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# Marine Spatial Planning: spaces of protection and conservation, sovereignty and development

## Planejamento Espacial Marinho: espaços de proteção e conservação, soberania e desenvolvimento

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### Abstract

The research question is whether Marine Spatial Planning is a tool, a methodology, a political process, or a combination of the three. Thus, this paper provides an understanding of Marine Spatial Planning: its origins, historical analysis, development, implications, and agendas, both globally and in Brazil. Concepts like politics, economics, law, the environment, geography, and strategy employed in ocean studies, which are always changing and being talked about in terms of how they work together and clash, are used as theoretical references. The research methodology employs an extensive bibliographical review of primary and secondary sources while prioritizing qualitative analytic methods. Conclusions are drawn about the international maritime community's understanding of Marine Spatial Planning, specifically its role in enhancing ocean governance and restructuring state marine territories, as well as the intricate connections between these aspects. In Brazil, despite the relative priority of political power in the last decade, given Brazil's international commitments, Marine Spatial Planning is still in its early stages, with not much expressed in effective domestic actions.

**Keywords:** Marine Spatial Planning; Protection and conservation; Sovereignty; Sustainable development.

### Resumo

A questão da pesquisa é se o Planejamento Espacial Marinho é uma ferramenta, uma metodologia, um processo político, ou uma combinação de todos esses elementos. A partir daí, o artigo busca fornecer uma compreensão do Planejamento Espacial Marinho: suas origens, análise histórica, desenvolvimento, implicações e agendas, tanto a nível global como no Brasil. Conceitos afetos ao estudo dos oceanos, como política, economia, direito, meio ambiente, geografia e estratégia, que se encontram em constantes mudanças e discussões sobre suas interações, são usados como referenciais teóricos. A metodologia de pesquisa emprega uma extensa revisão bibliográfica de fontes primárias e secundárias, priorizando métodos analíticos qualitativos. Por fim, são apresentadas conclusões sobre a compreensão da comunidade marítima internacional em relação ao Planejamento do Espaço Marinho, especificamente quanto ao seu papel no reforço da governança dos oceanos e na reestruturação dos territórios marinhos estatais, bem como nas complexas inter-relações entre estes aspectos. No Brasil, apesar da prioridade relativa do poder político na última década, tendo em vista os compromissos internacionais assumidos, o Planejamento Espacial Marinho ainda se encontra em estágio embrionário, o que se traduz na pouca efetividade das ações empreendidas.

**Palavras-chave:** Planejamento Espacial Marinho; Proteção e conservação; Soberania; Desenvolvimento sustentável.

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**Introduction**

Is Marine Space Planning (MSP) a methodology, a policy, or a strategy? This is the question driving the investigation in this scientific study. The primary objective of this study is to comprehend the concept of MSP, its utility, and its significance in safeguarding, conserving, utilizing, and enhancing marine, coastal, and oceanic spaces, regardless of their national jurisdiction, while considering their intersections with borders and boundaries within an inclusive maritime governance framework.

Marine space encompasses the diversity and interdisciplinarity of the life sciences, as well as the humanities. Understanding the borders and limits of marine regions requires a broad understanding of Political Science, which includes, in the strictest sense, Strategic Studies and International relations. Poor global maritime governance and limited maritime public policy reflect the lack of a more in-depth discussion on maritime sovereignty, which is inextricably linked to the security and defense of natural resources.

Because politics is the epistemological core of Strategic Studies, this area is concerned with problematizing political, economic (capital accumulation), and social reality through defense and security, which includes analyses of strong correlations between states at the international level and the formulation of state policies aimed at protecting national interests (FIGUEIREDO, 2015).

Thus, politics, economics, strategy, and human geography all play a role in marine space management projects that are part of state sovereignty. It seeks to achieve the objectives related to the conservation and protection, use, defense, and sustainable development of the state marine spaces, as is the essence of the MSP in all of its areas of action: maritime transport, renewable energies, marine conservation and protection, mineral extraction, fishing, aquaculture, and oil and gas exploration, in addition to defense.

To implement this paradigm of integration between sovereignty and development by national institutions, a shift in viewpoint is required in the State's multisectoral cooperation and integration process. The decentralization of ocean and space studies is inextricably connected to this stimulation.

The logic of power extends to the capitalist production logic in geographical space in these interrelationships, with the expansion of capital itself as its starting point in these new places of development. According to Santos (1996) and Harvey (1992, 2004, 2005), space-time compression breaks through boundaries in an increasingly accelerated time, where the space dispute is a competitive advantage for the manufacturing system. The sea, according to this concept, is space and has been a source of progress, survival, and power for people and nations, while faster technical evolution, which enhances the possibilities of using ocean resources, corresponds to time.

When countries began to view the sea, its bed, and subsoil not only as a means of transportation or a source of food but also as wealth generators and of considerable strategic importance, the geopolitical agenda, the economic significance, natural resources policy, and the strategic direction of power began to influence national and international relations, causing repercussions at all levels of the economy (MARRONI; ASMUS, 2013). So, the conflicting part of geopolitics comes from the uneven distribution of resources, with plenty in some areas and not enough in others, while countries need to use them for their own economic gain.

Till (2021) argues that the greatest global military threats to national areas can originate from the sea, driven by the depletion of natural resources and hostile players' accidental or deliberate involvement in disputes.

The MSP presents itself around the globe as a valuable tool for managing marine areas, whether they are state-owned or for human use, regardless of the prospects for collaboration and conflict, the latter of which may present opportunities for sustainable development. And it cannot be different in Brazil.

**Methodology for conceptual reinterpretation in the context of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)**

The present article employs a methodological framework that transcends superficial analysis, acknowledging the inherent intricacy of our research subject. We aim to surpass conventional limitations and thoroughly explore the comprehension of MSP, taking into account its intersection with critical issues of conservation, protection, defense, and sovereignty. In order to accomplish this objective, we integrate theoretical frameworks, empirical data, and interdisciplinary dialogue, meticulously investigating the interactions and fundamental mechanisms involved. Our ultimate goal is to propose a new paradigm for comprehending MSP — one that is vital for the sustainable future of our oceans, marine territories, and, ultimately, our planet.

Consequently, through qualitative analyses and a comprehensive bibliographic review, this paper seeks to address these issues in three sections. The first responds to the proposed question, the second presents current global discussions on the establishment of the MSP, and the third provides an overview of the discussions about Brazil's MSP and its cross-border character with South Atlantic neighbors in a region that presents unique challenges and opportunities due to its geographic characteristics, existing spatial uses, and governance arrangements. Further exploration of Brazil's MSP in this context would shed light on how it aligns with neighboring countries' approaches and contributes to sustainable development in the region.

Ultimately, the global development of this tool, political process, and plan underscores the criticality of understanding the organizational space of the oceans and seas, particularly in light of the immense marine biodiversity essential to the planet's survival. The interaction between state sovereignties and ocean governance leads to the creation of instruments that regulate these spaces and serve the interests of the entire international maritime community. These instruments are based on less asymmetrical relations, seeking a geopolitical balance between coastal states and the major players of the global system.

Only a few complete MSPs exist in the world. The political process in Brazil is premature and heavily dependent on bureaucratic centralization for more effective results.

**What is MSP? What is it for? How to do it?**

Vivero (2021, p. 2) claims that there are various coexisting perspectives on the subject matter at present. From a geopolitical perspective, the configuration and development of a state's territorial boundaries have a significant impact on the formulation of Marine Spatial Planning. So, the Marine Spatial Planning can be seen as a unique way for each state to deal with maritime conflicts within the framework of their own political-economic organization models, using administrative or political resources that are already in place. Each MSP is its own world, responding to specific needs and demands. The uncertainty surrounding MSP stems from a lack of a broad enough perspective to answer this question.

It is possible to say that MSP corresponds to a political process for organizing or reorganizing the sea as an important space for conservation, use, sovereignty, and development, and that it is still in the stage of national and international reference. MSP does not have a legal framework. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) stands in for the legitimacy of this construction.

MSP organizes coastal and oceanic marine spaces, human-ecosystem interactions, maritime transport, renewable energy, marine conservation and protection, mining, aquaculture, oil and gas exploration, military-naval defense (sovereignty), and a variety of other political, social, and economic issues.

There are numerous opportunities for interaction in the aforementioned areas. Such a collaborative and integrative process, which moves MSP forward, derives from an understanding of the space in which we live, protect, and use it as an element of marine use management in its most diverse sectors (EHLER *et al*., 2019).

These authors allocate spaces in a way that minimizes conflicts between activities and nature, or, when possible, maximizes compatibility between sectors. One important part of this idea is that MSP is at the cutting edge of many fields

of knowledge, such as biological, geological, and physical, when it comes to studying the physical conditions of marine ecosystems. It is also at the forefront of data science when it comes to organizing the data that is collected and the research that is done, all the way through to Strategic Studies and achieving national goals. It all happens because of its comprehensive nature in understanding the various relationships that living beings share in an interconnected and reciprocal manner with their environment.

A Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in northeastern Australia has been using this management approach to nature conservation for over 40 years. We can also mention other initiatives from the late nineteenth century in Canada and Australia. In 2011, both the Special Areas Management Plan for the Rhode Island Ocean (SAMP) and the general regulations requiring all EU Member States to prepare maritime space plans (Directive 2014/89/EU) received approval (MARRONI *et al.*, 2019).

The Integrated Maritime Policy, which proposes the international security of European states despite their inherent biases, includes Marine Spatial Planning as part of its larger initiative. This policy was born out of the demands of various organizations for the conservation, use, and, most importantly, legitimacy of marine spaces (following UNCLOS). MSP, with an international emphasis on the defense of national states, represents one of the most recent actions in the realm of maritime policy (MARRONI *et al.*, 2019).

The European Union's (EU) Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) began in 2007 with the publication of the Blue Paper, which made public the recognition of marine and coastal maritime spaces as essential to the well-being, prosperity, and integration of political communities. Such advantages stem from the MSP's implementation in the face of globalization and climate change, which includes policies such as: (1) blue growth; (2) knowledge and data on the marine environment; (3) marine spatial planning; (4) integrated marine surveillance; and (5) marine basin strategies (BEIRÃO *et al.*, 2018).

This policy incorporates the international security of European states into all of its biases, including the issue of these states' adjacent maritime spaces. According to Ehler (2016), the Blue Growth Strategy aims to develop five sectors with high economic growth, job creation, and innovation potential: (1) coastal and maritime transport and tourism; (2) fisheries and aquaculture; (3) offshore wind energy; (4) marine biotechnology; and (5) seabed mining.

More recently, the world's oceans and seas have used this tool and methodology for a variety of purposes, some of which are even in their infancy. Three categories define its goals: conservation, economy, and sovereignty. Not by chance, the same aspects of the blue Amazon concept's consolidation occurred in Brazil. Thus, the rationalization of marine space aims to strike a balance between the protection of this ecosystem and social, economic, and, dare we say, defense objectives.

The so-called BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) were some of the first states to formulate new maritime policies, although they did not develop planning instruments at the same time (VIVERO *et al.*, 2009, 2010). The initiatives conducted by UNESCO-IOC MSPglobal (2014) are primarily responsible for demonstrating the significance that marine spatial planning has attained at the global level.

Vivero (2021) emphasizes the geographical point of view where the MSP faces uncertainty and indecision, with various perspectives on its purposes coexisting. As a result, multisectoral marine spatial planning serves as a facilitator for the integrated management of areas of interest and the various actors involved in achieving such planning. Therefore, it is important to understand that this process is still in the construction stage of national and international maturity (MARRONI *et al.* 2019).

There are still a few cases where Marine Spatial Planning has made considerable progress. In the words of Vivero (2021, p. 8, our translation):

> I do not think South America is so outdated. Except for some northern European countries, most countries are in their preliminary stages. Some initiatives, called Marine Spatial Planning, are usually traditional instruments. [...] One way of promoting marine spatial planning actions is by promoting public policies that define strategic objectives that are innovative but realistic and feasible.

The MSP Manual, a 20-year collaboration between the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the Human and Biosphere Programme (PHB), provides a step-by-step approach to doing it, from authority establishment to continuous implementation and evaluation. The guide aims to collaborate for the technical, institutional, and sustainable management of the marine ecosystem while respecting the unique characteristics of each space and place. The following are the ten steps proposed by the guide (UNESCO-MSPGlobal, 2030):

1. Identification of necessity and determination of authority.
2. Obtaining appropriate economic financing
3. Organizing the process through pre-planning.
4. Organization of stakeholder participation.
5. Definition and analysis of existing conditions.
6. Definition and analysis of future conditions.
7. Development and approval of the space management plan.
8. Implementation and implementation of the space management plan.
9. Monitoring and evaluation of results.
10. Adaptation of the marine space management process.

The planning cycle of MSP is an adaptive and continuous process that aims to clarify authority for each stage of it. It involves pre-planning, defining, and analyzing existing and future conditions, the plan itself, financial consequences, and implementation actions. Indicators defined in each sector and phase conduct post-plan monitoring and evaluation, ensuring clarity in decision-making and the smooth functioning of the marine space management system.

Guides and manuals are important but not dependent on sovereign states' political processes. Global integration is necessary, taking into account the specific contexts of each nation's sectors. Adaptations to the IOC/UNESCO Manual are important and should consider the unique characteristics of each nation and the efforts of the experts involved.

**Brief discussions on Marine Spatial Planning in the world**

Maritime policy and Marine Spatial planning have become increasingly important in recent years, focusing on the defense of national states on the periphery of the world system. European models are consolidating to address cross-border issues, fostering cooperation and opportunities. However, conflicts of interest are inevitable, requiring collective understanding in dispute resolution. This consolidation of European models highlights the need for understanding and addressing cross-border issues among various actors and interests.

The analysis of land-sea interactions is a new method that aims to help both the MSP and territorial planning processes by finding the key elements that link the land and marine parts, connecting both space efforts, and working together to understand the threats and risks that come from these interactions (OTGCA, 2021). This is essential given the variety of living and non-living resources that require preservation, protection, and sustainable use.

The Brazilian "Blue Amazon" requires the development of an MSP to protect and conserve living and non-living resources in various activities. This system, spanning geographical, coastal, and oceanic areas, aims for sustainable socio-economic development and conservation. The MSP should consider spatial conflicts and opportunities for consensus among the actors and sectors involved. We may employ management measures, but environmental-related activities may require more restrictive solutions.

The establishment of general, restricted, or strategic monitoring areas, as well as the advancement of specific solutions, such as multiple uses, are viable options for resolving interactions between various sectors in a large marine space area.

Moreover, MSP links the geopolitical aspect to the importance of military-naval defense against current and future threats. The UNCLOS standardization of jurisdictional expansion and nationalization of maritime space in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s has led to a decline in international law, strengthening unilateral positions and eroding multilateral sanctions. This has resulted in an increase in global maritime spaces under national jurisdiction and a retrograde of maritime areas beyond this height.

Vivero (2021) predicts a 50% equilbrium between terrestrial and marine spaces, indicating a significant geopolitical shift and a new territorial order. The political shift that these data reveal – states have evolved into maritime states, with marine space serving as their primary territory – is one of the factors contributing to the rapid spread of marine spatial planning in recent years. The development of MSP aligns with the expansion of state maritime domains and the necessity to broaden territorial control tools beyond multilateral jurisdiction. States are now integrating or incorporating the fundamental elements of maritime governance, which were primarily of an international nature, into their unilateral decisions.

More broadly, comprehensive marine use management seeks to achieve a rational and sustainable development of these spaces, thereby contributing to the achievement of national objectives both internally and externally. An ecosystem approach realizes this assumption in the planning and management of marine development and activities. The protection of ecological processes and natural heritage, as well as the recovery and restoration of important components of marine ecosystems, should be compatible with political, social, and strategic benefits to the highest degree possible.

Santos (2000, 2003) highlights the negative impacts of globalization, including climate change, pollution, and resource waste. To sustain growth and development, it is crucial to use these spaces responsibly, involving political and social responsibility. We can achieve this through the acquisition of wide-spectrum marine data, conservation of resources and heritage, integrated maritime surveillance, and the MSP itself.

Technological advancements have led to the exclusion of peripheral countries from global development and inclusion. With coastal populations reaching three billion, growth in the next decade will directly impact the environment and economy, including coastal and maritime transport, tourism, fishing, aquaculture, offshore wind energy, marine biotechnology, and seabed mining.

Worldwide cooperative and integrative structures are crucial, but one must consider how much the so-called global community, with the acceleration of space-time (technology) for all, would enable the realization of the dream of a single world. It is known that, at the hands of a few in the global market, these peculiarities forged over the centuries have not achieved their purpose (SANTOS, 2000). Thereby, the construction of the concept of sustainable governance of the oceans goes from local to regional and global (not the opposite) into a more symmetrical globalization and governance.

The blue economy is expanding throughout the world's maritime spaces and borders, but its success depends on enhanced sustainability or better resource management. Monitoring access to maritime routes, constantly hampered by illegal behavior such as rising levels of piracy, drug trafficking, arms trafficking, and other transnational maritime crimes, is of clear interest.

The 2017-established UNESCO Marine Spatial Planning Programme mentions attempts to make territorial or maritime claims outside of the UNCLOS framework through intimidation, coercion, or force, which can have an impact on both the regional stability of coastal states and the global economy. This document demonstrates how awareness of illegal activities in the maritime domain is a critical factor for rational rule-based governance.

But how can we improve maritime governance? Vivero (2021) adds that common interests must come first. The instruments and institutions emerge from there. According to the author, a large number of states have acquired large marine territories but are having difficulty claiming these large spaces due to the complexities that exist.

The governance of the oceans made considerable progress in 2015, following the adoption of a document titled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" by 193 United Nations General Assembly Member States (DOUVERE; EHLER, 2009). Decree No. 8.892 authorized the establishment of the National Commission for the Sustainable Development Goals (CNODS) in Brazil in October 2016. The primary objective of this commission is to facilitate the integration, promotion, and transparency of the implementation process of Agenda 2030. 32 representatives from civil society and government, including both primary and alternate members, comprise CNODS.

In support of SDG 14 (conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development), the 2017 United Nations Conference on the Oceans made a commitment to implement the MSP in order to ensure sovereignty, shared and sustained use of the marine environment, and legal certainty for investors.

Global governance can help envision effective solutions to potential territorial, maritime, political-social, cultural, and other external conflicts. Therefore, the UNCLOS has been an extremely significant step in the organization of coastal states with respect to global ocean management. The Rio+20 conference highlighted the fragmentation of ocean governance and the use of sectoral and geographical boundaries to overlook the interconnectedness and scope of ocean-related issues (MACEDO *et al.*, 2021).

There are also some gaps in the conventions relating to the sea, including aspects of marine management. The emergence of concepts such as the blue economy, the sea economy, and blue growth is evidence of the development of the MSP on a global scale. Vivero (2021, p. 8, our translation) understands that there are many initiatives in the world but few that are effective: "We are calling MSP many actions that, traditionally, do not have that aim". First, the author argues, we must update maritime public policy to reflect the changed status of the oceans as a result of the developments in maritime norms and geopolitical dynamics over the past few decades. Most advanced nations link their MSP with the marine wind power industry, which has been instrumental to their progress.

Europe has adopted these principles, discussed at the Rio+20 conference, by promoting basic initiatives for blue growth, sustainable development, the blue economy, the green economy, participation, and the importance of knowledge, science, technology, and innovation (STI). Portugal has developed a sea policy based on five pillars: blue growth, growth data, MSP, integrated maritime space surveillance in the context of ensuring activity safety, and a basin strategy (ALMODOVAR, 2014). The Portuguese example has inserted into the blue economy a perspective of job creation, opportunities for international trade expansion, and the development of STI through the process known as Marine Spatial Planning.

While certain regional and supranational spheres emphasize the cross-border dimension of the MSP, the pilot projects presented thus far, even within the European Union with its advanced supranational structure, demonstrate the difficulty of moving forward in a more multilateral direction. "In conclusion, marine governance is moving from an international and multilateral scope to a national scope, strengthening maritime nationalism" (VIVERO, 2021, p. 7, our translation).

In this vein, Castelo (2021) points out the prospect of MSP administering and ordering the use of this common good, considered "humanity's property" – the prospect of exploitation of the living and non-living natural resources that permeate the sea and its water column beyond the authorities of the states, i.e., the "Area." Advocates advocated various positions, ranging from property privatization to exploitation rights. The UNCLOS establishes exclusive exploitation rights for coastal countries, which is a long-standing policy. However, in the "Area," this is still an open and unresolved issue.

Of course, the sciences are constantly changing, and the connections between diverse sources of knowledge are always shifting and developing, especially when we take into account the full scope of political, economic, legal, social,

and environmental factors. The scarcity and limited nature of the available resources necessitate the most effective use of technical and political analysis.

Marine Spatial Planning encompasses intricate planning processes that necessitate the consideration of various dimensions, including economic, geopolitical, geological, biological, legal, and political-strategic aspects. Within the realm of political and strategic considerations, it is crucial to recognize the interconnectedness of numerous public policies across sectors associated with the marine domain. This includes addressing matters related to STI as well as defense and security concerns.

In this context, a coastal-ocean setting lacks value unless it integrates with technology. On its continental shelves and EEZ, the ocean contains vast quantities of mineral reserves and energy resources, and it functions as a privileged route for national and international communication and supply. The greatest obstacle is bringing together international and national perspectives.

**Marine Spatial Planning in Brazil**

The appreciation of the sea in all its aspects—social, economic, and political-strategic—leads to a perception problem. The creation of Brazil ´s "Blue Amazon" concept is an attempt to bring the value of the sea to the typical Brazilian, both individually and collectively. Argentina's "Blue Pampa" concept is like that of other countries.

Because we are optical beings with limited perception, overcoming this issue will necessitate the consolidation of a maritime consciousness through basic, fundamental, and advanced education for the general population. We share information to enhance our understanding of the sea, its limits, borders, riches, and dimensions, as planning is impossible without a comprehensive understanding.

In Brazil, the integrated management of marine spaces includes a number of public policies that affect the sea. The National Maritime Policy (PMN), the National Policy for Marine Resources (PNRM), the National Policy of Science, Technology, and Innovations (PNCTI), and the National Defense Policy (PND) are some of the policies that all ministries involved in this process use as frameworks for their actions.

Brazil, for example, is one of the countries with the largest responsibility for its marine space, which implies both an advantage and an opportunity. However, it is a significant international obligation to maintain these maritime spaces, borders, and boundaries within their jurisdiction through costly administrative instruments to regulate this new territory.

We must point out that Brazil is one of the few states in the world to have an expressive government policy of environmental protection, always prioritizing respect for all international conventions of an environmental character.

Following the Stockholm Conference in 1972, Brazil was one of the first countries in the world to establish a Special Secretariat of the Environment (in 1973), which became an expressive milestone in the country's institutional history for the environment. On September 12, 1974, decree no. 74.577 established the Interministerial Commission on the Resources of the Sea (CIRM), aiming to coordinate topics leading to a national policy for Brazil's coastal zone (MARRONI; ASMUS, 2005).

The Brazilian Navy Commander, as a Maritime Authority, serves as the CIRM Coordinator (art. 3, decree no. 6.979, 2009). He is in charge of the necessary and convenient institutional structures for managing public policy, which include many stakeholders as well as sectoral programs and plans.

It shows how important it is to set up the Secretariat of the Interministerial Commission for the Resources of the Sea (SECIRM) as a fundamental organization for the elaboration and evaluation of a continuous cycle of an MSP with Brazilian identity, responsible, along with other government and civil society agents, for the direction of studies for the creation of a public policy aimed at the sea called the National Policy for the Resources of the Sea (PNRM) (MACEDO *et al.*, 2021).

The National Policy for Resources of the Sea is to guide the development of activities aimed at the effective use, exploitation, and exploitation of the Territorial Sea, the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and the Continental Shelf in accordance with national interests in a rational and sustainable way for the socio-economic development of Brazil, creating jobs and income, and helping to bring people together. The CIRM coordinates the implementation of the PNRM.

The Sectoral Plan for the Resources of the Sea (PSRM), which is part of the PNRM, is valid for more than one year. Its goals are to know and evaluate the potential of the sea, as well as to monitor the living and non-living resources and oceanographic and climatological phenomena of marine spaces under national authority and of national interest, with the goal of management, sustainable use of these resources, and fair and equitable distribution of them. In collaboration with the SECIRM, the CIRM develops the PSRM.

The National Policy for the Resources of the Sea (PNRM), which integrates marine space planning in Brazil, has undergone historical and evolutionary changes through successive PSRMs, involving various sea actors such as companies, researchers, ministries, and others. It is currently in its tenth version, with continuous verification. The MSP aims to modernize its political aspects by establishing more integrated maritime policy priorities. The MSP gradually incorporated new principles that had not existed previously. The involvement of the institutions that develop, implement, and monitor Brazilian sea policy is an example of its evolution (MARRONI, 2013).

The first seven versions of the PSRM focused on generating knowledge about the marine environment and the sustainable use of its riches, emphasizing its socioeconomic dimension. People described the VIII Sectoral Plan for Sea Resources (2012–2015) as an improvement over the VII PSRM. Its main directive expresses the Brazilian government's concern for the South Atlantic Ocean and coastal zone (BRASIL, 2012). Brazil views these geographical spaces as strategic environments for national development, incorporating them into the National Policy for Sea Resources through studies from the VIII PSRM (MARRONI *et al*., 2019).

The purpose of the IX PSRM (2016–2019) was to promote shared use of the marine environment through the appropriate use of existing resources and installed capacity, as well as to defend Brazil's political-strategic interests in the sea at the national and international levels, with the goal of expanding the Brazilian presence in national, international, and oceanic islands (BRASIL, 2016).

Among the different goals planned for the X PSRM (2020–2023), one can point out, in line with the VIII and IX (in particular), a higher priority for the development and implementation of the MSP by the Brazilian State. This is because of Brazil's commitment in Agenda 2030 to help reach Sustainable Development Goal No. 14 (Life in Water).

Several acts link the MSP to achieving the X PSRM's objectives, programs, initiatives, and activities. To accomplish such responsibilities, such public policies must be wide and inclusive of society, allowing Brazil to chart a more direct path to full utilization of the sea and practical realization of its potential.

The United Nations declared the years 2021–2030 the "International Decade of Oceanography for Sustainable Development" in December 2017. This program aims to broaden worldwide scientific cooperation in order to enhance ocean conservation and the management of coastal natural resources. Brazil established the National Committee for the Oceans, uniting international organizations, government leaders, civil society, and academia. The goal was to create a plan with clear criteria for where we want and expect to be in ten years in terms of ocean conservation, which involves, primarily, the development and implementation of the National Marine Spatial Planning (UN, 2017).

This process heavily relies on SECIRM, which oversees and manages a working group on MSP comprising various ministries and serves as a hub for the interaction of various Brazilian sectoral policies. Brazil does not yet have a Marine Spatial Planning procedure that coordinates with other marine sectoral policies. Despite the Brazilian Navy's best efforts, the sea is not yet a state policy, and the activities targeted at building Brazil as a nation with a maritime vocation and regional projection of the South Atlantic are still relatively dispersed. This is due to a lack of funding but also, and more importantly, to a lack of priorities and an appreciation for the significance of oceanic areas.

The current shortcomings in public management highlight opportunities for problem-solving, promoting economic growth, and sustainable development. This necessitates governmental institutional arrangements to guide stakeholders from various sectors in forming and articulating their interests in implementing public policies.

The country is still unable to quantify the actual economic contribution of the sea's resources to the generation of income, employment, and social well-being in a scenario of choice in the face of limited and scarce budgetary resources (MARRONI *et al.*, 2016; GANDRA *et al.*, 2018). It also stands out by advocating for a state that is both modern and active, one that serves not only as a funder of development (though it is still the main one) but also as a mediator of innovative actions in the administration of public resources (MATIAS-PEREIRA, 2010; REZENDE, 2015).

In recent years, MSP has gained national and international relevance and projection through its inclusion in the Oceans, Coastal Zone, and Antarctic Programme, the Multiannual Plan (PPA), for the period 2016–2019 and, subsequently, for the PPA (2020–2023), through the establishment of the goal of promoting the shared use of the marine environment.

In response to the needs of the blue economy, this institutional launch of the PPA 2020–2023 aims to advance scientific and technological knowledge, biodiversity conservation, sustainable resource use, effective management of marine areas, and national interests in the oceans and the Arctic. As a result, it becomes necessary to identify, discuss, and comprehend the following key factors that affect the marine ecosystem: (1) vulnerability to extreme events, sea-level rise, and warming seawater; (2) susceptibility to research ensuring Brazil's presence in the Antarctic and a say in the continent's future; (3) insufficient knowledge and its application; (4) lack of a marine mindset and strategic vision; (5) inadequate integration of programs and projects; (6) inadequate organization of marine and coastal space potentials; and (7) lack of the necessary resources. To start fixing these problems, the PPA's organizations and entities want to finish at least 80% of the planned actions between 2020 and 2023, as stated in the Sectoral Plan for the Resources of the Sea (PSRM), the National Coastal Management Plan (PNGC), the Science, Technology, and Innovation Plans (PACTI-Antarctica and Amazonia), and the Plan for Levantament of the Brazilian Continental Shelf (LEPLAC) (SOUZA; VIOLANTE, 2021).

Having stated so, it is recognized that there is a favorable environment for the institutionalization of MSP in the government agenda, beginning with the VIII, IX, and X PSRM and the PPA (2016–2019) and, more especially, in the PPA (2020–2023). In Brazil, the MSP can be considered a model of Public Governance Policy, and a protagonist in the process of institutionalization and cooperation among the marine sectors.

A significant Brazilian Navy action in the MSP was its inclusion as one of the 11 actions of the X Sectoral Plan for Sea Resources (X PSRM), approved by decree no. 10.544, on November 16, 2020, and in force between 2020 and 2023 (BRASIL, 2021). An executive committee working under the Navy's coordination conducts the MSP action in the SECIRM sphere of influence. Furthermore, the MSP Executive Committee (CE-PEM) was established, which dictated the requirements and steps for its deployment in the country through regional pilot projects, beginning with the South region due to the vastness of the "Blue Amazon.". This choice sought to optimize the resources invested, considering the political power's difficulty in realizing the importance of the sea in all of its sectors, which would result in simultaneous efforts throughout the "Blue Amazon".

At the start of 2020, collegiate meetings focused more on the MSP, but the military-naval defense sector did not merit more attention. The Minister of Defense and the Brazilian Navy themselves have squandered the opportunity to link their primary tasks and strategic projects to the goals of other maritime spaces of interest, such as actions of presence, patrol, and surveillance in these spaces that are representative of all stakeholders involved. In recent years, the SECIRM has already demonstrated increased assertiveness as a pressure agent to achieve this objective.

The lack of updating and insertion of data derived from existing programs and projects for coastal and oceanic spaces in the National Space Data Infrastructure (INDE) by all ministries and sectors linked to the sea has hampered SECIRM's progress in the early stages of space planning.

A specialized geoportal's availability of marine data enables the achievement of numerous national development goals, including:

1. The development of Marine Space Diagnostic Maps, Affectation Plans, and Zoneing Maps will address the spatial and temporal distribution of uses and economic activities in progress and potential, as well as marine preservation and conservation.
2. permission for governmental and non-governmental institutions and businesses to access high-value maritime data (batimetry, geology, geophysics, oceanography, and so on). This can provide important energy sectors with knowledge about locations with high exploration and exploitation potential, considerably decreasing the operational, financial, and time requirements of intensive marine study.
3. The Geoportal of Marine Space provides access to data. Data eliminates redundancy in marine data gathering by various entities, maximizes public and private resources spent, and boosts the efficiency and competitiveness of firms operating in these maritime spaces.
4. The identification of areas with high economic value and strategic importance is crucial for military and naval defense, enabling the Brazilian Navy to prioritize its location and movements (SECIRM, 2022).

Up until 2022, the MSP was divided into four geographical areas: north, northeast, southeast, and south. The National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES) became aware of the need to ensure the bidding process for the creation of the first phase of the "Blue Amazon" MSP, after a challenging struggle for resources among the involved ministries led to the realization of the South pilot project. This will serve as a comprehensive methodological laboratory for conflict resolution, consensus-building, and negotiation experience in cross-border activities.

Relations with our South Atlantic neighbors demonstrate that the MSP's cross-border dimension is relevant for its challenges and processes that occur on many scales. Ecosystems and their dynamics do not respect political boundaries in marine environments. As a result, there is no way to abandon planning that could lead to cooperative control of such coastal and maritime areas.

Uruguay, like Brazil, is in the preliminary stages of creating its MSP. Uruguay has formed alliances with Canada and Norway to benefit from their expertise in this process, and, according to Daniel Collazo (2015), a member of the National Environmental Directorate, seeks to accelerate the process of valorizing the sea at the heart of its society. We must emphasize that disputes, collaboration, and opportunity will emerge in oil prospecting with Brazil as well as Argentina.

Large-scale commercial fishing by foreign vessels in the territorial sea, which is illegal, is a point of contention between the two countries. According to Rouco and Martinez (2021), the Uruguayan continental shelf is an incredibly rich place because two ocean currents with diverse characteristics merge there, in addition to the mouth of the Silver River. This leads to a remarkably diverse swimming region, which Brazil and Argentina share with Uruguay. Uruguay shares its fishing resources with Argentina, managing a common fishery region for resource extraction bilaterally through a mixed technical committee comprising members from both countries. This is not the situation in Brazil. There is no agreement here, and illicit fishing is common, causing harm to the three countries in the southernmost portion of the Atlantic. While Uruguay does not actively engage in hydrocarbon exploration or exploitation, Brazil does. Furthermore, Argentina is about to commence seismic activity in the province of Buenos Aires, which may have an impact on the Uruguayan continental shelf.

A possible trilateral agreement between Argentina (river border), Brazil, and Uruguay, based on their MSPs and their relationships with each other, would allow for resource management that would lead to the recovery and sustainability of marine life, as well as the guarantee of use and defense of the marine region against new and old threats, especially on the continental platforms of these friendly states.

Brazil, in contrast, has no problematic borders. Therefore, if the Brazilian State establishes a national MSP within the Agenda 2030 framework, it has the potential to propel Brazil to the forefront of efforts, either through integration or collaboration with countries with established marine and river borders, such as Argentina and Paraguay. This will necessitate conflict resolution and environmental impact reduction at the local and regional levels among numerous maritime sector stakeholders, delivering rational and sustainable development to as many people as possible.

However, research in this area is still in its early stages. We still do not fully understand how important the process of globalization, governance, or globalism (when seen as a critical reduction of globalization to the economic dimension) and the analysis and distribution of human activities at sea are for maintaining the geopolitical balance between coastal and ocean projection states.

Understand and comprehend the mechanisms that operate within the system of policies aimed at defending the state, which are linked to the strategic principles of cooperation in international security. These mechanisms are also associated with the guidelines for public policies related to the sea, including their respective strategies, programs, projects, and derivative actions. Furthermore, they aim to promote an understanding of the cooperative, integrative, and democratic process that underpins the vision of Marine Space Planning.

**Conclusion**

The Marine Spatial Planning does not indicate a specific plane. This is a continuous political and methodological process and feedback, involving analyses of its initial objectives, its application conditions, the evolution of the actors involved, and the internal and external conjuncture of interests involving state and transnational actors in these spaces and their borders and boundaries.

A well-developed, implemented, constantly evaluated, and reviewed plan will provide important environmental, economic, social, and political-strategic gains to coastal and ocean projector states, as well as to the entire international maritime community, even because of its dynamic and continuously moving character. The ocean's capacity to provide ecosystem services essential to humans and all other forms of life on Earth continues to grow as new data improves analyses of current and future marine conditions.

There is no MSP without strategists, internationalists, political scientists, philosophers, historians, geographers, biologists, oceanologists, lawyers, anthropologists, and, finally, all the sciences that study the interaction of human beings with their space. This increased local, national, regional, and global fragmentation can result in a better understanding of marine spaces for their protection, conservation, sovereignty, and development, without a decline in supranational actions.

The sciences are dynamic, and the interrelationships between different fields of knowledge are constantly changing and in motion, particularly when we consider the entire political, economic, legal, social, and environmental dimensions. Resources, scarce and limited, require technical and political analysis to ensure their efficient and effective use.

Initially, MSP will not solve all problems, but we must overcome our inertia. The obstacles are enormous. However, there must be a distinct objective for advancement. The MSP can serve as an aggregating element of national and maritime governance initiatives, even attempting to fill existing gaps in international maritime standards such as the Law of the Sea.

Spatial issues, the use of the common good, and national policies are not omitted; however, due to the rapid movement of space and time by the actors holding the technical processes and technology, there is a propensity for special spaces to cause divisions and conflicts. Sustainable development requires this comprehension and the pursuit of a new model of globalization that is more participatory and inclusive.

In Brazil, to supersede the procastination, SECIRM and other stakeholders worked together to get funding from BNDES for the first phase of the Marine Spatial Planning. The need to challenge existing paradigms necessitates significant action. Prior to planning, it is essential to understand the entire Blue Amazon. Oil and gas exploration, maritime transport, fishing, and defense account for approximately 95% of Brazil's maritime activities. Due to the complexity of these activities, such as those involving clean technologies, the population's fascination with the sea does not match their appreciation of its full potential.

Currently, there has been no strengthening of national marine space control, protection, and utilization, which is at odds with the current goals of the Blue Amazon Marine Spatial Planning. Given the project's nascent stage, we anticipate that political power will accord it genuine priority rather than mere rhetorical backing. Brazilians accomplish this through a comprehensive and inclusive MSP of the ocean's potential in all its activities and by protecting the marine ecosystem as part of a technological and sustainable development project that involves conquering the final political frontier for more fair and proportional global governance.

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