

USE CASE

SUPPORTING UNODC IN GHANA

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) manages a Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP) with activities in the areas of counter-piracy, maritime capacity building, and combating maritime crime including the trafficking of illicit substances by sea.

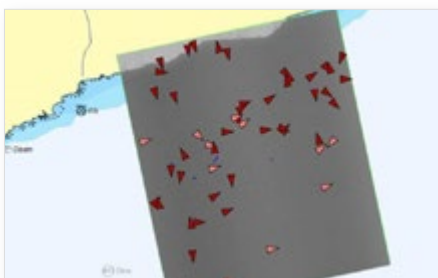
In 2019, in the framework of the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, the UNODC GMCP along with the Gulf of Guinea Inter-regional Network (GoGIN) supported a pilot exercise being conducted by the Ghanaian Navy, the Ghana Fisheries Commission (Monitoring Control and Surveillance Division) and the maritime police. The purpose of the exercise was to increase capacities to use satellite information in the context of multinational maritime law enforcement. The Ghanaian Navy made available a crewed vessel to inspect targets identified on the satellite images.

CMS provided two synthetic aperture radar (SAR) images, one in the morning and one in the evening on the day of the exercise. These images had been analysed to detect probable vessels. The detections were checked against other

sources from reporting systems at EMSA, to see whether the detected vessels were transmitting information such as vessel name, location, speed or heading. If they match, the vessels are designated as 'correlated'; if they are not reporting their position they are considered 'uncorrelated' vessels.

These images were then delivered in near real time to the UNODC and used to identify potential 'dark targets' which might have been engaged in suspicious activity. By analysing the size and location of the vessels that were not reporting, the Ghanaian Navy and Fisheries Commission were able to select the vessels to be inspected. As a result, two vessels – one fishing vessel and one oil tanker – were boarded and investigated.

The operation was viewed positively by the partners involved and received coverage on national television. Representatives from the ECOWAS centres in charge of coordinating maritime security and maritime operations supervised the event and compiled lessons learned to contribute to future joint operations.



One of the images delivered, showing correlated and uncorrelated vessels in pink and red respectively, and oil spills in blue.



The operation was viewed positively by the national media



Photos of the operation

Get in touch for more information

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CREDITS

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Copernicus, the European Union's Earth Observation Programme, delivers operational data and information services to support a broad range of environmental and security applications. The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) is responsible for implementing the Copernicus Maritime Surveillance Service.