



Sector characteristics

Military defence

Military use of the sea and coast is a reality in all coastal countries. Military defence usually comprises activities that are designed to ensure capability for armed combat. This capability is ensured on, above and under the water, by means of naval exercise areas, artillery ranges and air bases for example.

Defence interests are varied and cannot always be communicated openly. This can make their inclusion in MSP difficult.

Civil defence

Civil defence safeguards the civil population, ensures the most important societal functions and contributes to military defence in the event of war.

Security is a generic term that can relate to a broad range of domestic issues, including crime prevention and prosecution (e.g. illegal fishing), disaster relief, or combating fires.

Search and rescue activities can also be part of civil defence and security.

Conflict description

Interference with military installations

Maritime activities could get in the way of military infrastructure. Turbines for example could interfere with defence radar or military underwater cables. Installations may also have negative impacts on optical, radio and hydroacoustic observation and the possibilities of veiling.

Areas need to be kept free of obstacles

Maritime activities can interfere with areas that need to be free of obstacles, such as naval training areas, artillery ranges or airbases. Obstacles particularly include tall permanent installations such as offshore wind turbines. Nature conservation, such as the establishment of new MPAs, or the establishment of aquaculture can restrict certain types of military activity.

Securing nationally relevant infrastructure

Maritime activities can interfere with the functioning of marine infrastructure that is considered indispensable for national safety and security, such as pipelines, transmission cables, data cables etc.

Drivers of conflict

UNCLOS

UNCLOS does not give coastal countries the right to regulate defence in the EEZ. Defence is permitted in the EEZ as a customary activity, but it must give room to other EEZ freedoms that are regulated under UNCLOS, such as cables and pipelines

Policy precedence

Issues of national defence usually take precedence over all other activities. This means military needs cannot be negotiated to the same degree as other activities. In some coastal areas, the navy is an important employer, adding socio-economic "weight" to the sector.

Secrecy

Very often, the military cannot be explicit about its spatial needs. It may be difficult to designate a permanent military training area, or make it explicit on a map. MSP plays an important role as a mediator between defence and other sectors.

Possible solutions

Analytical and policy solutions

- 1 Use a compatibility matrix to identify potential conflicts
- 2 Identify military areas of importance during MSP stocktaking
- 3 Identify interactions with other users
- 4 Use strategic policy to set general priorities in marine plans
- 5 Set out concrete rules for military areas

Sector-specific and spatial solutions

- 6 Use temporary restrictions in areas important for national defence
- 7 Facilitate the development of voluntary codes of conduct
- 8 Inform developers of the interests of national defence
- 9 Relocate some national defence and security sites
- 10 Make use of synergies

Future trends

It is difficult to predict what the future may hold for military defence. Countries may decide to increase their military operational ability, which could imply more exercises in marine areas.

The defence policy situation has changed in recent years and may change further. Freedom to act is important, making it important to keep open shipping lanes, including main and alternative shipping lanes.

Defence activities in the territorial sea must comply with environmental legislation, which may become stricter in the future.

More mobile technical installations may be used, which makes it more difficult to predict where and how defence activities may be disrupted. The same technology is becoming more sensitive to disruption. Permanent installations in the sea are likely to increase in many countries, increasing the likelihood of conflict.