



## **Preventing collisions with fishing vessels in China**

On 22 September 2023, the China Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) issued two circulars addressing the prevention of collisions between commercial and fishing vessels in Chinese waters. These circulars specifically identify high-risk areas (HRAs) prone to such incidents and provide valuable guidance on collision prevention in these waters.

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Mariners on vessels trading to Chinese ports or transiting Chinese waters are recommended to refer to these circulars and implement appropriate measures to minimize the risk of collisions with fishing boats.

## High risk areas for collisions between merchant and fishing vessels

In recent years, various provincial MSAs have published information on high risk areas (HRAs) within their administrative waters. This information has been based on extensive research analyzing previous incidents, AIS tracks, traffic patterns, and other factors related to collisions between merchant and fishing vessels. Examples of such information are:

- In 2022, before lifting of the seasonal fishing ban in the East and South China Sea between latitudes 26° 30' N and 12° N, Fujian MSA released the

[First batch of ten HRAs for collisions between merchant and fishing vessel in the coastal waters of Fujian Province](#). A year later, on 7 August 2023, the [Second batch of HRAs](#) was published, including two additional HRAs.

- In 2023, prior to lifting of the seasonal fishing ban in the Bohai Sea and Yellow Sea North of latitude 35°N, Shandong MSA issued the [circular of HRAs for collisions between commercial and fishing boats](#). The circular includes 39 HRAs within the coastal waters of Shandong Province.

The [circular](#) (type: asset-hyperlink id: 17OyQMxQBHLmOfIqHNLBsV) released by China MSA on 22 September 2023 consolidates and highlights a total of 38 HRAs spanning from north to south across the [three sea areas affected by China's seasonal fishing ban](#). These are the sea areas north of 35°N, between 35°N and 26° 30'N, and between 26° 30' N and 12°N.

### Guidance for the prevention of collisions with fishing vessels in Chinese waters

The type: asset-hyperlink id: 6dyl87240BiEoZrrb6FyXK accompanies the above circular on HRAs. This guidance has been revised from the [2021 edition guideline](#). It provides detailed guidance in three key areas: navigation techniques, collision avoidance actions, and emergency rescue protocols. In particular, it sets out the requirements for the navigation techniques merchant vessels should use when approaching, navigating in or near an area with a high density of fishing vessels.

## Recommendations

Mariners on vessels trading to Chinese ports or transiting Chinese coastal waters should familiarize themselves with the above circulars issued by the China MSA in September 2023 to ensure safe navigation through these waters.

## Further information

- [Collision avoidance – safeguarding the lives and livelihoods of fishermen](#)
- [Incident hot spots - a global overview of navigation incidents](#)
- [Look out for risk of collision with fishing vessels in Chinese waters](#)

- China MSA's [Circular on HRAs for collisions between merchant and fishing vessels](#)  
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- China MSA's type: asset-hyperlink id: 6dyl87240BiEoZrrb6FyXK