menggunakan pekerja paksa di kapal nelayan dan terlibat dalam penyelundupan manusia

- Melakukan pencemaran laut dari kapal dan sumber dari darat, sehingga merusak lingkungan laut dan membahayakan warga setempat
- Mengutak-atik perangkat pemantauan atau pelacakan elektronik agar "gelap" sehingga kapal dapat terlibat dalam aktivitas ilegal tanpa terlacak
- Memasuki dan beroperasi secara ilegal di perairan yurisdiksi negara lain

Pelanggar yang paling sering melakukannya adalah kapal penangkap ikan komersial milik armada penangkapan ikan perairan jauh (DWF) RRT.

- RRT memiliki armada DWF terbesar di dunia, dan kapalnya beroperasi di perairan di seluruh dunia. Kapal ini menerima subsidi negara yang cukup besar dan tunduk pada pengawasan pemerintah RRT.
- Kapal penangkapan ikan berbendera RRT dianggap terlibat dalam 13 dari 15 kasus aktivitas maritim ilegal yang diuji untuk penelitian ini. Setidaknya ada dua insiden yang diduga melibatkan kapal milik pemerintah, satu kapal penjaga pantai dan satu kapal survei RRT.
- Analisis kami menemukan bahwa beberapa kapal DWF berbendera RRT dilaporkan bertanggung jawab atas penyalahgunaan tenaga kerja yang serius serta penubukan dan penenggelaman kapal penangkap ikan asing yang lebih kecil, yang keduanya mengakibatkan kematian.

Terdapat kesenjangan yang mengakar antara retorika RRT dan perilaku ilegal aktor-aktor RRT di wilayah maritim transnasional.

- Kesenjangan ini tampak jelas dalam 15 kasus yang diteliti untuk studi ini.
- Beijing mendukung narasi bahwa RRT adalah aktor global yang bertanggung jawab yang secara efektif mengatur armada DWF-nya dan kapal-kapal lautnya yang lain.
- Pejabat dan media pemerintah juga berusaha menggambarkan RRT sebagai sumber investasi yang disambut baik dalam industri perikanan dan penangkapan ikan asing, khususnya di Afrika. Mereka menggambarkan aktivitas ekonomi RRT di sektor perikanan di negara lain sebagai "saling menguntungkan" dan dimaksudkan untuk memberikan manfaat bagi pembangunan ekonomi lokal.
- Narasi ini berbeda dengan laporan aktivitas ilegal yang dilakukan beberapa aktor RRT baru-baru ini.

Tanggapan masyarakat Beijing terhadap tuduhan aktivitas terlarang oleh aktor RRT menyatakan bahwa RRT sedang mencoba untuk membentuk diskusi publik dengan cara yang meminimalkan dampak negatif terhadap citra RRT.

- Sebagai tanggapan atas tuduhan pelanggaran oleh para aktor RRT, pejabat dan media RRT sebisa mungkin tetap diam untuk mengaburkan insiden tersebut.
- Dalam kasus lain, pejabat dan media RRT membantah tuduhan tersebut secara publik, terkadang sampai melakukan tuduhan balik yang ditujukan untuk menyalahkan atau mendiskreditkan pihak yang menuduh mereka.

Upaya Beijing dalam mengaburkan dan membantah dugaan perilaku maritim ilegal oleh aktor RRT tampak bertentangan dengan laporan kredibel yang menyebutkan perilaku buruk tersebut.

- Dalam kasus-kasus yang diteliti untuk studi ini, dugaan aktivitas terlarang telah dilaporkan oleh otoritas asing, organisasi non-pemerintah, dan media. Laporan tersebut kerap mencakup data pendukung dari teknologi yang meningkatkan kesadaran ranah maritim (*maritime domain awareness*), buku catatan harian penangkapan ikan, wawancara orang pertama, dan bukti video atau foto.
- Di hadapkan dengan bukti-bukti seperti ini, tanggapan Beijing menciptakan kesan bahwa Beijing secara terbuka melanggar aturan, hukum, dan norma-norma internasional, bukan mengakui dan menangani perilaku beberapa aktor RRT.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, persons, vessels, and corporations based in or tied to the People's Republic of China (PRC) have reportedly engaged in illicit maritime activities around the globe. International news media, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and foreign governments have all published reports detailing persistent illicit maritime activity involving PRC actors, including PRC nationals, PRC-based criminal organizations, PRC-flagged vessels, and vessels beneficially owned by PRC entities (a beneficial owner enjoys the benefits of ownership even though the title to the property is in another name).¹ The alleged illicit maritime activities of PRC actors are often at odds with Beijing's rhetoric expressing support for international maritime laws (including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, or UNCLOS), rules, and norms. Unless addressed, this gap between Beijing's rhetoric and the behavior of PRC actors undermines the global system of international laws, norms, and conventions that govern the maritime domain.²

The purpose of this analysis is to examine possible contradictions between the PRC's official rhetoric and the illicit international maritime activities reportedly carried out by PRC-based actors. To achieve this, CNA examined 15 cases in which PRC actors have been accused of carrying out illicit activities in the maritime domain between 2018 and 2021. These case studies are geographically focused in the maritime areas surrounding Southeast Asia, the Atlantic coast of Africa, and the Pacific Island countries. For each case study, we examined the following:

- The alleged illegal PRC activity and the types of PRC actors involved
- PRC official policies and narratives about that type of activity (e.g., illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing or human trafficking)
- International, local, and PRC laws, policies, and norms at risk of subversion by the alleged activity
- PRC officials' and media responses to these incidents

To compile these case studies, we examined data sources that included PRC official statements, PRC foreign-directed and domestic media, local news media reports in countries affected by the alleged PRC behavior, maritime domain awareness and vessel tracking databases, subject matter experts, maritime law and regulation databases, and secondary literature published by nongovernmental and other research organizations.

2. The PRC and the Maritime Domain: Policy and Rhetoric

2.1 PRC maritime policies

Beijing has stated policies about how PRC actors should behave in the international maritime domain. According to these policies, PRC actors—including PRC nationals, PRC-flagged vessels, vessels beneficially owned by PRC entities, and PRC corporations—should do the following while operating in the international maritime domain:

- **Abide by UNCLOS.** The PRC is a signatory to UNCLOS and ratified the Convention in 1996.³ According to the PRC's ambassador to the United Nations (UN), China “resolutely safeguards the integrity and sanctity of UNCLOS” and “all countries should firmly defend the international maritime order based on international law, and properly resolve maritime disputes through negotiations and consultations in good faith.”⁴ This stated PRC policy likewise extends to abiding by other UN maritime conventions, including those safeguarding maritime safety and prohibiting marine pollution.⁵
- **Abide by local laws and regional frameworks.** Beijing also urges PRC nationals and companies to comply with local laws when operating overseas. According to a Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) spokesperson, “As a principle, the Chinese government always asks Chinese citizens abroad to comply with local laws and regulations.”⁶ Similarly, PRC policy frameworks such as the *Management Regulations of Far Seas Fisheries* recognize regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) as the regulatory authority governing fishing-related activities on the high seas.⁷
- **Combat IUU fishing.** Beijing promotes the conservation of fisheries and opposes IUU fishing among both its domestic and distant water fishing (DWF) fleets. According to an MFA spokesperson, “China has zero tolerance for violations of relevant laws and regulations committed by its distant fishing vessels.”⁸
- **Safeguard the marine environment.** Beijing’s stated policy is to pursue cooperation with other countries to protect the marine environment. According to former Vice Foreign Minister and current chairperson of the National People’s Congress Foreign Affairs Committee, Fu Ying, “China has been actively promoting cooperation with other countries on maritime policy and management to protect the marine environment, marine ecosystem and biodiversity.”⁹

2.2 Portraying a positive image of the PRC's role in the maritime domain

The Chinese Communist Party actively seeks to shape international perceptions of the PRC.¹⁰ The Chinese Party-State maintains an extensive, mature, and experienced system of government and party organizations—including a massive state-directed media complex—tasked with carrying out this “external propaganda work.”¹¹ Beijing uses this vast propaganda apparatus to communicate its official policies and promote narratives that it wants told in the international media, including narratives aimed at portraying a positive image of China as a maritime actor. Among the 15 cases we examined, we observed two overarching narratives that Beijing sought to promote about China’s role in the maritime domain:

- ***The PRC is a responsible maritime actor.*** PRC officials and media consistently sought to portray China as a responsible, law-abiding maritime actor that contributes to the safety, environmental security, scientific exploration, and sustainable exploitation of the oceans.
- ***PRC investment in foreign maritime sectors is mutually beneficial.*** PRC officials and media sought to portray China as a source of welcome investment in foreign fisheries and fishing industries, particularly in Africa. They describe PRC economic activity in other countries’ fishing sectors as “win-win,” “mutually beneficial,” and intended to benefit local economic development.

2.3 PRC public responses to allegations of misconduct

When PRC actors are publicly accused of misconduct in the maritime environment, Beijing often seeks to offset the potential damage to China’s international image. In many cases, it mobilizes elements of its vast propaganda apparatus to do so. (For more on this subject, see Appendix B.) China’s official and media responses to foreign public allegations of illicit maritime activity by PRC actors fell into the following general categories:

- ***Acknowledgement.*** PRC officials publicly acknowledged the incident and the concerns of the other country or countries involved and promised to address the allegations. This acknowledgement was also conveyed by PRC media.
- ***Denial.*** PRC officials denied allegations of wrongdoing, defended the actions of the PRC actors in question, or both. PRC media echoed their indignation, portraying the PRC actors in question as innocent of any wrongdoing.

- **Counteraccusations.** PRC officials and media accused other parties of being responsible for causing the incident or guilty of the illicit behavior in question. In some cases, PRC officials and media publicly blamed the victims.
- **Deflection.** Beijing sought to deflect attention by accusing a third party of being guilty of a particular illicit activity.
- **Silence.** Neither PRC officials nor media publicly discussed the incident.

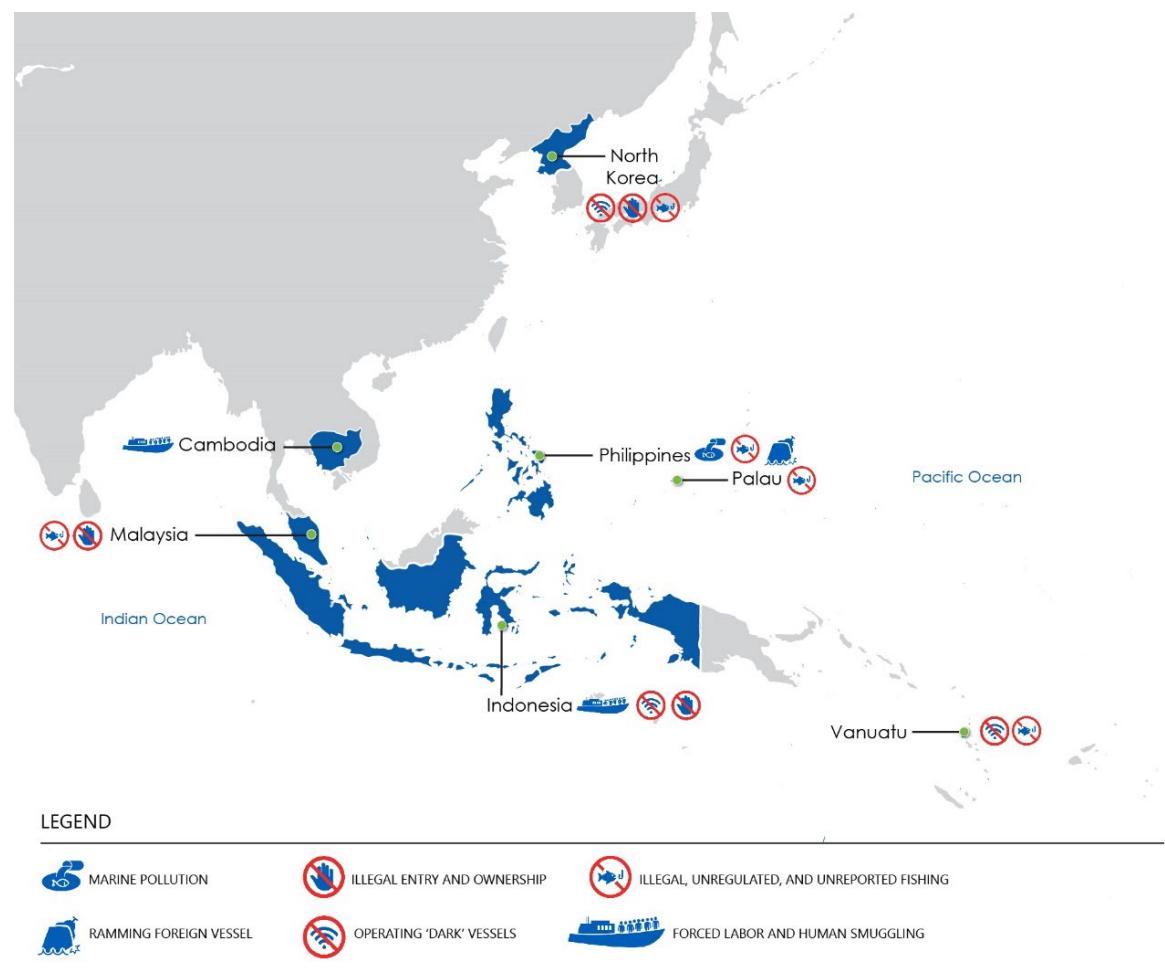
3. PRC Actors and Illicit International Maritime Activities

In recent years, international news media, NGOs, and foreign governments have all published reports detailing illicit maritime activity involving PRC actors, including PRC nationals, PRC-flagged vessels, vessels beneficially owned by PRC entities, and PRC-based criminal organizations. In addition, in the 2016 South China Sea Arbitration (Philippines vs. China), the Permanent Court of Arbitration detailed multiple instances of illegal behavior.¹² Among the 15 cases we examined, PRC actors were accused of being involved in the following types of illegal activities:

- **IUU fishing.** Illicit fishing activities that threaten ocean ecosystems and sustainable fisheries
- **Ramming foreign vessels.** Intentionally colliding with another vessel
- **Forced labor and human smuggling.** Illicit maritime activities involving human victims
- **Discharging marine pollution.** Marine dumping from vessel- and land-based sources
- **Operating “dark” vessels.** Tampering with electronic tracking or monitoring devices
- **Illegal entry and ownership.** Prohibited activities and corporate relationships in a foreign exclusive economic zone (EEZ)

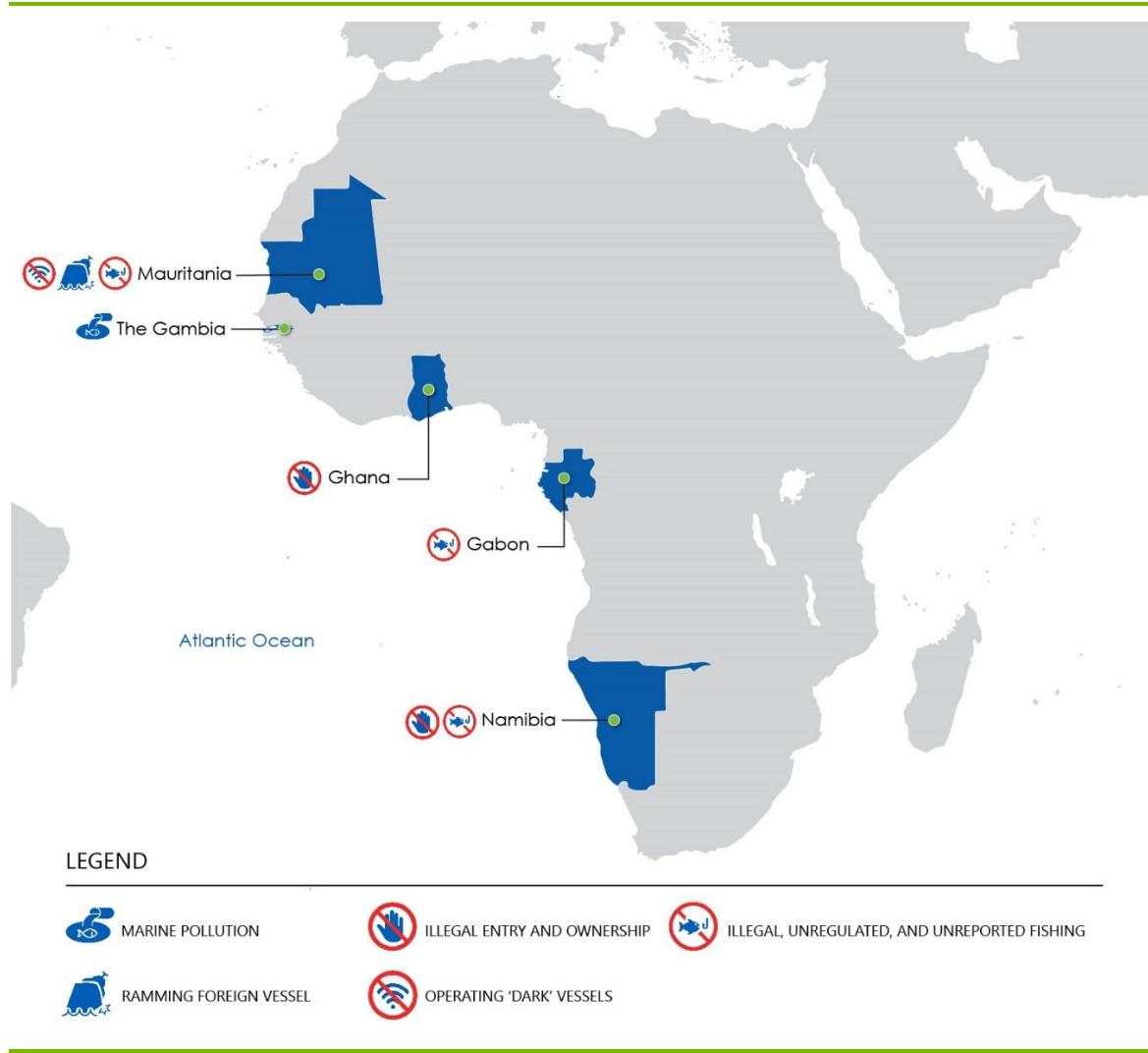
In the following sections, we discuss China's official policies regarding each of these activities, examples of alleged misconduct by PRC actors, Beijing's public response to the allegations, and the potential gaps between PRC actors' behavior and Beijing's rhetoric that risk subverting international laws, rules, and norms. Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the types of illicit activities that PRC actors allegedly committed in the 15 case studies and where the activities took place.

Figure 1. Alleged illicit activities by PRC actors in Southeast Asian waters



Source: CNA.

Figure 2. Alleged illicit activities by PRC actors off the coast of Africa



Source: CNA.

3.1 IUU fishing

IUU fishing is a broad term that captures a wide variety of illicit fishing activity. The UN International Plan of Action (IPOA) on IUU fishing describes IUU fishing as including a broad array of fishing activity prohibited by national, international, and regional regulations, laws, and conventions.¹³ According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, IUU fishing is one of the greatest threats to marine ecosystems because it greatly undermines national and regional efforts to manage fisheries sustainably and conserve marine biodiversity. As a result, IUU fishing threatens livelihoods, exacerbates poverty, and contributes to food insecurity.¹⁴

The UN has promulgated multiple frameworks intended to prohibit IUU fishing that appear to be at risk of subversion by actors examined in this study. Examples include the IPOA to prevent, deter, and eliminate IUU fishing, the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity, and a UN resolution banning driftnet fishing.¹⁵

3.1.1 PRC policy

PRC officials and media seek to portray China as a “responsible fishing nation” that promotes the conservation of fisheries and opposes IUU fishing among both its domestic and DWF fleets. For example, a PRC MFA spokesperson stated that China “attaches great importance to scientific conservation, sustainable use of fishery resources, and actively fulfills its international obligations.”¹⁶ On a separate occasion, an MFA spokesperson asserted that “China has zero tolerance for violations of relevant laws and regulations committed by its distant fishing vessels.”¹⁷ In February 2021, the director of the PRC Fisheries Administration Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said that the PRC government “upholds the spirit and responsibility” of the “Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries” and follows a “path of responsible fishery and aquaculture development with Chinese characteristics.”¹⁸

Of note, the PRC has laws, regulations, and frameworks forbidding IUU fishing activity. Examples include the Distant Water Fishery Supervisory Regulations, the Fisheries Law, and the White Paper on Compliance of China’s Distant-Water Fishing.¹⁹

3.1.2 Examples of alleged misconduct by PRC actors

In 5 of the 15 cases we examined, PRC-flagged commercial fishing vessels were accused of activities that the UN categorizes as IUU fishing. These include the following types of activities:

- Fishing within waters under the jurisdiction of a coastal state without the state’s permission or in contravention of local laws and regulations
- Engaging in fishing that was either not reported or misreported to the relevant national authority or RFMO²⁰
- Fishing in a manner that is not consistent with or contravenes the conservation and management measures of the relevant national authority or RFMO

PRC-flagged fishing vessels reportedly engaged in fishing within waters under the jurisdiction of a coastal state without the state’s permission or in contravention of local laws and regulations. For example, in December 2020, a Palau Maritime Law Enforcement patrol vessel reportedly intercepted the PRC-flagged fishing vessel *Qiong Sanya Yu* for suspected illegal harvesting of sea cucumber at Helen Reef, within Palau’s territorial waters and EEZ.²¹ According to local media reports, the Palau Ministry of Justice found evidence that the crew of the *Qiong Sanya Yu* poached 225 kilograms (496 pounds) of sea cucumber valued at roughly \$180,000.²² Similarly, on January 19, 2021, a Vanuatu Maritime Police vessel reportedly intercepted two PRC-flagged fishing vessels, *Dong Gang Xing 13* and *Dong Gang Xing*

16, for IUU fishing activities within Vanuatu's territorial waters.²³ Vanuatu prosecutors alleged that the ship operators engaged in illegal fishing without a license, illegally turned off their satellite transponders while in Vanuatu's waters, and possessed a driftnet in violation of Vanuatu's Fisheries Act.²⁴

PRC-flagged fishing vessels allegedly engaged in fishing that was either not reported or misreported to the relevant national authority or RFMO. For example, in March 2020, local media reported that the Namibian navy had intercepted six PRC-owned fishing vessels in a popular fishing location 17 miles off the Namibian coast amid claims of illegal activity.²⁵ Ultimately, the investigation found no evidence of illegal fishing but did identify discrepancies and evidence of behaviors that could be used to conceal illicit activities. For example, the PRC fishing vessels had catch records for Angola ending in March 2019 but no logbooks or licenses for their subsequent 11 months in waters off Equatorial Guinea and Namibia.²⁶

PRC-flagged fishing vessels reportedly fished in a manner that is not consistent with or contravenes the conservation and management measures of the relevant national authority or RFMO. For example, on August 8, 2020, Gabonese authorities, in collaboration with Netherlands-based nonprofit Sea Shepherd, stopped two PRC-flagged trawlers, *Guo Ji* 826 and *Guo Ji* 866, for a routine inspection (see Figure 3).²⁷ The inspection found illegally harvested rough-head catfish and endangered daisy stingrays, in violation of Gabonese law.²⁸ Gabonese authorities aboard the Sea Shepherd vessel arrested and escorted both vessels to port, where investigations uncovered additional rays and ray fins.²⁹ Similarly, in March 2021, the Philippine navy and media reported that PRC fishers operating near the contested Pagasa Islands (Philippines administered) and Scarborough Shoal (PRC administered) in the South China Sea continued to use damaging methods to illegally harvest protected giant clams.³⁰ Philippine media also asserted that the PRC coast guard is aware of the illegal harvesting around Scarborough Shoal.³¹ Philippine media reported that PRC vessels have been observed using "chopper boats," explosives, chemicals, water pumps, and vacuums on the coral reefs to harvest the giant clams, whose shells are sold for high prices in China.³²

Figure 3. Gabon Review report on the arrest of PRC-flagged vessels for IUU fishing in 2020

GABON Review
L'information quotidienne sur la vie du Gabon

POLITIQUE | ÉCONOMIE | SOCIÉTÉ | SPORT | ENVIRONNEMENT | CULTURE | FAITS DIVERS | AFRIQUE | SOS CONSO |

Pêche illicite : Deux chalutiers dans les filets de l'opération Albacore

posté par Stevie Mounombou / 20 août, 2020



Source: Stevie Mounbombou, "Illegal Fishing: Two Trawlers in the Nets of Operation Albacore" (Pêche illicite: Deux chalutiers dans les filets de l'opération Albacore), *Gabon Review*, August 20, 2020, <https://www.gabonreview.com/peche-illicite-deux-chalutiers-dans-les-filets-de-loperation-albacore/>.

3.1.3 PRC public responses to the allegations

PRC officials and media seek to portray China as a “responsible fishing nation” that promotes the conservation of fisheries and opposes IUU fishing among both its domestic and DWF fleets. However, in the cases examined for this study, PRC officials and media generally sought to

downplay, deflect, or deny allegations that PRC-flagged vessels were engaging in IUU fishing overseas. Examples include the following:

- In the five cases examined, silence was the most common response. In a possible effort to downplay the allegations, PRC officials and media did not appear to comment publicly on the allegations that PRC-flagged vessels engaged in IUU fishing in waters off Vanuatu, Gabon, or the Philippines.
- In the Namibia case, PRC officials publicly denied the accusations lodged against PRC-flagged fishing vessels. In a Facebook post, the PRC embassy in Namibia offered an alternative narrative of events.³³ It asserted that the six PRC vessels were conducting “innocent navigation” and not engaging in any “wrongful acts.”³⁴ The PRC embassy also characterized the Namibian navy’s interdiction of the PRC vessels as “humanitarian assistance” in response to dangerous weather.³⁵
- In only one case did PRC officials tacitly acknowledge the incident. In response to Palau’s detention of the *Qiong Sanya Yu*, PRC officials publicly urged PRC nationals to follow local laws while overseas.³⁶ At least two English-language PRC media outlets and the PRC embassy in the nearby Solomon Islands echoed these remarks.³⁷

Quick Facts: China's DWF Fleet

The PRC actors most frequently involved in the alleged illicit maritime activities in this study are vessels belonging to China’s DWF fleet. Key facts about China’s DWF fleet include the following:

- The PRC has the largest DWF fleet in the world and this fleet operates globally.³⁸
- Official PRC figures from 2020 show that the country has approximately 170 firms and 2,600 vessels involved in its DWF sector.³⁹
- Estimates of the number of vessels in the PRC DWF fleet from international NGOs and academics range higher, from 3,400 to 17,000.⁴⁰
- In 2017, the PRC government issued guidance to reduce the number of older wooden fishing vessels and subsidize their replacement with larger steel vessels.⁴¹ The resulting PRC DWF fleet comprises many new large steel vessels.
- Most PRC DWF vessels are trawlers, longliners, or squid jiggers.⁴²
- The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime and Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management assess that, among the world’s fishing fleets, China’s DWF fleet had the highest prevalence of IUU fishing in 2019.⁴³



3.2 Ramming foreign fishing vessels

For this study, we define ramming as intentionally colliding with another vessel.

The UN International Maritime Organization (IMO) promulgates multiple conventions requiring vessels to use all available means to avoid risk of collision as well as to render assistance to persons in distress. Three such conventions are the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions (COLREGs), the Convention on Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA), and the Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS).⁴⁴

Numerous eyewitness, video, photographic, investigative, and official accounts of ramming are readily available online. Ramming incidents among fishing vessels are typically the result of competition over contested fishing grounds or other natural resources, often in waters that are the subject of maritime territorial disputes. Reportedly, these ramming incidents have intimidated rival fisherfolk, damaged equipment, sunk vessels, and even injured, marooned, and killed crew.

3.2.1 PRC policy

Beijing requires PRC vessels to strictly abide by maritime safety laws, conventions, and international norms. For instance, the white paper, *The Development of China's Marine Programs*, presented by the PRC's permanent mission to the UN and other international organizations in Vienna, states that China "attaches great importance [to]" and "is constantly strengthening" maritime issues of international concern, including "maritime safety" and "marine-related laws."⁴⁵ Similarly, the PRC embassy in Vietnam issued a Vietnamese-language press statement in 2020 asserting that "China always strictly implements international laws, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea" and "actively protects safety" in the maritime domain.⁴⁶ The PRC also promulgates safety at sea regulations, including fishery-specific maritime safety laws on the prevention of fishing vessel collisions.⁴⁷

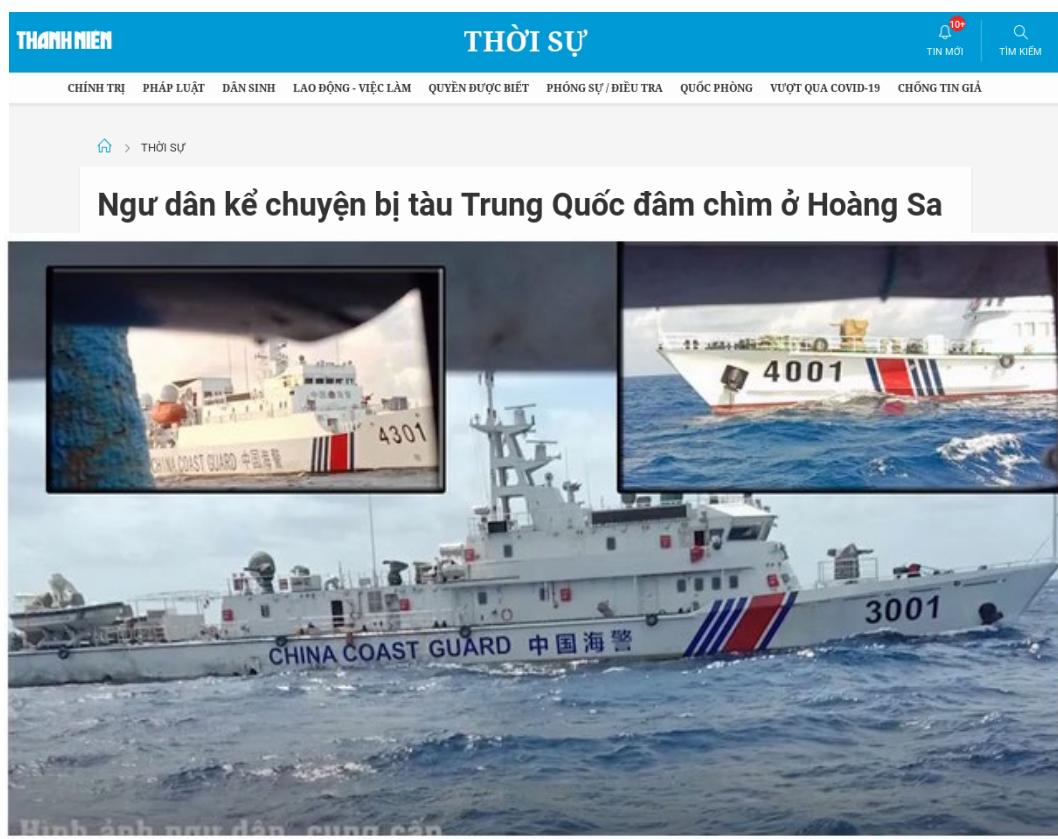
3.2.2 Examples of alleged misconduct by PRC actors

PRC-flagged vessels reportedly rammed foreign fishing vessels on at least five occasions since 2018.⁴⁸ These incidents include the following:

- **Philippines.** On the night of June 9, 2019, the 44-meter steel-hulled PRC vessel *Yuemaobinyu* 42212 rammed the 19-meter wood-hulled Philippine vessel *Gem Ver.* The PRC vessel's automatic identification system (AIS) was deactivated, and its lights were off.⁴⁹ *Yuemaobinyu* 42212 sailed away from the scene, leaving the 22 crewmembers stranded at sea until they were saved by Vietnamese fishermen.⁵⁰
- **Mauritania.** On the night of October 9, 2020, a large PRC trawler with its lights off and AIS deactivated rammed a Mauritanian artisanal fishing vessel.⁵¹ The vessel sank, and three Mauritians were killed.⁵²

- **Vietnam.** On the night of April 2, 2020, PRC coast guard vessel 4301 rammed Vietnamese fishing vessel QNg90617, sinking it and picking up its eight crewmembers (see Figure 4).⁵³ The PRC coast guard vessel then reportedly chased and stopped nearby Vietnamese vessels and confiscated and erased their crews' cell phones.⁵⁴
- **Senegal.** On September 19, 2020, a PRC-operated trawler reportedly tried to capsize a Senegalese-captained 11-person fishing canoe.⁵⁵ With the canoe up against the trawler, the Senegalese captain climbed aboard the trawler to confront the PRC crew about its dangerous maneuvers and was beaten and burned with gasoline.⁵⁶
- **Brazil.** On November 22, 2018, the 49-meter PRC tuna vessel *Chang Rong* 4 rammed the 22-meter *Oceano Pesca* six times, resulting in \$90,000 of damage.⁵⁷

Figure 4. Vietnamese media report showing three PRC coast guard vessels, one of which allegedly rammed and sank a Vietnamese fishing vessel in 2020



Source: "Fishermen Tell Stories of Being Rammed and Sunk by Chinese ships in the Paracels" (Ngư dân kể chuyện bị tàu Trung Quốc đâm chìm ở Hoàng Sa), *Than Nien*. May 4, 2020, <https://thanhnien.vn/ngu-dan-ke-chuyen-bi-tau-trung-quoc-dam-chim-o-hoang-sa-post943046.html>.

The PRC vessels involved in these incidents were typically larger steel-hulled vessels, and the non-PRC vessels were smaller and of wooden or nonmetal construction. Of note, China's DWF fleet not only outnumbers non-PRC fleets but also includes more large steel-hulled vessels. Moreover, according to reports, some of China's DWF fleet serve as China's People's Armed Forces Maritime Militia and are charged with challenging counterclaimants' abilities to maintain control over disputed waters.⁵⁸

In at least two of the cases discussed above—those involving vessels from Mauritania and the Philippines—the PRC vessel had turned off its lights and deactivated its AIS during the incident. Peter Hammarstedt, director of campaigns for Sea Shepherd Global, a nonprofit organization that works to eliminate IUU fishing, said such tactics are common among trawlers that want to avoid detection in protected waters.⁵⁹

PRC Fishery Subsidies

The PRC government heavily subsidizes its DWF fleet. Subsidies that artificially increase profits by reducing the cost of fishing result in overcapacity among DWF fleets. This overcapacity leads to overfishing and a more congested maritime environment. The UN and World Trade Organization call this harmful category of subsidy “capacity-enhancing.” Given rapidly depleting fish stocks due to overfishing, the World Trade Organization seeks to eliminate capacity-enhancing fisheries subsidies.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, PRC subsidies continue to promote overcapacity in China’s DWF fleet, totaling an estimated **\$5.87 billion**; roughly half goes to China’s DWF industry and the other half goes to domestic fisheries.⁶¹

Persistent capacity-enhancing PRC subsidies are likely to continue to drive overcapacity in the PRC’s DWF fleet, which may add pressure to engage in illicit maritime activities such as IUU fishing and forced labor as fish stocks decrease and pressure to stay at sea longer increases.

3.2.3 PRC public responses to the allegations

PRC officials and media seek to portray China as a responsible maritime nation whose vessels adhere to international conventions for the safety of life and vessels at sea. However, in the ramming cases examined for this study, the behavior of some PRC actors—including government vessels—does not line up with Beijing’s official rhetoric. PRC officials and media attempted to downplay, deflect, or deny the allegations of ramming in an effort to prevent them from undermining Beijing’s official narrative. Examples include the following:

- In response to eyewitness and media accounts of a PRC steel-hulled trawler ramming a wooden Philippine fishing vessel, PRC officials and foreign-directed media asserted that the collision was an accident that occurred because the PRC vessel was “suddenly besieged by Filipino boats” and denied that it was “an intentional ‘hit and run.’”⁶²

- PRC foreign-directed media blamed Vietnamese and Philippine vessels for instigating the incidents that resulted in the collisions.⁶³ For example, Vietnamese-language PRC media reporting alleged that a Vietnamese vessel sank after “harassing and colliding” with a PRC vessel and claimed that the PRC side saved the Vietnamese crew.⁶⁴
- PRC officials and media have not publicly addressed the alleged 2020 PRC ramming incidents in Mauritanian or Senegalese waters nor the 2018 ramming of the Brazilian *Oceano Pesca* in the high seas off the eastern coast of South America.



3.3 Forced labor and human smuggling at sea

Forced labor and human smuggling at sea are two types of illicit maritime activities that involve human victims. The International Labour Organization's (ILO's) Forced Labour Convention defines forced labor as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.”⁶⁵ The DWF industry—fishing in either international waters or those under a foreign jurisdiction—has increasingly come under scrutiny by media, government, and NGOs for the prevalence of forced labor within the industry.⁶⁶ The ILO has established at least three conventions against forced labor, including a convention specifically targeting forced and unsafe labor in the fishing sector.⁶⁷ Similarly, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has promulgated a convention to protect migrant workers.⁶⁸ RFMO conventions also seek to promote labor standards for crew on vessels permitted within their convention areas. In the case of reported labor abuses against Indonesian workers aboard PRC fishing vessels, the relevant RFMO mechanism is a nonbinding resolution on labor standards (a draft binding resolution is under review).⁶⁹

Regarding trafficking in persons, the UN has promulgated a convention to prevent and combat this type of crime.⁷⁰ According to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, human trafficking and smuggling of migrants by sea (i.e., the illegal transport of people, either forced or of their own volition, by sea) warrants a priority response because of the unique dangers of irregular travel by sea. According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, even though smuggling of migrants by sea accounts for only a small portion of overall migrant smuggling, more smuggling deaths occur by sea than by land or air.⁷¹

3.3.1 PRC policy

*PRC officials portray China as a law-abiding and “responsible” fishing nation whose vessels would not commit crimes such as forced labor.*⁷² PRC law explicitly prohibits labor abuses.⁷³ The PRC Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs outlines labor protections within its “program for introducing foreign crews to the ocean fishing industry.”⁷⁴ Similarly, PRC officials and media portray China as an upholder of international law by emphasizing Beijing’s efforts to combat human trafficking and illegal immigration in the region.⁷⁵ PRC officials have

also publicly pointed out that many victims of human smuggling in the region are PRC citizens and have urged cooperation with local law enforcement.⁷⁶

3.3.2 Examples of alleged misconduct by PRC actors

The PRC is home to the world's largest DWF fleet, and PRC-flagged fishing vessels have reportedly engaged in forced labor to maximize fishing time while reducing labor costs. According to a collaborative investigation by Greenpeace and Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia (also known as the Indonesian Migrant Workers Union or SBMI) published in September 2021, Indonesia is widely believed to be the DWF industry's biggest supplier of labor. International NGOs Greenpeace and Destructive Fishing Watch report that between late 2019 and mid-2021, dozens of Indonesians were victims of exploitation by PRC-flagged fishing vessels and many have died from illness, beatings, inadequate working conditions, or lack of food and water.⁷⁷ According to Greenpeace, 32 of 42 allegations of forced labor at sea by Indonesian migrant laborers filed from May 2019 to June 2020 were lodged against PRC-owned fishing vessels.⁷⁸ Similarly, a report by the US-based nonprofit Center for Advanced Defense Studies that analyzed the prevalence of forced labor documented during port calls noted that PRC port calls rank first in reported forced labor incidents.⁷⁹

In April 2020, Indonesian officials began to address the issue publicly when they reported the deaths of four Indonesian crewmembers on the PRC-flagged *Long Xin* 629.⁸⁰ Since then, Indonesian media have continued to report cases of human trafficking, abuse, and death of Indonesians aboard PRC-flagged vessels (see Figure 5).⁸¹ Of note, in May 2021, US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) issued an entry ban for all goods produced by the fleet of China's Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd. "based on information that reasonably indicates the use of forced labor in the entity's fishing operations."⁸² Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd. is the owner of at least two ships implicated in the forced labor of Indonesian crewmembers.⁸³

In addition to allegations of forced labor against PRC-flagged fishing vessels, we observed one instance in which PRC nationals appeared to be involved in human smuggling. In July 2021, 36 PRC nationals sailed from China aboard the Cambodian-flagged vessel *Tong Hai* to waters outside of Sihanoukville, Cambodia, where Cambodian authorities arrested all 36 for entering Cambodia illegally via sea.⁸⁴ Although Cambodian police statements said that the reasons the PRC nationals attempted to enter Cambodia illegally were unknown, some media reports asserted that the PRC nationals on board were "deceived and smuggled" into Cambodia to work for illegal online gambling parlors based in Sihanoukville that target gamblers in China.⁸⁵ Cambodian authorities and media have not provided details on the vessel's owner or operator, but photographs of the ship's interior posted by local media show hardware with Chinese characters, possibly indicating that a PRC entity operates the ship.⁸⁶

Figure 5. Indonesian media report on the death of an Indonesian on a PRC fishing vessel

Kasus ABK WNI Meninggal di Kapal China Kembali Terjadi, Kapolri Diminta Bertindak

Kompas.com - 09/07/2020, 10:48 WIB



Source: "The Case of Indonesian Crew Members Who Died on a Chinese Ship Happened Again, the National Police Chief Asked to Take Action" (Kasus ABK WNI Meninggal di Kapal China Kembali Terjadi, Kapolri Diminta Bertindak), *Kompas*, July 9, 2020, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2020/07/09/10484891/kasus-abk-wni-meninggal-di-kapal-china-kembali-terjadi-kapolri-diminta?page=all>.

3.3.3 PRC public responses to the allegations

Initially, PRC officials acknowledged Indonesia's concerns about the reported abuses of Indonesian workers on PRC-flagged vessels and offered to cooperate with Indonesian authorities conducting the investigations.⁸⁷ However, by 2021, PRC officials had changed their tune and dismissed reports of abuses as politically motivated false accusations.⁸⁸ In addition, following the US CBP's blacklisting of China's Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd. in May 2021, PRC media began to dismiss accusations of abuses by PRC-flagged vessels as US lies designed to "create contradiction" between Indonesia and China.⁸⁹

Beijing was silent in response to the allegations that PRC nationals were involved in human smuggling in Cambodia and refrained from commenting publicly on the incident. However, PRC official remarks and media reporting targeted at audiences in Cambodia have sought to deflect criticism by portraying the US as a hotspot for human trafficking and forced labor.⁹⁰

If true, allegations of forced labor aboard PRC-flagged fishing vessels would contradict PRC officials' efforts to portray China as a law-abiding and "responsible" fishing nation. Similarly, if operated by a PRC entity, the *Tong Hai*'s smuggling of PRC nationals into Cambodia would undermine Beijing's efforts to tout China's contributions to the fight against human trafficking and illegal immigration in the region.



3.4 Discharging marine pollution

The discharge of pollutants into the world's marine environment is regulated by national, international, and regional authorities. These authorities seek to reduce the harmful effects of manmade pollutants—which range from human waste and fish-processing effluent to microplastics and heavy metals—on the marine ecosystem. Such pollutants harm the ecosystem in numerous ways, including damaging coral reefs, contributing to habitat loss, and depleting fish stocks.

3.4.1 PRC policy

PRC officials and media seek to portray China as a responsible steward and defender of the marine environment. In an opinion piece published by China's official English-language newspaper, *China Daily*, former Vice Foreign Minister and current chairperson of the National People's Congress Foreign Affairs Committee, Fu Ying, writes, "China has been actively promoting cooperation with other countries on maritime policy and management to protect the marine environment, marine ecosystem and biodiversity."⁹¹ Similarly, a 2021 article published by China's official overseas broadcaster China Radio International's Bahasa Indonesian service describes China's regional cooperation in protecting the maritime environment and fisheries.⁹²

3.4.2 Examples of alleged misconduct by PRC actors

Two of the cases examined for this study involved PRC actors discharging pollutants into the marine environment in apparent contravention of relevant national laws and international conventions. Each is discussed below.

Illegal waste dumping in the Spratly Islands. A July 2021 report by US-based commercial imagery analysis company Simularity found that more than 200 vessels at anchor in the Spratly Islands had dumped sewage into the ecologically fragile waters in spring 2021.⁹³ Simularity estimated that the vessels observed at anchor in the Union Banks in June were dumping

roughly 2,596 pounds of sewage per day into the water.⁹⁴ According to Simularity, the vessels were discharging untreated or undertreated sewage, leading to chlorophyll-a blooms. In excess concentrations, chlorophyll-a can lead to hypoxic ocean conditions, which can negatively affect marine organisms and ecosystems. The report also asserted that the vessels were likely the same PRC vessels that the Philippine coast guard had observed in the same location weeks earlier.⁹⁵

The alleged dumping occurred in disputed waters that are claimed by the Philippines as well as the PRC. In response to the Simularity report, the Philippine government reportedly initiated an in situ water and seafloor analysis to determine whether the vessels had discharged damaging sewage.⁹⁶ In addition, Philippine lawmakers issued statements noting that both domestic and international law bar ships from dumping their sewage in the waters as reported.⁹⁷ In addition to the Philippines Marine Pollution Law,⁹⁸ this case of alleged vessel pollution contravenes the IMO International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships.⁹⁹

Pollution by PRC fishmeal factories in the Gambia. PRC-owned fishmeal factories reportedly discharged untreated wastewater and dangerous chemicals into a maritime reserve and the coastal waters of the Gambia between 2017 and 2021 (see Figure 6).¹⁰⁰ The factories' actions violated the Gambia's environmental¹⁰¹ and fishery¹⁰² laws and appear to be in contravention to UNCLOS Article 194 on the prevention of marine pollution from land-based sources as well as the London Dumping Convention of 1972.¹⁰³

The dumping led to fish kills, damaged aquatic plants, and injured locals who use the water for bathing. Testing initiated by local groups reportedly showed unsafe levels of arsenate, phosphates, and arsenic.¹⁰⁴ A 2017 lawsuit brought by the Gambian National Environmental Agency (NEA) resulted in one PRC-owned factory being fined and all three being forced to suspend operations.¹⁰⁵ The plants have since reopened and reportedly continue to pollute local waters.¹⁰⁶ In March 2021, the NEA issued a "stop notice" to one factory for violating the nation's environmental laws.¹⁰⁷ Despite the order, the factory continued plant expansion work, according to Gambian media.¹⁰⁸ During the same period, local protestors burned a second PRC-owned fishmeal factory in response to a constellation of alleged environmental and criminal complaints.¹⁰⁹

Figure 6. Regional media report on PRC-owned fishmeal company paying fine for marine pollution in the Gambia in 2017



Source: "Chinese Company to Pay \$25,000 Bond for Polluting Gambian Waters," Africa News, June 30, 2017, <https://www.africanews.com/2017/06/30/gambia-chinese-fishmeal-factory-settled-out-of-court-case/>.

3.4.3 PRC public responses to the allegations

In both cases, PRC officials and media sought to deny the allegations that PRC actors had polluted the marine environment. Examples include the following:

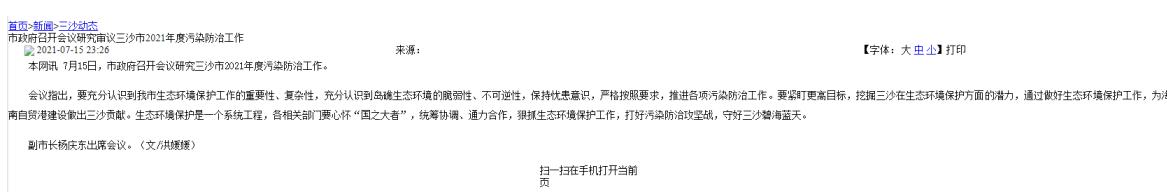
- In response to Simularity's report alleging that PRC vessels anchored in the Spratly Islands had been illegally dumping sewage, the PRC MFA and PRC embassy in the Philippines condemned the report as "fake news."¹¹⁰ PRC media directed at audiences in the region similarly portrayed the report as an attempt to smear China.¹¹¹
- PRC officials issued statements seeking to deny the PRC-owned factories' role in local environmental degradation in the Gambia:¹¹²
 - The PRC ambassador to the country told local media that the embassy's investigations had found no harmful substances in the factory effluent and that

China requires PRC entities to “follow local laws and fulfill their social responsibilities.”¹¹³

- Similarly, an embassy spokesperson said that allegations against the factories “lack evidence.”¹¹⁴
- The PRC ambassador claimed that the wastewater in question “provides abundant nutrition” and that “farmers in China buy this kind of wastewater to add to their fish ponds.”¹¹⁵

Of note, shortly after international attention turned to reports of PRC vessels dumping sewage in the Spratly Islands, some PRC government officials in charge of administering the Spratly Islands issued a press release stating that “the fragility and irreversibility of the ecological environment of the island and reefs should be fully recognized” and “it is important to strictly adhere to the requirements of promoting the various pollution prevention programs” (see Figure 7).¹¹⁶

Figure 7. Sansha Government, PRC, press release demanding better maritime protection, posted three days after Simularity published its report



会议指出，要充分认识到我市生态环境保护工作的重要性、复杂性，充分认识到岛礁生态环境的脆弱性、不可逆性，保持忧患意识，严格按照要求，推进各项污染防治工作。要紧盯更高目标，挖掘三沙在生态环境保护方面的潜力，通过做好生态环境保护工作，为海南自贸港建设做出三沙贡献。生态环境保护是一个系统工程，各相关部门要心怀“国之大者”，统筹协调、通力合作，狠抓生态环境保护工作，打好污染防治攻坚战，守护三沙碧海蓝天。

Translation: “The meeting noted that it is important to fully grasp the importance and complexity of the work of protecting the ecological environment surrounding [Sanya] city, and the fragility and irreversibility of the ecological environment of the island and reefs should be fully recognized. It is important to strictly adhere to the requirements of promoting the various pollution prevention programs.”

Source: “The Municipal Government Held a Meeting to Study and Review the Pollution Prevention and Control Work of Sansha City in 2021” [市政府召开会议研究审议三沙市2021年度污染防治工作], Sansha Municipal Government, July 15, 2021, http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:cvtRxVs_9-MJ:www.sansha.gov.cn/sansha/sysdt/202107/a4503cbae2d54e018ebd0864db6a2e8f.shtml&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us.



3.5 Operating “dark” vessels

Vessels “go dark” by obscuring their location, movement, or transmissions or by manipulating the data transmitted by their signals. One way that vessels “go dark” is by disabling or tampering with their electronic tracking or monitoring devices, such as their AIS or vessel monitoring system (VMS). In many cases, monitoring avoidance goes hand in hand with illicit maritime activities such as IUU fishing.¹¹⁷

AIS is an automatic open-source tracking system that assists a vessel's safe navigation and allows coastal authorities to track and monitor vessel movements.¹¹⁸ The IMO conventions for SOLAS call for the use of AIS by all vessels greater than 300 gross tonnage that are on an "international voyage." The IMO Revised Guidelines for the Onboard Operation Use of Shipborne AIS note that AIS on these vessels should always be in operation when ships are underway or at anchor.¹¹⁹ VMS tracks vessels in a similar way as AIS. However, unlike AIS, VMS data have historically been restricted to government regulators or other fisheries authorities and are not generally publicly accessible.¹²⁰

Fisheries and Vessel Monitoring Technologies

Multiple monitoring technologies are available to track and monitor fishing vessels at sea, including the following:

AIS – AIS transponders provide position, identification, and other information about a ship to other ships and coastal authorities automatically. SOLAS regulation V/19 requires AIS "to be fitted aboard all ships of 300 gross tonnage and upwards engaged on international voyages."¹²¹ AIS data are generally publicly available in real time.

VMS – VMS tracks vessels in a similar way as AIS, but its data have historically been restricted to government regulators or other fisheries authorities and are not generally publicly available.¹²² Individual countries have their own VMSs.

EM – Electronic monitoring (EM) uses cameras, gear sensors, and sophisticated data analysis to provide full accountability for fishing activities. The use of EM has several benefits, including high levels of compliance, documentation of sustainable fishing practices, and access to markets that demand high levels of transparency and sustainability. Less than 1 percent of the world's fishing vessels are equipped with EM.¹²³

RF – Space-based radio frequency (RF) analysis uses a range of RF signals such as marine radar and x-band to locate and track vessels that are not transmitting VMS or AIS.¹²⁴

SAR – Synthetic aperture radar (SAR) uses space-based active sensors to produce high spatial resolution imagery from layered, or "synthetic," images. SAR can be used to detect and identify marine vessels that are not transmitting VMS or AIS.¹²⁵

VIIRS – Visible infrared imaging radiometer (VIIRS) is a polar-orbiting satellite that uses highly sensitive optical sensors to see lights at night.¹²⁶ VIIRS can be used to detect fishing vessels that do not broadcast VMS or AIS. More than 85 percent of the fishing vessels in the VIIRS database do not broadcast AIS or VMS.¹²⁷

3.5.1 PRC policy

PRC officials and foreign-directed media promote the narrative that PRC vessels abide by "the world's most rigorous Vessel Monitoring System requirements." During at least four MFA press conferences in 2020, spokespersons asserted that "China implements the world's most rigorous Vessel Monitoring System."¹²⁸ These remarks were widely republished by PRC

foreign-directed media in multiple languages, including Indonesian, French, Spanish, and English.¹²⁹ Foreign-directed PRC media discussion of AIS focused on China's development of AIS-capable satellites and land-based AIS infrastructure for "increasing surveillance and monitoring."¹³⁰

The PRC likewise has national laws requiring VMS, AIS, or both for its DWF fleet. For example, the PRC Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs' *Measures for the Administration of Monitoring the Position of Ocean Fishing Vessels* states that its DWF vessels "shall be equipped with ship position monitoring equipment" and that when operating in waters of countries that prohibit VMS, "they shall use the installed automatic vessel identification equipment (AIS) to submit relevant information."¹³¹ Additionally, Article 24, Paragraph 1 and Paragraph 2 (12) of the *Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Maritime Affairs and Administrative Penalties* stipulates that "personnel on ships and facilities [who] do not keep AIS in normal working condition in accordance with the regulations, or fail to enter accurate information in the AIS equipment in accordance with regulations" face fines or revocation of licenses.¹³²

3.5.2 Examples of alleged misconduct by PRC actors

In at least 7 of 15 cases we examined, PRC actors allegedly tampered with their vessel's monitoring or identification systems, usually to obscure or enable other illicit activities, such as IUU fishing or illegal transshipment.¹³³ Between 2018 and 2021, there were reports of PRC vessels allegedly shutting off or tampering with their AIS to obscure illicit activities in the waters of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK),¹³⁴ Ecuador,¹³⁵ Vanuatu,¹³⁶ The Gambia, Namibia,¹³⁷ the Philippines,¹³⁸ and Indonesia.¹³⁹

- **DPRK.** According to a study conducted by eight institutions using satellite technology not reliant on AIS signals, nearly 1,000 "dark" vessels of PRC origin fished illegally in DPRK waters in 2017 and 2018, with the activity continuing into at least 2019.¹⁴⁰ Similarly, maritime trade organization Windward has reported that PRC vessels use multiple means of evading UN sanctions on the DPRK, including deactivating AIS as well as altering Marine Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) numbers, flag states, and vessel names.¹⁴¹
- **Ecuador.** From 2018 to 2021, investigative reports by international media and NGOs documented PRC squid jiggers and trawlers "going dark" in the high seas off South America, including near Ecuador's Galapagos Islands, a UNESCO world heritage site.¹⁴² Similarly, an analysis of select PRC-flagged vessels' operations near the Galapagos in 2020 found numerous instances of vessels changing draft, length, or ownership and going dark near Galapagos' EEZ.¹⁴³
- **Vanuatu.** On January 19, 2021, a Vanuatu Maritime Police vessel intercepted two PRC-flagged fishing vessels, *Dong Gang Xing 13* and *Dong Gang Xing 16*, for suspected IUU fishing activities within Vanuatu's territorial waters.¹⁴⁴ The vessels had permission to

fish within Vanuatu's EEZ but not within its 12-mile territorial waters, where they were caught with their AIS turned off, according to Vanuatu prosecutors.¹⁴⁵

- **The Gambia.** A 2019-2020 analysis of fishing vessels operating in waters off the Gambia and other Economic Community of Western African States members found PRC-flagged vessels altering AIS data such that multiple vessels shared names or IMO and MMSI numbers, which are legally required to be distinct.¹⁴⁶
- **Indonesia.** On January 11, 2021, Indonesian media reported that the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency had intercepted the PRC research vessel *Xiang Yang Hong* 03 in the Sunda Strait for operating in Indonesian waters with its AIS deactivated.¹⁴⁷ According to Indonesian and international regulations, all ships transiting Indonesia's archipelagic sea lanes are required to have functioning AIS.¹⁴⁸
- **Philippines.** On the night of June 9, 2019, the 44-meter steel-hulled PRC vessel *Yuemaobinyu* 42212 rammed the Philippine 19-meter wood-hulled *Gem Ver* with its AIS deactivated and lights off, according to crew aboard the *Gem Ver* and Philippine media reports.¹⁴⁹ The PRC vessel sailed away from the scene, leaving the 22 crewmembers stranded at sea until they were saved by Vietnamese fishermen.¹⁵⁰
- **Namibia.** In March 2020, local media reported that the Namibian navy had intercepted six PRC-owned fishing vessels in a popular fishing location 17 miles off the Namibian coast.¹⁵¹ Namibian authorities stated that the PRC vessels entered Namibia illegally and had not received authorization to anchor.¹⁵² The Namibian navy also noted that the vessels had deactivated their AIS.¹⁵³

3.5.3 PRC public responses to the allegations

PRC officials and media seek to portray China as a “responsible fishing nation” that implements strict vessel monitoring over its DWF fleet and other vessels. However, in the cases examined for this study, PRC officials and media generally sought to downplay, deflect, or deny allegations that PRC-flagged vessels were tampering with or deactivating onboard AIS to obscure illicit maritime activity.

In a likely effort to downplay the incidents, PRC officials and media did not comment publicly on the allegations that PRC-flagged vessels tampered with their AIS in waters off the Philippines, Vanuatu, Indonesia, and the Gambia. In other cases, rather than respond directly to the allegations, PRC officials and foreign-directed media sought to deflect criticism by claiming that PRC vessels abide by “the world’s most rigorous” VMS requirements.¹⁵⁴ For instance, when asked about PRC vessels operating without AIS near Ecuador’s Galapagos Islands, an MFA spokesperson asserted that “all Chinese fishing vessels are using the Vessel Monitoring System recognized by the regional fisheries management organizations, which reports the position every hour.”¹⁵⁵

In one case, the PRC embassy in Namibia appeared to deny the Namibian navy's allegation that the PRC vessels it had detained for illegal entry and possible IUU fishing in its waters had deactivated their AIS. The PRC embassy asserted that "continuous computer records of the fishing boats' sailing route" would prove that the vessels were not fishing illegally.¹⁵⁶

PRC Media Discussion of AIS Tampering

PRC media reporting targeted at foreign audiences is silent on the issue of AIS tampering aboard PRC vessels, emphasizing instead that PRC vessels strictly adhere to a separate VMS regimen that is not publicly available. PRC media reporting aimed at domestic audiences in China, however, highlights China's efforts to crack down on "illegal or incorrect use of AIS equipment," acknowledging that such actions "pose challenges to maritime order."¹⁵⁷ A report published by a popular online newspaper in 2020 bemoans the "current situation of illegal and chaotic information quality of shipborne AIS equipment" and calls for "jointly promoting the use of AIS equipment."¹⁵⁸ Similarly, a 2021 report by China's official Xinhua News Agency details how a regional PRC maritime authority investigated and penalized "the illegal installation of AIS by a fishing vessel," referring to a vessel inaccurately transmitting as a bulk carrier instead of a fishing vessel.¹⁵⁹ A third report catalogs three cases of PRC bulk carrier vessels misusing AIS, summarizes the relevant international and PRC regulations on AIS, and draws attention to the issue of inputting incorrect or multiple vessel identifiers such as ship name, call sign, IMO number, ship type, and MMSI number.¹⁶⁰



3.6 Illegal entry and ownership

Coastal states have the right under UNCLOS to regulate foreign economic and scientific activities in and on the water column of their own 200-mile EEZs.¹⁶¹ Moreover, within a coastal state's 12-mile territorial sea, it enjoys sovereignty over the water and seafloor while allowing for innocent passage by foreign vessels.¹⁶² Conducting economic activities such as fishing or scientific activities such as oceanographic surveys within a coastal state's EEZ or territorial waters without its consent is a contravention of UNCLOS. Many coastal states likewise have national laws codifying UNCLOS requirements for foreign vessels to receive permissions for commercial or scientific activities within their EEZ or territorial waters. Relatedly, some coastal states implement laws that require fishing vessels operating within their EEZ or territorial sea to have a specific flag, operator, or ownership relationship with the coastal state.

3.6.1 PRC policy

The PRC has ratified UNCLOS, according to which coastal states have the right to govern anchorage access for foreign vessels and set rules for licensing and foreign ownership of vessels under their registry (flag).¹⁶³ The PRC's ambassador to the UN stated in June 2021 that China "resolutely safeguards the integrity and sanctity of UNCLOS" and that "all countries

should firmly defend the international maritime order based on international law, and properly resolve maritime disputes through negotiations and consultations in good faith.”¹⁶⁴

Beijing also urges PRC nationals and companies to comply with local laws when operating overseas. The PRC MFA has stated, “As a principle, the Chinese government always asks Chinese citizens abroad to comply with local laws and regulations.”¹⁶⁵ Of note, PRC officials and media typically reiterate this policy in response to international media reports of PRC actors engaging in illicit activity, including at sea.¹⁶⁶

3.6.2 Examples of alleged misconduct by PRC actors

In this study, multiple cases involved allegations that PRC vessels illegally entered foreign EEZs to conduct commercial and other non-transitory activities without the required permissions from the coastal state. In one case, PRC companies allegedly held beneficial ownership of fishing vessels operating in a country’s waters, in violation of that country’s national laws. Examples of alleged misconduct by PRC actors are as follows:

- ***PRC vessels reportedly carrying out illegal oceanographic survey.*** On January 11, 2021, news media reported that the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency had intercepted the PRC research vessel *Xiang Yang Hong 03* in the Sunda Strait for operating in Indonesia’s territorial waters with its AIS deactivated.¹⁶⁷ Indonesian authorities reportedly suspected the vessel was conducting unauthorized activities in the Sunda Strait while its AIS was off.¹⁶⁸ Media reports speculated that the PRC vessel was gathering oceanographic information to inform PRC navy submarine operations.¹⁶⁹
- ***PRC vessels accused of illegal entry and anchoring.*** In October 2020, the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) announced it had detained six PRC-flagged fishing vessels and their crew for entering and anchoring in Malaysia’s territorial waters without permission.¹⁷⁰ Similarly, in March 2020, the Namibian navy intercepted six PRC-owned fishing vessels in a popular fishing location 17 miles off the Namibian coast. According to Namibian authorities, the PRC vessels entered Namibia illegally and had not received authorization to anchor.¹⁷¹ Upon their release, the same six PRC vessels sailed into South African waters, where they were again detained and fined for illegal entry.¹⁷²
- ***PRC companies illegally holding beneficial ownership of fishing vessels operating in Ghana.*** According to Ghana’s Fisheries Act, commercial fishing vessels with non-Ghanaian control or beneficial ownership are prohibited from fishing within Ghana’s EEZ.¹⁷³ Similarly, UNCLOS Article 91 requires a “genuine link” between the flag state and ship owners.¹⁷⁴ However, multiple investigative reports published by US-based environmental NGOs between 2019 and 2021 found that PRC corporations are the

beneficial owners of nearly all trawlers in Ghana.¹⁷⁵ According to the reports, PRC corporations register the trawlers with China's Ministry of Agriculture to benefit from state fuel subsidies and tax benefits while also registering the vessels with the Ghanaian flag via locally incorporated shell companies to benefit from fishing access in Ghana's EEZ and low-cost local fishing licenses.¹⁷⁶ This illegal practice results in Ghana losing up to \$23 million annually in fishing license fees.¹⁷⁷

Figure 8. Indonesia media report about interception of a PRC survey vessel operating in the Sunda Strait with its AIS deactivated



Source: Achmad Nasrudin Yahya, "Bakamla Suspects Chinese Survey Vessel Operates Underwater Sensors in Indonesian Waters" (*Bakamla Curiga Kapal Survei China Operasikan Sensor Bawah Air di Perairan Indonesia*), *National Compas* (Nasional Kompas), February 2, 2021, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2021/02/02/12144011/bakamla-curiga-kapal-survei-china-operasikan-sensor-bawah-air-di-perairan?page=all>.

3.6.3 PRC public responses to the allegations

PRC officials and media seek to portray China as a “responsible fishing nation” that upholds coastal states’ rights under UNCLOS, and Beijing publicly urges PRC entities to comply with local laws when operating abroad. In keeping with this narrative, Beijing publicly acknowledged that PRC vessels had been detained within Malaysia’s territorial waters. Both

the MFA and the PRC embassy called on Malaysian authorities to carry out a “fair investigation, ensuring the rights and interests of the Chinese citizens involved.”¹⁷⁸

However, gaps remain between PRC rhetoric and actions: in a possible attempt to downplay the allegations, PRC officials and foreign-directed media remained silent in response to allegations that PRC entities violated Ghanaian law by beneficially owning local fishing vessels. Likewise, Beijing did not respond publicly to Indonesia’s interception of a PRC research vessel that may have been conducting an oceanographic survey in Indonesian waters with its AIS deactivated and without the permission of the Indonesian government. In the Namibia case, the PRC embassy in Namibia denied that the PRC vessels were “illegally” stopped in Namibian waters and asserted that the vessels had been exercising innocent passage.¹⁷⁹

4. Conclusion

Based on the cases examined for this study, some PRC actors appear to be engaged in a variety of illicit maritime activities around the world. Typically, PRC actors engage in more than one type of illicit activity. The most common offenders appear to be commercial fishing vessels belonging to China's vast DWF fleet. However, we identified at least two incidents in which government vessels—a PRC coast guard vessel and a survey ship—allegedly engaged in illicit behavior.

PRC official rhetoric seeks to portray China as a responsible maritime actor that effectively governs its DWF fleet and other oceangoing vessels. ***The illicit behavior of PRC actors thus creates a persistent gap between PRC rhetoric and behavior that was apparent in all 15 cases.*** Beijing's public responses to allegations of illicit activity by PRC actors suggest that it is trying to shape public discussion in ways that minimize any negative impact on China's image. In seven cases, PRC officials and media remained silent, in a possible attempt to downplay the incidents. In other cases, PRC officials and media publicly denied the allegations, sometimes going as far as lodging counteraccusations intended to shift blame or discredit their accusers. These responses could create the appearance that, rather than acknowledge the problem, Beijing is trying to publicly undermine or recast international rules, laws, and norms.

A secondary narrative that Beijing promotes to foreign audiences about PRC maritime activity portrays China's presence and investment as beneficial to local populations. Among the cases examined for this study, this narrative featured prominently in PRC messaging targeting the coastal African nations and is likely intended to portray the PRC as a benefactor that supports these countries' economic development. However, in multiple cases explored in this study, PRC investment came at a cost: it benefitted the countries' economic development, but also resulted in environmental and economic damage to local communities.

In summary, the alleged illicit maritime activities of PRC actors inflict economic and environmental damage on coastal nations, violate their sovereignty, and harm their citizens. PRC officials and media actively seek to offset the damage that this activity does to China's reputation by publicly denying, deflecting, or downplaying incidents involving illicit behavior by PRC actors.

Appendix A: Beijing's Responders

In the cases we examined, the following elements of the PRC propaganda apparatus played a prominent role in Beijing's efforts to promote a positive image of China as a responsible maritime actor as well as respond to allegations of misconduct by PRC actors:

- **MFA spokespersons.** MFA spokespersons commented on 6 of the 15 incidents examined. Beijing first started designating government spokespersons in the early 1980s. Since then, these spokespersons have become one of the most routine and direct methods that the Chinese government employs to interact with both domestic and foreign audiences.^{180,181}
- **PRC embassy officials.** The PRC ambassador or other local embassy officials publicly commented on 8 of the 15 cases. PRC diplomats posted overseas play a frontline role in Beijing's public diplomacy efforts, including its responses to allegations of misconduct by PRC actors overseas.
- **PRC foreign-directed media.** State-run PRC media outlets reported on 6 of the 15 cases. Typically, this reporting conveyed remarks by PRC MFA spokespersons or embassy officials. In some cases, it also included commentary that reinforced or expanded on Beijing's official narrative. To make it accessible to target audiences, PRC media reporting was published in local languages, including English, French, Bahasa, Filipino, Malay, and Vietnamese.¹⁸²

See Table 1 on the next page for a summary of responders in each case study.

Table 1. Elements of PRC propaganda apparatus that responded to 15 cases of alleged PRC illicit maritime activity

Alleged PRC Activity	MFA Response	PRC Embassy	Foreign-Directed Media
Reports of PRC vessels dumping sewage in Philippine EEZ	Yes ¹⁸³	Yes ¹⁸⁴	Yes ¹⁸⁵
Illegal harvest of sea cucumber by PRC vessel in Palau EEZ	Yes ¹⁸⁶	Yes ¹⁸⁷	Yes ¹⁸⁸
Forced Indonesian labor on board PRC-flagged vessels	Yes ¹⁸⁹	Yes ¹⁹⁰	Yes ¹⁹¹
PRC vessels detained for illegal fishing in Vanuatu EEZ	No ¹⁹²	No ¹⁹³	No ¹⁹⁴
PRC vessels engaging in illegal fishing in Gabon	No	No ¹⁹⁵	No ¹⁹⁶
Water pollution from PRC-owned fishmeal factories in the Gambia	No	Yes ¹⁹⁷	No ¹⁹⁸
Illegal ownership of Ghana's fishing trawler fleet	No	No	No ¹⁹⁹
Illegal entering and anchoring in Malaysia's territorial waters	Yes ²⁰⁰	Yes ²⁰¹	Yes ²⁰²
PRC harvesting giant clams in Philippine-administered waters	No	No	No ²⁰³
PRC research vessel operating in Indonesian waters without AIS	No	No	No ²⁰⁴
Tampering with AIS on PRC ships	Yes ²⁰⁵	Yes ²⁰⁶	Yes ²⁰⁷
PRC trawler in Mauritanian restricted area rams local boat	No	No	No ²⁰⁸
PRC vessels allegedly ramming foreign fishing vessels	Yes ²⁰⁹	Yes ²¹⁰	Yes ²¹¹
Namibia investigates PRC vessels for illegal entry and fishing	No	Yes ²¹²	No ²¹³
PRC nationals smuggled into Cambodia by sea	No	No ²¹⁴	No ²¹⁵
Total responses out of 15 cases	6	8	6

Source: CNA.

Appendix B: Case Studies

1. Illegal harvest of sea cucumber by PRC vessel in Palau EEZ

In December 2020, Palau media outlets reported that a Palau Maritime Law Enforcement patrol vessel intercepted the PRC-flagged fishing vessel *Qiong Sanya Yu* for suspected illegal harvesting of sea cucumber at Helen Reef, within Palau's territorial waters and EEZ.²¹⁶ The US Coast Guard assisted Palau maritime authorities with locating the PRC vessel.²¹⁷ The Palau Ministry of Justice (MOJ) found evidence that the crew of the *Qiong Sanya Yu* poached 225 kilograms (496 pounds) of sea cucumber valued at roughly \$180,000.²¹⁸ The 28-member crew—all PRC nationals—accepted a settlement agreement offered by the Palau MOJ in place of charges, which required them to forfeit the vessel's fishing tackle and five small boats and pay \$200,000.²¹⁹

2. PRC vessels detained for illegal fishing in Vanuatu EEZ

On January 19, 2021, a Vanuatu Maritime Police vessel intercepted two PRC-flagged fishing vessels, *Dong Gang Xing 13* and *Dong Gang Xing 16*, for suspected IUU fishing activities within Vanuatu's territorial waters.²²⁰ Vanuatu prosecutors alleged that the ship operators engaged in illegal fishing without a license, turned off their satellite transponders while in Vanuatu's waters, and possessed a driftnet in violation of Vanuatu's Fisheries Act.²²¹ The ships' owner, Zhuhai Dong Gang Xing Ocean Fishing Co., refuted these charges at the time of the arrest of the ships and crew.²²² On May 18, 2021, the 14 detained PRC nationals pleaded not guilty on all charges in Vanuatu's Supreme Court.²²³ As of August 18, 2021, the ruling in the case has not been publicly reported, and Vanuatu authorities have not responded to requests for information.

3. PRC vessels engaging in illegal fishing in Gabon

On August 8, 2020, Gabonese authorities, in collaboration with Netherlands-based nonprofit Sea Shepherd, stopped two PRC-flagged trawlers, *Guo Ji 826* and *Guo Ji 866*, for a routine inspection.²²⁴ According to Sea Shepherd and local media reports, the inspection found illegally harvested rough-head sea catfish, endangered daisy stingrays, and other rays.²²⁵ Gabonese authorities aboard the Sea Shepherd vessel arrested and escorted both vessels to port, where further investigation uncovered additional rays and ray fins.²²⁶ The ship's captain, a PRC national, told authorities that he was unaware that the catch was illegal.²²⁷ According to local media, a year earlier, Gabonese authorities arrested two other PRC-flagged vessels—*Guo Ji 827*

(operated by the same owner as *Guo Ji* 826 and 866) and *Haixin* 27—for IUU fishing in protected Gabonese waters.²²⁸

4. PRC harvesting giant clams in Philippine-administered waters

Giant clams are categorized as a vulnerable species by multiple international conventions, and both the Philippines and the PRC have banned their harvest.²²⁹ The Philippine navy and media assert that PRC fishermen operating near the contested Pagasa Island (Philippines administered) and Scarborough Shoal (PRC administered) in the South China Sea continue to harvest giant clams illegally using environmentally damaging methods.²³⁰ Philippine media also assert that the PRC coast guard is aware of the illegal harvesting around Scarborough Shoal.²³¹ Philippine journalists have observed the PRC using “chopper boats,” explosives, chemicals, water pumps, and vacuums on the coral reefs to harvest the giant clams, whose shells are sold for high prices in China.²³² These harvesting methods have reportedly destroyed more than 104 square kilometers of coral reefs in the South China Sea, further depleting fish stocks and harming the livelihoods of fisherfolk from the Philippines and other countries.²³³

5. PRC trawler in Mauritania artisanal fishing area rams local boat

According to Mauritanian media reporting from early September 2020, a PRC-flagged trawler struck a Mauritanian fishing vessel at night, killing three of the Mauritanian crew.²³⁴ Local and regional media reported that the PRC fishing vessel struck the artisanal Mauritanian boat in waters off Nouadhibou in an area restricted to artisanal fishing where industrial trawlers are prohibited. The head of the local artisanal fishing association alleged that the incident was not an accident and asserted that the PRC vessel had turned off its lights, deactivated its AIS, and intentionally rammed the local fishing vessel.²³⁵ Mauritanian authorities reportedly arrested the captain of the PRC vessel, and local community members carried out protests against PRC and other foreign trawlers for their alleged illegal and dangerous fishing practices.²³⁶ According to Mauritanian media, a similar case occurred in 2017 when another PRC vessel reportedly collided with multiple local fishing vessels, killing at least four people.²³⁷

6. PRC vessels allegedly ramming foreign fishing vessels

Ramming incidents among fishing vessels are typically the result of competition over contested fishing grounds or other natural resources, often in waters that are the subject of maritime territorial disputes. Ramming incidents have intimidated rival fisherfolk, damaged equipment, sunk vessels, and injured, killed, and marooned crew. On at least five occasions between 2018 and 2021, news media reported that PRC-flagged vessels intentionally rammed fishing vessels from the Philippines, Mauritania, Vietnam, Senegal, and Brazil.²³⁸

7. Forced Indonesian labor on board PRC-flagged vessels

According to reports by NGOs based in Indonesia, Germany, and the US, between late 2019 and mid-2021, PRC-flagged fishing vessels exploited dozens of Indonesian crewmembers, many of whom have died from illness, beatings, unsafe working conditions, or lack of food and water.²³⁹ In April 2020, Indonesian officials began to address the issue publicly when they acknowledged the deaths of four Indonesian crewmembers on the PRC-flagged *Long Xin 629*.²⁴⁰ Since then, Indonesian authorities have announced additional cases of human trafficking, abuse, and death of Indonesians aboard PRC-flagged vessels. Subsequently, in May 2021, CBP issued an entry ban for all goods produced by the fleet of China's Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd. "based on information that reasonably indicates the use of forced labor in the entity's fishing operations."²⁴¹ Dalian is the owner of at least two ships implicated in the forced labor of Indonesian crewmembers.²⁴²

8. PRC nationals smuggled into Cambodia by sea

According to a Cambodian police report and local media, Cambodian maritime authorities arrested 36 PRC nationals and 2 Cambodians on July 26, 2020, for illegal entry into the country aboard the Cambodian-flagged vessel *Tong Hai*.²⁴³ Cambodian authorities said that *Tong Hai* left the port of Fu'an in the PRC's Fujian province on July 18 and sailed roughly 2,000 nautical miles to waters outside of Sihanoukville, where Cambodian authorities boarded the ship.²⁴⁴ Cambodian authorities and media have not provided details on the vessel's owner or operator, but photographs of the ship's interior posted by local media show hardware with Chinese characters, possibly indicating that a PRC entity operates the ship.²⁴⁵ Local media reports say that Cambodian police found no suspicious cargo beyond the smuggled persons, and it is unknown why the PRC nationals were attempting to enter Cambodia illegally.²⁴⁶ Cambodian police noted in a press release that they were prepared to deport the PRC nationals one day after their arrest but released no further details about the case.²⁴⁷

9. Reports of PRC vessels dumping sewage in Philippine EEZ

A July 2021 report by Simularity, a US-based commercial imagery analysis company, found that more than 200 vessels at anchor in the Spratly Islands were dumping sewage into the water.²⁴⁸ Simularity assessed that the vessels at anchor in the Union Banks in June were dumping roughly 2,596 pounds of sewage per day into the water.²⁴⁹ The report claims that the vessels were discharging untreated or undertreated sewage into the shallow waters, leading to chlorophyll-a blooms. These blooms, which Simularity said were visible in satellite imagery, can lead to hypoxic ocean conditions that can harm marine organisms and ecosystems.²⁵⁰ The report also asserted that these vessels were likely the same PRC vessels that the Philippine coast guard had observed in the same location weeks earlier.²⁵¹ The Philippine government is independently investigating Simularity's claims.

10. Water pollution from PRC-owned fishmeal factories in the Gambia

Gambian media outlets report that three PRC-owned fishmeal factories have discharged untreated wastewater and dangerous chemicals into a maritime reserve and the country's coastal waters.²⁵² Local media reports say that pollution from these factories has damaged freshwater and coastal marine resources, killed marine life, and caused locals to suffer skin ailments.²⁵³ Testing initiated by local groups reportedly showed unsafe levels of arsenate, phosphates, and arsenic.²⁵⁴ A 2017 lawsuit brought by the NEA resulted in one PRC-owned factory being fined and all three being forced to suspend operations.²⁵⁵ The plants have since reopened and reportedly continue to pollute local waters.²⁵⁶ In March 2021, the NEA issued a "stop notice" to one factory for violating the nation's environmental laws.²⁵⁷ Despite the order, the factory continued plant expansion work, according to Gambian media.²⁵⁸ During the same period, local protestors burned a second PRC-owned fishmeal factory in response to a constellation of alleged environmental and criminal complaints.²⁵⁹

11. Tampering with AIS on PRC ships

Vessels "go dark" by obscuring their location, movement, or transmissions or by manipulating the data transmitted by their signals. One way that vessels "go dark" is by disabling or tampering with their AIS, an automatic open-source tracking system that assists a vessel's safe navigation and allows authorities to track and monitor vessel movements.²⁶⁰ International conventions and PRC laws require ships with more than 300 gross tonnage to carry functioning AIS while sailing internationally.²⁶¹ According to experts, vessels sometimes turn off or tamper with their AIS to mask illicit activity.²⁶² DWF and other types of PRC vessels reportedly tamper with onboard AIS while operating around the world.²⁶³ Between 2018 and 2021, there were reports of PRC vessels allegedly shutting off or tampering with their AIS to obscure illicit activities in the waters of the DPRK,²⁶⁴ Ecuador,²⁶⁵ Vanuatu,²⁶⁶ West Africa,²⁶⁷ the Philippines,²⁶⁸ and Indonesia.²⁶⁹

12. PRC research vessel operating in Indonesian waters without AIS

On January 11, 2021, Indonesian news media reported that the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency had intercepted the PRC research vessel *Xiang Yang Hong* 03 in the Sunda Strait for operating in Indonesian waters with its AIS deactivated.²⁷⁰ According to Indonesian and international regulations, all ships transiting Indonesia's archipelagic sea lanes are required to have functioning AIS.²⁷¹ Indonesian authorities reportedly suspected the vessel was conducting unauthorized activities in the Sunda Strait while its AIS was off.²⁷² Media reports speculated that the PRC vessel was gathering oceanographic information to inform PRC navy

submarine operations.²⁷³ Indonesian law requires foreign vessels to obtain permission to conduct oceanographic research in Indonesia's EEZ or territorial waters. Indonesia's foreign ministry indicated that no such permissions had been given to the PRC vessel.²⁷⁴

13. Illegal entering and anchoring in Malaysia's territorial waters

On October 9, 2020, Malaysian and international news media reported that the MMEA had detained six PRC-flagged fishing vessels and their crews for entering and anchoring in Malaysia's territorial waters without the legally required permissions.²⁷⁵ The vessels' crewmembers reportedly told authorities that they were en route from China to Mauritania and stopped to anchor because of unspecified "malfunctions."²⁷⁶ At the time of the detention, Malaysian and international media reports noted that Malaysian authorities were investigating the case under sections of Malaysian law that carry fines and jail time upon conviction.²⁷⁷ However, Malaysian authorities released the crew two weeks after they were detained without making any public statement regarding their release or the status of the investigation.²⁷⁸

14. Namibia investigates PRC vessels for illegal entry and fishing

In March 2020, local media reported that the Namibian navy had intercepted six PRC-owned fishing vessels in a popular fishing location 17 miles off the Namibian coast.²⁷⁹ According to local media, Namibian authorities stated that the PRC vessels entered Namibia illegally and had not received authorization to anchor.²⁸⁰ Ultimately, the investigation found no evidence of illegal fishing but did identify discrepancies and evidence of behaviors that could be used to conceal illicit activities. First, the PRC fishing vessels had catch records for Angola ending in March 2019 but no logbooks or licenses for their subsequent 11 months in waters off Equatorial Guinea and Namibia.²⁸¹ Second, the Namibian navy noted that the vessels had deactivated their AIS.²⁸² Third, the PRC crew claimed that they anchored to avoid inclement weather, but the Namibian navy could not corroborate the alleged bad weather.²⁸³ Of note, after the PRC vessels were released, they sailed into South African waters without permission, where they were detained and fined.²⁸⁴

15. Illegal ownership of Ghana's fishing trawler fleet

Two investigative reports published by US-based environmental NGOs in 2019 and 2021 found that PRC corporations are the beneficial owners of nearly all trawlers in Ghana.²⁸⁵ It is illegal in Ghana for foreign companies to hold beneficial ownership of Ghanaian-flagged trawlers.²⁸⁶ According to the US-based NGOs, PRC corporations register the trawlers with China's Ministry of Agriculture while also registering the vessels with the Ghanaian flag via locally incorporated shell companies. This practice allows them to benefit from PRC fuel subsidies and tax benefits

and to obtain low-cost local fishing licenses from Ghanaian authorities and fish in Ghana's EEZ.²⁸⁷ According to one US-based NGO, this illegal practice results in Ghana losing up to \$23 million annually in fishing license fees.²⁸⁸ In addition, the practice also leads to IUU fishing and a decreasing catch per fishing effort, negatively affecting local fisherfolk.²⁸⁹

1. Pengantar

Dalam beberapa tahun terakhir, banyak orang, kapal, dan perusahaan yang berbasis atau terikat dengan Republik Rakyat Tiongkok (RRT) dilaporkan terlibat dalam aktivitas maritim ilegal di seluruh dunia. Media berita internasional, lembaga swadaya masyarakat (LSM), dan pemerintah asing telah menerbitkan semua laporan yang memerinci aktivitas maritim ilegal yang mengakar yang melibatkan para aktor RRT, termasuk warga negara RRT, organisasi kriminal yang berbasis di RRT, kapal berbendera RRT, dan kapal dengan entitas RRT sebagai pemilik manfaat (pemilik manfaat mendapatkan manfaat kepemilikan meskipun hak milik properti tersebut adalah atas nama orang lain).²⁹⁰ Dugaan aktivitas maritim ilegal dari para aktor RRT kerap tidak sesuai dengan retorika Beijing yang menunjukkan dukungan untuk hukum (termasuk Konvensi PBB tentang Hukum Laut, atau United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea/UNCLOS), aturan, dan norma maritim internasional. Kecuali diatasi, kesenjangan antara retorika Beijing dan perilaku aktor-aktor RRT ini mengacaukan sistem hukum global, norma-norma, dan konvensi internasional yang mengatur wilayah maritim.²⁹¹

Tujuan dari analisis ini adalah untuk memeriksa kemungkinan adanya pertentangan antara retorika resmi dan aktivitas maritim internasional RRT yang tidak sah yang dilaporkan dilakukan oleh para aktor yang berbasis di RRT. Untuk mencapai tujuan tersebut, CNA meneliti 15 kasus di mana para aktor RRT dituduh melakukan aktivitas terlarang di wilayah maritim antara tahun 2018 dan 2021. Studi kasus ini secara geografis difokuskan pada wilayah laut di sekitar Asia Tenggara, pesisir Atlantik di Afrika, dan negara-negara Kepulauan Pasifik. Untuk masing-masing studi kasus, kami memeriksa hal berikut ini:

- Dugaan aktivitas RRT ilegal dan jenis aktor RRT yang terlibat
- Kebijakan dan narasi resmi RRT tentang jenis aktivitas tersebut (mis., penangkapan ikan ilegal, tidak diatur, dan tidak dilaporkan (IUU) atau perdagangan manusia)
- Undang-undang, kebijakan, dan norma internasional, lokal, dan RRT yang berisiko dilanggar oleh aktivitas terlarang tersebut
- Jawaban pejabat dan media RRT atas insiden tersebut

Untuk menyusun studi kasus ini, kami memeriksa sumber data yang mencakup pernyataan resmi RRT, media domestik dan menyebarluaskan pihak asing dari RRT, laporan media berita setempat di negara-negara yang terkena dampak dugaan perilaku RRT, kesadaran ranah maritim dan basis data pelacakan kapal, para ahli maritim, basis data peraturan dan perundang-undangan tentang kelautan, dan literatur sekunder yang diterbitkan oleh organisasi non-pemerintah dan organisasi penelitian lainnya.

2. RRT dan Wilayah Maritim: Kebijakan dan Retorika

2.1 Kebijakan maritim RRT

Beijing telah mempertegas kebijakan tentang bagaimana para aktor RRT seharusnya berperilaku di wilayah maritim internasional. Berdasarkan kebijakan ini, para aktor RRT, termasuk warga negara RRT, kapal berbendera RRT, kapal dengan entitas RRT sebagai pemilik manfaat, dan perusahaan RRT, harus melakukan hal berikut dalam wilayah maritim internasional:

- **Mematuhi konvensi UNCLOS.** RRT adalah penanda tangan UNCLOS dan turut mengesahkan Konvensi tersebut pada tahun 1996.²⁹² Menurut duta besar RRT untuk Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa (PBB), Tiongkok “dengan tegas melindungi integritas dan otoritas tertinggi dari UNCOS” dan “semua negara harus dengan tegas mempertahankan tatanan maritim internasional berdasarkan hukum internasional, dan menyelesaikan sengketa kelautan dengan tepat melalui negosiasi dan konsultasi dengan iktikad baik.”²⁹³ Kebijakan RRT yang dipertegas ini juga mencakup kepatuhan terhadap konvensi maritim PBB lainnya, termasuk melindungi keamanan laut dan melarang polusi laut.²⁹⁴
- **Mematuhi peraturan setempat dan kerangka kerja regional.** Beijing juga mendorong warga negara dan perusahaan RRT untuk mematuhi undang-undang setempat saat beroperasi di luar negeri. Menurut juru bicara Kementerian Luar Negeri (MFA), “Pada prinsipnya, pemerintah Tiongkok selalu meminta warga negara Tiongkok di luar negeri untuk mematuhi peraturan perundang-undangan setempat.”²⁹⁵ Demikian pula, kerangka kerja kebijakan dari pihak RRT seperti *Peraturan Manajemen Penangkapan Ikan Perairan Jauh* mengakui organisasi pengelolaan perikanan regional (Regional Fisheries Management Organization/RFMO) sebagai otoritas regulasi yang mengatur aktivitas penangkapan ikan di laut lepas.²⁹⁶
- **Memberantas IUU fishing.** Beijing menggalakkan konservasi perikanan dan menentang *IUU fishing* atau penangkapan ikan ilegal, tidak diatur, dan tidak dilaporkan di antara armada nelayan dalam negeri dan perairan jauh (DWF) mereka. Menurut juru bicara MFA, “Tiongkok tidak menoleransi pelanggaran hukum dan peraturan terkait yang dilakukan oleh kapal penangkapan ikan perairan jauhnya.”²⁹⁷

- **Melindungi lingkungan laut.** Kebijakan yang dinyatakan Beijing adalah mengupayakan kerja sama dengan negara-negara lain dalam melindungi lingkungan laut. Menurut mantan Wakil Menteri Luar Negeri dan Ketua Komite Hubungan Luar Negeri Kongres Rakyat Nasional, Fu Ying, "Tiongkok secara aktif menggalakkan kerja sama dengan negara-negara lain dalam kebijakan dan manajemen kelautan untuk melindungi lingkungan laut, ekosistem laut, dan keanekaragaman hayatnya."²⁹⁸

2.2 Menggambarkan citra positif peran RRT di wilayah maritim

Partai Komunis Tiongkok secara aktif berusaha untuk membangun persepsi internasional atas RRT.²⁹⁹ Negara-Partai Tiongkok memelihara sistem pemerintahan dan organisasi pemerintahan dan partai yang luas, matang, dan berpengalaman, termasuk kompleks media yang diarahkan oleh negara, yang bertugas melakukan "pekerjaan propaganda eksternal."³⁰⁰ Beijing menggunakan alat propaganda besar ini untuk menyampaikan kebijakan resminya dan mempromosikan narasi yang ingin disampaikan kepada media internasional, termasuk narasi yang bertujuan menggambarkan citra positif Tiongkok sebagai aktor maritim. Di antara 15 kasus yang kami teliti, kami mengamati dua narasi menyeluruh yang berusaha dipromosikan Beijing tentang peran Tiongkok di bidang maritim:

- **RRT adalah aktor maritim yang bertanggung jawab.** Para pejabat dan media RRT secara konsisten berupaya menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai aktor kelautan yang bertanggung jawab dan mematuhi hukum, berkontribusi pada keselamatan, keamanan lingkungan, eksplorasi ilmiah, dan eksploitasi laut yang berkelanjutan.
- **Investasi RRT di sektor maritim asing saling menguntungkan.** Para pejabat dan media RRT berusaha menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai sumber investasi yang disambut baik di industri perikanan dan penangkapan ikan asing, khususnya di Afrika. Mereka menggambarkan aktivitas ekonomi RRT di sektor perikanan di negara lain sebagai "saling menguntungkan" dan dimaksudkan untuk memberikan manfaat bagi pembangunan ekonomi lokal.

2.3 Jawaban publik RRT terhadap dugaan pelanggaran

Ketika para aktor RRT dituduh di depan publik telah melakukan pelanggaran di lingkungan maritim, Beijing seringkali berusaha untuk menutup-nutupi potensi kerusakan terhadap citra internasional Tiongkok. Dalam banyak kasus, mereka menggerakkan elemen-elemen alat

propagandanya yang luas untuk melakukannya. (Untuk informasi selengkapnya tentang pembahasan ini, lihat Lampiran B.) Tanggapan resmi dan media Tiongkok terhadap tuduhan publik asing atas aktivitas maritim ilegal oleh para aktor RRT termasuk ke dalam kategori umum berikut:

- **Pengakuan.** Pejabat RRT mengakui insiden tersebut di depan umum serta kekhawatiran satu atau beberapa negara lainnya yang terlibat dan berjanji untuk mengatasi tuduhan tersebut. Pengakuan ini juga disampaikan oleh media RRT.
- **Pembantahan.** Pejabat RRT membantah tuduhan pelanggaran hukum, membela tindakan para aktor RRT yang dituduh, atau melakukan keduanya. Media RRT menyuarakan kemarahan mereka, menggambarkan para aktor RRT yang dituduh sebagai tidak bersalah atas kesalahan apa pun.
- **Tuduhan balik.** Pejabat dan media RRT menuduh pihak lain bertanggung jawab atas terjadinya insiden atau bersalah atas perilaku ilegal yang dituduhkan. Dalam beberapa kasus, para pejabat RRT dan media menyalahkan para korban.
- **Pengalihan.** Beijing berusaha mengalihkan perhatian dengan menuduh pihak ketiga bersalah atas aktivitas ilegal tertentu.
- **Diam.** Baik pejabat maupun media RRT tidak membahas insiden tersebut di depan umum.

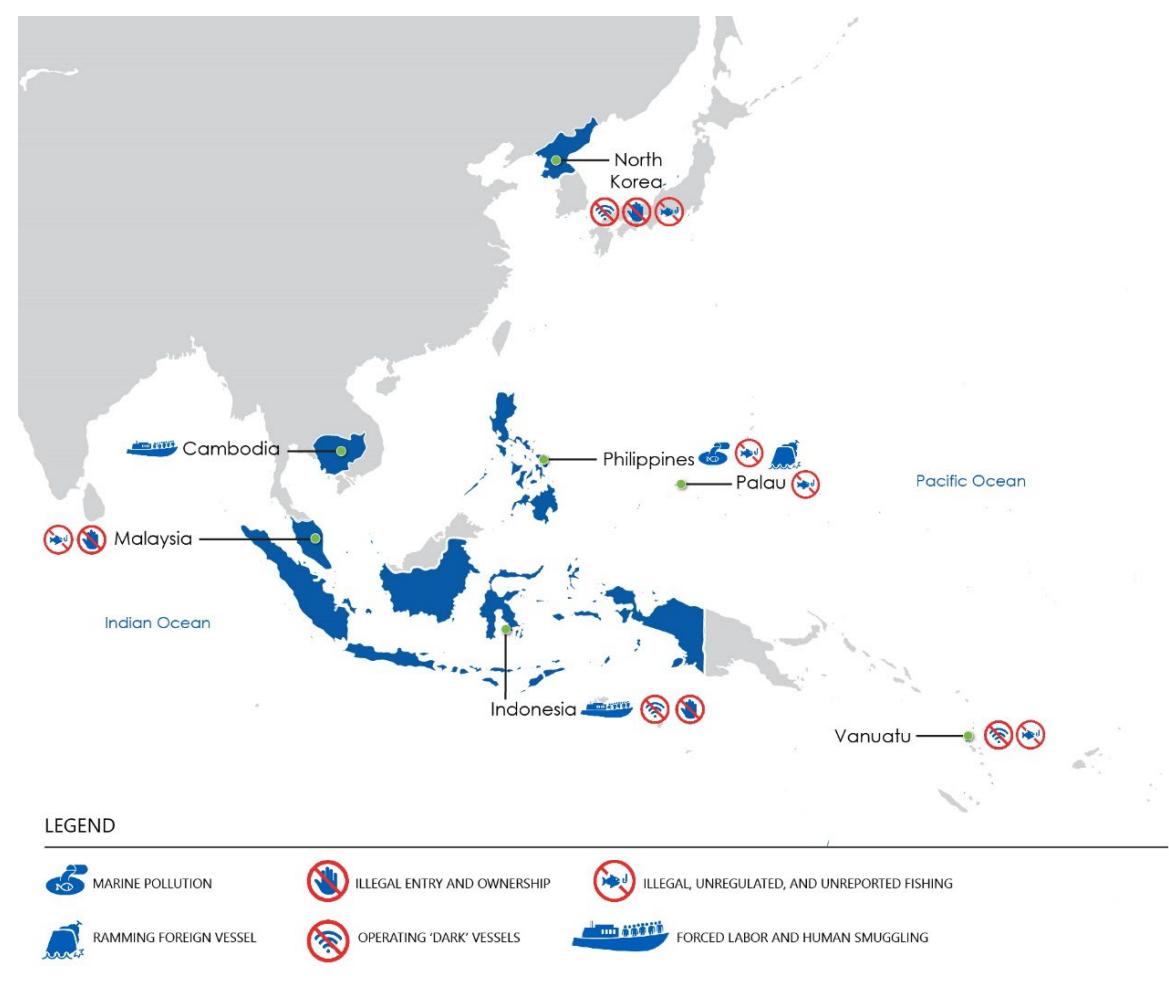
3. Aktor RRT dan Aktivitas Maritim Internasional Ilegal

Dalam beberapa tahun terakhir, media berita internasional, LSM, dan pemerintah asing telah menerbitkan laporan yang menguraikan tentang aktivitas maritim ilegal yang melibatkan aktor RRT, termasuk warga negara RRT, kapal berbendera RRT, kapal dengan entitas RRT sebagai pemilik manfaat, dan organisasi kriminal yang berbasis di RRT. Selain itu, dalam Arbitrase Laut Tiongkok Selatan 2016 (Filipina vs. Tiongkok), Mahkamah Arbitrase Antarbangsa menjelaskan banyak peristiwa perilaku ilegal.³⁰¹ Di antara 15 kasus yang kami kaji, para aktor RRT dituduh terlibat dalam aktivitas ilegal seperti berikut:

- **IUU fishing.** Aktivitas penangkapan ikan ilegal yang mengancam ekosistem laut dan perikanan yang berkelanjutan
- **Menabrak kapal asing.** Sengaja menabrakkan dengan kapal lain
- **Kerja paksa dan penyelundupan manusia.** Aktivitas maritim ilegal yang melibatkan korban manusia
- **Pembuangan polusi di laut.** Pencemaran di laut dari kapal dan sumber dari darat
- **Mengoperasikan kapal dengan "gelap".** Mengutak-atik perangkat pemantauan atau pelacakan elektronik
- **Masuk kawasan dan kepemilikan ilegal.** Aktivitas dan hubungan korporasi yang dilarang dalam zona ekonomi eksklusif (ZEE) asing

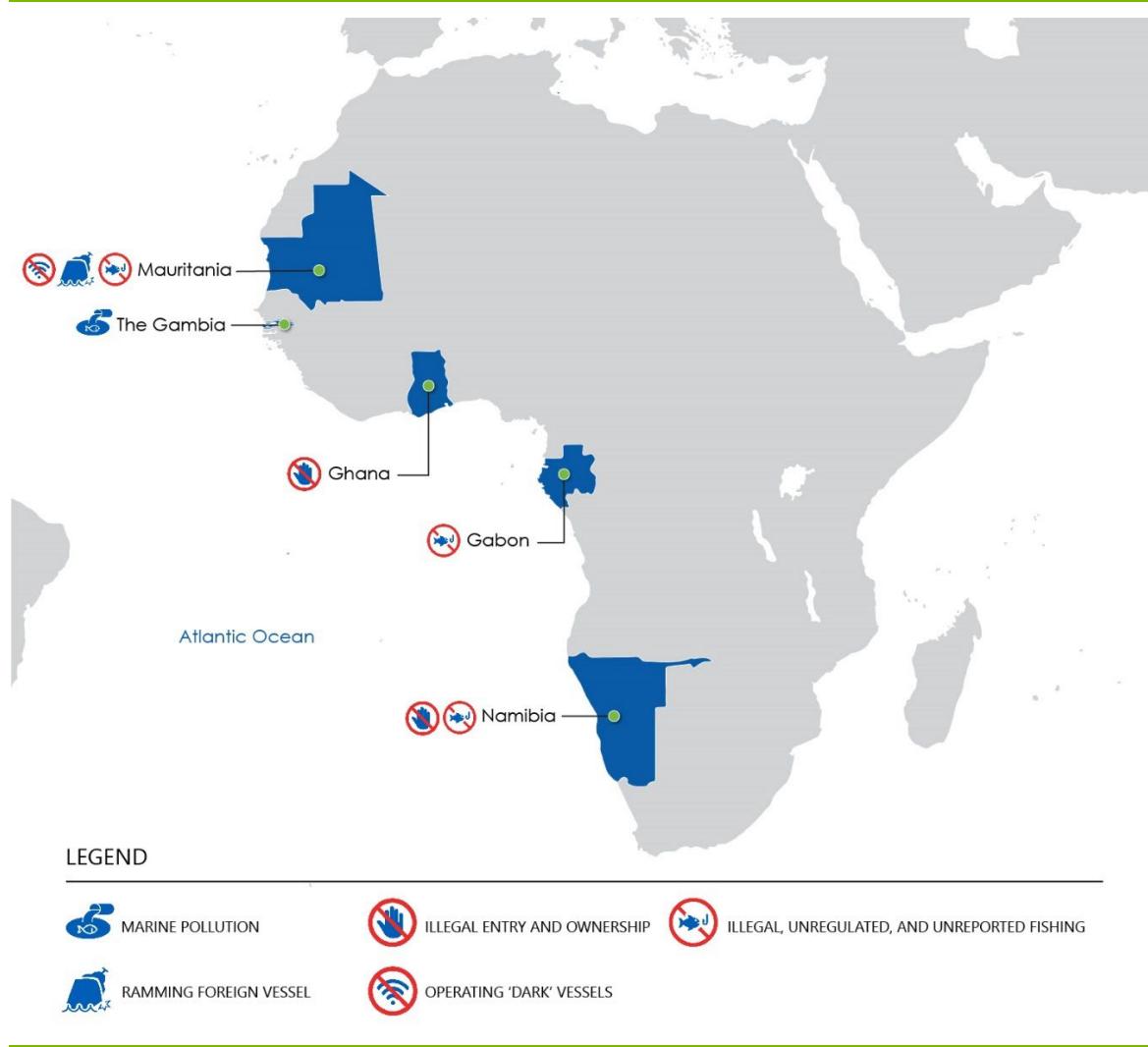
Dalam bagian berikutnya, kita akan membahas kebijakan resmi Tiongkok mengenai masing-masing aktivitas ini, contoh dugaan pelanggaran oleh para aktor RRT, respons publik Beijing terhadap tuduhan tersebut, dan potensi kesenjangan antara perilaku para aktor RRT dan retorika Beijing yang berisiko melanggar hukum, aturan, dan norma internasional. Gambar 1 dan Gambar 2 menunjukkan jenis aktivitas terlarang yang dilakukan para aktor RRT dalam 15 studi kasus dan tempat aktivitas tersebut berlangsung.

Gambar 9. Dugaan aktivitas ilegal oleh para aktor RRT di perairan Asia Tenggara



Sumber: CNA.

Gambar 10. Dugaan aktivitas ilegal oleh para aktor RRT di lepas pantai Afrika



Sumber: CNA.

3.1 *IUU fishing*

IUU fishing adalah istilah luas yang mencakup beragam aktivitas memancing ilegal. Rencana Aksi Internasional PBB (IPOA) terhadap *IUU fishing* menyatakan bahwa *IUU fishing* meliputi berbagai aktivitas penangkapan ikan yang dilarang oleh peraturan, hukum, dan konvensi internasional dan regional.³⁰² Menurut organisasi Pangan dan Pertanian PBB, *IUU fishing* merupakan salah satu ancaman terbesar terhadap ekosistem laut karena sangat merusak upaya nasional dan regional dalam mengelola perikanan yang berkelanjutan dan melestarikan keanekaragaman hayati laut. Akibatnya, *IUU fishing* mengancam mata

pencaharian masyarakat, memperburuk kemiskinan, dan berkontribusi terhadap ketidakpastian pasokan pangan.³⁰³

PBB telah mengumumkan berbagai kerangka kerja yang bertujuan melarang *IUU fishing* yang tampak berisiko dilanggar oleh aktor yang diteliti dalam studi ini. Contohnya termasuk IPOA untuk mencegah, menghalangi, dan menghapuskan *IUU Fishing*, adalah Konvensi 1992 tentang Keanekaragaman Hayati, dan resolusi PBB yang melarang *driftnet fishing* (teknik yang memanfaatkan jaring insang yang dipasang pada pelampung).³⁰⁴

3.1.1 Kebijakan RRT

Para pejabat dan media RRT berusaha menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai "bangsa nelayan yang bertanggung jawab" yang mendorong konservasi perikanan dan menentang IUU fishing di antara armada dalam negeri dan DWF mereka. Contohnya, juru bicara MFA RRT menyatakan bahwa Tiongkok "sangat mementingkan konservasi ilmiah, penggunaan sumber daya perikanan yang berkelanjutan, dan secara aktif memenuhi kewajiban internasionalnya."³⁰⁵ Pada kesempatan terpisah, juru bicara MFA menegaskan bahwa "Tiongkok sama sekali tidak memberikan toleransi terhadap pelanggaran hukum dan peraturan terkait yang dilakukan oleh kapal penangkap ikan perairan jauhnya."³⁰⁶ Pada bulan Februari 2021, Direktur Biro Administrasi Perikanan Departemen Pertanian dan Urusan Pedesaan RRT mengatakan bahwa pemerintah RRT "menjunjung semangat dan tanggung jawab" dari "Pedoman Perilaku Perikanan yang Bertanggung Jawab" dan mengikuti "jalur perikanan dan pembangunan budidaya perairan yang bertanggung jawab dengan karakteristik orang Tiongkok."³⁰⁷

Sebagai catatan, RRT memiliki hukum, peraturan, dan kerangka kerja yang melarang aktivitas *IUU fishing*. Contohnya mencakup Peraturan Pengawasan Perikanan Perairan Jauh, Hukum Perikanan, dan Laporan Resmi tentang Kepatuhan Penangkapan Ikan Perairan Jauh Tiongkok.³⁰⁸

3.1.2 Contoh dugaan pelanggaran oleh aktor RRT

5 dari 15 kasus yang kami kaji, kapal penangkap ikan komersial berbendera RRT dituduh melakukan aktivitas yang dikategorikan oleh PBB sebagai *IUU fishing*. Aktivitas tersebut meliputi jenis aktivitas berikut:

- Menangkap ikan di perairan yang berada di bawah kekuasaan negara pesisir tanpa izin negara tersebut atau bertentangan dengan hukum dan peraturan setempat
- Terlibat dalam penangkapan ikan yang tidak dilaporkan atau dilaporkan dengan salah ke otoritas nasional terkait atau RFMO³⁰⁹
- Menangkap ikan dengan cara yang tidak sesuai atau bertentangan dengan upaya konservasi dan pengelolaan oleh otoritas nasional yang terkait atau RFMO

Kapal penangkap ikan berbendera RRT dilaporkan terlibat dalam penangkapan ikan di perairan yang berada di bawah yurisdiksi negara pesisir tanpa izin negara tersebut atau penangkapan ikan yang bertentangan dengan peraturan perundang-undangan setempat. Misalnya, pada bulan Desember 2020, kapal patroli Penegak Hukum Maritim Palau, dilaporkan telah mencegat kapal nelayan berbendera RRT *Qiong Sanya Yu* atas dugaan penangkapan ketimun laut ilegal di Helen Reef, di dalam wilayah perairan dan ZEE Palau.³¹⁰ Menurut laporan media setempat, Kementerian Kehakiman Palau menemukan bukti bahwa awak kapal *Qiong Sanya Yu* mengambil 225 kilogram (496 pound) timun laut secara liar senilai kurang-lebih \$180.000.³¹¹ Demikian pula, pada tanggal 19 Januari 2021, kapal Kepolisian Maritim Vanuatu dilaporkan telah menahan dua kapal nelayan berbendera RRT, *Dong Gang Xing* 13 dan *Dong Gang Xing* 16, atas aktivitas *IUU fishing* di perairan teritorial Vanuatu.³¹² Jaksa Vanuatu mendakwa operator kapal tersebut yang terlibat dalam penangkapan ikan ilegal tanpa izin, yang telah secara melanggar hukum menonaktifkan transponder satelit mereka ketika berada di perairan Vanuatu, dan memiliki jaring hanyut (*driftnet*) yang melanggar UU Perikanan Vanuatu.³¹³

Kapal penangkap ikan berbendera RRT diduga terlibat dalam penangkapan ikan yang tidak dilaporkan atau salah dilaporkan kepada otoritas nasional terkait atau RFMO. Misalnya, pada bulan Maret 2020, media setempat melaporkan bahwa angkatan laut Namibia telah menangkap enam kapal penangkap ikan milik RRT di lokasi perikanan populer yang berjarak 17 mil dari pantai Namibia di tengah klaim aktivitas ilegal.³¹⁴ Pada akhirnya, penyelidikan tidak menemukan bukti penangkapan ikan ilegal, tetapi mengidentifikasi ketidaksesuaian dan bukti perilaku yang dapat digunakan untuk menyembunyikan aktivitas terlarang. Misalnya, kapal penangkap ikan Tiongkok telah menyimpan surat izin tangkapan di Angola yang berakhir pada bulan Maret 2019, tetapi tidak ada buku catatan atau izin untuk 11 bulan berikutnya di perairan Guinea Khatulistiwa dan Namibia.³¹⁵

Kapal penangkap ikan berbendera RRT dilaporkan menangkap ikan dengan cara yang tidak sesuai atau bertentangan dengan upaya konservasi dan pengelolaan oleh otoritas nasional terkait atau RFMO. Misalnya, pada tanggal 8 Agustus 2020, otoritas Gabon, bekerja sama dengan Sea Shepherd, sebuah organisasi nirlaba yang berbasis di Belanda, menghentikan dua kapal pukat berbendera RRT, *Guo Ji* 826, dan *Guo Ji* 866, dalam pemeriksaan rutin (lihat Gambar 3).³¹⁶ Dalam pemeriksaan tersebut ditemukan adanya ikan *rough-head catfish* dan ikan pari *daisy* yang terancam punah yang ditangkap secara ilegal, yang melanggar hukum Gabon.³¹⁷ Otoritas Gabon di kapal Sea Shepherd menangkap dan mengawal kedua kapal tersebut ke pelabuhan, di mana penyelidikan mengungkap adanya tangkapan ikan pari dan sirip ikan pari lainnya.³¹⁸ Demikian pula, pada bulan Maret 2021, angkatan laut dan media Filipina melaporkan bahwa para nelayan RRT yang beroperasi di dekat Kepulauan Pagasa yang diperebutkan (di bawah pemerintahan Filipina) dan Scarborough Shoal (di bawah pemerintahan RRT) di Laut Tiongkok Selatan terus menerus menggunakan metode yang merusak untuk secara ilegal memanen kerang raksasa yang dilindungi.³¹⁹ Media Filipina juga menegaskan bahwa penjaga pantai RRT mengetahui penangkapan ilegal tersebut di sekitar Scarborough Shoal.³²⁰ Media Filipina melaporkan bahwa kapal RRT telah diamati menggunakan “kapal-kapal chopper,” bahan peledak, bahan kimia, pompa air, dan vakum di

terumbu karang untuk memanen kima raksasa, yang cangkang-cangkangnya dijual dengan harga tinggi di Tiongkok.³²¹

Gambar 11. Gabon Review melaporkan penangkapan kapal berbendera RRT karena melakukan IUU fishing di tahun 2020

 **GABON**Review
L'information quotidienne sur la vie du Gabon

POLITIQUE | ÉCONOMIE | SOCIÉTÉ | SPORT | ENVIRONNEMENT | CULTURE | FAITS DIVERS | AFRIQUE | SOS CONSO

Pêche illicite : Deux chalutiers dans les filets de l'opération Albacore

posté par Stevie Mounombou / 20 août, 2020



Sumber: Stevie Mounombou, "Illegal Fishing: Two trawlers in the Nets of Operation Albacore" (), Gabon Review, August 20, 2020, <https://www.gabonreview.com/peche-illicite-deux-chalutiers-dans-les-filets-de-operation-albacore/>.

3.1.3 Respons publik RRT atas tuduhan ini

Para pejabat dan media RRT berusaha menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai "bangsa nelayan yang bertanggung jawab" yang mendorong konservasi perikanan dan menentang IUU fishing di antara armada dalam negeri dan DWF mereka. Akan tetapi, dalam kasus-kasus yang dipelajari untuk penelitian ini, para pejabat dan media RRT biasanya berusaha mengaburkan, mengalihkan, atau membantah dugaan bahwa kapal berbendera RRT terlibat dalam *IUU fishing* di luar negeri. Contohnya termasuk hal berikut:

- Dalam lima kasus yang diteliti, bersikap diam adalah tanggapan yang paling sering dilakukan. Dalam suatu upaya yang mungkin dilakukan untuk mengaburkan dugaan tersebut, pejabat dan media RRT nampaknya tidak mengomentari secara publik tentang dugaan bahwa kapal berbendera RRT yang dilaporkan terlibat dalam *IUU fishing* di perairan Vanuatu, Gabon, atau Filipina.
- Dalam kasus Namibia, pejabat RRT membantah tuduhan yang diajukan terhadap kapal berbendera RRT tersebut. Dalam sebuah postingan Facebook, kedutaan besar RRT di Namibia memberitakan narasi lain atas kejadian tersebut.³²² Dinyatakan bahwa enam kapal dari RRT melakukan "navigasi damai" dan tidak terlibat dalam "perbuatan yang melanggar hukum."³²³ Kedutaan RRT juga menyebut larangan angkatan laut Namibia terhadap kapal RRT sebagai "bantuan kemanusiaan" dalam menanggapi cuaca yang berbahaya.³²⁴
- Hanya dalam satu kasus, pejabat RRT mengakui secara diam-diam insiden tersebut. Sebagai tanggapan penahanan *Qiong Sanya Yu* oleh Palau, pejabat Tiongkok mendesak warga negara RRT untuk mengikuti hukum setempat saat berada di luar negeri.³²⁵ Setidaknya dua media RRT berbahasa Inggris dan kedutaan besar RRT di dekat Kepulauan Solomon menyuarakan pernyataan ini.³²⁶

Fakta Cepat: Armada DWF Tiongkok

Para aktor RRT yang paling sering terlibat dalam dugaan aktivitas maritim ilegal dalam studi ini adalah kapal milik armada DWF Tiongkok. Fakta penting tentang armada DWF Tiongkok meliputi hal berikut:

- RRT memiliki armada DWF terbesar di dunia dan armada ini beroperasi secara global.³²⁷
- Angka resmi pada tahun 2020 menunjukkan bahwa negara tersebut memiliki sekitar 170 perusahaan dan 2.600 kapal yang terlibat dalam sektor DWF-nya.³²⁸
- Perkiraaan jumlah kapal di armada DWF RRT dari LSM internasional dan akademisi berkisar lebih tinggi, dari 3.400 hingga 17.000 buah.³²⁹

- Pada tahun 2017, pemerintah RRT mengeluarkan pedoman untuk mengurangi jumlah kapal kayu nelayan yang lebih tua dan memberikan subsidi penggantian dengan kapal-kapal baja yang lebih besar.³³⁰ Hasilnya, armada RRT terdiri dari banyak kapal baja besar baru.
- Kebanyakan kapal DWF RRT adalah pukat hela (*trawler*), kapal rawai (*longliner*), atau kapal penangkap cumi-cumi (*squid jigger*).³³¹
- Inisiatif Global Melawan Kejahatan Transnasional Terorganisir dan Manajemen Sumber Daya Poseidon Aquatic menilai bahwa di antara armada nelayan dunia, armada DWF Tiongkok memiliki tingkat prevalensi tertinggi dalam melakukan *IUU fishing* pada tahun 2019.³³²



3.2 Menubruk kapal penangkap ikan asing

Untuk studi ini, kami mendefinisikan penubukan (*ramming*) sebagai secara sengaja menabrak kapal lain. Organisasi Maritim Internasional (IMO) PBB mengumumkan beberapa konvensi yang mengharuskan kapal menggunakan semua sarana yang tersedia untuk menghindari risiko benturan serta memberikan bantuan kepada orang-orang yang berada dalam kesulitan. Tiga konvensi tersebut adalah Konvensi tentang Peraturan Pencegahan Tabrakan di Laut Internasional (Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions/COLREGs), Konvensi Pemberantasan Tindakan Melawan Hukum Terhadap Keselamatan Navigasi Maritim (SUA), dan Konvensi Keselamatan Jiwa di Laut (SOLAS).³³³

Sejumlah saksi mata, video, foto, investigasi, dan laporan resmi perihal tabrakan dapat diakses secara online. Insiden tabrakan di antara kapal nelayan biasanya merupakan akibat perebutan daerah penangkapan ikan atau sumber daya alam lainnya, yang seringkali terjadi di perairan yang menjadi subjek sengketa wilayah maritim. Sesuai laporan, insiden tabrakan ini telah mengintimidasi nelayan saingan, merusak peralatan, menenggelamkan kapal, bahkan melukai, membunuh, dan menjadikan awak kapal terdampar.

3.2.1 Kebijakan RRT

Beijing mewajibkan kapal RRT untuk secara ketat mematuhi undang-undang, konvensi, dan norma-norma internasional. Contohnya, dalam laporan resmi *Pembangunan Program Kelautan Tiongkok*, yang disajikan oleh misi permanen RRT untuk PBB dan organisasi internasional lainnya di Wina, menyatakan bahwa Tiongkok “memiliki kepentingan yang luar biasa [pada]” dan “terus memperkuat penyelesaian” masalah maritim yang menjadi perhatian internasional, termasuk “keselamatan maritim” dan “hukum yang terkait dengan kelautan.”³³⁴ Demikian pula, kedutaan RRT di Vietnam mengeluarkan pernyataan pers berbahasa Vietnam pada tahun 2020 yang menegaskan bahwa “Tiongkok selalu menerapkan hukum internasional secara ketat, termasuk Konvensi PBB tentang Hukum Laut” dan “secara aktif melindungi keselamatan” dalam ranah maritim.³³⁵ RRT juga mengeluarkan peraturan keselamatan di laut,

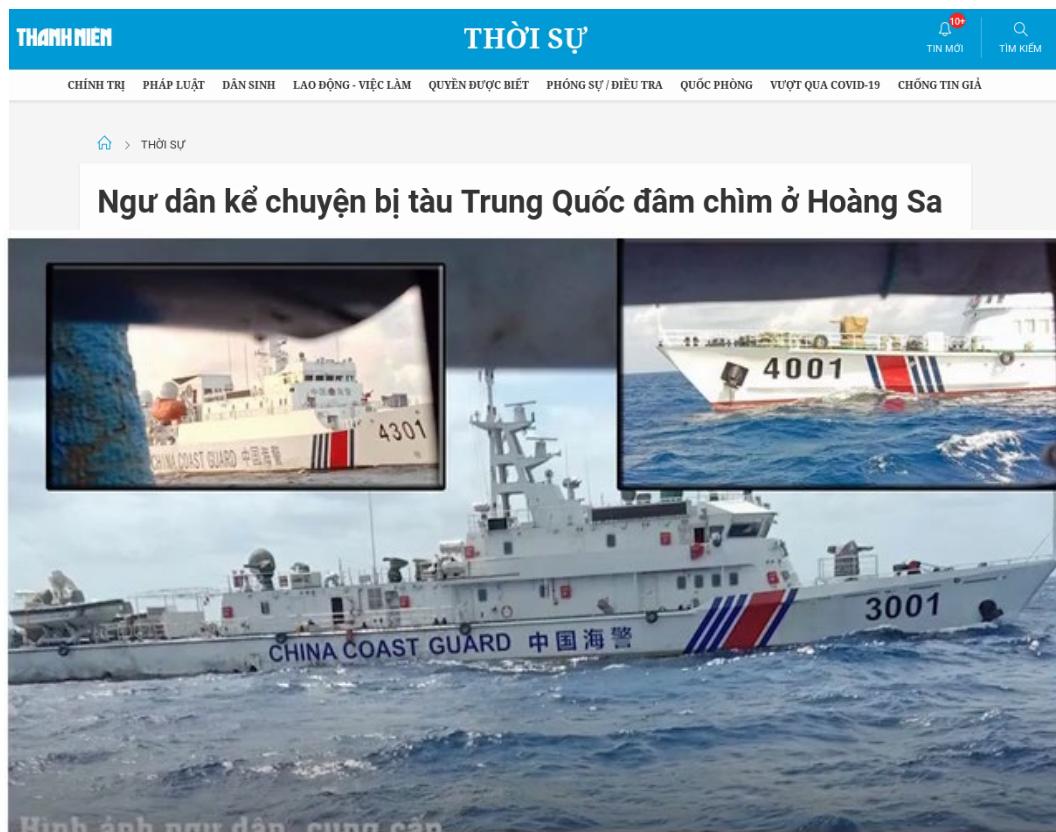
termasuk undang-undang keselamatan maritim khusus perikanan mengenai pencegahan benturan kapal penangkapan ikan.³³⁶

3.2.2 Contoh dugaan pelanggaran oleh aktor RRT

Kapal berbendera RRT dilaporkan menabrak kapal nelayan asing setidaknya lima kali sejak tahun 2018.³³⁷ Insiden tersebut termasuk berikut ini:

- **Filipina.** Pada malam 9 Juni 2019, kapal RRT berlambung baja dengan panjang 44 meter *Yuemaobinyu* 42212 menabrak kapal berlambung kayu 19 meter Filipina *Gem Ver*. Sistem identifikasi otomatis (AIS) kapal RRT dinonaktifkan, dan lampu-lampunya dipadamkan.³³⁸ *Yuemaobinyu* 42212 berlayar kabur dari tempat kejadian, meninggalkan 22 orang awak kapal terdampar di laut sampai mereka diselamatkan oleh nelayan Vietnam.³³⁹
- **Mauritania.** Pada malam 9 Oktober 2020, sebuah pukat hela RRT besar yang mematikan lampu-lampu dan AIS-nya menabrak kapal nelayan Mauritania.³⁴⁰ Kapal tenggelam, dan tiga orang Mauritania terbunuh.³⁴¹
- **Vietnam.** Pada malam 2 April 2020, kapal penjaga pantai RRT 4301 menabrak kapal nelayan Vietnam, QNg90617, menenggelamkannya dan menaikkan delapan anggota awaknya ke kapal (lihat Gambar 4).³⁴² Kapal penjaga pantai RRT tersebut kemudian melaporkan bahwa mereka mengejar dan memberhentikan kapal-kapal Vietnam di sekitarnya dan menyita serta menghapus data ponsel awak kapalnya.³⁴³
- **Senegal.** Pada tanggal 19 September 2020, kapal pukat hela yang dioperasikan oleh RRT dilaporkan berusaha menenggelamkan perahu lesung nelayan berisi 11 orang yang dikapteni warga negara Senegal.³⁴⁴ Dengan perahu lesung menghadap pukat hela, kapten Senegal memanjat naik ke kapal pukat hela untuk menghadapi awak RRT tentang manuver berbahaya dan dipukuli serta dibakar dengan bensin.³⁴⁵
- **Brasil.** Pada tanggal 22 November 2018, kapal *Chang Rong* 4 menabrak *Oceano Pesca* yang berukuran 22 meter sebanyak enam kali, sehingga mengakibatkan kerusakan senilai \$90.000.³⁴⁶

Gambar 12. Laporan media Vietnam memberitakan tiga kapal penjaga pantai RRT, salah satunya diduga menabrak dan menenggelamkan sebuah kapal nelayan Vietnam pada tahun 2020



Sumber: "Fishermen Tell Stories of Being Rammed and Sunk by Chinese ships in the Paracels" (), *Than Nien*. 4 Mei 2020, <https://thanhnien.vn/ngu-dan-ke-chuyen-bi-tau-trung-quoc-dam-chim-o-hoang-sa-post943046.html>.

Kapal RRT yang terlibat dalam insiden tersebut biasanya berupa kapal besar berlambung baja, dan kapal non-RRT tersebut lebih kecil dengan konstruksi kayu atau non-logam. Sebagai catatan, armada DWF Tiongkok tidak hanya mengungguli armada non-RRT dalam jumlah, tetapi juga menyertakan kapal berlambung baja yang lebih besar. Selanjutnya, menurut laporan, beberapa armada DWF Tiongkok bekerja sebagai Milisi Laut Tentara Bersenjata Rakyat Tiongkok dan dituntut atas menantang pihak lawan untuk mempertahankan kendali atas perairan yang dipersengketakan.³⁴⁷

Dalam setidaknya dua kasus yang dibahas di atas, yang melibatkan kapal dari Mauritania dan Filipina, kapal RRT telah mematikan lampu dan menonaktifkan AIS-nya selama insiden

tersebut. Peter Hammarstedt, Direktur Kampanye untuk Sea Shepherd Global, sebuah organisasi nirlaba yang bekerja untuk menghapus *IUU fishing*, mengatakan bahwa taktik seperti ini umum terjadi di antara kapal pukat hela yang ingin menghindari deteksi di perairan yang dilindungi.³⁴⁸

Subsidi Perikanan RRT

Pemerintah RRT memberi subsidi besar pada armada DWF-nya. Subsidi yang secara tidak wajar meningkatkan keuntungan dengan mengurangi biaya penangkapan ikan mengakibatkan kelebihan kapasitas di antara armada DWF. Kelebihan kapasitas ini menyebabkan aktivitas penangkapan ikan yang berlebihan dan lingkungan maritim yang lebih padat. Organisasi PBB dan organisasi Perdagangan Dunia menyebut jenis subsidi berbahaya ini sebagai "peningkatan kapasitas." Mengingat dengan cepat kehabisan persediaan ikan akibat penangkapan berlebih, Organisasi Perdagangan Dunia berusaha untuk menghilangkan subsidi perikanan yang meningkatkan kapasitas.³⁴⁹ Meskipun demikian, subsidi RRT terus mendorong kelebihan kapasitas dalam jumlah besar pada armada DWF Tiongkok, dengan total sekitar **\$5,87 miliar**; sekitar setengah diperuntukkan bagi industri DWF Tiongkok dan separuh lainnya untuk perikanan dalam negeri.³⁵⁰

Subsidi RRT dengan kapasitas yang kerap meningkat cenderung terus mendorong kapasitas berlebihan dalam armada DWF RRT, yang dapat menambah tekanan untuk terlibat dalam aktivitas maritim ilegal seperti *IUU fishing* dan kerja paksa karena persediaan ikan menurun dan tekanan untuk bertahan di laut lebih lama meningkat.

3.2.3 Respons publik RRT atas tuduhan ini

Para pejabat dan media RRT berusaha menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai bangsa maritim yang bertanggung jawab yang kapal-kapalnya mematuhi konvensi internasional demi keselamatan kehidupan dan kapal di laut. Namun, dalam kasus tubrukan yang diperiksa dalam studi ini, perilaku beberapa aktor RRT, termasuk kapal pemerintah, tidak sesuai dengan retorika resmi Beijing. Pejabat dan media RRT berusaha untuk mengaburkan, mengalihkan, atau membantah tuduhan melakukan tubrukan dalam upaya mencegah mereka merusak narasi resmi Beijing. Contohnya termasuk hal berikut:

- Menanggapi saksi mata dan akun media dari pukat hela berlambung baja RRT yang menabrak kapal nelayan kayu Filipina, pejabat RRT dan media siaran yang menyuarai pihak asing menyatakan bahwa tabrakan tersebut merupakan kecelakaan yang terjadi karena kapal dari RRT "secara tiba-tiba terkepung perahu Filipina" dan membantah bahwa "sengaja melakukan 'tabrak lari.'"³⁵¹
- Media siaran untuk asing RRT menyalahkan kapal-kapal Vietnam dan Filipina sebagai penyebab terjadinya insiden yang mengakibatkan terjadinya tabrakan tersebut.³⁵² Misalnya, laporan media berbahasa Vietnam milik RRT menuduh kapal Vietnam

tenggelam setelah “mengusik dan membentur” kapal RRT dan mengklaim bahwa pihak RRT tersebut menyelamatkan awak kapal Vietnam.³⁵³

- Para pejabat dan media RRT tersebut belum secara publik membahas tentang dugaan insiden tubrukan oleh kapal RRT pada 2020 di perairan Mauritania atau Senegal maupun tubrukan pada 2018 di *Oceano Pesca Brasil* di laut lepas di pantai timur Amerika Selatan.



3.3 Tenaga kerja paksa dan penyelundupan manusia di laut

Kerja paksa dan penyelundupan manusia di laut merupakan dua jenis aktivitas maritim terlarang yang melibatkan korban manusia. Konvensi Tenaga Kerja Paksa dari Organisasi Perburuhan Internasional (ILO) mendefinisikan tenaga kerja paksa sebagai “semua pekerjaan atau jasa yang dipaksakan pada setiap orang dengan ancaman hukuman apa pun dan yang mana orang

tersebut tidak menawarkan diri secara sukarela.”³⁵⁴ Industri DWF, penangkapan ikan di perairan internasional maupun perairan yang berada di bawah yurisdiksi asing, semakin diawasi oleh media, pemerintah, dan LSM karena kerja paksa lazim di dalam industri ini.³⁵⁵ ILO telah menetapkan setidaknya tiga konvensi menentang kerja paksa, termasuk konvensi yang secara khusus menargetkan tenaga kerja paksa dan tidak aman di sektor perikanan.³⁵⁶ Demikian pula, Komisioner Tinggi untuk Hak Asasi Manusia PBB telah mengumumkan konvensi untuk melindungi pekerja migran.³⁵⁷ Konvensi RFMO juga berupaya meningkatkan standar tenaga kerja untuk awak di atas kapal yang diizinkan dalam area konvensi mereka. Dalam kasus laporan pelanggaran buruh terhadap pekerja Indonesia yang berada di kapal penangkap ikan RRT, mekanisme RFMO yang relevan adalah penyelesaian yang tidak mengikat atas standar tenaga kerja (rancangan resolusi yang mengikat sedang ditinjau).³⁵⁸

Mengenai perdagangan manusia, PBB telah mengumumkan konvensi untuk mencegah dan memerangi jenis kejahatan ini.³⁵⁹ Menurut Komisioner Tinggi untuk Hak Asasi manusia PBB, perdagangan manusia dan penyelundupan para migran lewat laut (yaitu, transportasi orang secara ilegal, baik secara paksa atau atas kehendak mereka sendiri, melalui laut) menjamin sebuah tanggapan prioritas karena bahaya-bahaya tidak lazim dalam perjalanan yang tidak teratur lewat laut. Menurut Kantor PBB Urusan Narkoba dan Kejahatan (UNODC), walaupun penyelundupan buruh migran lewat laut hanya menyumbang sedikit dari penyelundupan migran secara keseluruhan, lebih banyak terjadi kematian saat penyelundupan lewat laut dibandingkan dengan penyelundupan lewat darat atau udara.³⁶⁰

3.3.1 Kebijakan RRT

*Para pejabat RRT menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai bangsa nelayan yang mematuhi hukum dan "bertanggung jawab" yang kapalnya tidak akan melakukan kejahatan seperti kerja paksa.*³⁶¹ Undang-undang RRT secara eksplisit melarang penyalahgunaan tenaga kerja.³⁶² Kementerian Pertanian dan Urusan Pedesaan RRT menjabarkan perlindungan tenaga kerja dalam "program untuk memperkenalkan kru asing ke industri perikanan laut."³⁶³ Demikian pula, pejabat dan media RRT menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai pemegang teguh hukum internasional dengan menekankan upaya Beijing untuk memerangi perdagangan manusia dan imigrasi ilegal di kawasan tersebut.³⁶⁴ Para pejabat RRT juga secara terbuka menegaskan bahwa banyak korban penyelundupan manusia di wilayah tersebut adalah warga negara RRT dan mendesak kerja sama dengan penegak hukum setempat.³⁶⁵

3.3.2 Contoh dugaan pelanggaran oleh aktor RRT

RRT merupakan rumah bagi armada DWF terbesar di dunia, dan kapal penangkap ikan berbendera RRT dilaporkan telah bekerja keras untuk memaksimalkan waktu penangkapan ikan serta mengurangi biaya tenaga kerja. Menurut hasil penyelidikan bersama oleh Greenpeace dan Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia (SBMI) yang diterbitkan pada September 2021, Indonesia diyakini sebagai pemasok tenaga kerja terbesar industri DWF. LSM internasional seperti Greenpeace dan Destructive Fishing Watch melaporkan bahwa antara akhir 2019 dan pertengahan 2021, puluhan orang Indonesia menjadi korban eksloitasi kapal-kapal nelayan berbendera Tiongkok dan banyak yang telah meninggal akibat penyakit, pemukulan, kondisi kerja yang tidak memadai, atau kurangnya makanan dan air.³⁶⁶ Menurut Greenpeace, 32 dari 42 dugaan kerja paksa tenaga kerja di laut oleh buruh migran Indonesia yang diajukan pada bulan Mei 2019 hingga Juni 2020 telah diajukan terhadap kapal nelayan yang dimiliki RRT.³⁶⁷ Demikian pula, laporan oleh Pusat Studi Pertahanan Tingkat Lanjut nirlaba berbasis di AS yang menganalisis kelaziman tenaga kerja paksa yang didokumentasikan selama panggilan pelabuhan mencatat bahwa panggilan pelabuhan RRT berada di posisi pertama dalam laporan insiden kerja paksa.³⁶⁸

Pada bulan April 2020, para pejabat Indonesia mulai menangani masalah tersebut secara terbuka ketika mereka melaporkan kematian empat orang awak kapal Indonesia di kapal berbendera RRT, *Long Xin 629*.³⁶⁹ Sejak saat itu, media Indonesia terus melaporkan kasus-kasus perdagangan manusia, penyalahgunaan, dan kematian warga Indonesia di kapal berbendera RRT (lihat Gambar 5).³⁷⁰ Catatan, pada bulan Mei 2021, Bea Cukai dan Perlindungan Perbatasan (CBP) AS mengeluarkan larangan masuk untuk semua barang yang diproduksi oleh armada Tiongkok Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd. "berdasarkan informasi yang secara jelas mengindikasikan penggunaan tenaga kerja paksa dalam operasi penangkapan ikan oleh badan usaha tersebut."³⁷¹ Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd. adalah pemilik sedikitnya dua kapal yang terlibat dalam kerja paksa awak Indonesia.³⁷²

Selain tuduhan kerja paksa terhadap kapal nelayan berbendera Tiongkok, kami mengamati satu contoh ketika warga negara RRT terlibat dalam penyelundupan manusia. Pada bulan Juli 2021, 36 warga negara RRT bertolak dari Tiongkok dengan kapal berbendera Kamboja *Tong Hai* ke perairan di luar Sihanoukville, Kamboja, di mana otoritas Kamboja menangkap kesemua 36 orang tersebut karena memasuki Kamboja secara ilegal melalui laut.³⁷³ Meskipun pernyataan polisi Kamboja mengatakan bahwa alasan percobaan masuknya warga negara RRT tersebut secara ilegal ke Kamboja tidak diketahui, beberapa laporan media menyatakan bahwa warga negara RRT yang berada di kapal tersebut "ditipu dan diselundupkan" ke Kamboja untuk bekerja bagi para pekerja rumah judi online ilegal yang berbasis di Sihanoukville, yang menyasar penjudi di Tiongkok.³⁷⁴ Otoritas dan media Kamboja tidak memberikan perincian mengenai pemilik atau operator kapal tersebut, tetapi foto bagian dalam kapal yang ditayangkan oleh media setempat menunjukkan perangkat keras dengan aksara Tionghoa, yang kemungkinan menunjukkan bahwa entitas RRT yang mengoperasikan kapal.³⁷⁵

Gambar 13. Laporan media Indonesia tentang kematian seorang warga Indonesia di kapal penangkap ikan RRT

Kasus ABK WNI Meninggal di Kapal China Kembali Terjadi, Kapolri Diminta Bertindak

Kompas.com - 09/07/2020, 10:48 WIB



Sumber: "Kasus ABK WNI Meninggal di Kapal China Kembali Terjadi, Kapolri Diminta Bertindak" (), *Kompas*, 9 Juli 2020, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2020/07/09/10484891/kasus-abk-wni-meninggal-di-kapal-china-kembali-terjadi-kapolri-diminta?page=all>.

3.3.3 Respons publik RRT atas tuduhan ini

Pada awalnya, para pejabat RRT mengakui keprihatinan Indonesia tentang laporan pelanggaran atas kapal-kapal berbendera RRT dan menawarkan untuk bekerja sama dengan pihak berwenang Indonesia dalam melakukan penyelidikan tersebut.³⁷⁶ Akan tetapi, pada tahun 2021, pejabat RRT mengubah pandangannya dan mengabaikan laporan-laporan tentang pelanggaran sebagai tuduhan palsu yang memiliki motivasi politik.³⁷⁷ Selain itu, setelah Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd. dimasukkan daftar hitam oleh CBP Amerika Serikat, pada bulan Mei 2021, media RRT mulai menolak tuduhan-tuduhan penyalahgunaan oleh kapal-kapal berbendera RRT sebagai kebohongan AS yang dirancang untuk "menciptakan pertentangan" antara Indonesia dan Tiongkok.³⁷⁸

Beijing tetap diam dalam menanggapi dugaan bahwa para warga negara RRT terlibat dalam penyelundupan manusia di Kamboja dan tidak berkomentar secara publik tentang insiden tersebut. Namun, pernyataan resmi dari RRT dan pelaporan media yang ditujukan kepada khalayak di Kamboja telah berusaha membelokkan kritik dengan menggambarkan AS sebagai tempat terjadinya perdagangan manusia dan kerja paksa.³⁷⁹

Jika benar, tuduhan kerja paksa di kapal nelayan berbendera RRT akan bertentangan dengan upaya para pejabat RRT untuk menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai bangsa nelayan yang mematuhi hukum dan "bertanggung jawab". Sama halnya, jika dioperasikan oleh entitas RRT, penyelundupan warga RRT oleh *Tong Hai* ke Kamboja akan memperlemah upaya Beijing untuk menggembor-gemborkan kontribusi Tiongkok dalam melawan perdagangan manusia dan imigrasi ilegal di kawasan tersebut.



3.4 Membuang polusi di laut

Pembuangan polutan ke lingkungan laut dunia diatur oleh otoritas nasional, internasional, dan regional. Pihak-pihak berwenang ini berusaha mengurangi efek berbahaya dari polutan buatan manusia, yang meliputi limbah manusia dan limbah pemrosesan ikan hingga mikroplastik dan logam berat, pada ekosistem laut. Polutan seperti itu merusak ekosistem dalam berbagai hal, termasuk merusak terumbu karang, berkontribusi terhadap hilangnya habitat, dan menyebabkan berkurangnya persediaan ikan.

3.4.1 Kebijakan RRT

Para pejabat dan media RRT berusaha menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai pelayan warga yang bertanggung jawab dan melindungi lingkungan laut. Dalam rubik opini yang diterbitkan oleh koran berbahasa Inggris resmi Tiongkok, *China Daily*, mantan Wakil Menteri Luar Negeri dan Ketua Komite Hubungan Luar Negeri Kongres Rakyat Nasional, Fu Ying, menulis "Tiongkok secara aktif menggalakkan kerja sama dengan negara-negara lain dalam kebijakan dan manajemen kelautan untuk melindungi lingkungan laut, ekosistem laut, dan keanekaragaman hayatnya."³⁸⁰ Demikian pula, sebuah artikel 2021 yang diterbitkan oleh perusahaan penyiaran internasional resmi, Radio International Tiongkok, dalam siaran berbahasa Indonesinya, menggambarkan kerja sama wilayah Tiongkok dalam melindungi lingkungan laut dan perikanan.³⁸¹

3.4.2 Contoh dugaan pelanggaran oleh aktor RRT

Dua kasus yang diteliti untuk studi ini melibatkan aktor RRT yang membuang polutan ke lingkungan laut yang tampak bertentangan dengan hukum nasional yang relevan dan konvensi internasional. Masing-masing kasusnya dibahas di bawah ini.

Pembuangan limbah ilegal di Kepulauan Spratly. Pada laporan yang dibuat oleh Simularity, perusahaan analisis citra komersial yang berbasis di AS, pada bulan Juli 2021 menemukan bahwa lebih dari 200 kapal yang berlabuh di Spratly Islands membuang limbah ke perairan yang secara ekologi sangat rentan pada musim semi 2021.³⁸² Simularity mengestimasikan bahwa kapal yang diamati berlabuh di Union Banks di bulan Juni telah membuang sekitar 2.596 pound limbah per hari ke dalam air.³⁸³ Menurut Simularity, kapal yang membuang limbah yang tidak diproses atau kurang penanganan, menyebabkan berkembangnya klorofil-a. Dalam konsentrasi yang berlebihan, klorofil-a dapat menyebabkan kondisi hipoksik di laut, yang dapat berdampak negatif terhadap organisme dan ekosistem laut. Laporan tersebut juga menyatakan bahwa kapal itu mungkin adalah kapal RRT yang sama seperti yang telah diamati oleh penjaga pantai Filipina di lokasi yang sama beberapa minggu sebelumnya..³⁸⁴

Dugaan pembuangan itu terjadi di perairan yang dipersengketakan antara Filipina dan RRT. Sebagai tanggapan terhadap laporan Simularity, pemerintah Filipina dilaporkan memprakarsai analisis perairan dan dasar laut in situ untuk menentukan apakah kapal tersebut membuang limbah yang merusak.³⁸⁵ Selain itu, para pembuat undang-undang Filipina menerbitkan pernyataan bahwa baik hukum domestik maupun internasional melarang kapal membuang limbah mereka ke dalam air seperti yang telah dilaporkan.³⁸⁶ Selain Undang-Undang Polusi Laut Filipina,³⁸⁷ kasus dugaan polusi kapal ini melanggar Konvensi Internasional IMO untuk Pencegahan Polusi dari Kapal.³⁸⁸

Polusi oleh pabrik makanan ikan RRT di Gambia. Pabrik makanan ikan yang dimiliki RRT dilaporkan membuang air limbah yang tidak diolah dan bahan kimia berbahaya ke cagar alam laut dan perairan pantai Gambia antara tahun 2017 dan 2021 (lihat Gambar 6).³⁸⁹ Tindakan-tindakan pabrik tersebut melanggar undang-undang lingkungan³⁹⁰ dan perikanan³⁹¹ Gambia serta nyata-nyata bertentangan dengan UNCLOS Pasal 194 tentang pencegahan polusi laut dari sumber-sumber yang berbasis daratan serta Konvensi Pembuangan London tahun 1972.³⁹²

Pembuangan tersebut menyebabkan matinya ikan, merusak tanaman air, dan melukai penduduk setempat yang menggunakan air untuk mandi. Pengujian yang dilakukan oleh kelompok lokal dilaporkan menunjukkan level arsenat, fosfat, dan arsenik yang tidak aman.³⁹³ Gugatan 2017 yang diajukan oleh Lembaga Lingkungan Nasional Gambia (NEA) mengakibatkan salah satu pabrik milik RRT didenda dan ketiganya dipaksa menunda operasinya.³⁹⁴ Pabrik tersebut telah dibuka kembali dan dilaporkan terus mencemari air setempat.³⁹⁵ Pada bulan Maret 2021, NEA mengeluarkan “pemberitahuan penghentian” kepada satu pabrik karena melanggar undang-undang lingkungan negara tersebut.³⁹⁶ Menurut media Gambia, pabrik tersebut terus melakukan pekerjaan ekspansi pabriknya meski ada perintah tersebut.³⁹⁷ Dalam jangka waktu yang sama, para demonstran lokal membakar pabrik makanan ikan milik RRT kedua sebagai tanggapan terhadap konstelasi keluhan lingkungan dan kriminal yang dituduhkan.³⁹⁸

Gambar 14. Laporan media regional tentang perusahaan makanan ikan yang dimiliki RRT membayar denda polusi laut di Gambia pada tahun 2017



Sumber: "Chinese Company to Pay \$25,000 Bond for Polluting Gambian Waters" (Perusahaan Tiongkok Didenda \$25.000 Karena Mencemari Perairan Gambia), Africa News, 30 Juni 2017, <https://www.africanews.com/2017/06/30/gambia-chinese-fishmeal-factory-settled-out-of-court-case/>.

3.4.3 Respons publik RRT atas tuduhan ini

Dalam kedua kasus tersebut, para pejabat dan media RRT berupaya menolak tuduhan bahwa para aktor RRT telah mencemari lingkungan laut. Contohnya termasuk hal berikut:

- Sebagai tanggapan terhadap laporan Simularity yang menyatakan bahwa kapal RRT yang ditambatkan di Spratly Islands telah secara ilegal membuang limbah, Kementerian Luar Negeri RRT dan kedutaan besar RRT di Filipina mengutuk laporan tersebut sebagai "berita palsu."³⁹⁹ Media RRT yang ditujukan kepada khalayak di wilayah tersebut menggambarkan laporan tersebut sebagai upaya menodai Tiongkok.⁴⁰⁰
- Pejabat RRT mengeluarkan pernyataan yang berusaha menolak peran pabrik yang dimiliki RRT tersebut dalam pencemaran lingkungan setempat di Gambia:⁴⁰¹

- Duta besar RRT untuk negara tersebut mengatakan kepada media lokal bahwa penyelidikan kedutaan besar tersebut tidak menemukan zat berbahaya di pembuangan pabrik tersebut dan bahwa Tiongkok mewajibkan entitas RRT untuk "mengikuti hukum setempat dan memenuhi tanggung jawab sosial mereka."⁴⁰²
- Demikian pula juru bicara kedutaan mengatakan bahwa tuduhan terhadap pabrik-pabrik tersebut "kurang bukti."⁴⁰³
- Duta besar RRT mengklaim bahwa air limbah tersebut "menyediakan nutrisi yang melimpah" dan bahwa "para petani di Tiongkok membeli jenis air limbah ini untuk ditambahkan ke kolam ikan mereka."⁴⁰⁴

Sebagai catatan, tak lama setelah perhatian internasional beralih ke laporan kapal RRT yang membuang limbah di Spratly Islands, beberapa pejabat pemerintah RRT yang bertanggung jawab mengelola Kepulauan Spratly telah menerbitkan siaran pers yang menyatakan bahwa "kerentanan dan ketidakterbalikkan lingkungan ekologi pulau dan terumbu karang tersebut harus sepenuhnya diakui" dan "penting sekali untuk mematuhi dengan ketat persyaratan untuk mendorong berbagai program pencegahan polusi" (lihat Gambar 7).⁴⁰⁵

Gambar 15. Siaran pers pemerintah kota Sansha, RRT, yang menuntut perlindungan maritim yang lebih baik, diumumkan tiga hari setelah Simularity menerbitkan laporannya

【字体：大 中 小】 打印

会议指出，要充分认识到我市生态环境保护工作的重要性、复杂性，充分认识到岛礁生态环境的脆弱性、不可逆性，保持忧患意识，严格按照要求，推进各项污染防治工作。要紧盯更高目标，挖掘三沙在生态环境保护方面的潜力，通过做好生态环境保护工作，为海南自贸港建设做出三沙贡献。生态环境保护是一个系统工程，各相关部门要心怀“国之大者”，统筹协调、通力合作，狠抓生态环境保护工作，打好污染防治攻坚战，守好三沙碧海蓝天。

副市长杨庆东出席会议。（文/洪健康）

扫一扫在手机打开当前页

Terjemahan: "Pertemuan tersebut menyatakan bahwa penting untuk sepenuhnya memahami pentingnya dan kompleksitas usaha perlindungan lingkungan ekologi di sekitar kota Sanya, dan kerentanan dan ketidakterbalikkan lingkungan ekologi pulau dan terumbu karang harus sepenuhnya diakui dan penting sekali untuk mematuhi dengan ketat persyaratan untuk mendorong berbagai program pencegahan polusi."

Sumber: "*The Municipal Government Held a Meeting to Study and Review the Pollution Prevention and Control Work of Sansha City in 2021*" (Pemerintah Kota Menyelenggarakan Rapat untuk Mengkaji dan Meninjau Tindakan Pencegahan dan Pengendalian Polusi Kota Sosha pada tahun 2021) [], Sosha Municipal, 15 Juli 2021, http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:cvtRxVs_9-MJ:www.sansha.gov.cn/sansha/sysdt/202107/a4503cbae2d54e018ebd0864db6a2e8f.shtml+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=cInk&gl=us.



3.5 Mengoperasikan kapal dengan "gelap"

Kapal beroperasi secara "gelap", dengan mengaburkan lokasi, pergerakan, atau transmisinya atau memanipulasi data yang ditransmisikan oleh sinyalnya. Salah satu cara kapal "gelap" adalah dengan menonaktifkan atau mengutak-atik alat pemantauan atau pelacakan elektroniknya, seperti AIS atau sistem pemantauan kapal (VMS). Dalam banyak kasus, penghindaran pemantauan terjadi bersamaan dengan aktivitas maritim ilegal seperti *IUU fishing*.⁴⁰⁶

AIS adalah sebuah sistem pelacakan sumber terbuka otomatis yang membantu navigasi kapal yang aman dan memungkinkan pihak berwenang melacak dan memantau gerakan kapal.⁴⁰⁷ Konvensi IMO untuk SOLAS menyerukan penggunaan AIS oleh semua kapal berbobot kotor lebih dari 300 ton yang berada di "pelayaran internasional." Panduan yang direvisi IMO untuk Penggunaan Operasi AIS di Kapal menyatakan bahwa AIS di kapal ini harus selalu beroperasi ketika kapal sedang berlayar atau berlabuh.⁴⁰⁸ VMS melacak kapal dengan cara yang sama seperti AIS. Namun, tidak seperti AIS, data VMS dibatasi secara historis untuk regulator pemerintah atau otoritas perikanan lainnya dan secara umum tidak dapat diakses oleh publik.⁴⁰⁹

Teknologi Pemantauan Perikanan dan Kapal

Berbagai teknologi pemantauan tersedia untuk melacak dan memantau kapal penangkap ikan di laut, termasuk berikut ini:

AIS – transponder AIS memberikan posisi, identifikasi, dan informasi lain tentang suatu kapal ke kapal-kapal lain dan pihak berwenang di pantai secara otomatis. Peraturan SOLAS V/19 mewajibkan AIS "untuk dipasang di semua kapal dengan bobot kotor 300 ton atau lebih, pada pelayaran internasional."⁴¹⁰ Data AIS biasanya tersedia secara umum secara *real time*.

VMS – VMS melacak kapal dengan cara yang sama seperti AIS, tetapi datanya secara historis hanya terbatas untuk regulator pemerintah atau otoritas perikanan lainnya dan umumnya tidak tersedia untuk umum.⁴¹¹ Masing-masing negara memiliki VMS-nya sendiri.

EM – Pemantauan elektronik (*EM, Electronic monitoring*/EM) menggunakan kamera, sensor roda gigi, dan analisis data canggih guna memberikan akuntabilitas penuh terhadap aktivitas penangkapan ikan. Penggunaan EM memiliki beberapa manfaat, termasuk tingkat kepatuhan yang tinggi, dokumentasi praktik penangkapan ikan yang berkelanjutan, dan akses ke pasar yang menuntut transparansi dan keberlanjutan yang tinggi. Kurang dari 1 persen kapal nelayan dunia dilengkapi dengan EM.⁴¹²

RF – Analisis frekuensi radio (*radio frequency/RF*) berbasis ruang menggunakan berbagai sinyal RF seperti radar laut dan pita-x untuk mencari dan melacak kapal yang tidak mengirimkan VMS atau AIS.⁴¹³

SAR – Radar apertur sintetis (*synthetic aperture radar/SAR*) menggunakan sensor aktif berbasis ruang untuk menghasilkan gambar resolusi spasial tinggi dari gambar berlapis atau "sintetis." SAR

dapat digunakan untuk mendeteksi dan mengidentifikasi kapal laut yang tidak mengirimkan VMS atau AIS.⁴¹⁴

VIIRS – Radiometer pencitraan inframerah yang terlihat (*Visible infrared imaging radiometer*/VIIRS) adalah satelit orbit kutub yang menggunakan sensor optik yang sangat sensitif untuk melihat lampu di malam hari.⁴¹⁵ VIIRS dapat digunakan untuk mendeteksi kapal penangkap ikan yang tidak menyiarkan VMS atau AIS. Lebih dari 85 persen kapal penangkap ikan di database VIIRS tidak menyiarkan AIS atau VMS.⁴¹⁶

3.5.1 Kebijakan RRT

Pejabat dan media RRT untuk asing mempromosikan narasi bahwa kapal-kapal RRT mematuhi persyaratan Sistem Pemantauan Kapal paling ketat di dunia. Selama setidaknya empat konferensi pers MFA pada 2020, para juri bicara menyatakan bahwa "Tiongkok menerapkan Sistem Pemantauan Kapal Laut yang paling ketat di dunia."⁴¹⁷ Pernyataan ini banyak diterbitkan kembali oleh media yang diarahkan untuk asing oleh RRT dalam berbagai bahasa, termasuk bahasa Indonesia, Prancis, Spanyol, dan Inggris.⁴¹⁸ Diskusi media RRT yang menyasar pihak asing tentang AIS berfokus pada pengembangan satelit berkemampuan AIS dan infrastruktur AIS berbasis lahan Tiongkok untuk "meningkatkan pengawasan dan pemantauan."⁴¹⁹

RRT juga memiliki undang-undang nasional yang mewajibkan VMS, AIS, atau keduanya untuk armada DWF. Misalnya, *Langkah-Langkah untuk Administrasi Pemantauan Posisi Kapal Laut* Kementerian Pertanian dan Urusan Pedesaan RRT menyatakan bahwa kapal DWF "harus dilengkapi dengan peralatan pemantauan posisi kapal" dan bahwa saat beroperasi di perairan negara-negara yang melarang VMS, "mereka harus menggunakan alat identifikasi kapal otomatis (AIS) yang terpasang untuk mengirimkan informasi yang relevan."⁴²⁰ Selain itu, Pasal 24, Paragraf 1, dan Paragraf 2 (12) *Peraturan Republik Rakyat Tiongkok tentang Urusan Maritim dan Sanksi Administratif* menetapkan bahwa "personel di kapal dan fasilitas [yang] tidak menjaga AIS dalam kondisi kerja normal sesuai dengan peraturan, atau gagal memasukkan informasi yang akurat dalam peralatan AIS sesuai dengan peraturan," dikenakan denda atau pencabutan lisensi.⁴²¹

3.5.2 Contoh dugaan pelanggaran oleh aktor RRT

Dalam setidaknya 7 dari 15 kasus yang kami telaah, aktor RRT diduga merusak sistem pengawasan atau identifikasi kapal mereka, biasanya untuk mengaburkan atau mendukung aktivitas ilegal lainnya, seperti *IUU fishing* atau transhipment ilegal.⁴²² Antara tahun 2018 dan 2021, terdapat laporan-laporan tentang kapal RRT yang diduga mematikan atau mengutak-atik AIS mereka untuk mengaburkan aktivitas terlarang di perairan Republik Rakyat Demokratik Korea (DPRK),⁴²³ Ekuador,⁴²⁴ Vanuatu,⁴²⁵ Gambia, Namibia,⁴²⁶ Filipina,⁴²⁷ dan Indonesia.⁴²⁸

- **Korea Utara.** Menurut studi yang dilakukan oleh delapan lembaga yang menggunakan teknologi satelit yang tidak bergantung pada sinyal AIS, hampir 1.000 kapal "gelap" yang berasal dari RRT secara ilegal terlihat di perairan Korea Utara pada tahun 2017 dan 2018, dengan aktivitas yang berlanjut hingga setidaknya 2019.⁴²⁹ Selain itu, organisasi perdagangan maritim Windward telah melaporkan bahwa kapal RRT menggunakan berbagai cara untuk menghindari sanksi PBB pada DPRK, termasuk menonaktifkan AIS serta mengubah nomor *Marine Mobile Service Identity* (MMSI), negara bendera kapal, dan nama kapal.⁴³⁰
- **Ekuador.** Dari tahun 2018 hingga 2021, laporan investigasi media internasional dan LSM mendokumentasikan kapal penangkap cumi-cumi (*squid jigger*) dan pukat hela (*trawler*) RRT yang beroperasi secara "gelap" di laut lepas di Amerika Selatan, termasuk dekat Kepulauan Galapagos Ekuador, salah satu situs warisan dunia UNESCO.⁴³¹ Demikian pula, analisis operasi kapal berbendera RRT terpilih di dekat Galapagos pada tahun 2020 menemukan sejumlah kejadian kapal mengubah sarat air, panjang, atau kepemilikan dan beroperasi secara "gelap" dekat ZEE Galapagos.⁴³²
- **Vanuatu.** Pada tanggal 19 Januari 2021, kapal Kepolisian Maritim Vanuatu telah mencegat dua kapal penangkap ikan berbendera RRT, *Dong Gang Xing* 13 dan *Dong Gang Xing* 16, atas dugaan aktivitas *IUU fishing* di perairan territorial Vanuatu.⁴³³ Kapal-kapal tersebut memiliki izin untuk menangkap ikan di ZEE Vanuatu, tetapi tidak berada dalam wilayah perairan 12 mil-nya, ketika kapal-kapal tersebut ditangkap dengan AIS mereka dimatikan, menurut jaksa Vanuatu.⁴³⁴
- **Gambia.** Analisis 2019-2020 di kapal penangkap ikan yang beroperasi di perairan Gambia dan anggota Masyarakat Ekonomi Negara Afrika Barat lainnya menemukan kapal berbendera RRT mengubah data AIS sehingga beberapa kapal memiliki nama atau nomor IMO dan MMSI yang sama, yang secara hukum diwajibkan berbeda.⁴³⁵
- **Indonesia.** Pada tanggal 11 Januari 2021, media Indonesia melaporkan bahwa Badan Keamanan Maritim Indonesia telah menghentikan kapal riset RRT *Xiang yang Hong* 03 di Selat Sunda karena beroperasi di perairan Indonesia dengan AIS dinonaktifkan.⁴³⁶ Menurut peraturan Indonesia dan internasional, semua kapal yang transit di jalur laut kepulauan Indonesia harus memiliki AIS yang berfungsi.⁴³⁷
- **Filipina.** Pada malam 9 Juni 2019, kapal RRT berukuran 44 meter berlambung baja *Yuemaobinyu* 42212 menabrak *Gem Ver* berukuran 19 meter berlambung kayu dengan AIS dinonaktifkan dan lampu dimatikan, menurut awak kapal *Gem Ver* dan laporan media Filipina.⁴³⁸ Kapal RRT berlayar menjauh dari tempat itu, meninggalkan 22 orang awak kapal yang terdampar di laut sampai mereka diselamatkan oleh nelayan Vietnam.⁴³⁹
- **Namibia.** Pada bulan Maret 2020, media setempat melaporkan bahwa angkatan laut Namibia telah menangkap enam kapal nelayan milik RRT di lokasi memancing yang

populer, 17 mil dari pantai Namibia.⁴⁴⁰ Pihak berwenang Namibia menyatakan bahwa kapal-kapal RRT memasuki Namibia secara ilegal dan tidak mendapatkan izin untuk berlabuh.⁴⁴¹ Angkatan laut Namibia juga mencatat bahwa kapal-kapal itu telah menonaktifkan AIS mereka.⁴⁴²

3.5.3 Respons publik RRT atas tuduhan ini

Para pejabat dan media RRT berusaha menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai "negara nelayan yang bertanggung jawab" untuk melaksanakan pengawasan kapal yang ketat atas armada DWF dan kapal lainnya. Namun, dalam kasus yang diperiksa untuk studi ini, pejabat dan media RRT umumnya mencoba untuk mengaburkan, mengalihkan, atau membantah dugaan bahwa kapal berbendera RRT mengutak-atik atau menonaktifkan AIS di kapal untuk menyamarkan aktivitas maritim ilegalnya.

Dalam upaya yang mungkin dilakukan untuk mengaburkan insiden ini, para pejabat dan media RRT tidak memberikan komentar secara publik atas dugaan bahwa kapal berbendera RRT telah mengutak-atik AIS mereka di perairan Filipina, Vanuatu, Indonesia, dan Gambia. Dalam kasus lain, pejabat RRT dan media untuk asing berupaya mengalihkan kritik dengan mengklaim bahwa kapal-kapal RRT mematuhi persyaratan VMS yang paling ketat di dunia, bukan menanggapi tuduhan tersebut secara langsung.⁴⁴³ Misalnya, ketika ditanya tentang kapal-kapal RRT yang beroperasi tanpa AIS dekat Kepulauan Galapagos, Ekuador, juru bicara MFA menyatakan bahwa "semua kapal nelayan Tiongkok menggunakan Sistem pemantauan Kapal Laut yang diakui oleh organisasi pengelolaan perikanan regional, yang melaporkan posisinya setiap jam."⁴⁴⁴

Dalam satu kasus, kedutaan RRT di Namibia tampak menepis tuduhan Angkatan Laut Namibia bahwa kapal-kapal RRT yang ditahan karena memasuki wilayah secara ilegal dan kemungkinan *IUU fishing* di perairannya telah menonaktifkan AIS mereka. Kedutaan RRT menegaskan bahwa "catatan komputer yang terus menerus dari rute pelayaran kapal nelayan" akan membuktikan bahwa kapal-kapal tersebut tidak melakukan penangkapan ikan secara ilegal.⁴⁴⁵

Diskusi Media RRT tentang Pengutak-atikan AIS

Laporan media RRT yang ditujukan kepada khalayak asing tidak memberitakan masalah pengutak-atikan AIS di kapal RRT, dengan menekankan bahwa kapal RRT secara ketat mematuhi rangkaian VMS terpisah yang tidak tersedia untuk umum. Namun, laporan media RRT yang ditujukan kepada khalayak domestik di Tiongkok, menekankan upaya Tiongkok untuk memecahkan "penggunaan peralatan AIS secara ilegal atau tidak benar", mengakui bahwa tindakan tersebut "menimbulkan tantangan terhadap tatanan maritim."⁴⁴⁶ Laporan yang diterbitkan oleh surat kabar online populer pada tahun 2020 menyebutkan "situasi saat ini dari kualitas informasi ilegal dan kacau-balau dari peralatan AIS di kapal" dan meminta "secara bersama-sama mempromosikan penggunaan peralatan AIS."⁴⁴⁷ Demikian pula, laporan tahun 2021 oleh Xinhua News Agency resmi Tiongkok yang memerinci cara otoritas maritim RRT regional menyelidiki dan menghukum "pemasangan ilegal AIS

oleh kapal nelayan," dengan merujuk pada kapal yang melakukan transmisi secara tidak akurat sebagai kapal muatan curah, bukan kapal penangkap ikan.⁴⁴⁸ Laporan ketiga mencatat tiga kasus kapal muatan curah RRT melakukan penyalahgunaan AIS, merangkum peraturan internasional dan RRT yang relevan tentang AIS, dan menarik perhatian pada masalah pemasukan yang salah atau beberapa pengidentifikasi kapal seperti nama kapal, tanda panggilan, nomor IMO, jenis kapal, dan nomor MMSI.⁴⁴⁹



3.6 Masuk kawasan dan kepemilikan ilegal

Negara-negara pesisir memiliki hak berdasarkan UNCLOS untuk mengatur aktivitas ekonomi dan ilmiah asing di dalam dan di permukaan kolom air dari ZEE 200 mil mereka sendiri.⁴⁵⁰ Lebih jauh lagi, dalam wilayah laut 12 mil milik negara pesisir, negara tersebut memiliki kedaulatan atas air dan dasar laut sambil memungkinkan lintas damai oleh kapal asing.⁴⁵¹ Melakukan aktivitas ekonomi seperti penangkapan ikan atau aktivitas ilmiah seperti survei oseanografi dalam ZEE atau wilayah perairan pesisir negara pantai tanpa persetujuan merupakan pelanggaran terhadap UNCLOS. Demikian pula, banyak negara pesisir juga memiliki undang-undang nasional yang menetapkan persyaratan UNCLOS bagi kapal-kapal asing untuk memperoleh izin untuk aktivitas komersial atau ilmiah dalam wilayah EEZ atau perairan teritorial mereka. Secara terpisah, beberapa negara pesisir menerapkan undang-undang yang mengharuskan kapal nelayan yang beroperasi di dalam ZEE atau laut teritorial mereka untuk memiliki bendera khusus, operator, atau hubungan kepemilikan dengan negara pantai.

3.6.1 Kebijakan RRT

RRT telah meratifikasi UNCLOS, sesuai dengan negara pesisir yang berhak mengatur akses pelabuhan pada kapal asing dan menetapkan aturan lisensi dan kepemilikan asing atas kapal dalam registri (bendera) mereka.⁴⁵² Duta besar RRT untuk UN menyatakan pada Juni 2021 bahwa Tiongkok "dengan tegas melindungi integritas dan otoritas tertinggi dari UNCOS" dan "semua negara harus dengan tegas mempertahankan tatanan maritim internasional berdasarkan hukum internasional, dan menyelesaikan sengketa kelautan dengan baik melalui negosiasi dan konsultasi dengan ikhtikad baik."⁴⁵³

Beijing juga mendesak warga negara dan perusahaan RRT untuk mematuhi undang-undang setempat saat beroperasi di luar negeri. MFA RRT telah menyatakan, "Pada prinsipnya, pemerintah Tiongkok selalu meminta warga negara Tiongkok di luar negeri untuk mematuhi peraturan perundang-undangan setempat."⁴⁵⁴ Sebagai catatan, pejabat dan media RRT

biasanya mengulangi kebijakan ini sebagai tanggapan atas laporan media internasional tentang para aktor RRT yang terlibat dalam aktivitas ilegal, termasuk di laut.⁴⁵⁵

3.6.2 Contoh dugaan pelanggaran oleh aktor RRT

Dalam studi ini, beberapa kasus yang melibatkan dugaan bahwa kapal dari RRT telah memasuki ZEE asing secara ilegal untuk melakukan aktivitas komersial dan non-peralihan lainnya tanpa izin yang diperlukan dari negara pantai. Dalam satu kasus, perusahaan RRT diduga memegang kepemilikan manfaat atas kapal nelayan yang beroperasi di perairan sebuah negara, yang melanggar hukum nasional negara itu. Contoh perilaku menyimpang yang diduga oleh aktor RRT adalah sebagai berikut:

- **Kapal RRT dilaporkan melakukan survei oseanografi yang ilegal.** Pada tanggal 11 Januari 2021, media berita melaporkan bahwa Badan Keamanan Maritim Indonesia telah menghentikan kapal riset RRT *Xiang Yang Hong* 03 di Selat Sunda, karena beroperasi di perairan Indonesia dengan AIS yang dinonaktifkan.⁴⁵⁶ Pemerintah Indonesia melaporkan kapal tersebut diduga melakukan aktivitas yang tidak sah di Selat Sunda pada saat AIS-nya mati.⁴⁵⁷ Media melaporkan dugaan bahwa kapal RRT mengumpulkan informasi oseanografi untuk menginformasikan operasi kapal selam angkatan laut RRT.⁴⁵⁸
- **Kapal RRT dituduh memasuki wilayah dan berlabuh secara ilegal.** Pada bulan Oktober 2020, Badan Penegakan Maritim Malaysia (MMEA) mengumumkan telah menahan enam kapal nelayan berbendera RRT dan awak kapalnya saat memasuki serta melabuhkan jangkar wilayah perairan Malaysia tanpa izin.⁴⁵⁹ Demikian pula, pada bulan Maret 2020, angkatan laut Namibia telah menangkap enam kapal nelayan milik RRT di lokasi memancing yang populer, 17 mil dari pantai Namibia. Menurut pihak berwenang Namibia, kapal-kapal RRT memasuki Namibia secara ilegal dan tidak mendapatkan izin untuk berlabuh.⁴⁶⁰ Setelah dilepaskan, enam kapal dari RRT yang sama tersebut berlayar ke perairan Afrika Selatan, di mana mereka sekali lagi ditahan dan didenda akibat masuk secara ilegal.⁴⁶¹
- **Perusahaan-perusahaan RRT yang secara ilegal memegang kepemilikan manfaat atas kapal nelayan yang beroperasi di Ghana.** Menurut Undang-Undang Perikanan Ghana, kapal nelayan komersial yang memiliki kontrol atau kepemilikan manfaat non Ghana dilarang memancing di ZEE Ghana.⁴⁶² Demikian pula, Pasal 91 UNCLOS mewajibkan "hubungan asli" antara negara bendera dan pemilik kapal.⁴⁶³ Namun, beberapa laporan investigasi yang diterbitkan oleh LSM lingkungan berbasis di AS antara tahun 2019 dan 2021 menemukan bahwa perusahaan-perusahaan RRT adalah pemilik manfaat atas hampir semua pukat hela Ghana.⁴⁶⁴ Menurut laporan tersebut, perusahaan RRT mendaftarkan kapal pukat hela di Kementerian Pertanian Tiongkok untuk mendapatkan subsidi BBM dan manfaat pajak negara, sekaligus

mendaftarkan kapal-kapal dengan bendera Ghana melalui perusahaan cangkang yang didirikan untuk mendapatkan keuntungan dari akses penangkapan ikan di EEZ Ghana serta izin penangkapan ikan lokal berbiaya rendah.⁴⁶⁵ Praktik-praktik ilegal ini menyebabkan Ghana kehilangan dana hingga \$23 juta per tahun untuk biaya izin penangkapan ikan.⁴⁶⁶

Gambar 16. Laporan media Indonesia tentang penahanan sebuah kapal survei RRT yang beroperasi di Selat Sunda dengan AIS dinonaktifkan



Badan Keamanan Laut (Bakamla) berhasil mengintervensi kapal survei China, Xiang Yang Hong 03 yang terbukti mematikan Automatic Identification System (AIS) ketika melintasi perairan Selat Sunda pada Rabu (13/1/2021) malam. (Dokumen Bakamla RI)

Sumber: Achmad Nasrudin Yahya, "Bakamla Curiga Kapal Survei China Operasikan Sensor Bawah Air di Perairan Indonesia" (2 Februari 2021, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2021/02/02/12144011/bakamla-curiga-kapal-survei-china-operasikan-sensor-bawah-air-di-perairan?page=all>).

3.6.3 Respons publik RRT atas tuduhan ini

Para pejabat dan media RRT berusaha menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai "bangsa nelayan yang bertanggung jawab" untuk mempertahankan hak-hak negara pesisir di bawah UNCLOS, dan Beijing secara umum mendorong entitas RRT untuk mematuhi undang-undang setempat saat beroperasi di luar negeri. Sesuai dengan narasi ini, Beijing secara umum mengakui bahwa kapal-kapal RRT telah ditahan di wilayah perairan Malaysia. Baik MFA maupun kedutaan besar RRT menyerukan pihak berwenang Malaysia untuk melaksanakan "penyelidikan yang adil, dengan memastikan hak dan kepentingan warga negara Tiongkok yang terlibat."⁴⁶⁷

Akan tetapi, kesenjangan antara retorika dan tindakan RRT tetap ada: sebisa mungkin berusaha mengaburkan tuduhan tersebut, pejabat dan media untuk asing RRT tetap diam dalam menanggapi dugaan bahwa entitas RRT melanggar undang-undang Ghana dengan memegang kepemilikan manfaat atas kapal penangkap ikan lokal. Demikian pula, Beijing tidak merespons secara terbuka terhadap penangkapan kapal riset RRT yang mungkin telah melakukan survei kelautan di perairan Indonesia dengan AIS dinonaktifkan dan tanpa izin dari pemerintah Indonesia. Dalam kasus Namibia, kedutaan RRT di Namibia membantah bahwa kapal RRT dihentikan secara “illegal” di perairan Namibia dan menyatakan bahwa kapal-kapal tersebut telah menggunakan lintas damai.⁴⁶⁸

4. Kesimpulan

Berdasarkan kasus yang dikaji untuk penelitian ini, beberapa aktor RRT tampaknya terlibat dalam berbagai aktivitas maritim yang tidak sah di seluruh dunia. Biasanya, para aktor RRT terlibat dalam lebih dari satu jenis aktivitas terlarang. Berbagai pelanggar yang paling umum nampaknya adalah kapal nelayan komersial milik armada DWF Tiongkok yang banyak. Namun, kami mengidentifikasi setidaknya dua insiden di mana kapal pemerintah, satu kapal penjaga pantai RRT dan satu kapal survei, yang diduga terlibat dalam perilaku ilegal.

Retorika resmi RRT berusaha menggambarkan Tiongkok sebagai aktor maritim yang bertanggung jawab yang secara efektif mengatur armada DWF-nya dan kapal lautnya yang lain. ***Karena itu, perilaku melanggar hukum dari para aktor RRT ini menciptakan kesenjangan yang nyata antara retorika dan perilaku RRT yang tampak jelas di semua 15 kasus tersebut.*** Tanggapan publik Beijing terhadap tuduhan aktivitas terlarang oleh aktor RRT menyatakan bahwa Beijing mencoba untuk membentuk diskusi publik dengan cara-cara yang meminimalkan dampak negatif terhadap citra Tiongkok. Dalam 7 kasus, pejabat dan media RRT sebisa mungkin tetap diam untuk mengaburkan insiden tersebut. Dalam kasus lain, pejabat dan media RRT membantah tuduhan tersebut secara publik, terkadang sampai melakukan tuduhan balik yang ditujukan untuk menyalahkan atau mendiskreditkan pihak yang menuduh mereka. Tanggapan-tanggapan ini dapat menciptakan kesan bahwa Beijing sedang berusaha untuk secara terbuka melemahkan atau merombak aturan, hukum, dan norma-norma internasional, bukan mengakui masalah tersebut.

Narasi sekunder bahwa Beijing mempromosikan kepada khalayak asing tentang aktivitas maritim RRT menggambarkan keberadaan dan investasi Tiongkok sebagai menguntungkan penduduk setempat. Di antara kasus-kasus yang diteliti untuk penelitian ini, narasi yang ditampilkan secara mencolok dalam pesan RRT ini menargetkan negara-negara pesisir Afrika dan cenderung menggambarkan RRT sebagai dermawan yang mendukung pembangunan ekonomi negara-negara ini. Akan tetapi, dalam beberapa kasus yang ditelaah dalam studi ini, investasi RRT pada akhirnya berimbang: investasi tersebut menguntungkan pembangunan ekonomi negara, tetapi juga mengakibatkan kerusakan lingkungan dan ekonomi bagi masyarakat lokal.

Singkatnya, aktivitas kelautan ilegal yang dilakukan aktor RRT menimbulkan kerugian ekonomi dan lingkungan pada negara-negara pesisir, melanggar kedaulatan mereka, dan merugikan warga negaranya. Para pejabat dan media RRT secara aktif berusaha untuk mengimbangi kerugian yang dilakukan aktivitas ini terhadap reputasi Tiongkok dengan membantah, mengalihkan, atau mengaburkan insiden yang melibatkan perilaku terlarang oleh aktor RRT kepada publik.

Lampiran A: Perespons Beijing

Dalam kasus-kasus yang kita amati, unsur-unsur alat propaganda RRT berikut ini memainkan peran penting dalam upaya Beijing untuk mempromosikan citra positif Tiongkok sebagai aktor maritim yang bertanggung jawab serta menanggapi tuduhan pelanggaran oleh para aktor RRT:

- **Juru bicara MFA.** Juru bicara MFA mengomentari 6 dari 15 insiden yang diteliti. Beijing pertama kalinya menunjuk juru bicara pemerintah pada awal tahun 1980-an. Sejak saat itu, juru bicara ini telah menjadi salah satu metode yang paling rutin dan langsung yang digunakan pemerintah Tiongkok untuk berinteraksi dengan khalayak baik domestik maupun asing.^{469,470}
- **Pejabat kedutaan RRT.** Duta besar RRT atau pejabat kedutaan besar setempat lainnya secara terbuka mengomentari 8 dari 15 kasus. Para diplomat RRT yang ditempatkan di luar negeri bertindak sebagai lini depan dalam upaya-upaya diplomasi publik Beijing, termasuk tanggapannya atas tuduhan pelanggaran oleh para aktor RRT di luar negeri.
- **Media RRT yang menyasar asing.** Outlet media RRT yang dijalankan negara melaporkan 6 dari 15 kasus. Biasanya, pelaporan ini mengabarkan hal yang disampaikan oleh juru bicara MFA atau pejabat kedutaan besar RRT. Dalam beberapa kasus, terdapat juga komentar yang memperkuat atau memperluas narasi resmi Beijing. Untuk membuatnya bisa diakses oleh audiens target, laporan media RRT diterbitkan dalam bahasa lokal, termasuk bahasa Inggris, Prancis, Indonesia, Filipina, Melayu, dan Vietnam.⁴⁷¹

Lihat Tabel 1 di halaman berikutnya untuk mendapatkan ringkasan tentang responden dalam setiap studi kasus.

Tabel 2. Elemen alat propaganda RRT yang menjawab 15 kasus dugaan aktivitas maritim ilegal RRT

Aktivitas RRT yang dicurigai	Respons MFA	Kedutaan besar RRT	Media yang Menyasar Asing
Laporan kapal RRT yang membuang limbah di ZEE Filipina	Ya ⁴⁷²	Ya ⁴⁷³	Ya ⁴⁷⁴
Panen liar ketimun laut oleh kapal RRT di ZEE Palau	Ya ⁴⁷⁵	Ya ⁴⁷⁶	Ya ⁴⁷⁷
Pekerja paksa Indonesia di kapal berbendera RRT	Ya ⁴⁷⁸	Ya ⁴⁷⁹	Ya ⁴⁸⁰
Kapal RRT yang ditahan untuk penangkapan ikan secara ilegal di ZEE Vanuatu	Tidak ⁴⁸¹	Tidak ⁴⁸²	Tidak ⁴⁸³
Kapal RRT terlibat dalam penangkapan ikan ilegal di Gabon	Tidak	Tidak ⁴⁸⁴	Tidak ⁴⁸⁵
Polusi air dari pabrik makanan ikan milik RRT di Gambia	Tidak	Ya ⁴⁸⁶	Tidak ⁴⁸⁷
Kepemilikan ilegal atas armada kapal pukat Ghana	Tidak	Tidak	Tidak ⁴⁸⁸
Masuk dan berlabuh secara ilegal di wilayah perairan Malaysia	Ya ⁴⁸⁹	Ya ⁴⁹⁰	Ya ⁴⁹¹
RRT memanen kima raksasa di perairan wilayah Filipina	Tidak	Tidak	Tidak ⁴⁹²
Kapal riset RRT beroperasi di perairan Indonesia tanpa AIS	Tidak	Tidak	Tidak ⁴⁹³
Mengutak-atik AIS di kapal RRT	Ya ⁴⁹⁴	Ya ⁴⁹⁵	Ya ⁴⁹⁶
Pukat hela RRT di wilayah terlarang Mauritania menubruk kapal lokal	Tidak	Tidak	Tidak ⁴⁹⁷
Kapal RRT diduga sengaja menubruk kapal nelayan asing	Ya ⁴⁹⁸	Ya ⁴⁹⁹	Ya ⁵⁰⁰
Namibia menyelidiki kapal RRT karena memasuki wilayah dan memancing secara ilegal	Tidak	Ya ⁵⁰¹	Tidak ⁵⁰²
Warga negara RRT yang diselundupkan ke Kamboja melalui laut	Tidak	Tidak ⁵⁰³	Tidak ⁵⁰⁴
Respons total dari 15 kasus	6	8	6

Sumber: CNA.

Lampiran B: Studi Kasus

16. Panen liar ketimun laut oleh kapal RRT di ZEE Palau

Pada bulan Desember 2020, sejumlah media Palau melaporkan bahwa kapal patroli Penegak Hukum Maritim Palau telah menghentikan kapal nelayan berbendera Tiongkok *Qiong Sanya Yu* atas dugaan penangkapan ketimun laut ilegal di Helen Reef, di dalam wilayah perairan dan ZEE Palau.⁵⁰⁵ Penjaga Pantai AS membantu otoritas maritim Palau menemukan kapal RRT.⁵⁰⁶ Kementerian Kehakiman (MOJ) Palau menemukan bukti bahwa awak *Qiong Sanya Yu* mencuri 225 kilogram (496 pound) timun laut senilai sekitar \$180.000.⁵⁰⁷ Awak kapal yang berjumlah 28 orang—semua warga negara RRT—menerima perjanjian penyelesaian yang ditawarkan oleh MOJ Palau sebagai ganti biaya, yang mengharuskan mereka untuk menyerahkan kapal penangkap ikan dan lima kapal kecil serta membayar denda \$200.000.⁵⁰⁸

17. Kapal RRT yang ditahan untuk penangkapan ikan secara ilegal di ZEE Vanuatu

Pada tanggal 19 Januari 2021, kapal Kepolisian Maritim Vanuatu telah mencegat dua kapal penangkap ikan berbendera RRT, *Dong Gang Xing* 13 dan *Dong Gang Xing* 16, atas dugaan aktivitas *IUU fishing* di perairan teritorial Vanuatu.⁵⁰⁹ Jaksa Vanuatu mendakwa operator kapal tersebut yang terlibat dalam penangkapan ikan ilegal tanpa izin, menonaktifkan transponder satelit mereka ketika berada di perairan Vanuatu, dan memiliki jaring hanyut (*driftnet*) yang melanggar UU Perikanan Vanuatu.⁵¹⁰ Pemilik kapal, Zhuhai Dong Gang Xing Ocean Fishing Co., menyangkal tuduhan ini pada saat kapal dan kru ditangkap.⁵¹¹ Pada tanggal 18 Mei 2021, 14 orang warga negara RRT yang ditahan menyatakan tidak bersalah atas semua tuntutan di Mahkamah Agung Vanuatu.⁵¹² Per tanggal 18 Agustus 2021, keputusan dalam kasus ini belum dilaporkan secara publik, dan pihak Vanuatu tidak menanggapi permintaan informasi.

18. Kapal RRT terlibat dalam penangkapan ikan ilegal di Gabon

Pada tanggal 8 Agustus 2020, otoritas Gabon, bekerja sama dengan Sea Shepherd, sebuah organisasi nirlaba yang berbasis di Belanda, menghentikan dua kapal pukat berbendera RRT, *Guo Ji* 826, dan *Guo Ji* 866, dalam pemeriksaan rutin.⁵¹³ Menurut laporan Sea Shepherd dan media setempat, pemeriksaan ini menemukan *rough-head sea catfish*, ikan pari daisy yang terancam punah, dan ikan pari lainnya yang ditangkap secara liar.⁵¹⁴ Otoritas Gabon di kapal Sea Shepherd menangkap dan mengawal kedua kapal tersebut ke pelabuhan, di mana penyelidikan lebih lanjut mengungkap adanya tangkapan ikan pari dan sirip ikan pari

lainnya.⁵¹⁵ Sang kapten kapal, seorang warga negara RRT, mengatakan kepada pihak berwenang bahwa ia tidak menyadari bahwa tangkapan tersebut ilegal.⁵¹⁶ Menurut media lokal, setahun sebelumnya, pihak berwenang Gabon menangkap dua kapal berbendera RRT lainnya—*Guo Ji 827* (dioperasikan oleh pemilik yang sama dengan *Guo Ji 826* dan *866*) dan *Haixin 27*—atas *IUU fishing* di perairan Gabon yang dilindungi.⁵¹⁷

19. RRT memanen kima raksasa di perairan wilayah Filipina

Kima raksasa dikategorikan sebagai spesies yang terancam oleh berbagai konvensi internasional, dan baik Filipina maupun RRT telah melarang pengambilannya.⁵¹⁸ Angkatan laut dan media Filipina menegaskan bahwa nelayan RRT yang beroperasi di dekat Pulau Pagasa (di bawah administrasi Filipina) dan Scarborough Shoal (di bawah administrasi RRT) di Laut Tiongkok Selatan terus mengambil kima raksasa secara ilegal menggunakan metode yang merusak lingkungan.⁵¹⁹ Media Filipina juga menegaskan bahwa penjaga pantai RRT mengetahui penangkapan ilegal tersebut di sekitar Scarborough Shoal.⁵²⁰ Wartawan Filipina telah mengamati bahwa RRT menggunakan “kapal-kapal chopper,” bahan peledak, bahan kimia, pompa air, dan vakum di terumbu karang untuk memanen kima raksasa, yang cangkang-cangkangnya dijual dengan harga tinggi di Tiongkok.⁵²¹ Metode pengambilan ini dilaporkan telah merusak lebih dari 104 kilometer persegi batu karang di Laut Tiongkok Selatan, lebih menguras ketersediaan ikan dan merusak mata pencarian para nelayan Filipina dan negara-negara lain.⁵²²

20. Pukat hela RRT di wilayah pemancingan tradisional Mauritania menubruk kapal lokal

Menurut laporan media Mauritania sejak awal September 2020, sebuah pukat hela berbendera RRT menabrak kapal nelayan Mauritania pada malam hari, membunuh tiga awak Mauritania.⁵²³ Media lokal dan regional melaporkan bahwa kapal nelayan RRT telah menghantam perahu tradisional Mauritania di perairan Nouadhibou di wilayah terbatas untuk pemancingan tradisional tempat pukat hela industri dilarang. Kepala asosiasi perikanan lokal menduga bahwa kejadian tersebut bukan merupakan kecelakaan dan menegaskan bahwa kapal RRT telah mematikan lampu-lampunya, menonaktifkan AIS-nya, dan sengaja menubruk kapal nelayan lokal.⁵²⁴ Otoritas Mauritania dilaporkan telah menahan kapten kapal RRT tersebut, dan anggota masyarakat setempat melakukan protes pada pukat hela RRT dan luar negeri lainnya karena dugaan praktik-praktik penangkapan ikan secara ilegal dan berbahaya.⁵²⁵ Menurut media Mauritania, kasus yang sama terjadi pada tahun 2017 ketika kapal RRT lainnya dilaporkan bertabrakan dengan beberapa kapal nelayan lokal, sehingga menewaskan setidaknya empat orang.⁵²⁶

21. Kapal RRT diduga sengaja menubruk kapal nelayan asing

Insiden tubrukan di antara kapal nelayan biasanya merupakan akibat perebutan daerah penangkapan ikan atau sumber daya alam lainnya, yang sering kali terjadi di perairan yang menjadi subjek sengketa wilayah maritim. Insiden tubrukan ini telah mengintimidasi nelayan saingan, merusak peralatan, menenggelamkan kapal, bahkan melukai, membunuh, dan menjadikan awak kapal terdampar. Paling tidak dalam lima kesempatan antara tahun 2018 sampai 2021, media berita melaporkan bahwa kapal berbendera RRT sengaja menabrak kapal dari Filipina, Mauritania, Vietnam, Senegal, dan Brasil.⁵²⁷

22. Pekerja paksa Indonesia di kapal berbendera RRT

Menurut laporan LSM yang berbasis di Indonesia, Jerman, dan AS, antara akhir 2019 dan pertengahan 2021, kapal penangkap ikan berbendera RRT memanfaatkan puluhan orang Indonesia, dan banyak diantaranya meninggal akibat penyakit, pemukulan, kondisi kerja yang tidak aman, atau kekurangan makanan dan air.⁵²⁸ Pada bulan April 2020, para pejabat Indonesia mulai menangani masalah tersebut secara terbuka ketika mereka membenarkan kematian empat orang awak Indonesia di kapal berbendera Tiongkok, *Long Xin 629*.⁵²⁹ Sejak saat itu, pihak berwenang Indonesia mengumumkan kasus-kasus tambahan perdagangan manusia, penyanyayaan, dan kematian warga Indonesia di atas kapal-kapal berbendera Tiongkok. Kemudian, pada bulan Mei 2021, CBP mengeluarkan larangan masuk untuk semua barang yang diproduksi oleh armada Tiongkok Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd. "berdasarkan informasi yang secara jelas mengindikasikan penggunaan tenaga kerja paksa dalam operasi penangkapan ikan oleh badan usaha tersebut."⁵³⁰ Dalian adalah pemilik setidaknya dua kapal yang terlibat dalam kerja paksa awak Indonesia.⁵³¹

23. Warga negara RRT yang diselundupkan ke Kamboja melalui laut

Menurut laporan polisi Kamboja dan media lokal, otoritas kelautan Kamboja menangkap 36 warga negara RRT dan 2 warga negara Kamboja pada 26 Juli 2020, karena masuk secara ilegal ke negara dengan menaiki kapal berbendera Kamboja *Tong Hai*.⁵³² Pihak berwenang Kamboja mengatakan bahwa *Tong Hai* meninggalkan pelabuhan Fu'an di provinsi Fujian RRT pada 18 Juli dan berlayar sekitar 2.000 mil laut menuju perairan di luar Sihanoukville, di mana pihak berwenang Kamboja menaiki kapalnya.⁵³³ Otoritas dan media Kamboja tidak memberikan perincian mengenai pemilik atau operator kapal tersebut, tetapi foto bagian dalam kapal yang ditayangkan oleh media setempat menunjukkan perangkat keras dengan aksara Tionghoa, yang kemungkinan menunjukkan bahwa entitas RRT yang mengoperasikan kapal.⁵³⁴ Laporan media lokal mengatakan bahwa polisi Kamboja tidak menemukan kargo mencurigakan selain orang yang diselundupkan, dan tidak diketahui mengapa warga negara RRT berusaha memasuki Kamboja secara ilegal.⁵³⁵ Polisi Kamboja mencatat dalam sebuah siaran pers bahwa

mereka siap untuk melakukan deportasi warga negara RRT satu hari setelah penangkapan mereka tetapi tidak mengungkapkan perincian lebih lanjut tentang kasus ini.⁵³⁶

24. Laporan kapal RRT yang membuang limbah di ZEE Filipina

Pada laporan yang dibuat oleh Simularity, perusahaan analisis citra komersial yang berbasis di AS, pada bulan Juli 2021 menemukan bahwa lebih dari 200 kapal yang berlabuh di Spratly Islands membuang limbah ke perairan tersebut.⁵³⁷ Simularity memperkirakan bahwa kapal yang diamati berlabuh di Union Banks di bulan Juni telah membuang sekitar 2.596 pound limbah per harinya ke dalam air.⁵³⁸ Laporan ini mengklaim bahwa kapal tersebut membuang limbah yang tidak diproses atau kurang penanganan, menyebabkan berkembangnya klorofilia. Pertumbuhan ini, yang dikatakan oleh Simularity terlihat dalam citra satelit, dapat menyebabkan kondisi hipoksik di lautan yang dapat membahayakan organisme dan ekosistem laut.⁵³⁹ Laporan tersebut juga menyatakan bahwa kapal itu mungkin adalah kapal RRT yang sama seperti yang telah diamati oleh penjaga pantai Filipina di lokasi yang sama beberapa minggu sebelumnya.⁵⁴⁰ Pemerintah Filipina secara independen menyelidiki gugatan Simularity.

25. Polusi air dari pabrik makanan ikan milik RRT di Gambia

Saluran media Gambia melaporkan bahwa tiga pabrik makanan ikan yang dimiliki RRT telah mengalirkan limbah cair yang tidak terolah dan bahan kimia berbahayanya ke cagar laut dan perairan pesisir negara tersebut.⁵⁴¹ Laporan media setempat mengatakan bahwa polusi dari pabrik-pabrik ini telah merusak sumber air tawar dan pesisir laut, membunuh kehidupan laut, dan menyebabkan penduduk setempat menderita penyakit kulit.⁵⁴² Pengujian yang dilakukan oleh kelompok lokal dilaporkan menunjukkan level arsenat, fosfat, dan arsenik yang tidak aman.⁵⁴³ Gugatan tahun 2017 yang diajukan oleh NEA mengakibatkan salah satu pabrik milik RRT didenda dan ketiganya dipaksa menghentikan operasinya sementara.⁵⁴⁴ Pabrik tersebut telah dibuka kembali dan dilaporkan terus mencemari air setempat.⁵⁴⁵ Pada bulan Maret 2021, NEA mengeluarkan "pemberitahuan penghentian" kepada satu pabrik karena melanggar undang-undang lingkungan negara tersebut.⁵⁴⁶ Menurut media Gambia, pabrik tersebut terus melakukan pekerjaan ekspansi pabriknya meski ada perintah tersebut.⁵⁴⁷ Dalam jangka waktu yang sama, para demonstran lokal membakar pabrik makanan ikan milik RRT kedua sebagai tanggapan terhadap konstelasi keluhan lingkungan dan kriminal yang dituduhkan.⁵⁴⁸

26. Mengutak-atik AIS di kapal RRT

Kapal beroperasi secara "gelap", dengan mengaburkan lokasi, pergerakan, atau transmisinya atau memanipulasi data yang ditransmisikan oleh sinyalnya. Salah satu cara kapal beroperasi secara "gelap" adalah dengan menonaktifkan atau mengutak-atik AIS-nya, sebuah sistem pelacakan sumber terbuka otomatis yang membantu navigasi kapal yang aman dan

memungkinkan pihak berwenang melacak dan memantau gerakan kapal.⁵⁴⁹ Konvensi internasional dan undang-undang RRT mewajibkan kapal dengan bobot kotor lebih dari 300 ton agar dilengkapi AIS yang berfungsi saat berlayar di perairan internasional.⁵⁵⁰ Menurut para ahli, kapal terkadang mematikan atau mengutak-atik AIS mereka untuk menutupi aktivitas ilegal.⁵⁵¹ DWF dan jenis kapal RRT lain dilaporkan mengutak-atik AIS di kapal saat beroperasi di seluruh dunia.⁵⁵² Antara tahun 2018 dan 2021, terdapat laporan-laporan tentang kapal RRT yang diduga mematikan atau mengutak-atik AIS mereka untuk mengaburkan aktivitas terlarang di perairan DPRK,⁵⁵³ Ekuador,⁵⁵⁴ Vanuatu,⁵⁵⁵ Afrika Barat,⁵⁵⁶ Filipina,⁵⁵⁷ dan Indonesia.⁵⁵⁸

27. Kapal riset RRT beroperasi di perairan Indonesia tanpa AIS

Pada tanggal 11 Januari 2021, media berita Indonesia melaporkan bahwa Badan Keamanan Maritim Indonesia telah menghentikan kapal riset RRT *Xiang yang Hong* 03 di Selat Sunda karena beroperasi di perairan Indonesia dengan AIS dinonaktifkan.⁵⁵⁹ Menurut peraturan Indonesia dan internasional, semua kapal yang transit di jalur laut kepulauan Indonesia harus memiliki AIS yang berfungsi.⁵⁶⁰ Pemerintah Indonesia melaporkan kapal tersebut diduga melakukan aktivitas yang tidak sah di Selat Sunda pada saat AIS-nya mati.⁵⁶¹ Media melaporkan dugaan bahwa kapal RRT mengumpulkan informasi oseanografi untuk menginformasikan operasi kapal selam angkatan laut RRT.⁵⁶² Hukum Indonesia mewajibkan kapal-kapal asing untuk memperoleh izin melakukan penelitian kelautan dalam wilayah ZEE atau perairan wilayah Indonesia. Kementerian luar negeri Indonesia menunjukkan bahwa tidak ada izin seperti itu yang diberikan kepada kapal RRT tersebut.⁵⁶³

28. Masuk dan berlabuh secara ilegal di wilayah perairan Malaysia

Pada tanggal 9 Oktober 2020, media berita Malaysia dan internasional melaporkan bahwa MMEA mengumumkan telah menahan enam kapal nelayan berbendera RRT dan awak kapalnya saat memasuki serta berlabuh jangkar wilayah perairan Malaysia tanpa izin yang diperlukan.⁵⁶⁴ Para awak kapal dikabarkan memberi tahu pihak berwenang bahwa mereka sedang dalam perjalanan dari Tiongkok ke Mauritania dan berhenti dengan membuang jangkar karena “malafungsi” yang tidak jelas.⁵⁶⁵ Pada saat penahanan, laporan media Malaysia dan internasional mencatat bahwa pihak berwenang Malaysia sedang menyelidiki kasus ini berdasarkan pasal hukum Malaysia yang mengenakan denda dan hukuman penjara.⁵⁶⁶ Namun, pemerintah Malaysia melepaskan para awak dua minggu setelah ditahan tanpa membuat pernyataan publik tentang pembebasan mereka atau status penyelidikannya.⁵⁶⁷

29. Namibia menyelidiki kapal RRT karena memasuki wilayah dan memancing secara ilegal

Pada bulan Maret 2020, media setempat melaporkan bahwa angkatan laut Namibia telah menangkap enam kapal nelayan milik RRT di lokasi memancing yang populer, 17 mil dari pantai Namibia.⁵⁶⁸ Menurut media setempat, pihak berwenang Namibia menyatakan bahwa kapal-kapal RRT memasuki Namibia secara ilegal dan tidak mendapat izin untuk berlabuh.⁵⁶⁹ Pada akhirnya, penyelidikan tidak menemukan bukti penangkapan ikan ilegal, tetapi mengidentifikasi ketidaksesuaian dan bukti perilaku yang dapat digunakan untuk menyembunyikan aktivitas terlarang. Pertama, kapal penangkap ikan Tiongkok telah menyimpan surat izin tangkapan di Angola yang berakhir pada bulan Maret 2019, tetapi tidak ada buku catatan atau izin untuk 11 bulan berikutnya di perairan Guinea Khatulistiwa dan Namibia.⁵⁷⁰ Kedua, angkatan laut Namibia juga mencatat bahwa kapal-kapal itu telah menonaktifkan AIS mereka.⁵⁷¹ Ketiga, awak kapal RRT mengaku bahwa mereka berlabuh untuk menghindari cuaca buruk, tetapi angkatan laut Namibia tidak mendukung dugaan cuaca buruk tersebut.⁵⁷² Sebagai catatan, setelah kapal-kapal RRT dilepaskan, mereka berlayar ke perairan Afrika Selatan tanpa izin, di mana mereka ditahan dan didenda.⁵⁷³

30. Kepemilikan ilegal atas armada kapal pukat Ghana

Dua laporan investigasi yang diterbitkan oleh LSM lingkungan berbasis di AS di tahun 2019 dan 2021 menemukan bahwa perusahaan-perusahaan RRT adalah pemilik manfaat dari hampir semua pukat hela di Ghana.⁵⁷⁴ Merupakan hal yang ilegal di Ghana bagi perusahaan asing untuk memegang kepemilikan manfaat dari pukat hela berbendera Ghana.⁵⁷⁵ Menurut LSM yang berbasis di AS, perusahaan RRT mendaftarkan pukat hela di Kementerian Pertanian Tiongkok, serta mendaftarkan kapal tersebut dengan bendera Ghana melalui perusahaan cangkang yang didirikan secara lokal. Praktik ini memungkinkan mereka mendapatkan keuntungan dari subsidi bahan bakar RRT dan manfaat pajak serta mendapatkan izin memancing setempat berbiaya rendah dari otoritas Ghana dan menangkap ikan di ZEE Ghana.⁵⁷⁶ Menurut salah satu LSM yang berbasis di AS, praktik ilegal ini menyebabkan Ghana kehilangan dana hingga \$23 juta per tahun untuk biaya izin penangkapan ikan.⁵⁷⁷ Selain itu, praktik ini juga menyebabkan *IUU fishing* dan penurunan tangkapan dalam setiap usaha penangkapan ikan, berdampak buruk pada nelayan setempat.⁵⁷⁸

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Abbreviations

AIS	automatic identification system
CBP	US Customs and Border Protection
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
DWF	distant water fishing
EEZ	exclusive economic zone
EM	electronic monitoring
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IPOA	International Plan of Action
IUU	illegal, unregulated, and unreported
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MMEA	Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency
MMSI	Marine Mobile Service Identity
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NEA	Gambian National Environmental Agency
NGO	nongovernmental organization
PRC	People's Republic of China
RF	radio frequency
RFMO	regional fisheries management organization
SAR	synthetic aperture radar
SOLAS	Safety of Life at Sea
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
VIIRS	visible infrared imaging radiometer
VMS	vessel monitoring system

Singkatan

AIS	automatic identification system (sistem identifikasi otomatis)
CBP	US Customs and Border Protection (Bea Cukai dan Perlindungan Perbatasan AS)
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea (Republik Demokratik Rakyat Korea)
DWF	distant water fishing (penangkapan ikan di perairan jauh)
EEZ	exclusive economic zone (zona ekonomi eksklusif)
EM	electronic monitoring (pemantauan elektronik)
ILO	International Labour Organization (Organisasi Buruh Internasional)
IMO	International Maritime Organization (Organisasi Maritim Internasional)
IPOA	International Plan of Action (Rencana Tindakan Internasional)
IUU	illegal, unregulated, and unreported (ilegal, tidak diatur, dan tidak dilaporkan)
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Kementerian Luar Negeri)
MMEA	Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (Badan Penegakan Hukum Maritim Malaysia)
MMSI	Marine Mobile Service Identity (Identitas Layanan Mobile Maritim)
MOJ	Ministry of Justice (Kementerian Kehakiman AS)
NEA	National Environmental Agency (Badan Lingkungan Nasional Gambia)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization (LSM)
RRT	People's Republic of China (Republik Rakyat Tiongkok)
RF	Radio Frequency (Frekuensi Radio)
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization (Organisasi Manajemen Perikanan Regional)
SAR	Synthetic Aperture Radar (Radar Apertur Sintetis)
SOLAS	Safety of Life at Sea (Keselamatan Hidup di Laut)
PBB	Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Konvensi PBB tentang Hukum Laut)
VIIRS	Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer (Pencitraan Inframerah Terlihat Radiometer)
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System (Sistem Pemantauan Kapal Perikanan)

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មានគេកន្លែងទំព័រប៉ុណ្ណោះដែលរាយការបំពើបញ្ជាក់របស់ខ្លួន ទាក់ទិន្នន័យជាពីរនេះ:

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¹⁸⁸ See, for example, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference on December 15, 2020.”; “Regular Press Conference (2020-12-15).”; Wenbin, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference on December 25, 2020.”

¹⁸⁹ See, for example, Jingjing, “US Mounts ‘Forced Labor’ Lies on Fishing Firm to Serve Strategy of Containing China Following Attack on Xinjiang Industries.” Wenbin, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference on May 31, 2021; “China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Alleged Forced Labor Is a Conspiracy.”

¹⁹⁰ For example, during a PRC embassy press conference in Jakarta, a spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy to Indonesia answered reporters' questions regarding the deaths of Indonesian crew members aboard PRC fishing vessels. The spokesperson's response at the time conveyed concern over the reported deaths and assurances of cooperation with Indonesian authorities regarding investigations. “Spokesperson of Chinese Embassy to Indonesia Answers Reporters' Question Regarding Indonesian Crew Members Who Passed Away on a Chinese Fishing Vessel and Relevant Issues [Juru Bicara Kedutaan Tiongkok untuk Indonesia kembali menjawab pertanyaan wartawan mengenai masalah yang melibatkan ABK WNI di sebuah kapal perikanan].”

¹⁹¹ “China Is a Responsible Fishing Country.”

¹⁹² See, for example, Glenda Willie, “The Chinese Embassy in Port Vila Did Not Respond to Requests for Comment,” *Daily Post Vanuatu*, Mar. 15, 2021, https://www.dailypost.vu/news/chinese-nationals-pi-next-week/article_7950988c-8517-11eb-a64d-af2fea32f071.html; “Vanuatu Detains Chinese Fishing Boats, Russian Yacht,” Agence France Press, Jan. 30, 2021, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210130-vanuatu-detains-chinese-fishing-boats-russian-yachtS>.

¹⁹³ See, for example, Willie, “The Chinese Embassy in Port Vila Did Not Respond to Requests for Comment.”; “Vanuatu Detains Chinese Fishing Boats, Russian Yacht.”

¹⁹⁴ CNA did not observe any PRC media reporting on the incident in English or French—two official languages of Vanuatu. The few Chinese-language PRC media reports observed asserted that this was the first time that Vanuatu had detained a Chinese fishing boat.

¹⁹⁵ CNA did not observe any PRC media reporting on the incident in French—the official language of Gabon.

¹⁹⁶ CNA did not observe any PRC media reporting on the incident in French—the official language of Gabon.

¹⁹⁷ “Discussions on the Burnt-Down Sanyang Fishmeal Factory Should Be Constructive.” “China Moves Forward with Investments in Gambia, Despite Protests.”

¹⁹⁸ CNA did not observe any PRC media reporting on the incident in English—the official language of Gambia.

¹⁹⁹ A PRC embassy representative in Ghana reportedly acknowledged the PRC-owned trawler fleet during a 2012 media interview. See Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy in Ghana, “Counselor Gao Wenzhi Interviewed by the Special Issue of China-Africa Trade and Economic Cooperation in the International Business Daily,” Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China, Mar. 30, 2012, accessed Feb. 28, 2018,

<http://www.mofcom.gov.cn/aarticle/i/dxfw/gzzd/201203/20120308044957.html> accessed via: *China's Hidden Fleet in West Africa: A Spotlight on Illegal Practices Within Ghana's Industrial Trawl Sector.*

²⁰⁰ “China Urges Malaysia to Investigate Fishing Vessel Detention Case.”; “Malaysia Detained 60 Fishermen from 6 Chinese Fishing Boats? Chinese Embassy Response.”; “China Attaches Great Importance to Malaysia’s Detention of 60 Chinese Nationals: Embassy.”; “China's Embassy in Malaysia Seeks Protection for Legitimate Rights of Detained Chinese Sailors.”, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian's Regular Press Conference on October 12, 2020.”

²⁰¹ “China Urges Malaysia to Investigate Fishing Vessel Detention Case.”; “Malaysia Detained 60 Fishermen from 6 Chinese Fishing Boats? Chinese Embassy Response.”; “China Attaches Great Importance to Malaysia’s Detention of 60 Chinese Nationals: Embassy.”; “China's Embassy in Malaysia

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²⁰³ One English report from the state-run nationalist-leaning *Global Times* newspaper blamed “mistaken government support for and promotion of the giant clam industry in Tanmen, Hainan Province” for “excessive exploitation” and “destruction of coral reef ecosystems.” See “S. China Sea Corals on Brink of Extinction,” *Global Times*, May 24, 2016, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/984745.shtml>. Another English report acknowledged that the “considerable economic opportunities” the giant clam shell trade entailed led to “unsustainable fishing methods that have not only led to a rapid decline in the number of giant clams in the South China Sea, but have also seriously damaged the coral reef ecosystem.” See “Giant Clams Still on Sale in South China Despite Bans,” *Global Times*, Apr. 25, 2019, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1147431.shtml>. For other examples, see, “Shenzhen Authorities Intercept Clam Shell Products,” *China Daily*, Sept. 19, 2017, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2017-09/19/content_32198728.htm; “Over 300 Smuggled Endangered Species Items Seized in NE China,” *Xinhua*, May 19, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-05/19/c_138070724.htm.

²⁰⁴ English and Indonesian-language PRC media reporting also sought to portray PRC research vessels in a positive light, highlighting their efforts to assist the Indonesian navy in the retrieval of its sunken submarine KRI *Nanggala* 402.

²⁰⁵ PRC MFA statements assert that PRC vessels rigorously abide by separate, but related, PRC VMS requirements. See “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian’s Regular Press Conference on September 10, 2020.”; “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference on October 9, 2020.”; “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin’s Regular Press Conference on September 28, 2020.”; “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin’s Regular Press Conference on December 25, 2020.”

²⁰⁶ PRC embassies have reposted MFA remarks about PRC vessels abiding by rigorous VMS requirements. They do not remark specifically on AIS tampering or deactivating.

²⁰⁷ See, for example, “Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denies Pompeo’s ‘Worried and Concerned’ Statement on Chinese Fishing Vessel Operations on the High Seas.”; “Chinese Fishing Vessels Operate in Accordance with Relevant International Laws.”; “Pollution: Clandestine Treatment of Garbage in China.”

²⁰⁸ CNA did not observe any PRC media reporting on the incident in Arabic—the official language of Mauritania.

²⁰⁹ See, for example, “The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Talks About the Collision of Chinese and Philippine Fishing Boats: I Believe the Two Sides Can Properly Handle the Matter.”

²¹⁰ See, for example, “Press Release on the So-Called Collision of Fishing Boats Between China and the Philippines.”

²¹¹ See, for example, “China in America: Stop Baseless Criticism.”; “The Japanese Destroyer Collided with a Chinese Fishing Boat and Returned to Hong Kong. The Side of the Apron Was Knocked out of a Crack.”; “Vietnam Disrupts Chinese Company’s Exploration of Xisha Islands, Illegal — Chinese Ambassador to Australia.”; “A Vietnamese Fishing Boat Sank While Harassing and Colliding with a Chinese Fishing Vessel in the Waters of China’s Xisha Islands-The Fishermen on Board Were Rescued.”

²¹² According to a Namibian navy official, the navy detained the PRC vessels in response to reports of illegal activity and contradictory statements from the crew, noting that the PRC crew “initially refused to cooperate and wanted to proceed with their way to China.” See “Chinese Vessels Cleared of Illegal

Fishing.”; “Navy Intercepts Suspicious Fishing Vessels.”; “Chinese Vessels Found in Namibian Waters: Something Fishy?”

²¹³ CNA did not observe any PRC media reporting on the incident in English—the official language of Namibia.

²¹⁴ The PRC embassy in Cambodia issued a press release on September 8, 2021, two months after the *Tong Hai* incident, in response to local media reporting about human smuggling and illegal gambling in Sihanoukville’s “China Town.” This press release emphasized that “most of the victims” are PRC citizens and urged cooperation with local law enforcement. See “The Spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in Cambodia Made a Statement on the Cambodian Media’s Report on the “China Town” In Sihanoukville.”

²¹⁵ CNA did not observe any PRC media reporting on the incident in Khmer—the official language of Cambodia.

²¹⁶ Somers, “US Embassy Commends ROP Government and Condemns Chinese IUU Fishing.”

²¹⁷ Myrtle Hazard, “Palau and USCG Bust Chinese Vessel for Illegal Fishing,” *Maritime Executive*, Dec. 24, 2020, <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/palau-and-uscg-bust-chinese-vessel-for-illegal-fishing>.

²¹⁸ “Chinese Poachers Barred from Returning to Palau.”

²¹⁹ Adam Somers, “Chinese fishing boat stripped and escorted out of Palau,” *Island Times*, Jan. 5, 2021, <https://islandtimes.org/chinese-fishing-boat-stripped-and-escorted-out-of-palau/>.

²²⁰ Willie, “Chinese Fishing Vessels Seized.”

²²¹ McGarry, “Chinese Fishing Captains Face Jail, Big Fines for Alleged Illegal Fishing in Vanuatu.”

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Hilaire Bule and Glenda Willie, “14 Plead Not Guilty,” *Daily Post Vanuatu*, May 19, 2021, https://www.dailypost.vu/news/14-plead-not-guilty/article_5d5df734-b82d-11eb-bc45-a38a2e0ce52e.html.

²²⁴ “Two Trawlers Arrested with Over One Ton of Rays and Fins in Gabon.”

²²⁵ *Fisheries and Aquaculture Code Law n 015 2005 [Code des pêches et de l'aquaculture Loi n°015/2005]*, 2005; Mounombou, “Illegal Fishing: Two Trawlers in the Nets of Operation Albacore.”

²²⁶ “Leveraging NGOs and Volunteerism for Maritime Surveillance Against IUU Fishing.”

²²⁷ “Gabon Cracks Downon Illegal Trawlers,” Livestock and Fisheries Chamber, 2020, accessed Aug. 27, 2021, <https://livestockandfisherieschamber.com/gabon-cracks-down-on-illegal-trawlers/>.

²²⁸ “Chinese trawler caught illegal fishing in protected waters of Loango National Park,” Un chalutier chinois pris en flagrant délit de pêche illégale dans les eaux protégées du parc national de Loango, Direct Info Gabon, Aug. 18, 2019, <https://directinfosgabon.com/un-chalutier-chinois-pris-en-flagrant-delit-de-peche-illegale-dans-les-eaux-protegees-du-parc-national-de-loango/>.

²²⁹ *Regulations on the protection of coral reefs and clams in Hainan Province* (海南省珊瑚礁和砗磲保护规定), Qionghai, Hainan, China Government, (May 24, 2021), accessed Sept. 27, 2021, http://qionghai.hainan.gov.cn/zfxxgkzl/bm/gongsj/gkml/202105/t20210524_2983261.html; *Philippine fisheries code Republic Act No. 8550*, Congress of the Philippines Tenth Congress, (Feb. 25, 1998), accessed Sept. 26, 2021, UN FAOLEX, <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/phi16098.pdf>; *Philippines' Wildlife Protection Act Republic Act No. 9147*, Congress of the Philippines Eleventh Congress, (July 30, 2001), accessed Sept. 26, 2021, Philippines Official Gazette, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2001/07/30/republic-act-no-9417/>; *Giant Clams Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) – Vulnerable*, 1985; *Tridacna gigas IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*, 2004.

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²³¹ “Sino Poachers Target Giant Clams in Palawan Waters.”; “PH Protests China’s Harvest of Giant Clams.”

²³² See, for example, "Harvesting Giant Clams Has Led to 'Wanton Destruction' of Scarborough Shoal: Expert."; "Sino Poachers Kill Coral Reefs."; "PH Protests China's Harvest of Giant Clams."

²³³ Dr. John McManus, *Massively Destructive Coral Reef Damage from Giant Clam Shell Digging in the South China Sea*, OpenChannels, 2019, <https://vimeo.com/342103171>; Chiara Zambrano, "EXCLUSIVE: Chinese harvesting giant clams in Scarborough Shoal," ABS CBN, Apr. 15, 2019, <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/04/15/19/exclusive-chinese-harvesting-giant-clams-in-scarborough-shoal>.

²³⁴ See, for example, "Fujian subsidies to the fishing sector bring trouble to West African waters," الدعم, الفوجياني لقطاع الصيد يجلب المتاعب لمياه غرب إفريقيا, Africa Defense Forum, Aug. 11, 2021, https://adf--magazine-com.translate.goog/ar/2021/08/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%88%D8%AC%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B7%D8%A7%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D9%8A%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AA/?_x_tr_sl=ar&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=nui,sc. Gitonga Njeru, "Chinese companies get go-ahead to operate in a range of industries in Mauritania ", Beijing Review, June 18, 2019,

http://www.bjreview.com/World/201906/t20190618_800171021.html; "Mauritania: 3 Fishermen Were Killed After Their Boat Collided with a Chinese Ship."

²³⁵ "Mauritanians Protest Chinese Fishing After Deadly Incident."

²³⁶ "Mauritania: 3 Fishermen Died After Their Boat Collided with a Chinese Ship, and the Matter Worsened."; "Mauritania: 3 Fishermen Were Killed After Their Boat Collided with a Chinese Ship."

²³⁷ "Nouadhibou: A Chinese ship kills four Mauritanian fishermen," نواديبيو: باخرة صينية تتسبب في مقتل أربعة صيادين موريتانيين, El Hiyad, July 26, 2017, https://elhiyad-info.translate.goog/node/4413?_x_tr_sch=http&_x_tr_sl=ar&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=nui,s. As of October 2021, reporting on the outcome of cases brought against the PRC fishermen were not observed.

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²³⁹ "DFW: 35 Indonesian Migrant Fishing Vessel Crew Die Abroad."; *Forced Labor at Sea: The Case of Indonesian Migrant Fishers*.

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⁴⁷¹ Lihat, contohnya, "A Vietnamese Fishing Boat Sank While Harassing and Colliding with a Chinese Fishing Vessel in the Waters of China's Xisha Islands-The Fishermen on Board Were Rescued.;" "Vietnam Disrupts Chinese Company's Exploration of Xisha Islands, Illegal — Chinese Ambassador to Australia.;" "US Urged to Stop Spying in the South China Sea," AS Digesa Hentikan Kegiatan Pengintipan di Laut China Selatan, Malay CRI, Dec. 18, 2016, <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:GPweZ83g1jcJ:malay.cri.cn/601/2016/12/18/27s166433.htm+&cd=7&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>; "The Second Batch of Chinese Medical Aid Delivered to Mauritania," CRI Arabic, Apr. 21, 2020, https://arabic-cri-cn.translate.goog/news/china/438/20200421/456053.html?_x_tr_sch=http&_x_tr_sl=ar&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=nui,sc; "It Is Better to Advance the Fisheries Agreement with China," Mas magandang isulong ang Fisheries Agreement sa Tsina, Filipino CRI, Nov. 17, 2017, https://filipino-cri-cn.translate.goog/301/2017/11/17/109s152848.htm?_x_tr_sch=http&_x_tr_sl=tl&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=nui,sc,elem; "Interview: Chairman of the Ruling Party in Mauritania: The Chinese Communist Party Is Leading China to Achieve Unprecedented Development," CRI Arabic, July 16, 2021, http://arabic.news.cn/2021-07/16/c_1310065216.htm; "Indonesia Ends KRI Nanggala 402 Submarine Lifting Operation," Indonesia Akhiri Operasi Pengangkatan Kapal Selam KRI Nanggala 402, Indonesian CRI, June 3, 2021, <http://indonesian.cri.cn/20210603/d326421e-f138-8ee8-906b-999eb8fbe624.html>; "Pollution: Clandestine Treatment of Garbage in China."

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⁴⁷³ Juru Bicara Kedutaan Besar Tiongkok Menjawab Pertanyaan tentang Laporan Dugaan Kapal Tiongkok Membuang Sampah di Laut Cina Selatan, ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Lihat, contohnya, 15 Juli, 2021, artikel yang diterbitkan oleh *Global Times*, anak perusahaan non-otoritatif yang telah dikenal luas dan berpengaruh dari *People's Daily* dengan ikatan nasionalis yang kuat, yang memberitakan respons Kementerian Luar Negeri RRT, yang menyebut laporan kapal RRT melakukan pembuangan sebagai "dibuat-buat dan berbahaya." "Chinese FM Condemns 'Fabricated, Malicious' Report of US Company Accusing Chinese Ships of Dumping Sewage in South China Sea."; "Twitter Thread about Simularity Report Funding."; "Twitter Thread About Simularity Report Chlorophyll Analysis.";

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⁴⁸¹ Lihat, contohnya, Glenda Willie, "The Chinese Embassy in Port Vila Did Not Respond to Requests for Comment," *Daily Post Vanuatu*, Mar. 15, 2021, https://www.dailypost.vu/news/chinese-nationals-ip-next-week/article_7950988c-8517-11eb-a64d-af2fea32f071.html; "Vanuatu Detains Chinese Fishing Boats, Russian Yacht," Agence France Press, Jan. 30, 2021, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210130-vanuatu-detains-chinese-fishing-boats-russian-yachtS>.

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⁴⁸⁴ CNA tidak melihat laporan media tentang RRT apa pun tentang insiden tersebut dalam bahasa Prancis—bahasa resmi Gabon.

⁴⁸⁵ CNA tidak melihat laporan media tentang RRT apa pun tentang insiden tersebut dalam bahasa Prancis—bahasa resmi Gabon.

⁴⁸⁶ "Discussions on the Burnt-Down Sanyang Fishmeal Factory Should Be Constructive." "China Moves Forward with Investments in Gambia, Despite Protests."

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⁴⁹¹ "China Urges Malaysia to Investigate Fishing Vessel Detention Case."; "Malaysia Detained 60 Fishermen from 6 Chinese Fishing Boats? Chinese Embassy Response."; "China Attaches Great Importance to Malaysia's Detention of 60 Chinese Nationals: Embassy."; "China's Embassy in Malaysia Seeks Protection for Legitimate Rights of Detained Chinese Sailors."; "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian's Regular Press Conference on October 12, 2020."

⁴⁹² Salah satu laporan berbahasa Inggris dari koran nasional yang dikelola negara, *Global Times* menyalahkan "kesalahan dukungan pemerintah untuk mendukung dan mempromosikan industri kima raksasa di Tanmen, Provinsi Hainan" atas "eksploitasi berlebihan" dan "perusakan ekosistem terumbu karang." Lihat "S. China Sea Corals on Brink of Extinction," *Global Times*, May 24, 2016, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/984745.shtml>. Laporan berbahasa Inggris lainnya mengakui bahwa "peluang ekonomi yang cukup besar" yang dihasilkan perdagangan kulit kima raksasa ini mengakibatkan "metode penangkapan ikan yang tidak berkelanjutan dan tidak hanya menyebabkan penurunan jumlah kima raksasa di Laut Tiongkok Selatan, tetapi juga telah benar-benar merusak ekosistem terumbu karang." Lihat "Giant Clams Still on Sale in South China Despite Bans," *Global Times*, Apr. 25, 2019, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1147431.shtml>. Untuk contoh lain, lihat, "Shenzhen Authorities Intercept Clam Shell Products," China Daily, Sept. 19, 2017, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2017-09/19/content_32198728.htm; "Over 300 Smuggled Endangered Species Items Seized in NE China," Xinhua, May 19, 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-05/19/c_138070724.htm.

⁴⁹³ Media RRT berbahasa Inggris dan Indonesia juga berupaya menggambarkan kapal-kapal penelitian RRT tersebut secara positif, menyoroti upaya mereka untuk membantu angkatan laut Indonesia dalam mengangkat kapal selam KRI *Nanggala* 402 yang tenggelam.

⁴⁹⁴ Pernyataan MFA RRT menegaskan bahwa kapal RRT harus mematuhi persyaratan VMS RRT yang terpisah tetapi terkait. Lihat "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian's Regular Press Conference on September 10, 2020."; "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Regular Press Conference on October 9, 2020."; "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference on September 28, 2020."; "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference on December 25, 2020."

⁴⁹⁵ Kedutaan besar RRT telah memposting ulang keterangan MFA tentang kapal RRT yang mematuhi persyaratan VMS yang ketat. Mereka tidak secara khusus memberikan pernyataan tentang pengubahan atau penonaktifan AIS.

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