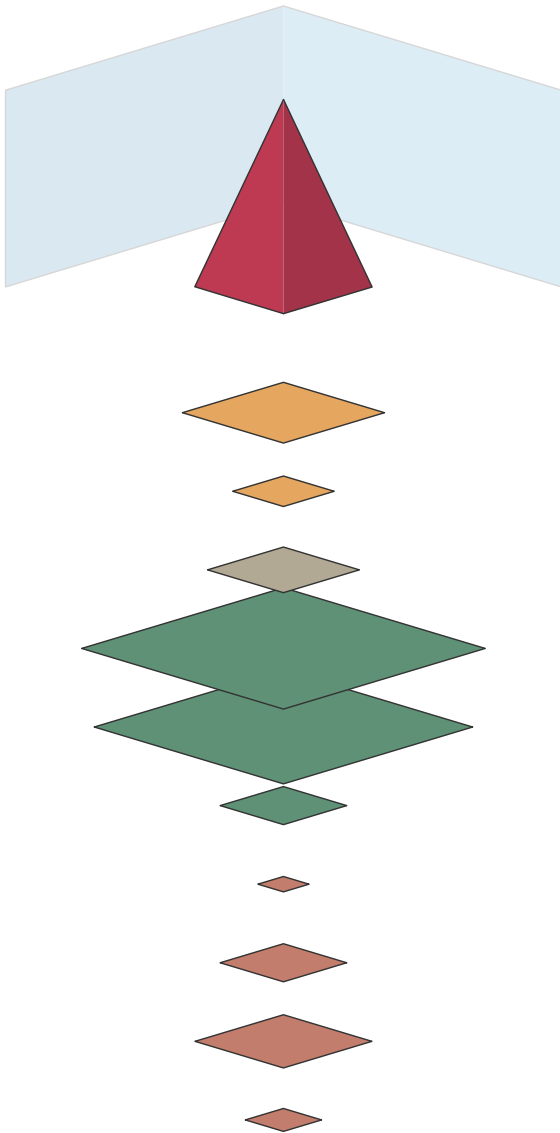




SOLOMON ISLANDS



4.15 CRIMINALITY SCORE

135th of 193 countries
2nd of 14 Oceanian countries
2nd of 5 Melanesian countries

CRIMINAL MARKETS 3.55

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	4.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	2.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	3.00
FLORA CRIMES	8.00
FAUNA CRIMES	7.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	2.50
HEROIN TRADE	1.00
COCAINE TRADE	2.50
CANNABIS TRADE	3.50
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	1.50

CRIMINAL ACTORS 4.75

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	4.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	7.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.50

5.21 RESILIENCE SCORE

76th of 193 countries
8th of 14 Oceanian countries
3rd of 5 Melanesian countries



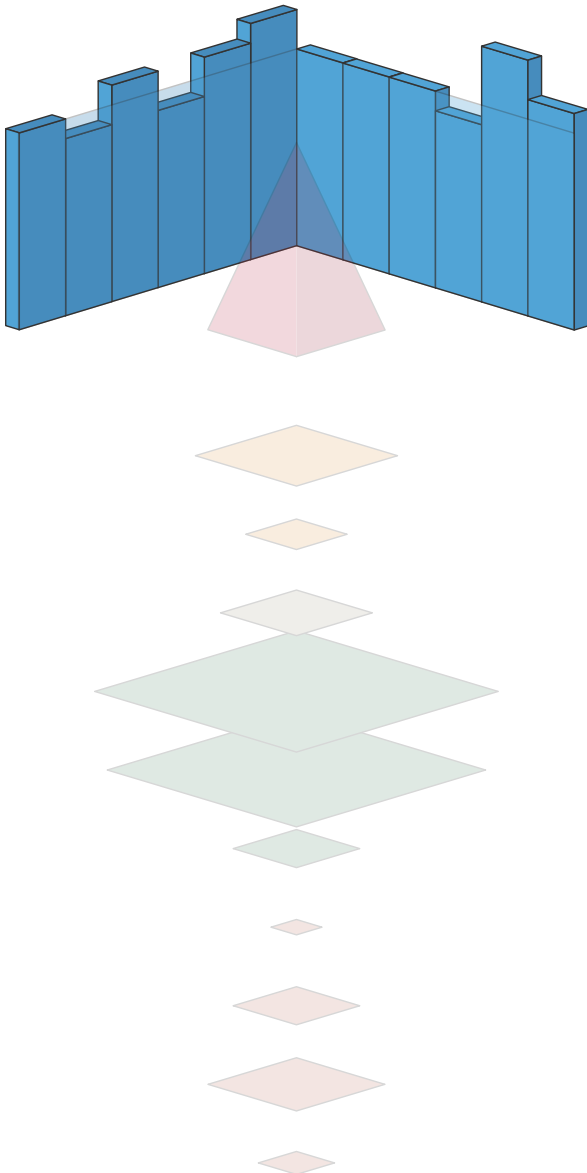
Funding provided by the United States Government.



ENACT is funded by the European Union and implemented by the Institute for Security Studies and INTERPOL, in affiliation with the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.



SOLOMON ISLANDS



5.21 RESILIENCE SCORE

76th of 193 countries
8th of 14 Oceanian countries
3rd of 5 Melanesian countries

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

4.15 CRIMINALITY SCORE

135th of 193 countries
2nd of 14 Oceanian countries
2nd of 5 Melanesian countries

CRIMINAL MARKETS	3.55
CRIMINAL ACTORS	4.75



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CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Human trafficking occurs in the Solomon Islands, but at a relatively low level. Reportedly, Solomon Islanders are becoming victims of forced labour abroad, but people smuggled into the country are vulnerable to forced labour as well, primarily in the logging industry, but also fishing. Women in the Solomon Islands, many of whom are underage, come into the country as irregular migrants and are forced into prostitution, working around logging camps. Corruption plays a significant role in sex and labour trafficking, as there are reports of complicity at various levels of the state.

A significant proportion of trafficking victims in the Solomon Islands initially arrive as irregular migrants smuggled from South-eastern and Eastern Asia, including China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and North Korea.

TRADE

The country has seen a massive reduction in the prevalence of small arms and light weapons since the commencement of the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands and its Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programme. Currently, gun ownership levels are low, but there are reports of arms trafficking between the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea's Bougainville Island. Arms trafficking seems to ebb and flow in both directions because of the poorly monitored maritime borders.

ENVIRONMENT

The Solomon Islands rely heavily on timber with over 50% of its exports coming from logging. Reports indicate that much of this billion-dollar industry is illegal. This is predominantly due to the involvement of transnational corporations from China and Malaysia abusing quotas and avoiding regulations, and shipping about two thirds of their harvest to China. In addition, state actors are known to engage in bribery and other corrupt practices, facilitating illicit logging. Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is also a serious issue as territorial waters are highly vulnerable. Similar to flora crimes, IUU fishing is mostly perpetrated by foreign fleets, originating in Vietnam and China. Corruption is key to allowing foreign actors to operate free of government interference. Poaching levels of rare and endangered turtle species in the Solomon Islands are also concerning. Turtle shells are used by carvers and jewellery-makers and sold domestically, although local buyers are known to sell to

buyers throughout Asia. The country is also rich in gold and minerals, which until recently were exploited to a minimal extent. Increased mining activities may come with a heightened risk of corruption and criminal involvement in the country, which has demonstrated limited capacity in the management of natural-resource wealth. Nevertheless, the government plans to tap into natural resources as a potential source of economic development.

DRUGS

Although demand is low and there is limited evidence of a domestic cocaine market, there are indications that the Solomon Islands is a major transit point for cocaine destined for Australia and New Zealand. Conversely, there is neither local demand, nor transit routes for heroin going through the Solomon Islands or its territorial waters.

It is arguable that a domestic market for cannabis exists in the country, and demand is seemingly satisfied by cannabis farms inside the country, implying the involvement of domestic actors. No concrete evidence supports the presence of a synthetic drugs market in the Solomon Islands. There is, however, the heightened risk of a spillover effect in the sense that availability of synthetic drugs in the region might contribute to the development of such a market locally. In addition, the country is at risk of becoming a transit zone for methamphetamine destined for Australia and New Zealand.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

State-embedded actors appear to be the most prominent criminal actor type in the Solomon Islands. There is evidence of their involvement in illicit logging, fishing and gambling/prostitution at different levels and in close cooperation with private entities involved in these activities. The issue stems predominantly from clientelism and the fact that state actors are able to direct resources towards specific agents, mostly by awarding concessions and contracts to companies. Closely linked to that, foreign actors – mostly companies – are the main beneficiaries of the support of state-embedded actors. These entities originate mostly in East and South-east Asian countries and are primarily involved in illegal logging and IUU fishing. It is likely that foreign actors are also making use of the close proximity between large drugs markets, such as Australia and New Zealand, and the Solomon Islands, using the latter as a transit hub.

Reports of criminal networks operating in the Solomon Islands are not widespread, however, their existence seems probable. These are arguably involved to some extent in facilitating human trafficking as well as in fauna crimes

and the trafficking of arms. Establishing how widespread criminal networks are is difficult, but a likely hypothesis is that they operate around 'hubs', such as logging camps, cities and the porous border area with Bougainville Island. It is reasonable to suggest criminal networks have links to foreign actors. There is no evidence to back the existence

of mafia-style groups in the Solomon Islands. Those closest to this definition were the so-called 'raskol' gangs, but rather than evolving into actual mafia groups, they were unable to develop a clear command structure or maintain group membership.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Although the integrity of political process, political pluralism and freedom of media are respected, corruption seems to be a significant issue in the Solomon Islands, taking many forms. Bribe rates appear high across the country and grand corruption is a major concern. Parties revolve around kinship and clan ties and the Solomon Islands appear to be caught in a 'clientelism trap', where politicians funnel funding locally, towards their immediate clients or embezzle state funds, rather than directing them towards building a well-functioning institutional framework. Corruption issues are endemic in the natural-resource sectors – fisheries, logging and non-renewable resources – with companies frequently bribing or offering kickbacks to politicians. Nevertheless, steps have been taken at a national level to address the issue. One such measure has been the adoption of anti-corruption legislation in 2018, which established the Independent Commission Against Corruption. While an important step in the right direction, these measures have their limitations and further anti-corruption efforts are needed. Although an independent ombudsman's office and an auditor general are operational in the country, a lack of funding hinders their work. Following the ethnic violence that ended in 2003, group grievances have reduced, although there are still occasional flare-ups of civil unrest.

The Solomon Islands is party to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora but has not signed or ratified other international treaties and conventions pertaining to organized crime. Nevertheless, the country has been a member of INTERPOL since 2017. The organization has a National Central Bureau in Honiara and is mostly engaged in capacity building as well as providing intelligence and facilitating intelligence exchange with partner countries in the region. Additionally, the Solomon Islands cooperates with other island nations via a number of regional security initiatives, including the Pacific Islands Forum, the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police, and others. Overall, international cooperation has been key in the country better policing its borders and in rebuilding its judicial system in the post-conflict period. Still, laws related to organized crime are poor, even by regional

standards, and need to be updated in order to adequately respond to modern threats.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The justice sector in the Solomon Islands is best described as a hybrid of formal and informal institutions, with community leaders, for the most part, regarded as the most accessible, fair and efficient means of resolving disputes. Although improvement in the work of the formal judicial system is evident, prosecution services, for instance, still lack capacity and resources to work efficiently. Both the judicial system and law enforcement have benefited significantly from the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) and the subsequent bilateral Solomon Islands Justice Program. However, there are still substantial issues in the justice system that need to be addressed. Although standards in law enforcement have been raised and training is considered good, a lack of funding persists. The penal system has also benefited from international funding, despite evidence suggesting that prisons are still underfunded. Along with the investment in facilities, international donors recognize the need for leadership and management capacity building as well as an increased focus on rehabilitation. Justice as well as governance in general are heavily influenced by geographical constraints, making it difficult for institutions to exercise sovereignty equally throughout the country. Along these lines, the vast maritime borders are difficult to police and are vulnerable to illegal flows.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Money laundering risks in the Solomon Islands stem primarily from proceeds generated from illegal logging, IUU fishing and related corruption practices. Reports indicate that these risks are either not properly accounted for or the policy framework to address them is inadequate. No steps have been taken on the part of authorities to close these gaps. There is an operational financial intelligence unit, but money laundering offences are rarely the subject of investigation, often taking a backseat to predicate offences, while supervision of private actors, such as financial institutions or NGOs, has been limited or non-existent.

The Solomon Islands also faces structural constraints to economic development. The country's economy is heavily dependent on the export of primary goods, especially timber, and lacks diversification and sophistication. In addition, the country's economic regulatory framework makes doing business in the Solomon Islands extremely difficult. Youth disenfranchisement in politics, society and the economy has on occasion led to riots, often targeting the property of those who benefit from the status quo. Labour participation rates are low, leaving young people in particular vulnerable to criminality of a mostly petty nature.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The police reportedly operate a shelter for victims of violence, which can be used to house victims of sex trafficking. Specialized facilities for victims and witnesses, however, are lacking, and the police are unable to adequately protect witnesses, particularly the most vulnerable. A nationwide crime prevention strategy is being implemented, with crime prevention committees set up across various locations in the country. Intentions are for the committees to enable the police to focus on prevention and on a proactive response to crime issues. Other prevention measures, such as awareness-raising workshops focussed on youth, are also being implemented. Press freedom is for the most part respected, although government officials have, on occasion, used both legal and extra-legal measures to coerce journalists. A whistle-blower protection act was adopted in 2018, which is expected to further promote independent reporting on issues facing the country, in particular corruption. However, the defamation law continues to cast a shadow over media and contributes to self-censorship. Civil society has been relatively active in the Solomon Islands, including on matters related to crime. Organized sport, churches and affiliated youth groups have had a positive impact on crime reduction, making it difficult for gangs to institutionalize in urban settlements.

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