

Africa's east coast heroin trafficking route

A rising share of the heroin crop from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan is being shipped along a network of maritime routes to East and southern Africa in a so-called “smack track” to the West

HEROIN TRAFFICKING ROUTES

→ Balkan route

Traditional land route has become increasingly difficult for traffickers to use – owing to Turkey tightening its borders in response to Syrian conflict, and attempts by European countries to keep out refugees

→ Southern route

Heroin taken from Afghanistan to Makran coast of Pakistan, where shipments are placed on dhows – traditional Arab boats – or smuggled in containers on larger ships. Vessels sail to African coast, where smaller boats collect contraband



U.S. Navy team boarding drug-laden dhow in Arabian Sea in 2003. Most heroin is destined for Western markets but spin-off trade is fuelling consumption in Africa, along with formation of regional criminal economy

