

Chinese-linked maritime exploitation networks in the Western Hemisphere

Executive assessment

This is a strong subject for the next independent website—but the organizing idea should be maritime exploitation and accountability, not simply illegal fishing. The most useful question is how vessels, owners, recruiters, support services, ports and markets connect, and where the evidence establishes harm, responsibility or a failure of enforcement.

The recommended geographic center is the Western Hemisphere: Ecuador and the Galápagos, Peru and Chile; Argentina and Uruguay; and the trade and enforcement connections running through Mexico and North American markets. Philippine and Indonesian material belongs in a clearly marked second layer: either a documented connection to a company, vessel, workforce or supply chain in the main coverage, or a comparative case explaining a practice. “PI” is interpreted here as the Philippines.

The research supports several distinct lines of coverage:

- **Extraction and incursions:** unauthorized fishing, protected species, environmental damage, and the distinction between unlawful entry and lawful high-seas fishing.
- **People:** coercive recruitment, withheld pay, abuse, deaths, missing crew, access to medical care and the outcome of complaints.
- **Identity and control:** vessel identifiers, flag histories, beneficial ownership, management, domestic subsidiaries and documented state relationships.
- **Offshore and port services:** refrigerated carriers, fuel, repairs, crew transfers, agents and inspection decisions.
- **Trade and money:** catch transfers, processing, false declarations, wildlife smuggling, import restrictions and financial sanctions.
- **Accountability:** what governments investigated, what courts or regulators decided, what changed afterward, and what remains unresolved.

The evidence does not support treating the entire Chinese fleet as criminal, every flag change as fraudulent, or every commercial relationship as complicity. Those shortcuts would weaken the site for its intended governmental and NGO audiences. A forceful, findings-first presentation can make precisely documented conduct more prominent without overstating it.

This dossier contains **16 case and context modules**, including research leads that are not yet suitable for a definitive accusation. Its coverage cutoff is **8 September 2026, Eastern Time**. It is a foundation for a maintained publication, not a complete census of Chinese vessels, companies or maritime offenses.

1. What the evidence establishes

Scale is substantial, but scale is not an offense count

SPRFMO's Secretariat reports **528 active Chinese squid-jigging vessels in its Convention Area in 2024**. This is an unusually useful regional benchmark because the geography, activity and year are explicit. It is not the worldwide Chinese fishing fleet, the number operating illegally, or a count of ships inside South American exclusive economic zones.¹

The same source records falling catch and catch per vessel-day in 2024 and discusses El Niño-related catchability. A falling catch cannot, on its own, establish that Chinese vessels depleted a stock or caused a particular community's income loss.¹ The site should pair fleet-effort reporting with stock assessments, environmental conditions and locally documented livelihood impacts.

Court records, sanctions and labor investigations tell different stories

The Fu Yuan Yu Leng 999 proceedings establish a protected-wildlife transport case in the Galápagos, including forfeiture of the carrier. U.S. Treasury actions identify companies and individuals under a human-rights sanctions program. Worker investigations describe coercion and abuse that may not have reached a court. Each has a different evidentiary and procedural status.^{2, 3, 4}

Presenting those records side by side is useful. Collapsing them into one "convicted criminal fleet" label is not. The same discipline applies to owners, recruiters, cargo buyers and service providers.

The network extends beyond the fishing vessel

C4ADS' 2025 investigation examines the services keeping distant-water squid operations functioning: carriers, fuel, port services and other support. It traces continued activity by Pingtan-controlled vessels after U.S. sanctions. This supports an investigation of continuity and dependencies; continued navigation is not, by itself, proof that a particular transaction violated sanctions.⁵

A separate U.S. criminal record establishes that a furniture business was used in a Mexico–United States–China marine-wildlife smuggling route. This provides a concrete reason to cover trade intermediaries and concealment on land, not just vessels at sea.⁶

Human costs belong at the center

ITF's port-record study reports **66 crew deaths or disappearances after falls into the sea associated with 59 SPRFMO-registered vessels during 2013–2023**. Within that dataset, Chinese-flagged vessels account for 41 crew and 38 vessels. These are not 66 proven killings or trafficking findings. The categories include illness, accidents and unknown causes. The Chinese-flagged subset includes Chinese, Indonesian and Filipino crew.⁷

EJF’s February 2026 investigation draws on **81 interviews concerning work on 60 Chinese-flagged squid vessels during 2020-2025**. Its accounts describe serious labor abuses. The interview sample is not a random prevalence survey of the whole fleet, and allegations associated with one ship cannot automatically be assigned to its sister ships.⁴

The editorial subject is the treatment of people and the conduct of institutions—not the ethnicity of crews, owners or consumers.

2. Geographic and thematic boundaries

Core coverage

Area	Initial coverage purpose	Important constraint
Ecuador / Galápagos	Protected wildlife, cargo carriers, reserve enforcement and case outcomes	Seizure location does not necessarily establish catch location.
Peru	Port access, monitoring rules, crew records, squid fisheries and local livelihoods	Distinguish foreign-fleet records from rules for domestic artisanal boats.
Chile	Port services, routing changes and the Pacific support network	A port call or a move from another country is not proof of evasion.
Argentina	Incursions, pursuit, enforcement outcomes and domestic flag/ownership structures	Argentine flag and Chinese beneficial ownership can coexist lawfully.
Uruguay	Atlantic logistics, crew disembarkation and follow-up to reported abuse	A medical or death record establishes an event, not necessarily its cause or an employer’s guilt.
Mexico / North America	Wildlife smuggling, processing, import controls and financial enforcement	Separate market destination, buyer knowledge and criminal participation.

Central America, the Caribbean and additional South American jurisdictions should be added when a traceable case warrants it. They should not appear to have been comprehensively investigated merely because a map covers the hemisphere.

Connected and comparative coverage

Indonesia is directly relevant through worker recruitment and the cross-border Hua Li 8 enforcement case. The Philippines is relevant through affected workers and the legally distinct South China Sea record. Broader Pacific-island, tuna and longline cases belong where they establish a concrete link or explain a clearly labeled comparison.

Do not merge the distant-water commercial fleet, maritime militia, coast guard and navy into a single actor. A ship’s role must be established individually and over a defined period. The site should be able to show a documented state-owned parent, subsidy, intervention or operational direction as four different relationships.

3. Sixteen case and context modules

C01. Fu Yuan Yu Leng 999: the carrier and the Galápagos cargo

Place / status: Ecuador; adjudicated wildlife-transport case, with a 2019 cassation decision.

The National Court's 18 July 2019 decision ordered forfeiture of Fu Yuan Yu Leng 999, identified Hong Long as its owner, and confirmed compensation of approximately US\$6.14 million. Its reasoning concerns the transport of protected specimens. The vessel was a refrigerated carrier; this is not evidence that it caught the cargo itself or that all the animals were caught inside the reserve.²

Publication angle: follow the cargo, carrier, ownership and judicial outcome. Separate the 2017 seizure, lower-court decisions and 2019 disposition.

Further work: establish catch-origin evidence, supplier vessels, disposition of the ship and compensation collection. Do not turn a judgment ordering payment into a claim that payment occurred.

C02. Hua Li 8: enforcement across two oceans

Place / status: Argentina and Indonesia; official Argentine account of detection, flight and subsequent detention.

Argentina's Prefectura describes Hua Li 8 fishing illegally in 2016, resisting inspection and later being detained in Indonesia following international cooperation. The record distinguishes a federal judicial order from an INTERPOL Purple Notice; a Purple Notice is not itself an arrest warrant.⁸

Publication angle: a concrete example of how a case originating off South America can depend on action in Southeast Asia.

Further work: obtain the Indonesian detention and release records, the ownership history applicable in 2016, and the final Argentine judicial outcome. A detention is not a conviction.

C03. Dalian Ocean Fishing and Long Xing 629: recruitment, coercion and remedies

Place / status: trans-Pacific labor network; official sanctions and a historical U.S. import action, supplemented by original reporting.

Treasury's 2022 action identifies Dalian Ocean Fishing and Li Zhenyu in connection with serious abuse. CBP announced a fleet-wide Withhold Release Order in May 2021.^{3, 9} Tansa and its reporting partners documented recruitment, debt, pay and deaths associated with the fleet. Their investigation reports five recruitment-agency personnel convicted of either trafficking or unlawful recruitment; those are not interchangeable offenses, and the underlying Indonesian judgments have not been independently examined for this dossier.¹⁰

Publication angle: connect recruitment promises to contracts, shipboard conditions, complaints and actual remedies. This is also a warning that a tuna/longline case should not be described as a squid-vessel case.

Further work: identify each recruiter and defendant from original proceedings; obtain precise judgments and compensation outcomes. Treat the 2021 WRO as a dated action until its present status is separately checked.

C04. Pingtan, Fuzhou Honglong and Xinrong Zhuo: ownership and continuity

Place / status: a multinational fishing and corporate network with a Galápagos connection; U.S. administrative sanctions, not criminal convictions.

Treasury's 9 December 2022 action identifies Pingtan Marine Enterprise, Fuzhou Honglong and Xinrong Zhuo, with described corporate and operational relationships.³ A current public SDN-list check on 8 September 2026 found these three entries and the entries for Dalian Ocean Fishing and Li Zhenyu still present.¹¹

Pingtan's SEC-filed response asserted compliance with applicable fishing and employment laws and discussed seeking relief from the designations. That response belongs beside the government's findings.¹²

Publication angle: a dated ownership and enforcement timeline. Do not use "subsidiary" for every connected company or imply that U.S. designation is a worldwide ban on every activity.

Further work: reconcile current corporate records, ship identities, management and any restructuring; analyze individual transactions before alleging sanctions evasion.

C05. Crew arriving dead, missing or in need of treatment

Place / status: South American port records and SPRFMO vessel histories; a documented risk dataset rather than a single criminal case.

ITF also reports at least 27 crew disembarkations for medical attention in Peru during 2024. Its records provide a starting point for vessel-specific follow-up, not a diagnosis of trafficking in each instance.⁷

Publication angle: follow people's outcomes: access to treatment, repatriation, unpaid wages, official investigation and family compensation. The research should cover Chinese crew as well as migrant workers.

Further work: seek corroborating port, hospital, consular and judicial records through appropriate public channels. Publish only necessary, already-public personal details; do not expose witnesses, their families or sensitive medical material.

C06. Peru's monitoring requirements and shifts in port use

Place / status: Peru and Chile; policy and operating-pattern case.

PRODUCE's October 2024 explanation of Decreto Supremo 014-2024-PRODUCE describes strengthened controls over foreign fishing vessels and satellite-monitoring arrangements.¹³ EJF subsequently reports a shift in port use toward Chile.⁴

Publication angle: explain how different port requirements may change where vessels obtain services. This is a hypothesis about regulatory incentives, not proof of unlawful diversion by each ship.

Further work: compare dated arrivals, authorization decisions, reasons for entry, monitoring compliance and inspection outcomes on both sides. Preserve emergency and humanitarian exceptions; do not portray medical assistance itself as misconduct. Confirm amendments before presenting the 2024 decree as the complete current rulebook.

C07. Argentine flags and Chinese-controlled businesses

Place / status: Argentina; investigated ownership and licensing structures, not a finding that domestic registration is inherently illegal.

The Outlaw Ocean Project's August 2024 investigation identified at least 62 Chinese-controlled industrial fishing vessels flying Argentina's flag. That figure is not a count of 62 convicted vessels, nor exclusively a count of squid boats. The investigation explicitly describes lawful forms of "flagging in."¹⁴

Publication angle: show registered owner, ultimate control, fishing rights and the relevant dates separately. The accountability question is whether a particular arrangement meets domestic law and whether regulators could see who controlled it.

Further work: consult Argentine corporate and fisheries decisions for named operators. Do not label a joint venture a front company without evidence of concealment or illegality.

C08. Refrigerated carriers and floating support: the Ningtai-Wei Fong lead

Place / status: Pacific and Atlantic squid support network; research-attributed commercial relationships.

C4ADS links Wei Fong carriers and Zhoushan Ningtai operations while explicitly noting lawful, authorized carrier activity. It also examines floating medical and logistics support.⁵

Publication angle: distinguish an observed encounter, a documented service, a confirmed cargo transfer and a proven prohibited transaction. A service relationship can explain how a fleet operates without proving that the service provider knew of abuse.

Further work: use cargo manifests, authorizations and contemporaneous registry records to substantiate individual connections. Medical support should be evaluated for care and accountability outcomes, not treated as inherently suspicious.

C09. Wei Yu 18: labor allegations and deaths

Place / status: distant-water operation with a Montevideo connection; original investigative reporting, not a conviction established here.

The Outlaw Ocean Project's vessel record associates Wei Yu 18 with Weihai Huanhai Aquatic and reports deaths and forced-labor allegations. The record identifies IMO 8782587, helping distinguish the ship from similarly named vessels.¹⁵

Publication angle: a source-led vessel timeline with the operator's identity dated to the relevant events, plus a distinct response and outcome section.

Further work: obtain the underlying local records and any operator response. A petition asking CBP to issue an import restriction must not be displayed as though CBP already issued it. Current operating status also requires a fresh registry check.

C10. Shandong Meijia: processing can be a separate labor-risk stage

Place / status: China and U.S. import controls; a 2024 administrative entity-list action.

A Federal Register notice effective 12 June 2024 added Shandong Meijia Group, also known as Rizhao Meijia Group, to the UFLPA Entity List. The relevant government determination concerns labor-transfer practices.¹⁶

Publication angle: explain why a product's processing history matters separately from where the fish was caught. This action does not establish that all input seafood was illegally harvested or that every overseas buyer knowingly participated.

Further work: verify current listing status, identify documented plants and shipments, and separate harvest, processing and export countries. The live UFLPA list was not independently verified for this dossier; the 2024 listing is the established event.

C11. Kaven and Kam Wing Chan: the furniture-company front

Place / status: Mexico–United States–China; guilty pleas recorded by the U.S. Department of Justice.

DOJ's August 2015 environmental-crimes bulletin records that Kaven Company and owner Kam Wing Chan pleaded guilty on 21 July 2015 to smuggling abalone and totoaba. It describes marine products sourced in Mexico, passing through the United States and sold to relatives' companies in China.⁶ The earlier indictment announcement described the furniture-company concealment mechanism.¹⁷

Publication angle: this is a strong non-fleet story about false commercial presentation and cross-border sales. Use the guilty plea as the established outcome rather than repeating only the earlier allegations.

Further work: retrieve sentencing and forfeiture records. Do not label an uncharged relative or customer a criminal merely because a trade relationship is reported.

C12. The Philippines: adjudicated resource interference and environmental harm

Place / status: South China Sea; the 12 July 2016 arbitral award, distinct from a Western Hemisphere fleet case.

The tribunal found violations involving Philippine resource rights, interference with traditional fishing access at Scarborough Shoal, harmful wildlife harvesting and severe coral-reef damage. The official summary also explains that it did not decide sovereignty over land territory. China rejected the arbitration and award.¹⁸

Publication angle: a clearly labeled comparative case of state conduct and marine-resource harm. It is not evidence that a squid ship off Peru is a maritime-militia vessel.

Further work: any contemporary vessel- or militia-specific feature needs separate dated evidence. AMTI/C4ADS' specialized militia research is a starting point for that task, not a basis for blanket attribution.¹⁹

C13. Kway Fey 10078: the Natuna confrontation

Place / status: Indonesia; a 2016 enforcement confrontation with competing official accounts.

Indonesian officials stated that a Chinese coast-guard vessel interfered with enforcement against Kway Fey 10078 near Natuna. China's foreign ministry advanced a different account, referring to traditional fishing grounds and assistance to the vessel.^{20, 21}

Publication angle: compare what each government stated against positions, applicable maritime zones and incident records. Sovereign resource rights in an EEZ are not identical to territorial sovereignty.

Further work: obtain contemporaneous records for the ship and intervention. No common ownership with a South American case has been established here; classify this as a comparison, not a proven network connection.

C14. Squid governance: pressure, rules and observable compliance

Place / status: Southeast Pacific; institutional context, not an offender dossier.

The applicable framework is not a legal vacuum. SPRFMO's published 2026 measures include squid-vessel limits and monitoring requirements. Its transshipment measure establishes rules for transfers, while the organization also has a labor-standards decision.^{22, 23, 24}

Publication angle: tell readers what is required, which body can act, and what evidence would establish noncompliance. An authorized high-seas operation can still raise environmental or labor concerns, but those concerns need their own evidence.

Further work: link vessel authorization and observer coverage to the rule in force on the event date. Treat a labor decision, binding conservation measure and national law as distinct instruments.

C15. Reflagging and disputed ownership: a verification file

Place / status: international carrier structures; an identity-research module.

C4ADS describes changes of flag among heavily used carriers and reports an ownership dispute involving Winson and certain ships. Winson denied the attributed ownership or control. That dispute must remain visible, not be converted into an undisputed network edge.⁵

IMO distinguishes fraudulent registration from legitimate registration and flag changes; the offense concerns unauthorized or falsely represented registration, not foreign ownership alone.²⁵

Publication angle: show the underlying registry records and the competing interpretation, with dates. Legal flagging, disputed control and documentary fraud need separate labels.

Further work: acquire original registry certificates, deletion records and corporate filings. This research did not independently establish a Western Hemisphere-specific fraudulent-registration case ready for a definitive accusation.

C16. Jing Yuan 626: an enforcement lead requiring primary follow-up

Place / status: Argentina; a secondary research account awaiting additional original records.

C4ADS' 2022 brief describes an Argentine pursuit involving Jing Yuan 626 in 2018, coordinated obstruction by other vessels, and a subsequent owner payment. The report identifies IMO 9784568.²⁶

Publication angle: potentially important for the distinction between ordinary fishing competition and active interference with inspection.

Further work: secure the Prefectura incident report, relevant judicial orders and payment disposition. The current dossier does not establish a criminal conviction, the exact legal character of the payment, or the current operator. Keep this in the research-lead queue until those claims are resolved.

4. How to investigate the mechanisms

The following is a proposed research framework, not a claim that every listed practice has been established for every company.

Mechanism	Evidence that would establish the link	What does not establish it by itself
Fraudulent flagging or identity	Flag-state confirmation, invalid certificates, false registry claim, matched hull history	A foreign flag, an ordinary reflagging or a different English spelling
Hidden control	Dated corporate filings, shareholding, management contracts, financing and control evidence	Similar company names, shared nationality or a single common address
Unauthorized catch	Position and activity evidence, applicable authorization, catch or inspection records, adjudication	Proximity to an EEZ boundary or absence from a public tracking map
Unreported catch or catch laundering	Inconsistent logbooks, manifests, permits, transfer reports, weights and species records	A ship-to-ship encounter or a processed product labeled with another country
Diversion to another port or market	Route change plus the relevant prohibition, declarations, instructions or enforcement record	A new port call, fuel stop, sale or commercial rerouting alone
Forced labor or trafficking	Recruitment and coercion evidence, contracts, corroborated testimony, official findings	Poor conditions alone, or treating every labor-law breach as trafficking
Knowing support for abuse	Evidence of service, knowledge, control, assistance and the applicable legal standard	An insurer, agent, bank or supplier appearing somewhere in the network

Mechanism	Evidence that would establish the link	What does not establish it by itself
State direction or protection	Operational orders, government intervention, control records or identified official conduct	Chinese ownership, subsidies or lawful diplomatic assistance alone

Vessel identity is a timeline

Use an internal entity identifier and retain the IMO number where available. Store MMSI, call sign, vessel name, flag, registered owner, manager and beneficial owner with start and end dates and their source. An AIS identity is not automatically a distinct hull; a hull may transmit different identities over time.

Global Fishing Watch explains important limits in AIS-based inference. Transmission gaps can arise for multiple reasons; apparent fishing and vessel encounters are modeled observations rather than direct proof of a particular catch or transfer.^{27, 28} Historical map views should say exactly what the layer measures and when it was last updated.

Build separate relationships for ownership, management, financing, port agency, crew recruitment, cargo transfer and purchase. Do not let a visual line silently mean “complicit in crime.” A reader should be able to click any line and see the document, date and uncertainty supporting it.

Labor evidence must follow the recruitment chain

Trace the recruiter, any subagent, contract language, fees or debt, document retention, wages promised and paid, ability to leave, threats, access to communication and the outcome of complaints. ILO’s framework requires attention to involuntariness and menace of a penalty; multiple indicators may support analysis, but a website should not invent a legal determination.²⁹

Keep workers’ accounts separate from the findings of investigators and from judicial conclusions. Attribute translations and corroboration. Record whether a company answered, denied a particular allegation, offered compensation or disputed the worker’s employment. A statement that no response was received must identify whose request and when; this dossier did not itself contact companies or workers.

Follow the product without skipping stages

Represent the path as harvest vessel → carrier or port → processor → exporter → importer or buyer. A trade record supporting one step does not automatically prove the rest. Distinguish species, product form, quantities, harvest origin and processing origin. Avoid extrapolating company-wide culpability from one shipment.

NOAA’s Seafood Import Monitoring Program covers specified groups, not all seafood. Its published list of 13 groups includes sharks, sea cucumbers and several tuna species, but not squid. That is a specific traceability-program coverage gap, not proof that squid imports are exempt from all other laws.³⁰

Where records establish a false species declaration, concealed harvest origin or prohibited transfer, explain the actual mechanism. “Laundering” should describe evidence of concealment or misrepresentation, not function as a catch-all for processing or international

resale.

Treat support vessels as their own subjects

Reefers, tankers, repair ships and medical/logistics vessels can be essential to understanding how fleets remain offshore. They should have distinct profiles, regulatory roles and event records. The key questions are what service occurred, for whom, under which rules, and with what documented knowledge or control.

Similarly, a port agent, insurer or bank may be a useful research lead without being an offender. Public claims about an individual's involvement should rest on a concrete role in an established event, not an impressive-looking cluster of connections.

5. Editorial position and website design

Recommended position

An independent, evidence-led account of Chinese-linked maritime exploitation affecting the Americas: the actors, the mechanisms, the human and environmental costs, and the enforcement record.

The tone should be direct and demanding, with specificity doing the work. A headline such as “The carrier seized with protected wildlife—and the case that followed” is more useful than a sweeping claim about an entire nationality. Strong language such as “smuggling,” “forced labor” or “illegal fishing” is appropriate when the supporting record and attribution justify it.

The site should criticize government and corporate conduct where warranted and make Chinese workers' victimization visible. It should also record successful enforcement, rejected allegations and corrected findings. That makes the publication harder to dismiss and more useful to governments and NGOs.

Presentation drawn from the existing sites

Reuse the editorial principles of AI Public Opinion and ChinaSteals: restrained typography, concise findings before deep documentation, approachable explainers, source-linked case files, dated updates and clean mobile reading. Give this project independent branding and a distinct maritime visual identity; no public umbrella or automatic cross-site links are necessary.

Maps should explain place and jurisdiction. Timelines should explain what changed. Relationship diagrams should explain a small, supported chain. Do not use a dense network graphic as a substitute for demonstrating its links.

Recommended structure

Section	Purpose
Start here	Three short paths: the human cost, the operating network, and the enforcement record
Cases	Filter by place, practice, actor and evidence/status category

Section	Purpose
Vessels and companies	Dated identities, ownership and management records; linked cases and responses
How it works	Recruitment, flagging, transfers, port services, processing and sales
Countries and regions	Local institutions, fisheries, affected communities and case collections
People at sea	Labor findings, medical events, complaints, remedies and unresolved outcomes
Trade and money	Proven product paths, import actions, sanctions and documented financial links
Accountability	Court and regulator decisions, company responses and subsequent developments
Methods and sources	Definitions, source standards, limitations, corrections and downloads

The homepage should not present the 16 modules as 16 proven criminal cases. Context, allegation, adjudication and unresolved lead should be visually distinct. A record-level “checked on” date is more meaningful than a generic footer date.

Three audiences, three useful outcomes

Governments: jurisdiction-specific evidence trails, institutional responsibilities, dated rules, action outcomes and downloadable records. Distinguish flag-state, coastal-state, port-state and market-state roles. FAO’s Port State Measures framework is a useful foundation for explaining the port-state role without assuming identical powers or treaty participation everywhere.³¹

The public: brief explanations of what happened, why it matters locally and which conclusions are actually supported. Connect ecosystem impacts and working conditions to coastal livelihoods without implying that every shortage, price change or stock fluctuation has the same cause.

NGOs and researchers: original source links, structured records, response histories and explicit evidence gaps. Let readers identify which facts are established and which records would advance an investigation.

Language recommendation: English and Spanish for the core editorial experience, with Portuguese when Brazil-focused coverage warrants it. Keep original document languages and translated summaries visible. This is a product recommendation, not a completed localization commitment.

6. Existing resources and the opportunity to add value

Global Fishing Watch already provides vessel activity tools and regional work. Outlaw Ocean provides extensive labor and supply-chain investigations. C4ADS, EIJ and ITF offer substantial network, environmental and crew research.^{32, 33, 4, 5, 7}

The opportunity is not to claim discovery of an unknown problem or to duplicate their entire databases. It is to maintain a readable Western Hemisphere account that connects these materials to official records, local consequences and subsequent outcomes.

Reuse existing public tools through appropriate links and permitted data access. Verify licensing before reproducing datasets, photography, video or substantial reporting. Build original summaries and evidence trails; do not republish another investigator's work as the site's own reporting.

The distinctive value should be **continuity**: whether a designation remains active, a case advanced, a ship changed name or control, a worker received compensation, a regulation changed, or a published claim was corrected.

7. Evidence and publication standards

Two separate classifications

Every material claim should have both a **source/evidence description** and an **event status**. A strong source may establish only that an allegation was filed. A later court decision may narrow an earlier official accusation.

Recommended event labels are: adjudicated; administrative finding or restriction; official allegation or investigation; independently reported allegation; observed activity; contextual analysis; disputed attribution; unresolved research lead. Do not turn these into an invented numerical "guilt score."

For each claim retain the source, relevant passage or page, event date, publication date, latest check date, entity identity, jurisdiction, response and subsequent outcome. Sources copied across many outlets are one evidentiary chain, not multiple independent confirmations.

Current status versus historical facts

The SDN check accompanying this dossier verifies **five selected entries**, not every designated vessel or entity. The Shandong Meijia listing and Dalian WRO are established historical actions whose current status needs a fresh check before a current-status assertion. The 2016 arbitral findings and 2019 Ecuador decision should be displayed as dated decisions, not contemporary incident reports.

A rules page should identify the version and effective period of each measure. Old report figures should not silently become current fleet counts. Registered, authorized, active, AIS-observed and risk-selected vessels have different denominators.

Substantive gaps

- No exhaustive current inventory of the entire fleet, all owners or all affected jurisdictions has been established.
- No broad claim of fraudulent flagging in the Western Hemisphere is established merely by the reflagging and ownership material reviewed.
- Direct catch-to-final-buyer paths remain incomplete in many cases; association is not knowledge or participation.

- This dossier does not quantify a fleet-wide trafficking rate or attribute all stock and livelihood changes to one fleet.
- Several recruitment, sentencing, compensation and current corporate-control outcomes require original national records.
- Chilean and Uruguayan coverage needs deeper local-record work before either is represented as comprehensively documented.
- Reported ownership disputes must remain visible until resolved; name similarity is not enough to merge entities.

8. Recommended first release and research priorities

A focused, substantive first edition

Start with six lead features: the Galápagos carrier case; Dalian/Long Xing recruitment and remedies; Pingtan's sanctions and response; the Peru-Chile port-policy question; Argentina-Indonesia enforcement; and the Mexico-China smuggling case. Give each a concise public summary and a substantial evidence trail.

Support those features with the crew-record context, a fleet-scale and rules explainer, the distinction between legal flagging and fraudulent identity, and the processing/import-control module. Argentine flagging-in and Wei Yu 18 can add depth with explicit attribution. Put Philippines/Natuna comparisons in a separate collection, not on the main map as though they occurred in the Americas.

Keep unresolved leads out of accusation-driven homepage headlines. Publishing a clear "what we still need to establish" note can be valuable; publishing an unsupported conclusion is not.

Highest-value next records

1. **Judicial outcomes:** Argentine and Indonesian Hua Li 8 records; Jing Yuan 626's legal/payment outcome; Kaven sentencing; Indonesian recruiter judgments.
2. **Ownership histories:** original corporate and flag records for selected carriers and operating companies, with native-script names and dated identifiers.
3. **Cargo continuity:** transfer declarations, port inspections and shipment records linking particular harvests to processors and buyers.
4. **Worker remedies:** wage settlements, repatriation, medical follow-up and compensation in named cases.
5. **Port-policy implementation:** Peru and Chile arrivals, inspection outcomes and monitoring compliance, using consistent time periods.
6. **Current status:** the relevant import-control lists, vessel authorizations, sanctions entries and later court decisions before each feature's publication.

Operational recommendation

Keep the first edition small enough to maintain. Use a curated case register and existing tracking resources before building complex monitoring infrastructure. Add automation only after identifiers, update sources and editorial review rules are stable. A stale "live" dashboard

would be less useful than a clearly dated, well-maintained case library.

Measure usefulness through source completeness, resolved identity links, updated outcomes, correction speed and coverage of affected people—not merely the number of named vessels or alarming claims.

Bottom line: proceed with the broader maritime-networks concept. The evidence supports an independent, forceful site covering extraction, labor, identity, logistics, trade and accountability, with the Americas at its center. The research package is a foundation for that site; no domain, public deployment or automated publishing system has been created.

Sources

The numbered references identify the supporting documents and their limits. The accompanying source register preserves source type, date where established, access notes and relevant sections. Titles are descriptive where a source is a database or record rather than an article.

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