

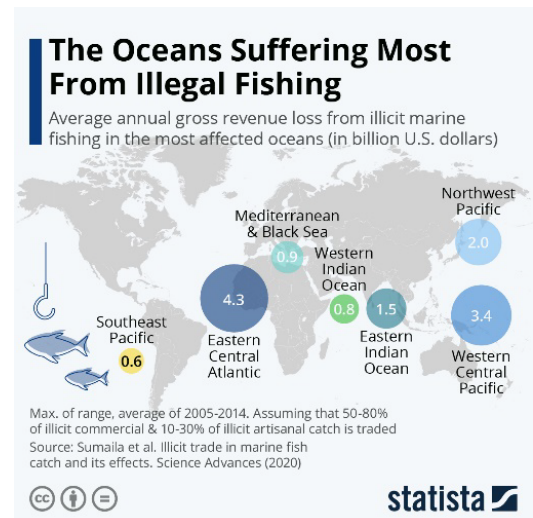
## Criminal Activities Undermining African Development

*This fact sheet series aims to raise awareness about the global threat to development that Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) pose, and what we can do to stop the threat.*

According to Financial Transparency, criminal activities are about 30 percent of the Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) from Africa. As IFF mechanisms siphon away taxable revenue from African nations, a country's ability to combat criminal activity plummets, contributing to widespread instability. With more than \$80 Billion lost to IFFs annually, many African countries do not have the economic and legal frameworks to fix these problems effectively.

Criminal activity undermines global Rule of Law norms and have wide-ranging negative consequences. Activities that fall under the IFF umbrella include:

- **Illegal Fishing:** fishing activities conducted by national or foreign fishing vessels in maritime waters under the jurisdiction of a State, without the permission of that State, or in contravention of its laws and regulations
- **Human Trafficking:** a crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services or to engage in commercial sex acts
- **Weapon Trafficking:** the illicit import, export, acquisition, sale, delivery, movement, or transfer of firearms
- **Drug Trafficking:** a global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution, and sale of substances that are subject to drug prohibition laws



Ending transnational criminal activity requires cohesive international efforts. Strengthening national public safety systems and increasing worldwide commitment to the Law of the Sea are priorities. As

important, regions driving the demand for illegal products, for example, North America and Europe should use their resources to stop importing illicit goods.

A better-educated public and more accountable businesses also play critical roles in reducing the demand for illegally sourced items. Without reducing demand, better law enforcement, and a commitment to hold bad actors accountable, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) as outlined by the [UNDP](#) are unachievable because of the catastrophic losses from these illegal practices. As Shamila Batohi, South Africa's National Director of Prosecutions, succinctly states, "Monies destined to uplift the most vulnerable, the poorest of the communities in South Africa, has left the country." These are "monies that would have been used to provide basic infrastructure, water, sanitization, accommodation, schools."

## **Barriers to African Development**

Criminal action impedes every facet of African development. Illegal activities under the IFF rubric hinder progress towards sustainable development goals on the continent, and they also contribute to instability. For example, where illegal fishing and drug trafficking occur, often additional criminal activities exist, such as weapons and human trafficking

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing affects every African coastal country. Foreign vessels fishing without authorization from African countries, fishing out of season, misreporting, or underreporting catches are examples of illegal fishing. According to the UN, [IUU fishing has cost the "countries of Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Guinea an estimated \\$2.3 billion per year between 2010 and 2016."](#) According to the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), ["Ghana alone loses about \\$100 million a year in catches."](#)

In addition to the economic consequences, IUU also contributes to the destruction of marine ecosystems, job loss, trade disruption, and economic migration. While African countries are working towards increasing their capacity to combat IUU, the problem is global. According to a [High-Level Panel for Sustainable Ocean Economy](#),

*"the three main drivers of IUU fishing are economic incentives that make IUU fishing a low-risk, high-profit activity; weak governance that fails to enact or live up to fisheries management regulations; and barriers to enforcement of fishing regulations caused by lack of political will, lack of enforcement capacity, and sometimes corruption."*

All nations have a duty to enforce international law, an obligation to ensure that international law is respected, and all citizens have a right to demand that the seafood they purchase is legally sourced without the use of slave labor.

## **What can you do?**

**First**, you can sign the petition, [Multinational Corporations are Stealing Africa's Money and Resources](#). It urges US House and Senate Africa Subcommittee leaders to hold hearings and pass a

joint resolution condemning IFFs. After adding your voice, please forward the link to your friends and colleagues.

After signing, please forward the link to your friends and colleagues. In addition, please:

- Visit the [US-Africa Bridge Building](#) website and sign-up for periodic updates on the petition campaign.
- Visit the [Africa Focus Bulletin](#) for current information.
- Follow the [FACT Coalition](#) and the [Jubilee USA Network](#) on Twitter and Facebook for periodic updates on advocacy efforts to increase corporate transparency and reduce Africa's debt burden.
- Join [Africans Rising for Justice, Peace, and Dignity](#) for related campaigns.

With your support, we can build the collective power needed to ensure that "We the People" overcome corporate corruption, political gridlock, and systemic inequalities in our economic system.

*\*The US-Africa Bridge Building Project sincerely thanks Research and Social Media Intern Seamus Love for contributing to the Stop the Bleeding fact sheet series.*

The US-Africa Bridge Building Project links economic inequality activists and social movements to strengthen collective efforts for tax justice at all levels of the global economy. Ending IFFs is a critical part of that fight. [Please join us to receive periodic updates.](#)

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