

A large Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force ship is seen from a rear-quarter perspective, sailing on the open ocean. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, golden glow and a shimmering reflection on the water's surface. The ship's complex superstructure, including masts and radar equipment, is silhouetted against the bright sky. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

# Annual Report 2025

## “Japan's Actions against Piracy off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden”

March 2026

Cabinet Secretariat The Government of Japan

# Somalia and the Surroundings (off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden)

## ➤ Importance of the Gulf of Aden for Japan

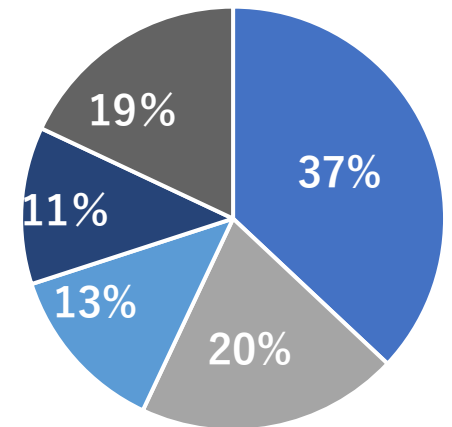
Japan imports many of the various energy resources, mineral resources, marine products, agricultural products, and other resources from overseas that form the basis of the nation's economic activities and social life, and 99.5% of its trade volume (based on tonnage) is dependent on marine transportation. Therefore, it is extremely important for Japan's economy and the lives of its citizens to ensure safe navigation of ocean-going vessels. The Gulf of Aden, about 12,000 km from Japan, is located on the east side of the Bab el Mandeb Strait, the entrance to the Red Sea that connects to the Suez Canal, and is a strategic point on the maritime transportation route linking Asia and Europe. The area is also extremely important for Japan, as approximately 1,800 vessels\* related to Japan pass through it each year\*\*.



\* Annual Passage of Japan-Related Vessels through the Gulf of Aden  
※ Japanese flag vessels, and foreign flag vessels operated by Japanese shipping companies or overseas subsidiaries wholly owned by the companies

\*\* Many Japanese and foreign shipping companies have been forced to stop navigating the Red Sea since November 2023 and forced vessels to reroute around the Cape of Good Hope due to the deteriorating situation in the Middle East. As a result, the actual number of vessels passing in 2025 is zero.

Approx. 1,800 Vessels



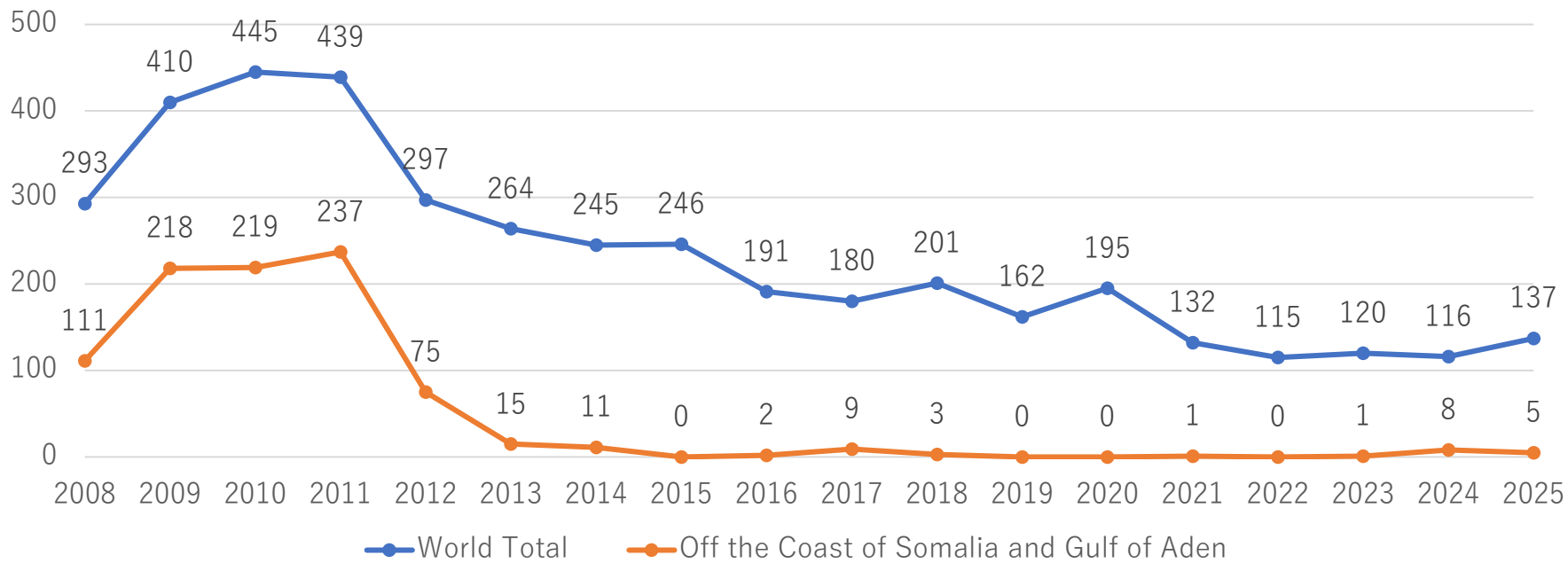
- Pure Car Carriers
- Container Carriers
- Bulk Carrier
- Chemical Tankers

# Piracy Incidents off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden

## ➤ Number of Incidents

Japan remains concerned about the threat of piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. Although the number of attacks and hijackings has decreased since 2012, the situation could be easily reversed if the international community reduces its efforts, considering the fact that Somalia is still dealing with the assumed root cause of piracy. In fact, for the first time since 2017, a merchant vessel was hijacked by Somali pirates in December 2023. The number of attacks and hijackings in 2025 was 5 confirmed cases.

Number of Incidents of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships

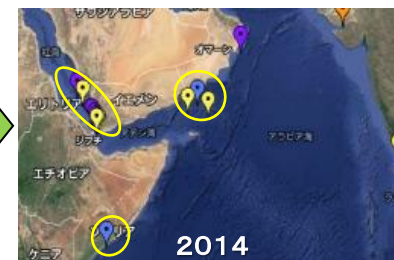
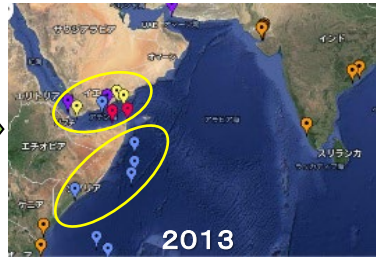
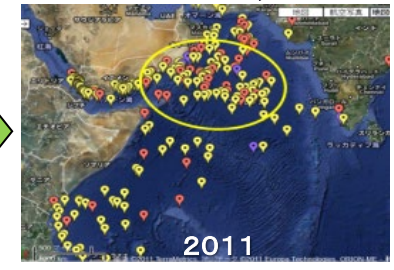
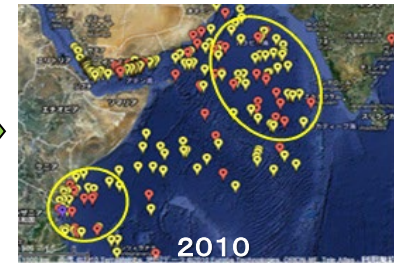
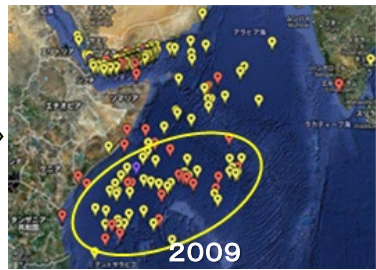


\*(Source: International Chamber of Commerce International Maritime Bureau Annual Report 2025)

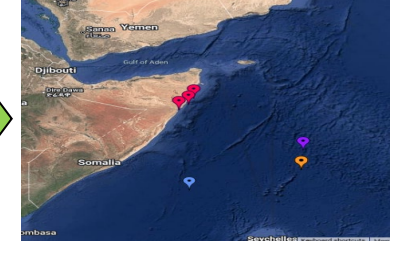
# Piracy Incidents off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden

## ➤ Locations of Incidents

📍 =Hijacked   🟢 =Boarded   🟡 =Fired upon   🟠 =Attempted Attack   🟣 =Suspicious vessel



\* 0 incident in 2015, 2 incidents in 2016



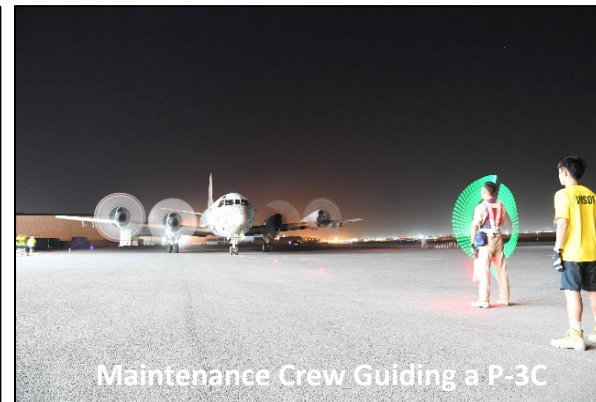
\*\* 0 incident in 2019~2020 and 2022, 1 incident in 2021

\*(Source: International Chamber of Commerce International Maritime Bureau Annual Report 2025)

# Japan's Actions against Piracy

- The Counter-Piracy Operation by Japan Maritime Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and the Japan Coast Guard (JCG) (See “Overview” on Page 6)

In Mar. 2009, with the approval of the Prime Minister for “Maritime Security Operations”, two destroyers of Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) started the mission to escort Japan-related vessels in order to protect them from pirates off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. 8 officers of Japan Coast Guard (JCG) also are on board for judicial police activities of counter-piracy. In Jun. 2009, two P-3C patrol aircraft joined surveillance activities in the Gulf of Aden to cover the extensive marine area. Also, in view of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Japan subsequently enacted the “Law for Punishment of Acts of Piracy and Measures to Deal with Acts of Piracy” (Counter-Piracy Measures Act) in Jul. 2009. Since the following month, JSDF and JCG have implemented “Counter-Piracy Operations”. The current base of these activities is in the Republic of Djibouti.



## Japan's Actions against Piracy

- The Counter-Piracy Operation by Japan Maritime Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and Japan Coast Guard (JCG) (See “Overview” on Page 6)

In Jul. 2013, the Government of Japan decided to join CTF151\*, for the purpose of conducting more flexible and effective operations with other countries’ forces deployed around Somalia for counter-piracy operations. In Dec. 2013, JSDF destroyers started “zone defense”\*\* in addition to the escort missions. And since Feb. 2014, JSDF’s flight team has been participating in CTF151. In Nov. 2016, the Government of Japan decided to reduce the number of destroyers deployed in the Gulf of Aden from two to one, since the demand of direct escort by JSDF had been decreasing and this trend was expected to continue. In addition, four JSDF officers served as a CTF151 Commander (May. till Aug. in 2015, Mar. till Jun. in 2017, Mar. till Jun. in 2018 and Feb. till Jun. in 2020). These opportunities have boosted JSDF’s reliability in the international community and represents JSDF’s continuous contribution to maritime security.

Having improved the maintenance facilities at the base, activities previously carried out by two P-3C patrol aircraft can now be carried out by a single aircraft at the same level as before. In addition to this improvement, taking into account Japan’s surrounding security environment, the Government of Japan decided to reduce the number of P-3C patrol aircraft deployed in the Gulf of Aden from two to one in Nov. 2023.

\*In Jun. 2021, CMF and CTF151 were reorganized for the purpose of more efficient operation.

\*\*Stationing in certain waters to protect navigating vessels

# JSDF's Counter-Piracy Operations

## Deployed Forces

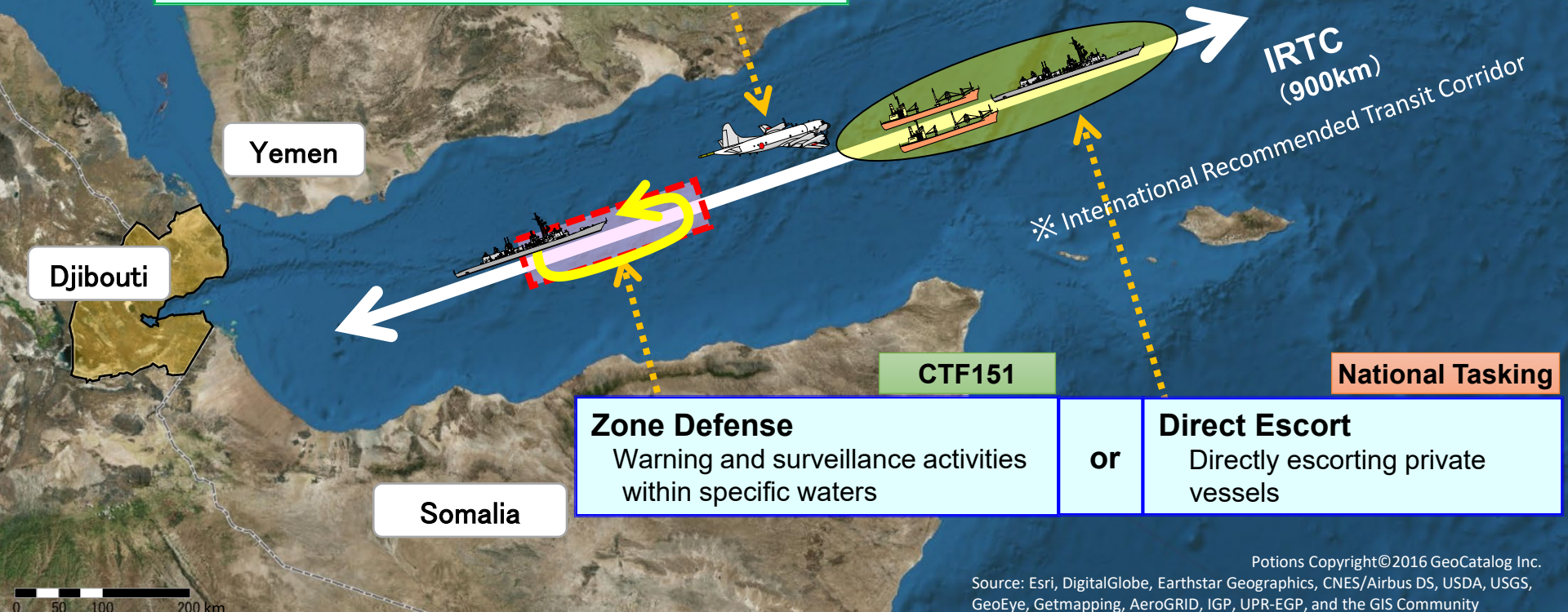
- DSPE (approx. 200 personnel/1 destroyer)
- DAPE (approx. 60 personnel/1 P-3C)
- DGPE (approx. 130 personnel)

## International Activities

Naval Vessels		Aircraft
<b>Direct Escort</b> National Tasking (Japan, China, India etc.)	<b>Zone Defense</b> CTF151 (Japan, Korea etc.) EUNAVFOR (Spain, Italy etc.)	CTF151 (Japan) EUNAVFOR (Spain)

CTF151

**[Surveillance activities(P-3C patrol aircraft)]**  
 Provision of information from the airspace over the escort route



### Zone Defense

Warning and surveillance activities within specific waters

or

### Direct Escort

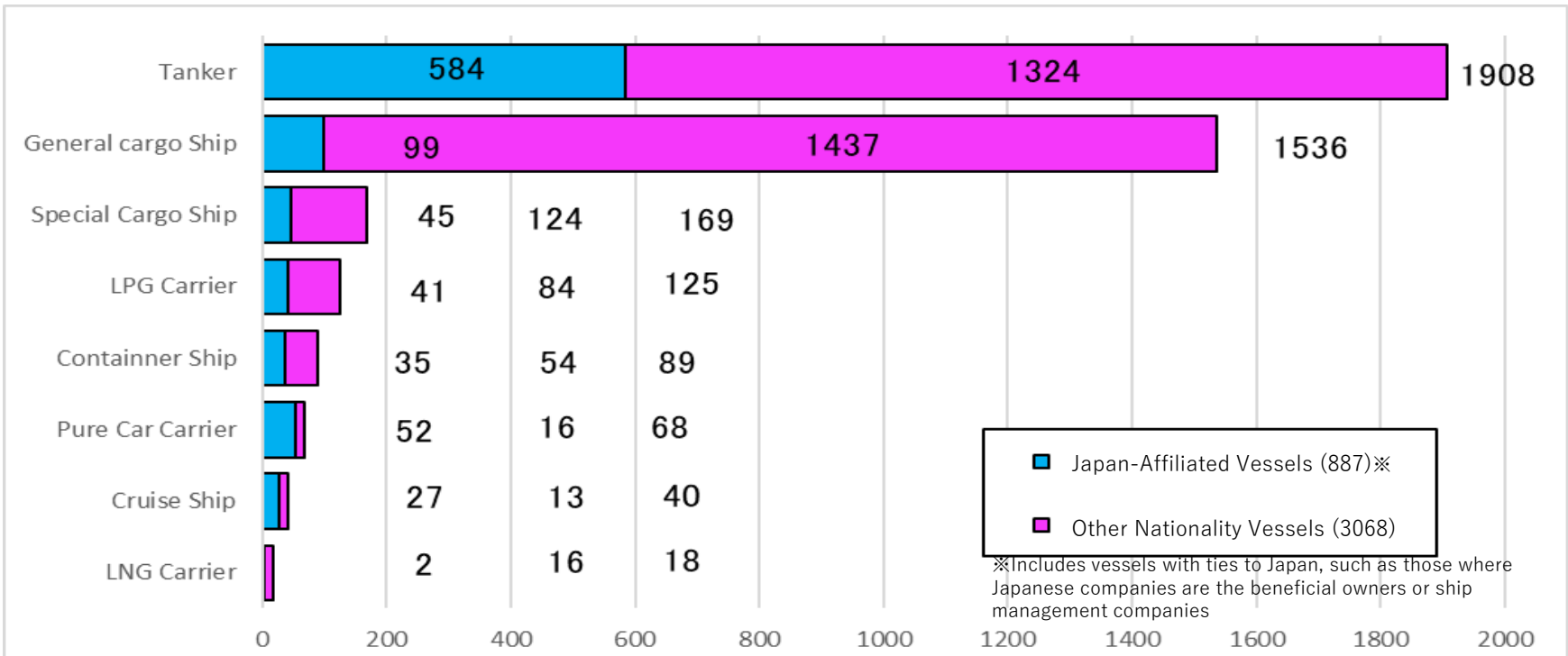
Directly escorting private vessels

# Japan's Actions against Piracy

## ➤ Outline of the Escorted Vessels and Seafarers

As of Dec. 31 2025, 3,955 vessels have been escorted under the protection of the JSDF's destroyers. Not a single vessel has come to any harm from pirates, and these vessels have all passed safely through the Gulf of Aden. The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism(MLIT) of Japan provides a single contact point for coordination with the JSDF's escort.

**Type of ships (in total)**



# Japan's Actions against Piracy

- Act on Special Measures concerning the Guarding of Japanese Ships in Pirate-Infested Waters (Act No.75 of 2013, Enacted on Nov. 13 2013, Enforced on Nov. 30 2013, Revised on Dec. 1 2022)

The number of piracy incidents in the Gulf of Aden rapidly increased in 2008, and later spread to the Indian Ocean. Under these circumstances, it became common among major maritime countries that Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel (PCASP) were on-board of their flag vessels. These PCASP contributed to the decrease of attacks by the pirates. However, under Japanese laws, it was prohibited to employ PCASP on Japanese flag vessels .

Therefore, the Act on Special Measures Concerning the Guarding of Japanese Ships in Pirate-Infested Waters was enforced on Nov. 30 2013 to ensure the security of Japanese flag vessels by PCASP. And on Dec. 1 2022, the Act was revised to expand\* the coverage of Japanese flag vessels with PCASP on-board.

Under the Act, PCASP confirmed by Minister of MLIT of Japan can guard Japanese flag vessels in the Pirate-Infested Waters, based on Designated Guarding Plan authorized by the Minister.

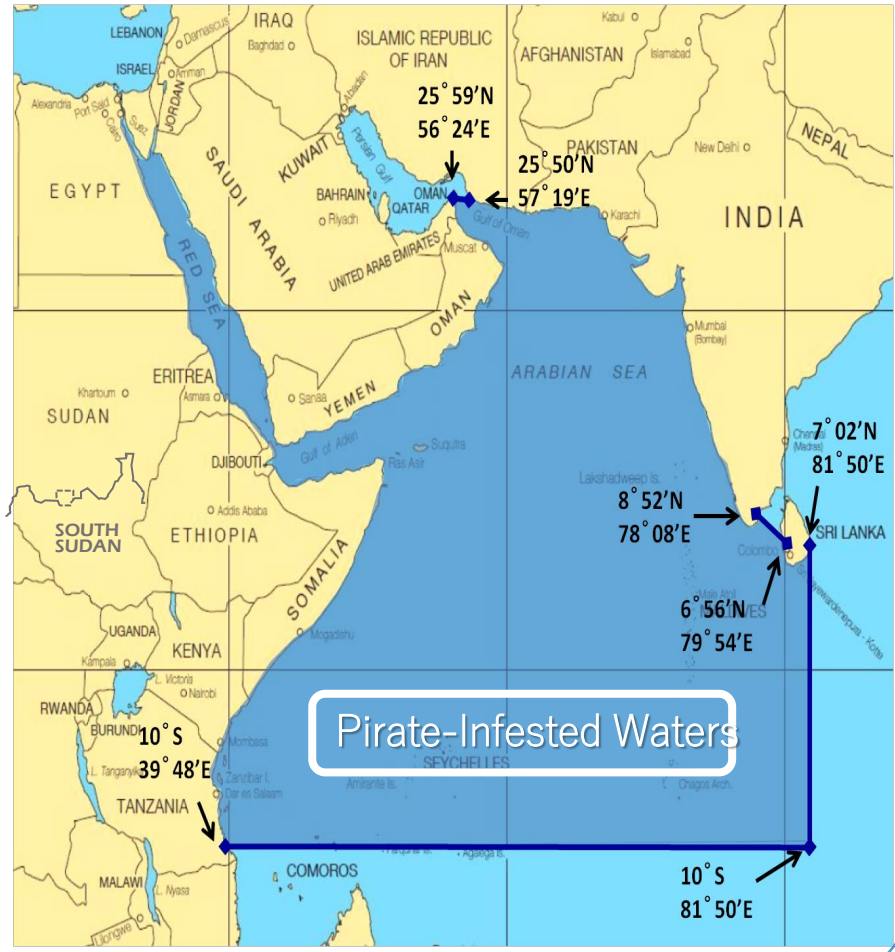
\*The coverage was expanded to bulk carriers, LPG vessels and chemical tankers etc. in addition to oil tankers.

# Japan's Actions against Piracy

➤ Act on Special Measures concerning the Guarding of Japanese Ships in Pirate-Infested Waters (Act No.75 of 2013, Enacted on Nov. 13 2013, Enforced on Nov. 30 2013, Revised on Dec. 1 2022)

## Overview of the Act

- (1) Applicable sea areas  
: Pirate-infested waters as shown in the map  
Applicable vessels  
: Japanese flag vessels vulnerable to piracy attacks
- (2) Ship owners, seeking to protect their vessels by PCASP, shall submit, for each vessel, Designated Guarding Plan(DGP) specifying any Private Maritime Security Companies (PMSC), implementation method of guarding, etc., and shall obtain the authorization from Minister of MLIT of Japan.
- (3) The ship owners, before they implement their DGPs, shall obtain confirmation from the Minister that both the PMSC and the PCASP meet all requirements stipulated by the Act.



# Japan's Actions against Piracy

## ➤ Joint Exercises with Other Countries' Forces

In 2025, JSDF's counter-piracy enforcement conducted the following joint exercises with the navies from various countries off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden.

Month	JSDF	Participating Countries	Types of Exercises
July	Destroyer "Harusame"	"Navarra" (EU NAVFOR(Spanish Navy))	Maneuvering Exercise, Communication Exercise and PHOTOEX
October	Destroyer "Harusame", P-3C patrol aircraft etc	"Victoria" (EU NAVFOR(Spanish Navy)), Djiboutian Navy etc.	Joint Counter-piracy Exercise, Table Top Exercise (TTX) etc.



Joint Exercise with Spanish Navy "NAVARRA"



Joint Exercise with Spanish Navy "VICTORIA",  
Djiboutian Navy etc

# Japan's Actions against Piracy

## ➤ Japan's Development Cooperation on Tackling Piracy

**The total amount of financial Grant Assistance to Somalia (2007-2025 Fiscal Year): US\$ 620 million**

To stabilize the situation in Somalia, improving Somalia's own governance capacity is an urgent issue. Japan shares this recognition with the international community, and since 2007, Japan has been providing grant assistance to Somalia in cooperation with international organizations under the following three pillars.

### **1) Recovery of Basic Social Services**

Food aid, Water supplies, Public health, Education, Basic infrastructure development, Humanitarian Assistance including enhancement of human security

### **2) Improvement of the Capability of Security Institutions**

Assistance to Somali Police Force

Assistance to enhance border control

Collection and destruction of small arms and light weapons in the Horn of Africa

### **3) Revitalization of Domestic Industries**

Vocational training, Employment generation

Repairing of markets

# Japan's Actions against Piracy

## ➤ Japan's Financial and Technical Cooperation on Tackling Piracy

### Assistance to Improve Capacities for Maritime Security in the Region

Japan has been contributing US\$15.53 million to the “IMO Djibouti Code of Conduct Trust Fund” (a Japan-initiated multi-donor trust fund) for capacity-building for law enforcement agencies in Somalia and its neighboring coastal countries (including assistance for construction of the Djibouti Regional Training Centre) , and US\$4.50 million to the “Trust Fund to Support the Initiatives of States Countering Piracy off the Coast of Somalia” to support piracy prosecution capacity building.

Furthermore, Japan has provided patrol vessels through ODA, and will provide Coastal Radar System through OSA, to Djibouti for enhancing capacities for maritime law enforcement and maritime domain awareness (MDA) capabilities.



Meeting with Djibouti Coast Guard



Exercise with Djibouti Coast Guard

# Japan's Actions against Piracy

## ➤ Cooperation on Tackling Piracy between Japan and Seychelles

In December 2014, Japan and Seychelles signed the Memorandum on the conditions of transfer of suspected pirates. Based on this MoU, Japan can detain suspected pirates in the Gulf of Aden and off the Coast of Somalia and transfer them to Seychelles for pursuits.

Japan established its embassy in Seychelles in January 2019, upgraded the embassy and appointed an ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary in 2024. Seychelles is a geopolitically important country, located on the significant sea lanes. Japan is working to strengthen bilateral relations with Seychelles.



Reception on board of “Japan Ship BUNGO”

# Japan's Actions against Piracy

## ➤ Mutual Understanding and Cooperation for JSDF's counter-piracy operations

The Japan Self-Defense Forces units conducting counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, off the coast of Somalia, are based in Djibouti. The DSPE (Deployment Surface Force Counter-Piracy Enforcement) is working closely with the Djibouti government authorities to ensure the smooth implementation of the operation. Furthermore, the understanding and cooperation of the Djiboutian people towards the activities of the JSDF are essential for this mission. From this perspective, the JSDF has been actively interacting with the citizens of Djibouti through sports exchanges, introduction of Japanese culture, and volunteer activities events between the dispatched counter-piracy action units and the citizens of Djibouti. In addition, with the cooperation of JICA, members of the JSDF unit have also participated in the "Souvenir Project," an exhibition of folk art created by the people of Djibouti. In this way, we have deepened mutual understanding with the people of Djibouti.



Souvenir Project



Anniversary Event at JSDF's Base