

# Fish poachers besiege Nigeria, W/ Africa waters

Publication info: Vanguard ; Lagos [Lagos]. 07 Oct 2020.

[ProQuest document link](#)

---

## FULL TEXT

Kindly Share This Story:

### Action fuelling piracy –Expert

#### ·Navy says it is on top of situation

FOREIGN nationals involved in fish poaching have invaded the West African waters with fishing vessels plundering the region of its fishery resource, a development which experts say is fuelling the rising cases of piracy.

Vanguard Maritime Report gathered that despite the ban on such vessels at the international level, international fishing companies have deployed them to the region.

Investigations by Vanguard Maritime Report reveal that the same problem was responsible for the piracy plague in Somalia.

A source in the Ministry of Agriculture who spoke with Vanguard Maritime Report on the condition of anonymity disclosed that they are aware of the development but stressed that it is the responsibility of the Nigerian Navy to protect the nation's waters.

Asked if the ministry had made representation to the Navy on the development, the source could not confirm but only said that they are aware that the Navy knows about the high-level fish poaching in the country.

Speaking with Vanguard Maritime Report on the issue, former Director of Shipping Development, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, NIMASA, Waredi Eniosuoh, confirmed the presence of these vessels in the region.

Eniosuoh noted that fishing operations in West Africa is mostly illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) which is responsible for the high level exploitation of fishery resources in the region.

He stated: "Fishing operations are illegal, unreported, and unregulated in West Africa region. A lot of the factory boats that have been banned worldwide are operating in West Africa.

"By law around the world you are not supposed to operate a factory boat anymore, you cannot have a ship that you can use to catch fish, pack in cartons and then sell because that old method used to encourage stealing from other people's territory and Africa suffered more from it.

"In fact, that was the major reason that created the Somali pirates. It was IUU that created and escalated the Somali pirates. Somalia does not have iron-ore or crude oil or any other mineral; their major resource was fish. If I am not mistaking, Somalia has the longest coastline possibly in Africa.

"So their resource was fish, but because of the failed state resulting from the internal crisis, a lot of countries now went into their waters to go and start stealing their resources and that is how they now resorted to kidnapping.

"That is how the piracy thing came up. So they decided okay, you steal our resources; if we catch a ship, we hold the crew and you must pay due. That is how the whole thing started, now it is happening around the whole of West Africa; the Somali section now has died down because of the international naval presence.

"However, quite a lot of something similar is now happening in the West Africa region; so most of the ships that were used in those IUU operations are in our waters.

"The IUU vessels are fishing factory vessels, they catch fish, they process them, they carton them and even come into our territory to sell; it does happen.

So the possibility is that the whole COVID-19 thing did not allow them to move further to go and sale abroad; so they move them into these people's country where there is hardly any regulation or hardly any knowledge of how these things are done and sell to them.

"If you remember, sometimes recently there are a lot of crooker fish in Bayelsa; I told people at that time that you people are going to blame oil companies. If fishes are going to die why should it be only crooker; actually with all these illegal fishing vessels in our waters maybe their net got caught in an underwater pipe or something, maybe; we do not know.

"They will cut the net off and the whole fish will flow with the tide to the shore or they may have even sighted the Nigerian Navy and they think they were coming to arrest them; they quickly skip the net so that they are not caught with any evidence.

"So many things are possible, I have pursued these types of ships before and I have arrested quite a few of them and I have de-registered quite a few of them but they are very powerful people.

"They will either get you out of the system so that they can have a field day but I have a very strong feeling that because of the COVID-19 they could not take their catches very far again, so they decide to dump them within our territory, it is possible," he noted.

When contacted, spokesman of the Western Navy Command, Commodore Thomas Otuji , said that they have made a lot of arrests of fishing vessels with expired documents.

Ituji further disclosed that the Navy has facilities with which they monitor vessels in the national waters.

He pointed out that these facilities enable them know when a vessel is coming into the nation's waters, from where they are located, what they are doing, and other information.

He asked for details of such fishing factory vessels to enable them track and take action against such vessels. He

noted that without such details, it will be difficult to act on the information.

Kindly Share This Story:© 2020 Vanguard Media Limited, Nigeria Provided by SyndiGate Media Inc. (Syndigate.info).

## DETAILS

<b>Subject:</b>	Poaching; Piracy; Fishing vessels; Fisheries; Coronaviruses; COVID-19; Fish
<b>Location:</b>	Africa Somalia Nigeria West Africa
<b>Publication title:</b>	Vanguard; Lagos
<b>Publication year:</b>	2020
<b>Publication date:</b>	Oct 7, 2020
<b>Publisher:</b>	SyndiGate Media Inc
<b>Place of publication:</b>	Lagos
<b>Country of publication:</b>	United States, Lagos
<b>Publication subject:</b>	General Interest Periodicals--Nigeria
<b>ISSN:</b>	0794652X
<b>Source type:</b>	Newspapers
<b>Language of publication:</b>	English
<b>Document type:</b>	News
<b>ProQuest document ID:</b>	2448863954
<b>Document URL:</b>	<a href="http://132.174.250.227/newspapers/fish-poachers-besiege-nigeria-w-africa-waters/docview/2448863954/se-2?accountid=8394">http://132.174.250.227/newspapers/fish-poachers-besiege-nigeria-w-africa-waters/docview/2448863954/se-2?accountid=8394</a>
<b>Copyright:</b>	© 2020 Vanguard Media Limited, Nigeria Provided by SyndiGate Media Inc. (Syndigate.info).
<b>Last updated:</b>	2020-10-07
<b>Database:</b>	International Newsstream

Database copyright © 2021 ProQuest LLC. All rights reserved.

[Terms and Conditions](#) [Contact ProQuest](#)