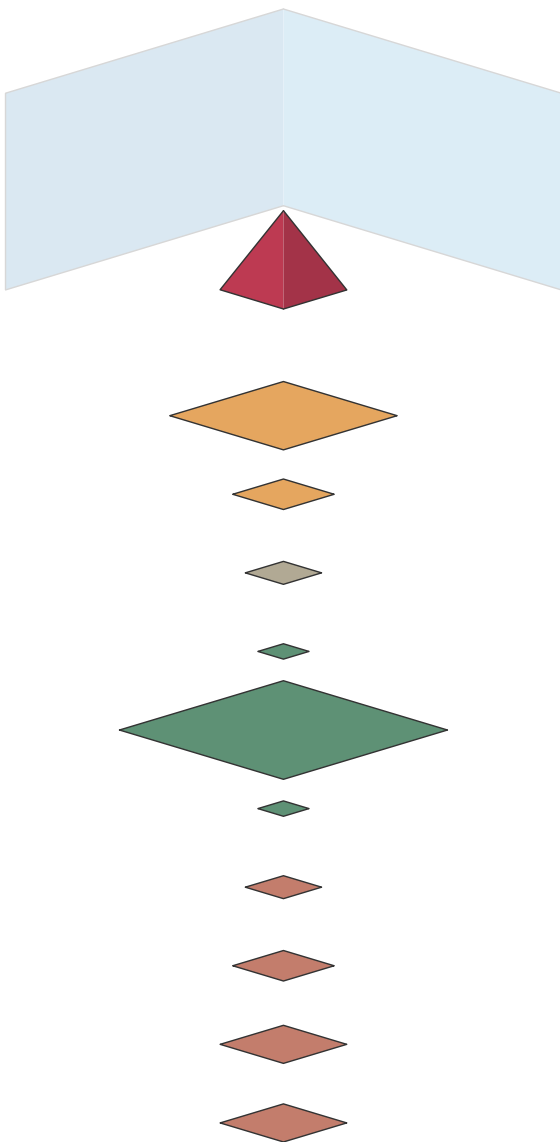


MARSHALL ISLANDS



2.31 CRIMINALITY SCORE

187th of 193 countries
10th of 14 Oceanian countries
3rd of 4 Micronesian countries

CRIMINAL MARKETS 2.50

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	4.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	2.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	1.50
FLORA CRIMES	1.00
FAUNA CRIMES	6.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	1.00
HEROIN TRADE	1.50
COCAINE TRADE	2.00
CANNABIS TRADE	2.50
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	2.50

CRIMINAL ACTORS 2.13

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	2.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	2.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	3.50

5.04 RESILIENCE SCORE

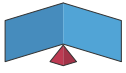
87th of 193 countries
10th of 14 Oceanian countries
2nd of 4 Micronesian countries



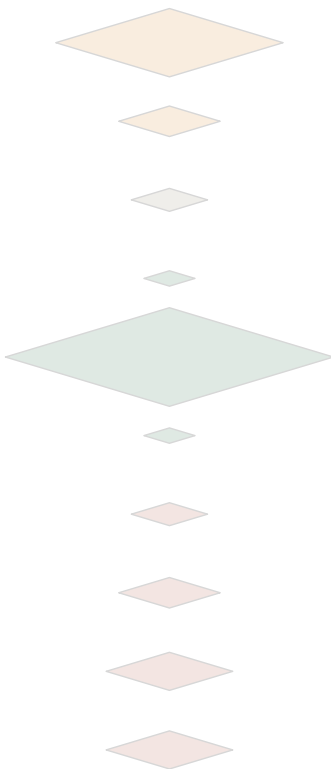
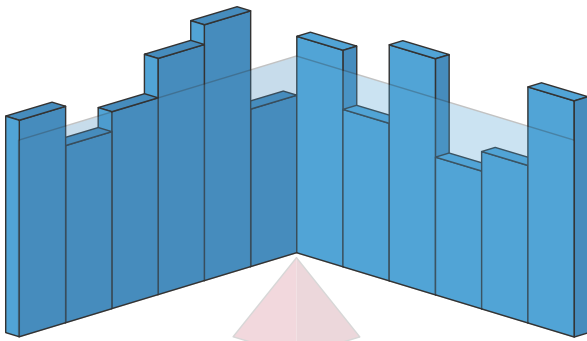
Funding provided by the United States Government.



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MARSHALL ISLANDS



5.04

RESILIENCE SCORE

87th of 193 countries

10th of 14 Oceanian countries

2nd of 4 Micronesian countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	5.50
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	4.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	5.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	6.50
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	5.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	4.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	6.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	3.50
PREVENTION	4.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	6.00



2.31

CRIMINALITY SCORE

187th of 193 countries

10th of 14 Oceanian countries

3rd of 4 Micronesian countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS 2.50



CRIMINAL ACTORS 2.13



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Human trafficking is among the most significant criminal markets in the Marshall Islands, involving women, men and children, who are mostly trafficked internally, although cases of trafficking to other countries are also recorded. Foreign individuals or groups in the country drive demand for sexual exploitation, while domestic actors are involved as both victims and perpetrators. Children from the Marshall Islands are also trafficked to and sexually exploited in the United States. Even though there is no indication that trafficking for adoption is a common practice, a recent case flagged the country's vulnerability to this practice. The Marshall Islands is also a destination country for victims of sexual exploitation from East Asia. Young girls and women, mainly from China, are lured into travelling to the Marshall Islands and forced into prostitution. Labour exploitation is also present domestically. Often wealthier families exploit impoverished Marshallese from the outer islands under the pretext of traditional cultural practices. In addition, foreign fishermen are exploited in practices indicative of forced labour on fishing vessels in Marshallese waters, while the country's citizens are known to be exploited abroad as well. In spite of the market being so pervasive, generated proceeds are low and usually accrue to both local and foreign actors.

Conversely, it appears that human smuggling does not affect the Marshall Islands on any significant scale as neither a source, transit nor destination country. There have been allegations that foreign nationals have acquired travel or identity documents from the Marshall Islands to get access to the United States, but that practice has largely declined, or ceased altogether.

TRADE

Trafficking in stolen firearms is among the more prominent criminal markets affecting the Marshall Islands. Assessments of civilian-held firearms, however, show that the number of privately owned small arms is minuscule, which would suggest the market is comparatively small. There is no indication that the market accrues any significant profit or involves sizeable financial transactions.

ENVIRONMENT

There are no indications that trafficking in flora products occurs in the Marshall Islands, with few to no criminal opportunities available. On the other hand, wildlife crime and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in

particular, is one of the most significant forms of transnational organized crime in the country. IUU fishing is mainly carried out by legally licensed vessels fishing above approved quotas. Related to that, the country is host to the third-largest ship registry of 'flags of convenience', which facilitate transnational maritime crime, including fisheries crimes. As a source country for illegal fishing, the Marshall Islands is deeply affected, because overfishing negatively influences marine life/fish resources and consequently the locals, who rely on fish as an important food source. Given the extent of IUU fishing, the value of the market is significant by regional and global comparison. Although reef mining has occurred on the Marshall Islands, there is no evidence to suggest the involvement of organized crime groups or illegality.

DRUGS

Cannabis is grown locally to satisfy domestic demand. Although evidence suggests the cannabis market may be declining in the country, it is likely that the prevalence of cannabis, and thus the size and value of the market, is significantly higher than that of other drugs. There is indication that amphetamine-type stimulants might be traded in low quantities into or through the Marshall Islands. The country is mainly a destination for synthetic drugs, reporting the highest annual prevalence rate of amphetamines-group substances among countries in Oceania.

Although there is no evidence to suggest the existence of heroin trafficking in the Marshall Islands or through its territories, the use of cocaine has escalated in recent years. Instances of cocaine washing up ashore or being caught in fishing nets have also been recorded, pointing to organized seaborne trans-shipments crossing Marshallese waters. Beyond the negative health consequences of cocaine use reported by officials, there is little information to assess the societal impact of cocaine trafficking.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Due to the strategic geographic location of the Pacific Island countries, there is high interest in exploiting them as transit hubs for trafficking, and the Marshalls are no exception. Illicit cross-border trade and trans-shipment (including marine species and amphetamine-type stimulants or cocaine) going through Marshallese territorial waters involve private and commercial entities, most of them from other countries. Thus, much of the criminal activity in the Marshall Islands can be attributed to foreign actors. There are also reports of gang activity in the Marshall Islands, with such entities forming due to a lack of legitimate employment opportunities. Besides anecdotal evidence

of organized criminal networks involved in the domestic trade of cocaine, little else is known of their activities.

Arguably, both minor and high-level corruption, as well as rent-seeking, exists throughout the Pacific Island countries,

the Marshall Islands included. These are opportunistic crimes, which arise mainly because of the low incomes earned by officials. In contrast, there is no evidence that mafia-style groups exist or operate in the country.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Particular crimes of concern, such as IUU fishing and human trafficking, feature on the political agenda in the country, with political leaders showing commitment to tackling organized crime. Accordingly, concrete steps have been implemented to put measures into practice. Nevertheless, chronic corruption that spans the higher echelons of power compromises anti-organized-crime commitments. In spite of auditing bodies and independent courts being somewhat efficient in detecting and prosecuting corruption cases, investigation is subpar. Transparency is also problematic, due to the absence of a legal mechanism guiding public access to information. In addition to practical and legal measures being adopted to remedy that deficiency, a joint programme with the World Bank was launched in late 2018. The aim was to strengthen public procurement and budget reporting processes, with the ultimate purpose being to enhance transparency.

Although the Marshall Islands is party to a number of relevant international treaties and conventions pertaining to organized crime, it has not yet signed or ratified the UNTOC or any of its protocols. There is a basic institutional framework to facilitate international criminal justice cooperation, but additional resources and expertise from donor countries and international organizations are needed. Against this backdrop, law enforcement bodies across the region tend to operate relatively isolated from one another and the Marshall Islands is no exception. Nevertheless, the country is member to a number of regional security initiatives and there is an INTERPOL National Central Bureau (NCB) in Majuro, which is part of the Marshall Islands Police Department. The NCB is the point of contact for international law-enforcement cooperation and plays an essential role in the analysis, detection, investigation and prevention of organized crime. A fairly comprehensive legal framework covers key organized-crime types and is well positioned to respond to current threats that may involve overseas crime groups.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The judiciary in the Marshall Islands generally operates without political interference, but judges and prosecutors may lack specific expertise in transnational organized crime and related laws. Therefore, there is a recognizable need for increased capacity building within both the judicial and law-enforcement system. As emphasized, the NCB plays a critical role in anti-organized-crime efforts, and the country is working towards achieving better regional cooperation. Human and material resources at the disposal of law enforcement agencies are very limited, but the Marshall Islands is able to adequately respond to the present organized-crime situation and maintain its territorial integrity. Nevertheless, some improvement might be required to achieve a better level of preparedness and alertness. The Marshall Islands remains vulnerable to fisheries crime, especially given the geography and topography of the country, which makes it difficult to patrol its territorial waters, coastline and borders effectively.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

There is a high risk of money laundering and terrorist financing and the current anti-money-laundering and counter-terrorism financing framework is insufficient to respond to potential threats, requiring it's alignment with international standards. Anti-money laundering agencies are operational in the country, but lack adequate technical and human resources. Likewise, the economic regulatory environment in the Marshall Islands is not conducive to doing business. It is arguable that, because of the unattractive business environment, there is no incentive for criminal elements to infiltrate business or the legal economy, especially from abroad.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Victim and witness support services are poorly developed or in some instances lacking altogether. There are procedures for the identification of victims of trafficking in place but they are reportedly not used, nor are assistance measures employed for confirmed victims of trafficking. The lack of resources once more appears to be a major obstacle in enhancing the scope of victim and witness support.

Prevention efforts in relation to organized crime, especially trafficking in people, appear to be in their infancy and only marginally developed. Conversely, prevention of IUU fishing features more prominently on the country's agenda, with efforts made to establish international cooperation to curb the practice. In addition, the Marshall Islands has expressed interest in ratifying the Agreement on Port State Measures as a tool to block IUU fishing vessels from docking in its ports.

The Marshall Islands has robust civil society organizations, many of which provide social services (including to victims of human trafficking) and are able to operate freely. The full potential of civil society actors, however, has yet to be used more efficiently in pursuing better preventive and counter measures against organized crime. Freedom of speech and of the press, as well as religious freedom, are generally respected in the country.

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