

Dark Side of Maritime Industry: Tales of Corruption

<https://maritimefairtrade.org/the-dark-side-of-the-maritime-industry-tales-of-corruption/>

- [November 29, 2022](#)
- [Corruption](#), [guide](#), [Maritime News](#), [Philippines](#), [Shipping](#)
- [By Associate Editor](#)

The maritime industry is no stranger to tales of corruption. From illegal fishing, human trafficking, or pollution to tales of bribery and smuggling to more recent stories of fraud and embezzlement, the maritime industry has been embroiled in scandal in recent years. We will look at some of the most egregious examples and the most notable cases of corruption in the maritime industry here at the leading [shipping news in Singapore](#) and what's being done to combat it.

Illegal Fishing

Illegal fishing is a massive problem in the maritime industry. It's estimated that up to 26% of the world's fish catch is stolen, costing the industry billions of dollars annually. Illegal fishing takes many forms, from using banned fishing methods to fishing in protected areas. Illegal fishermen sometimes will even resort to violence to defend their catches.

Human Trafficking

[Human trafficking](#) is another severe problem in the maritime industry. Every year, thousands of people are trafficked onto ships and forced to work under conditions often tantamount to slavery. They are confined to their quarters and are not allowed to leave the ship in port. Victims of maritime human trafficking are often promised good jobs and decent wages, only to find themselves working long hours for little to no pay.

The Panama Papers Scandal

In 2016, a massive leak of 11.5 million confidential documents from the Panama-based law firm Mossack Fonseca revealed widespread tax evasion and money laundering among the world's elite. The Panama Papers scandal implicated several high-profile individuals in the maritime industry, including shipowners, managers, and brokers.

While the full extent of the scandal is still being uncovered, one thing is for sure – the Panama Papers have shone a light on the dark side of the maritime industry, and there are sure to be more revelations to come.

The Maersk Line Bribery Scandal

In 2017, it was revealed that Maersk Line, one of the world's largest shipping companies, had been involved in a years-long scheme to bribe officials to secure contracts with state-owned oil companies in Angola and Brazil.

According to US prosecutors, Maersk Line paid millions of dollars in bribes to officials in Angola between 2009 and 2014 to secure contracts with Sonangol, the state-owned oil company. In Brazil, Maersk Line reportedly paid out \$27 million in bribes between 2007 and 2010 to secure contracts with Petrobras, another state-owned oil company.

As a result of the scandal, Maersk Line agreed to pay \$761 million in fines to US and Danish authorities.

What's Being Done?

Several initiatives are underway to combat corruption in the maritime industry. For example, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has launched a global campaign against maritime piracy and armed robbery. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has also adopted several measures to tackle corruption in the shipping industry. These include raising awareness of the problem and providing guidance on how shipowners and operators can prevent and detect corrupt practices.

Conclusion

The maritime industry has seen everything from human trafficking to fraud and embezzlement. With continued effort, it is hoped that corruption in the maritime industry can be reduced significantly. Stay updated on the [maritime industry news in Singapore](#) here at Maritime Fairtrade

End doc