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Commentary

The Successes and Failures of the European Union Integrated Maritime Policy: Critical Mid-term Review 2007-2013

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Abstract

The European Council adopted the first EU Sustainable Development Strategy in 2001 (Gothenburg strategy), later on ambitiously updated in June 2006. The mainstreaming in the maritime domain is the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) launched in 2007. This commentary provides a critical mid-term review on the status of IMP implementation, outlining the successes and failures of the implementation process from a governance perspective. The review focuses on the Integrated Maritime Surveillance, one of the pillars of the Integrated Maritime Policy, using this as a case study for evaluating the implementation progress against the stated objectives and the associated governance model. The outcome suggests that while the EU Integrated Maritime Policy has stimulated a lot of interest for a new maritime vision at EU level and has initiated important steps towards its implementation, including new maritime governance paradigm, so far it has failed to promote the necessary changes to boost the cooperative and sustainable environment it has claimed to do. In the particular case of the Integrated Maritime Surveillance, despite the strong political commitment of the European Commission and the considerable budget expenditure, the EU still has not been able to achieve the targeted Common Information Sharing Environment, failing an important milestone towards building sustainability in the maritime domain.

Keywords

Sustainable development; Governance; Integrated Maritime Surveillance; Common Information Sharing Environment; cooperative environment; policy making

THE EU INTEGRATED MARITIME POLICY (IMP)

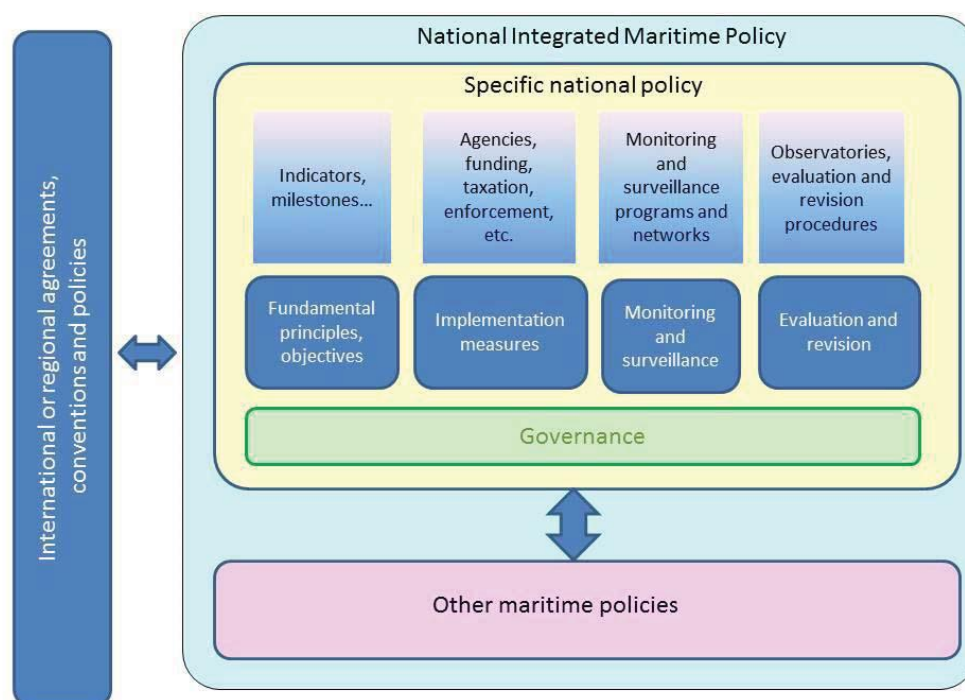
Inspired by the renewed 2006 EU Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS), the Commission (COM) adopted a Green Paper on a future Maritime Policy for the EU (June 2006), pointing out the strategic importance of the seas and oceans for the European economy. It highlighted the urgency of ensuring that future developments take account of the need to maintain competitiveness while safeguarding the marine environment and protecting the well-being and livelihoods of those who depend on the maritime economy or live on the coast. This was then followed by a one year consultation period on how stakeholders foresee the future, which saw some 230 events and over 490 written submissions. The stakeholders overwhelmingly agreed that the EU could not continue to manage its policy towards the oceans and seas through a series of unconnected sectorial policies (EU Commission 2007a). Data collected on the state of the marine environment, human maritime activities and the health of the coastal economy are fragmented and largely inaccessible, and the different authorities entrusted with protecting our seas against pollution, illegal fishing and traffickers are independently developing similar systems to detect and identify anomalous behaviour.

Taking account of these reactions, in 2007, the Commission proposed the overarching Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) with the following goals: (1) maximising the sustainable use of the oceans and seas; (2) building a knowledge and innovation base for the Maritime Policy; (3) delivering the highest quality of life in coastal regions; (4) promoting Europe's leadership in international maritime affairs; and (5) raising the visibility of Maritime Europe. The challenges affecting the IMP implementation call for shared and, above all, integrated responses, rooted in improved maritime governance. An integrated approach to maritime affairs should clearly not undermine the tools and objectives that

have been set for moving forward in specific areas of maritime relevance. On the contrary, it seeks to provide the necessary cross-cutting governance perspective and tools so as to be able to minimise impacts and optimise efficiency and outputs. The IMP can be seen as one of the most comprehensive policies ever adopted by the EU as it criss-crosses all possible maritime and marine policy areas. However, an Integrated Maritime Policy requires a governance framework that applies the integrated approach at every level, as well as horizontal and cross-cutting policy tools (see Fig. 1). It will realise its full potential only if analogous arrangements are also adopted by member states (MSs) in line with the subsidiarity principle, to provide for the improved coordination of all maritime-related affairs. It is worth quoting the governance objective of the IMP:

EU Integrated Maritime Policy will change the way we make policy and take decisions – at every level compartmentalised policy development and decision making are no longer adequate. Inter actions must be understood and taken into account; common tools developed; synergies identified and exploited; and conflicts avoided or resolved (EU Commission 2007b: p. 2).

Figure 1: IMP governance framework model



Source: Atkins International

Three main supporting tools are outlined within the IMP as of major importance: i) Integrated Maritime Surveillance (IMS), critical for the safe and secure use of marine space; ii) Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), key planning tool for sustainable decision making; iii) and Marine Knowledge (MK), a comprehensive and accessible source of data and information. To promote a more holistic approach towards maritime affairs throughout the entire EU, principles and guidelines were considered helpful. These have been provided through a number of documents released by the COM, such as: the Integrated Maritime Policy adopted via Communication (the so-called Blue Book) in October 2007, its accompanying Action Plan and the 'environmental dimension', the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

The first progress report on the implementation of new policies was conducted by the European Commission in October 2009 (European Commission 2009a) and revealed a number of positive developments that had taken place in various aspects of EU governance relating to maritime areas, including a good number of MSs that had started to move toward the integration of maritime policies, in line with the flexible guidance provided by the Commission in its Guidelines of June 2008 (European Commission 2008a). The report argued that all of the three IMP tools (IMS, MSP and the building of MK) have been made use of, although the progress in integrated surveillance and building of marine knowledge base could have been better. The European Commission reacted quickly in providing further support for identified shortcomings by publishing the Communication: 'Towards the integration of maritime surveillance in the European Union,' (European Commission 2009b), which sets out guiding principles for the establishment of a Common Information Sharing Environment for the EU maritime domain (EU CISE), based on existing and new surveillance capacities. In addition, it set up the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODNET) with the aim of reducing uncertainty in knowledge of the seas as well as operational costs for those who use marine data.

The Commission embraced a sea-basin approach for the implementation of the IMP whose fundamental premise is that each sea region is unique and needs individual attention in balancing its uses in a sustainable manner. According to the progress report, regional approaches had been put forward by the Commission for the Arctic and the Mediterranean Sea, and a strategy was launched for the Baltic Sea. In the end, the progress report took up six strategic directions where priority action should be further targeted:

1. Integrated maritime governance must be further enhanced. The registered progress needs to be turned into effective integrated structures at all levels of government further counteracting the prevalence of isolated sectorial policy thinking.
2. Cross-cutting policy tools are of utmost importance to enhance economic development, environmental monitoring, safety, security, and law enforcement and the Commission flags here the special importance of MSP and IMS.
3. The 'environmental' component will remain a key objective which should develop the necessary cooperation between marine science and environment policy.
4. The sea-basin strategies are a key to successful implementation of the IMP, given that here the priorities and the tools of the policy can be adapted to the specific geographic, economic, and political contexts of each large maritime region.
5. The international dimension of the IMP will require more attention to improved global maritime governance, as it has done in the matter of piracy or with regard to destructive fishing practices.
6. Finally, the Commission raises the challenges created by the present economic downturn, and re-affirms its commitment to a renewed focus on sustainable economic growth, employment and innovation.

Based on the Commission report, 56 actions, out of the total 65 in the initial 2007 action plan, had been launched or completed, strong evidence that in its short life-span from 2007 to 2009, the IMP was able to make a difference in the way the EU manages the maritime domain. Based on the evaluation of progress made and new identified challenges, the European Parliament and the Council decided to support the Commission's stated intention to continue the IMP and allocated a new financial envelope of EUR 50 million for the period of 2011-2013 (European Parliament 2011) in order to build upon previous projects in the areas of policy, governance, sustainability and surveillance. With financial guarantees being put in place to secure the continuation of the IMP, the challenge was to ensure the IMP functions in the real world of institutional politics within the EU, as well in the MSs, with their long traditions of fragmented national maritime policies, laws, and institutions. Will the national IMP be established on the basis of the guidance from the Commission,

even though the MSs are not legally required to create these? This was and continues to be a critical question, which will certainly put the IMP to a difficult test (Koivurova 2009: p. 179).

Past experience indicates that whenever the EU (the Commission, the European Parliament or the Council) has issued guidelines instead of mandatory directives, the implementation process is slow, un-coordinated and follows very different paths between MSs. The IMP paradigm shift toward more holistic ways of perceiving and managing the oceans requires new political solutions to the problems of the seas (Juda 2003: pp. 178–179) and a new generation of politicians and managers to challenge the old legally enshrined sectorial ways of policy implementation. For the first time, the national waters of the MSs have become European waters which are jointly managed as regional sea-basins shared by all littoral states:

Now it is possible to view these European seas as part of the territory of the EU, and with this the IMP has certainly contributed to a vision of a more unitary EU, which will likely promote the process of its further integration (Koivurova 2009: p. 179).

Another new feature and challenge of the IMP is that it does not promote change in ocean governance only via MSs but primarily through encouraging all stake-holders and all levels of governance to become full partners in changing the way European seas are governed. This is a shift toward more holistic ways of perceiving and understanding the oceans and thereby enabling new political solutions to the problems of the sea. In support of this approach, the EU financial contribution to marine related-research and innovation amounted to EUR 1.4 billion through 644 projects over 2007-2010, including improved governance mechanisms (such as the 'MARCOM+' forum, 'EMAR2RES') to contribute to more coherent interaction between researcher, industries and policy-makers (EU Commission 2012).

EU INTEGRATED MARITIME SURVEILLANCE (IMS)

On 13 July 2008, the ministers responsible for maritime affairs acknowledged the necessity of reinforcing maritime governance, in particular through the coordination of European agencies, a regional approach by maritime basins, and an enhanced role for the group of high-level national focal points, for the purpose of supporting the development of a European maritime surveillance network (EU Council 2008). The document enumerates the existing surveillance systems (Vessel Detection System, Vessel Monitoring System, Automatic Identification System, radar system, etc) and outlines the lack of interoperability between these systems. The Commission's communication document, COM/2009/0538 final (European Commission 2009b), supported Integrated Maritime Surveillance (IMS) as a pillar of the IMP. As set out above, the main objective was to lay the foundations for the development of a Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) for the EU maritime surveillance domain and to launch a process towards its establishment. The document explains the meaning of CISE, provides guidelines on implementation and proposes the establishment of an IMS Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to coordinate the implementation and to test the most optimal solution. The Council recognised and approved the proposed way forward and called upon the Commission to present a roadmap, including a step by step approach, for its development and implementation, before the end of 2010. The requested roadmap, delivered by the Commission as the communication COM(2010) 584 final, provides a good framework for how IMS can be achieved through better cooperation between all authorities involved in the different maritime sectors. The document proposes six main steps in the implementation process: 1) identification of relevant user communities; 2) mapping of data sets and gap analysis for data exchange; 3) establishing common data classification levels; 4) developing the supporting technical framework based on interoperability principles; 5) establishing proper data access rights for each user community; and 6) ensuring compliance with the legal framework. The coordination of the CISE

initiative was entrusted to DG MARE and the aim was to complete all steps by 2013, resulting in a new paradigm of integrated and collaborative maritime surveillance services across all EU maritime communities.

Towards the end of 2012, the IMP implementation process was again evaluated through a second IMP Progress Report (EU Commission 2012). This time, the conclusion was not as positive as the first one. The report addressed each of the IMP 2011-2013 actions and the general outcome was that IMP related activities had continued at the theoretical level, with many studies and pilot projects trying to demonstrate how IMP could provide added value to different maritime and marine sectors, but little to no progress was noted of effective implementation of an IMP activity which had really changed (i.e. improved) a particular domain. This negative outcome was also reflected in the Limassol Declaration of October 2012 which stated that 'Europe's seas and oceans offer unexplored areas for innovation, sustainable growth and employment' (EU Council 2012) and called on member states and European institutions to improve their support for a more effective sustainable development of marine and maritime activities in the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020.

Despite all the good initiatives and concepts for a more integrated maritime approach, including the IMS and CISE initiatives, the existing legal and operational maritime framework has not changed much over recent years. Policies are still formulated at the EU level and implemented at the national level, often with little or no EU coordination (van Tatenhove 2011). By the end of 2013, Europe still did not have an EU Integrated Maritime Surveillance system and this domain is still covered at the national or the partially regional level by different sector-based authorities with little cooperation between them. Whilst the political vision of IMS and its supporting Common Information Sharing Environment was quite well prepared and expressed by the EU political leaders, the practical implementation process was less successful. Two particular obstacles are worth mentioning as their combined effect has caused a substantial delay in the proposed roadmap: (i) the voluntary implementation approach lacking the support of an EU legal framework (ideally mandatory, as was the case for existing EU maritime traffic monitoring systems); and (ii) the confusing and uncoordinated implementation campaign of DG MARE which did not manage to create the necessary willingness, cooperation and trust needed to promote the change towards a more cooperative environment. Contrarily, the CISE project produced more resistance rather than support from the user communities supposed to share the information, mainly because of cultural differences, misunderstanding of the concepts and the lack of clear guidance. Multiple small initiatives and pilot projects have been made over the last five years but the big decisions on sweeping reform were avoided due to the fractured nature of the EU system.

At European scale, there should be greater recognition of the importance of marine space within EU activities and greater integration of sectorial policies with maritime dimensions. Close collaboration between DGs Environment, Mare, Move, Energy and Regio (for example) should be encouraged (ESPON 2013).

The first phase of the Common Information Sharing Environment initiative ended on 08.07.2014 with the Communication 451 (EU Commission 2014) which provides guidance for the next steps of the implementation process. The Communication foresees a number of future implementation activities until 2018, including:

- launching a project in 2014 under the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research (FP7) to test the CISE application on a large scale;
- developing a non-binding CISE Handbook by the end of 2016 with best-practice recommendations for promoting a 'care to share to be aware' culture;

- defining a technical reference architecture by the end of 2017 in line with European Interoperability Reference Architecture developed by the programme on 'Interoperability Solutions for European public administrations' (ISA programme);
- finally, launching a review process by 2018 to assess the implementation status and the need for further action.

The conclusion of the Communication is that at this stage there is no need for a cross-sector legislative initiative and work should continue both at EU and national level based on the guidelines, recommendations and outcome of CISE related projects.

EUROPEAN MARITIME SAFETY AGENCY (EMSA) – A BOTTOM-UP APPROACH

If no big changes were triggered through top-down decisions of the EU policy makers, the IMS bottom-up approach of the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) might provide the answer for effective implementation of CISE-type of services. Set up in 2002 through Regulation (EC) 1406/2002 (EU Parliament 2002), as a technical body to assist the Commission and MSs in improving maritime safety, security and anti-pollution standards, EMSA is widely recognised as the leading EU agency in the maritime domain. Over the last 10 years, the Agency has developed and operates some of the most advanced cooperative maritime systems, such as the following. First, the SafeSeaNet (SSN), which is the EU short range ship traffic monitoring system using over 700 shore-based receiving stations distributed along the entire EU coast-line to track the Very High Frequency (VHF) radio signal from the Automatic Identification System (AIS) of all ships navigating around the EU. Second, the EU Long Range Identification and Tracking Data Centre (EU LRIT DC), the EU's long range ship tracking system using communication satellites to track EU ships all over the world, as well as all ships, irrespective of their flag, within a maximum radius of 1000 nautical miles from the EU coastline. Finally, the CleanSeaNet (CSN) system which uses satellite radar pictures to detect pollution within EU waters. These systems were set up based on a mandatory legislative EU framework (Dir. 2002/59/EC for SSN, Dir. 2005/35/EC for CSN, EU Council Res. of October 2007 for EU LRIT DC) to address the specific needs of maritime safety and pollution control authorities and to provide real-time maritime information to over 3000 end-users from all EU member states.

When the CISE communication was issued (in 2009), EMSA immediately initiated the necessary technical developments to upgrade and interlink its existing systems (SSN, CSN, EU LRIT DC) into an Integrated Maritime Data Environment (IMDatE) platform able to meet and support CISE requirements. At the beginning of 2013, the EMSA IMDatE platform became operational and ready to support CISE services. Using a bottom-up approach, EMSA has openly invited all interested user communities and authorities to start setting up cooperative services based on CISE principles and using IMDatE capabilities. By the end of 2013, the first CISE-type of services had been established and have been running since then, the most representative being: the EU NAVFOR IMS, the service integrating maritime and defence information to support the EU naval forces acting against piracy in the Horn of Africa area; the European Fishery Control Agency (EFCA) IMS, a service integrating maritime and fishery information in support of illegal fishing activities; and the FRONTEX IMS, the service integrating maritime and border control information in support of illegal migration activities at sea. Other user communities are using EMSA services when needed, i.e. the Customs' BlueBelt service which tracks ships registered within the EU internal trading scheme, or EUROPOL which can use EMSA ship tracking services to monitor specific ships for law enforcement purposes.

Whilst the CISE initiative aims to provide the (legal and technical) framework and guidelines for how IMS can be achieved at EU level, the EMSA IMDatE services provide operational examples of implementation. All seven user communities identified by CISE (border control, fisheries control, defence, maritime safety and security, marine environment, customs, general law enforcement)

have tested and some are using on a permanent basis the EMSA integrated maritime services. Unfortunately, the CISE and IMDatE projects have been more competitive than complementary and the opinions and discussions at both the political (DG MARE vs DG MOVE) and technical (CISE Technical Advisory Group (TAG) vs EMSA IMDatE) levels could not be aligned despite the fact that cooperation and data exchange are the core problems of both projects. A number of CISE pilot projects were funded to demonstrate how a cooperative maritime picture can be achieved, the most notable being MARSUNO, bringing together 24 authorities from ten countries around the North Sea basin; BLUEMASSMED, 37 authorities from six countries around the Mediterranean Sea; and CoopP (EU Commission n/d), 28 partners from 12 countries from all EU sea-basins. EMSA has not participated in these projects and instead has developed its own IMDatE project, using its own ICT platform to develop a system able to process, integrate, and share data within a correlated cooperative maritime picture. Whilst all CISE pilot projects are now closed and a final communication document was issued by DG MARE in June 2014 on the future of CISE, most of the MSs (about 80 authorities from 12 MSs) are now using the EMSA IMDatE platform for achieving their maritime data integration needs, even if the platform is not labelled as CISE compliant by DG MARE. Many MSs were and continue to be confused by the two parallel and un-coordinated initiatives (CISE vs IMDatE) and have asked the Commission to clarify and synchronise the two, as outlined in a number of minutes from the SafeSeaNet High Level Steering Group (HLSG) meetings (EU Commission n/d).

IMP / IMS GOVERNANCE MODEL

The IMP is recognised as one of the most complex and challenging EU policy areas, reflecting the complexity of the institutions and organisations related to the multilevel and multi-sectorial character of most maritime issues. At the EU decision making level, the IMP had a good start as it was powered by an overarching vision (general objectives, basic common principles) supported and implemented by EU organisations, public and private stakeholders. The idea of better cooperation, synergies and coordination between different marine and maritime sectors, the efficient use of resources for multiple common benefits, was well embraced and supported at all levels – EU, MSs, private and non-governmental (not-for-profit) sectors. However, the implementation process has not so far achieved the expected results and certainly not within the planned time-frame, as concluded by the IMP progress reports. A number of the reasons are worth analysing for the purpose of seeking improvement during the next phase of the IMP (2013-2020).

The first specific particularity of the IMP is its complexity, both horizontal and vertical. The marine environment, maritime safety and security, spatial planning, knowledge sharing domains are brought together under a single governance political framework but without any change to the organisational and institutional framework supposed to facilitate the implementation. Initially, an InterServices Group (ISG) involving 28 Directorates-General of the Commission was supposed to support a Steering Group of Commissioners and monitor the day-to-day progress of the EU Integrated Maritime Policy. The ISG was scheduled to meet at six week intervals and provide the core of the integrative work of the IMP within the Commission. Unfortunately, this structure has not worked in practice and the implementation task was mainly performed by DG MARE assisted by a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) consisting of representatives from MSs and EU Agencies. The implementation of the new type of policy (cross-sector) was therefore reliant on the old (sector orientated) structures, mainly based on their good will to cooperate. Very often and in most of the countries, marine and maritime activities are regulated through independent sectorial laws, usually without taking into account, or only in a limited way, possible interferences and conflicts between distinct sectorial legislation. Unless the organisational and structural issues are tackled at a system level, the IMP implementation process will continue to navigate on ‘very rough seas’, as the existing

institutional settings have been optimised for classical, non-integrated policies whilst the IMP demands novel institutional arrangements (van Tatenhove, 2011).

Another governance issue was the representation and the commitment of all parties. The marine environment, resources and space are common goods, whilst maritime zones are associated with many political and geopolitical assets (sovereignty, defence and security, international cooperation). The exploitation, management or protection of these assets must be based on transparent and generally accepted rules which account for the opinion of citizens, either directly (individually or in stakeholder groups) or through democratic processes. It is essential for the countries and communities to be represented in these organisations, at the right level and by the right people. Although the generation of the IMP was based on a wide consultation process, the implementation task was assigned to a sectorial organisation (DG MARE) instead of to a new cross-sector structure. Under time and political pressure to deliver, the implementation soon become a DG MARE project driven and managed by the interests of the Directorate. This has generated questions regarding the legitimacy of the outcomes. Government and national administrations are key organisations for the elaboration and the implementation of maritime policies and regulations; they prepare laws and decrees, propose public budgets, implement policies and are in charge of the enforcement of the legislation. Their participation in the first implementation phase of the IMP was weak and so far the national IMP actions are still at the declarative level rather than operational. Very few MSs (France, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom) have taken steps to establish inter-ministerial or national executive structures for coordinated management of the IMP related issues.

The consistency and completeness of the IMP through all stages (policy making, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation) has to be mentioned as well as a weak point of the implementation process. The result of weak cross-sectorial coordination was the absence of clear objectives associated with schedules and milestones, and based on defined institutional and organisational principles. The undefined framework was used either to avoid any commitment to the IMP principles or to develop its own implementation path (see the EMSA IMDatE project). The voluntary implementation approach chosen for the IMP is inconsistent with the strong political declaration of support. The IMP was endorsed and strongly promoted at the highest political levels: the Parliament and the Council, the Commission, the Ministers of the MSs (EU Commission 2012). However, the approach for implementation is based on a voluntary rather than mandatory implementation through directives. This has proved (once again) impractical and a change of course is already visible with IMP related legislative proposals being initiated by the Commission and approved by the Parliament and Council. Whilst the adoption of the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (European Commission 2008b) might indicate that other IMP pillars, including IMS, may follow a similar implementation path in the future, the latest CISE Communication of 8th July 2014 concluding that there is no need for a cross-sector legislative initiative further accentuates the inconsistency of the governance model.

CONCLUSION

The EU maritime policy failures have increasingly been pointing to the issue of revised governance arrangements and procedures as a solution (Roe 2013). The Blue Paper featured significant discussion of the concept of governance and the EU Maritime Affairs Commissioner emphasised the need to ensure that the process of governance includes mechanisms for cooperation, coordination and integration. Although recognition of the need for improved governance is a step forward, this is not enough to achieve a better outcome within the maritime domain. The poor implementation stage of the IMP suggests that the underlying framework, which supports and directs policy generation and implementation, has not yet achieved the appropriate level of maturity. The 2000 – 2010 Lisbon Strategy has failed in many of its stated objectives and the reasons for failure were

claimed to be the unforeseen and unexpected global economic crisis. True or not, the results of that decade have not strengthened the EU, rather the contrary. Learning from that experience and this time fully considering the economic crisis, the EU-2020 strategy is setting up the framework for the ongoing decade. Almost half-way through, are we happy with the progress?

Through IMP, the Commission has focused on developing cross-cutting actions supporting the sustainable growth of coastal regions and maritime sectors. It has also given priority attention to implementing a more strategic and integrated approach to sea-related sectorial policy making that is expected to have a lasting positive impact and will continue to be developed further. The proposed multiplication of levels, rules and actors in the practice of governance points to the empirical and theoretical need to find new modes of legitimacy production (Scharpf 2004). The IMP introduces a new governance (integrated) approach which presupposes an integration of different bodies of knowledge, an integration of sectorial activities and policy domains. The building blocks, integration, participation, and sustainable management, are based on innovative initiatives within shipping governance and integrated coastal zone management (Integrated Maritime Surveillance, Marine Spatial Planning, Marine Knowledge). The IMP has been able to identify the relationship between the different maritime activities and the dynamics of the maritime policy domains, how they influence each other and what the enabling and constraining conditions for integration are. Whilst this is a good first step towards an integrated governance model, further challenges have to be tackled to ensure a successful implementation outcome. So far, the IMP design does not fit the existing institutional arrangements and associated rules of the games. The governance objective of the IMP was to change the way the EU makes policy and takes decisions. This has not been achieved yet and the IMP was not able to set up the necessary structural setting to support the institutionalisation of integrated horizontal governance. The proposed voluntary forms of cooperation do not connect to the interests, expectations and values of the participants, and the public and private actors have not demonstrated their commitment for the IMP implementation. In the particular case of the Integrated Maritime Surveillance pillar, the IMP CISE initiative has triggered a number of activities and projects towards data exchange and integration for a more enhanced maritime picture. Questions about the legal framework for data exchange have been answered in a number of studies funded under the CISE framework and the positive outcome is that there are no legal barriers for setting up the IMS. Main user communities have been identified and dialogue between them initiated. Although a number of integrated maritime services have been set up based on bilateral cooperation between EU Agencies (EMSA-EU NAVFOR, EMSA-EFCA, EMSA-FRONTEx), none was classified as a CISE service. Moreover, the framework for the EU Integrated Maritime Surveillance system is not defined and for the time being left to the voluntary will of the member states.

Will the IMP be able to set up the necessary structural setting to support the institutionalisation of IMP governance in the future? Do the proposed forms of cooperation connect to the interests, expectations and values of the participants and are the results in accordance with the desired outcomes of the actors involved? Finally, can the Integrated Maritime Surveillance be achieved at EU level? These are all questions and topics to be addressed by the IMP implementation process in the coming years. A new Commission will take over the IMP implementation responsibility by the beginning of 2015. This might be an opportunity for renewed commitment and enthusiasm or a delaying factor if the new team decides to reassess the situation and adjust the proposed 2020 strategy. This is just another problem to complicate further the already overly complex EU and IMP frameworks. The future of the IMP is certainly a challenging task, from the governance, political and operational management perspectives. The very dynamic evolution of maritime related activities (commercial transport, energy and resources exploration, fishery, cross-border illegal activities) requires similarly fast and pro-active decision making and managerial processes to ensure the expected results. This is clearly missing within the existing EU mechanisms. Being able to change the

governance paradigm and associated implementation tools might be the biggest challenge of the IMP and IMS over the coming years.

Disclaimer

The content of this Commentary does not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Maritime Safety Agency. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in the Commentary therein lies entirely with the author.

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