RED SEA FUTURES

CLIENT BRIEF · AUGUST 2026

FOR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND INVESTORS

Risk and due diligence

Due diligence and Red Sea risk for funds and investors.

Investors now price Red Sea risk into every regional decision – the chokepoints and shipping, the energy flows, the Gulf capital moving through it, and the deals reaching into Africa. Everyone is looking at it now; no one specializes in it. Red Sea Futures does.

HOW WE DO IT

Our biggest asset is our experts — a meticulously-built pool of regional and technical specialists and management leads, each with career experience in-region. A team of lead experts 'deconstructs' the challenge at hand, while Big Red™, our proprietary agentic model, mines our experts' publications and work histories to identify those best equipped to respond to the challenge. It assists with the formation of tailored queries, while drawing on our custom databases and relevant contextual data. The result is an interactive process that creates a constantly improving resource that is available to the client to address future issues.

WHAT WE OFFER

Geopolitical risk

Sovereign behavior, conflict spillover, chokepoint disruption.

Local risk

At the level of the governorate, the terminal, and the concession.

Diligence on prospective acquisitions

Diligence on prospective investors and partners

Where the question is who stands behind an offer of capital.

Downside scenarios

Concrete worst-case scenarios, with estimated costs attached.

SAMPLE CLIENT PROFILE

An investment fund, private-capital firm, or investor considering an acquisition, a market entry, or an offer of capital in the region. The information that decides the deal is often not in the documents the counterparty provides: who actually owns and controls the counterparty, where sanctions or expropriation risk sits, and who is behind the money. Building that regional capability in-house rarely makes sense for a single transaction.

EXAMPLES OF RECENT WORK

01 A medical-technology company set out to enter the Gulf with investment capital paired with a contract to build a dedicated treatment center. The commercial package was clear enough. The political sensitivities around who would fund it, who would host it, and who would be seen to benefit were not. Most diligence in this region fails at the same point: the registered owner, the beneficial owner, and the person who actually decides are often three different parties, and sanctions exposure, expropriation risk, and failed enforcement usually trace back to the distance between them. That distance does not appear in the documents a counterparty provides, and it is not held by anyone with an incentive to write it down. We convened people who had transacted in these markets, regulated them, or sat on the government side of the table, and worked from commercial registries and court filings in the original language.

02 A recurring line of work is diligence on the source of capital itself. When a fund or company receives an offer of investment, we establish who stands behind it — tracing ownership through commercial registries and court filings in the original language, and surfacing the sanctions, reputational, and control exposure conventional processes do not show.

03 Due diligence is a core, repeatable practice for us. We have vetted an acquisition target for a technology fund, assessed two nonprofits tied to larger investment projects, and evaluated firms and projects for a range of other clients.

Red Sea Futures marries three capabilities most clients have to buy separately: research and AI, strategy, and the capacity to implement. Not every engagement needs all three — clients engage the parts they need.

Bring us your most challenging Red Sea and MENA questions — chorin@redseafutures.com · set up a call at redseafutures.com. All inquiries handled in strict confidence.

THE LEADS

A sample of relevant leads includes:

Dr. Vasanth N. Mohan

An Investment Professional at Shukr Investments, a public equities manager specializing in global equities. Before joining in 2021 he spent over ten years on the sell-side and buy-side in the Bay Area, New York, and Abu Dhabi at GMO, Piper Jaffray, and Morgan Stanley.

Danial Kaysi

A strategic advisor based in Riyadh with over 15 years of experience across the Middle East, East Africa, the United States, and Europe. Formerly at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, he has advised the G20 Secretariat, USAID, FCDO, Global Affairs Canada, and the World Bank, among others.

Michael Brill

A Ph.D. candidate in Near Eastern Studies at Princeton, where his dissertation examines the political life and legacy of Iraqi Baʿth Party founder Michel ʿAflaq, and currently a Visiting Scholar in Middle East Studies at Smith College. In 2024–2025 he was a Global Fellow with the Wilson Center's History and Public Policy Program and a Non-Resident Fellow at the U.S. Air Force Academy's Institute for Future Conflict.

Dr. Birol Başkan

A political scientist specializing in state formation, regime building, and the international politics of the Middle East. He is the author of The Politics of Islam (Edinburgh, 2021), Turkey and Qatar in the Tangled Geopolitics of the Middle East (Palgrave, 2016), and From Religious Empires to Secular States (Routledge, 2014), and co-author of Turkey: The Second Republic (2024).

Dr. Anna Gueorguieva

An economist and sustainability leader with more than 20 years in climate finance, sustainability data, and ESG strategy. She spent 18 years as a Senior Economist and Task Team Leader at the World Bank, where she established and led its Climate Task Force and directly managed more than $1.5B in sustainability and infrastructure investments. As Climate Lead at Bridge Investment Group (Apollo) she drove decarbonization strategy and reporting across a $49B portfolio. She is now Chief Sustainability Officer at GreeniumDC Consult and holds a PhD from UC Berkeley.

Dr. Ethan Chorin

Founder and CEO of Red Sea Futures; former diplomat and Middle East analyst with more than 25 years working on and in the Red Sea basin for the US State Department, Dubai Ports, Royal Dutch Shell, and Perim Associates. Author of Benghazi: A New History, and a forthcoming history of the Red Sea (Harvard University Press).

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