

EUROPEAN COMMISSION - WEB RELEASE

New EU project helps increase maritime security in the Indian Ocean

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The EU has launched a new project called EU CRIMARIO to tackle cross-border issues in the Indian Ocean by developing regional cooperation and coordination between maritime agencies. This project builds on the success of its predecessor, which led to the signature today of the Mombasa Protocol between Djibouti, Kenya, Tanzania and Yemen, to increase cooperation on maritime security.

The Indian Ocean represents the world's third largest ocean, carrying out around 70% of all oil shipments. The threats on the maritime routes remain significant, even if piracy and armed robbery at sea have decreased in recent years. Overcoming those cross-border issues at sea requires **regional cooperation and interagency coordination**.

When piracy reached the highest peak in 2009, the European Union decided to support the implementation of a regional mechanism, the **Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC)**, agreed in 2009 by 21 coastal states of the Western Indian Ocean by launching the **Critical Maritime Routes programme (CMR)** in 2010.

Based on successful achievements, the **CMR is launching the EU CRIMARIO project**, to increase awareness about potential risks or threats in the Indian Ocean rim (known as **maritime situational awareness**), together with capacity building, information data sharing, and improvement of maritime governance.

The project will support the coastal countries in putting together the data from various maritime sources such as national and international agencies, the maritime industry, and non-governmental organisations, to achieve a global understanding of the maritime domain, therefore increasing maritime security.

To achieve this ambitious goal, EU CRIMARIO will provide technical assistance to work in most of the Indian Ocean rim countries. It will comprise three main components:

- 1) A **global information sharing network**. It will rely on **Information Fusion Centres**, dedicated to analyse and evaluate the existing data and provide information to authorised authorities. Two information centres will be supported by EU CRIMARIO (one in the Northern part of the Indian Ocean and the other in the Southern part).
- 2) A **capacity building network**. It will be based on the existing training facilities available in the region, to develop the culture of Maritime Situational Awareness and improve the inter-agency approach.
- 3) **Operational policies and maritime governance**. EU CRIMARIO will seek to create common methodologies, and in the long term, to improve **maritime governance** in the Indian Ocean area and globally.

The project has started to be implemented this year and is expected to run until 2019, with a budget of €5.5 million. The overall management is ensured by Expertise France.

The Mombasa Protocol

EU MARSIC, the first project launched under the **Critical Maritime Routes programme (CMR)** (2010-2015), supported the establishment of four operational centres for information sharing and training (in Kenya, Tanzania, Yemen and one Djibouti) established under the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC).

Now that the EU MARSIC project is coming to an end, these four countries, encouraged by the EU, have today signed the Mombasa Protocol, showing their willingness of the region to improve the maritime governance and inviting other signatory countries to renew their engagement in the DCoC.

Background information

EU Critical maritime routes programme and EU MARSIC

The EU, through its Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, has set up the **Critical Maritime Routes programme** (CMR) to secure shipping lanes of communications (SLOCs) and, in the longer term, to improve maritime governance. EU MARSIC, launched in 2010 for a 5-year period, was the first project launched under this initiative. Its aim was to guide and coach national authorities in improving interagency cooperation and build genuine regional cooperation to tackle maritime security and safety issues within the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC) framework.

EU MARSIC successfully supported the creation of the **three regional Information Sharing Centres** (ISCs), Regional Maritime ISC (ReMISC) Sana'a (Yemen), ISC Mombasa (Kenya), ISC Dar Es Salam (Tanzania), and the **Djibouti Regional Training Centre** (DRTC). The ISCs contribute to exchange maritime information related to piracy events, the first essential element necessary before establishment of Maritime Situational Awareness (MSA) can be attained. The DRTC is a key centre to support institutions and practitioners of the regional maritime community by improving skills, knowledge and confidence.

The Mombasa Protocol

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The **Mombasa Protocol** defines the rules of governance between its first founders and invites other signatory countries to renew their engagement in the DCoC by joining the process. It also foresees the framework of financial contribution to ensure a structured implementation for full sustainability of the centres.

For more information:

More information on EU CRIMARIO: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/eu-crimario-enhancing-maritime-situational-awareness-indian-ocean_en

More information on EU Marsic and Mombasa Protocol: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCT15PirLeoh1JhECy7VGNXA>

More information on the EU Critical Maritime Routes programme: <http://www.maritimeroutes.eu>

More information on Djibouti Regional Maritime Training Centre www.drtc.education

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