

# West Africa Report

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## Benin's maritime security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea

### Summary

Benin is confronted with various maritime threats. This includes piracy, which reached a worrying level in 2011. However, the country is now taking steps to preserve its maritime industry; particularly the port of Cotonou, on which the national economy largely depends. The latest initiative is the adoption of a new strategy, which is aimed at improving the coordination of state action at sea. However, the effective implementation of this strategy is a key challenge.

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### Introduction

DESPITE A SHORT coastline of 121 km, Benin has a relatively large maritime area that is equivalent to 40% of its land surface. Like many littoral West African countries, Benin derives most of its revenue from its maritime sector, which constitutes more than half of its gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>1</sup>

This important asset, after having suffered indirectly from the negative impacts of the initially localised piracy along the Nigerian coastline, was then targeted by pirates, armed robbers and illegal fishing vessels. The attacks in Benin's waters reached alarming levels in 2011 and 2012, when the country recorded 21 cases of piracy,<sup>2</sup> making it a high-risk maritime country.

As a result of these attacks, as well as those perpetrated in the same period in the maritime areas of Togo, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and, on a much larger scale, Nigeria, the United Nations (UN) Security Council passed resolutions 2018 (2011) and 2039 (2012) to support the countries bordering the Gulf of Guinea.<sup>3</sup> Internationally, these resolutions showed awareness of the extent of maritime insecurity in the region.

While the international community has been concerned about a possible escalation of the phenomenon, no act of piracy has been reported off the coast of Benin since the end of 2012. As piracy is still a very real threat in the region, this sudden change raises questions. Is it merely chance or the result of an effective policy against maritime criminal activities? To better understand this change and learn from Benin's experience, researchers from the Institute for Security Studies conducted field research in Cotonou in November and December 2014.

This research-based report goes beyond security questions to analyse the various maritime challenges the country faces and the measures proposed to address them. It also makes recommendations to the government of Benin.

The report consists of four main sections. First, it analyses Benin's maritime challenges in terms of human and material capacity, and of the threats faced. Second, it takes a look at the responses that have been put in place since 2011, after which it draws policymakers' attention to the negative economic impact of persistent maritime insecurity. Fourth, the report focuses on Benin's new maritime strategy, which has been presented as an appropriate framework for sustainable maritime security.

## Challenges in Benin's maritime domain

### Benin's navy an exception among weak maritime actors

Most of Benin's key actors in the fight against maritime insecurity face a resource problem (human and material), with too few, ill-equipped and often unqualified personnel. This hampers operations.

The human resources deficit in the Benin merchant marine is the result of structural adjustment policies in the transport sector

The merchant marine, whose primary functions include ensuring maritime safety, security and transport, and protecting the marine environment, has only 16 officers. Only six of them – an administrator and five junior officers – have a maritime training. This shortage of personnel may worsen in a few years as several are approaching retirement age (set at 60 years for administrators and 58 for all other staff).

The human resources deficit in the Benin merchant marine is the result of structural adjustment policies in the transport sector in the early 1990s, when the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund requested, among other things, that the country cut back its payroll. Since this period, the Merchant Marine Directorate has not recruited any officers specialising in maritime affairs.<sup>4</sup>

The Directorate of Fisheries (DF) and the Institute for Fisheries and Ocean Research (IFOR) – two important actors in the development, control, protection and conservation of fisheries resources – are in a similar situation. The IFOR, with a total of seven officers of whom three are permanent and two expatriates, has few technical staff members and is forced, from time to time, to call in external experts. The DF, which, like the IFOR, deals more with formulating than implementing policies, has 48 employees of whom only 17 are in senior positions.

In contrast, Benin's navy has over 1 000 naval officers. In terms of logistical resources, the navy also appears to be the wealthier structure. Its budget quadrupled between 2012 and 2014 and it has adequate naval and communication resources. Benin's fleet consists of six patrol boats, four of which are new (three French vessels and one Chinese vessel). The fleet is also supported by Benin's air force, which has two small maritime patrol planes.<sup>5</sup>

In order to gather nautical information and conduct surveillance of the country's maritime approaches, the navy has two radar surveillance centres in Cotonou,



COTONOU SAW A  
REDUCTION IN TRAFFIC OF

172 SHIPS

BETWEEN 2010 AND 2012,  
A LOSS IN PORT REVENUES  
OF ABOUT

5.5 BILLION

CFA FRANCS

the economic capital, and Grand-Popo, a coastal town situated on the border with Togo, 90 km from Cotonou. Each centre operates at a radius of 80 km. A third centre is planned in Sèmè, situated 20 km to the east of Cotonou on the border with Nigeria, which is considered the epicentre of piracy in the region. The navy also manages a video surveillance centre.

The merchant marine does not have the logistical means to operate at sea. Its paltry income, gained from providing services to ships and sailors, does not allow it sufficient resources.<sup>6</sup> Despite its important functions, there is no plan to equip the Merchant Marine Directorate. The merchant marine officers cannot board ships at anchorage unless the navy or port officers agree to transport them.

The situation is similar in the fisheries and oceanographic administrations. The DF and IFOR lack the material resources necessary to conduct monitoring and research. This partially explains why Benin does not have recent data on fishing activities in its waters, except for the results of a study funded by the West African Economic and Monetary Union in 2012.<sup>7</sup>

### **Piracy decreases but the threat remains**

Pirates were particularly active in 2011 along the coast of Benin. Within the space of nine months the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) recorded 19 attacks or attempted attacks off the port of Cotonou. Although no act of piracy or armed robbery has been recorded in more than two years, the IMB continues to advise ships docked in the port of Cotonou or passing through Benin's waters to maintain strict prevention and anti-piracy measures. Benin's proximity to Nigeria, with which it shares a border, is a factor that fosters maritime insecurity. The inhabitants of the villages of Gbadagri in Benin and Akraké in Nigeria are considered kinfolk. This sociological proximity increases the likelihood of collusion along both sides of the border.

The illicit trade in low-quality fuel from Nigeria (*kpayo* in the local Fon language) is another factor that encourages piracy in the region. This inferior fuel sold in Benin consists partly of adulterated oil stolen from refineries, vandalised pipelines and hijacked ships in the Gulf of Guinea.<sup>8</sup> This important illegal trafficking, which extends to Togo,<sup>9</sup> may lead to members of the 'chain' commissioning the hijacking of oil tankers. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) believes that West Africa's growing black market in oil explains why pirates mainly target oil tankers in the region. UNODC emphasises that 'if oil parallel markets did not exist, the pirates would have no interest in committing attacks'.<sup>10</sup> The pirates sometimes also take hostages to collect ransom.

### **Local fishermen the victims of illegal activities**

The fisheries sector represents approximately 2% of the country's GDP and provides 600 000 direct and indirect jobs. It thus forms a significant part of socio-economic life in Benin and is dominated by artisanal fishing, both continental and maritime.

Despite a modest continental shelf of 3 100 km<sup>2</sup>, about 5 000 registered fishermen (for a fleet of about 700 embarkations) practice artisanal sea fishing, representing 97% of all maritime fishery in the country. Their annual catch is estimated at 9 800 tonnes.<sup>11</sup> However, this sub-sector is threatened by illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which manifests in various forms. One of these is foreign industrial fishing ships trespassing in Benin's territorial waters. According to local fishermen, IUU ships that operated in the coastal strip (5 nautical miles from the coast) reserved for artisanal fishing continue to operate unlawfully, but in more distant zones where the military patrol boats rarely go.

Another form of IUU fishing that takes place in Benin's waters is the utilisation of prohibited fishing equipment and techniques, such as the small mesh fishing nets that are used by some fishermen from Nigeria and Benin. These nets, designed for mysids or 'pink ocean shrimp' fishing, catch all sizes of fish. Local fishermen also complain about the practice of 'twin trawling'. This consists of fishing by at least two trawlers with a net harnessed between them, which not only increases by-catch but also contributes to the destruction of marine flora and coastal nurseries for fish.

### **Marine environment in danger**

Coastal erosion is a serious problem in Benin and a concern for both coastal communities and the Beninese Directorate of Shoreline and Coastal Development. Erosion has been observed for several years and has already destroyed fish offloading sites, hotels and homes. Anti-erosion measures have been taken around the port of Cotonou, where groynes have been built. However, experts say that these barriers, which will eventually extend 11 km along the coast, will not reverse the erosion and can only push it towards Nigeria. In addition, nothing has been done yet in the south-west of the country, where the phenomenon is accelerating.

An oceanographer biologist from Benin estimates that 'erosion is much more pronounced in the west ever since Togo protected its coast a few kilometres from the border, in the regions of Hillacondji and Agoué'. He confirms that severe erosion was observed on the eastern side of the port until the construction of the seven groynes, which caused the phenomenon to move towards the east. As a result, several used car lots have seen alarming levels of erosion and could disappear completely.

The IFOR records the erosion at seven observation stations, in Sèmè Toll Bridge, Zone Sen Sad, Donatin, Fidrjossè-Plage, Djondji, Grand-Popo and Hillacondji.

The marine environment in Benin is also threatened by pollution caused by a phosphate treatment factory in the Togolese village of Kpémé, 40 km from its capital city, Lomé. The National Union of Artisanal Fishermen, which has been vocal in its complaints, estimates that fish are moving away from the coast because of the warm polluted water discharged by this factory.

The same Beninese oceanographer questioned echoed this sentiment and noted that the phosphate levels in the affected waters were significantly above normal.<sup>12</sup> Given that the gulf current moves from west to east, the phosphate sludge produced by the factory affects Benin. He noted that the various agreements signed between Togo and Benin have not yet found a solution to the problem, which now goes beyond the bilateral Togo-Benin framework.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, Benin faces the risk of an accidental oil spill in its waters due to the discovery of oil fields off the coast of Nigeria's Lagos State in the Dahomey Basin, near Benin.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, imports at the port of Cotonou consist of about 13% hydrocarbons. Finally, the oil tanker traffic between Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire, where the African 'giant' refines part of its crude oil, should not be overlooked.<sup>15</sup> Despite this, the national emergency response plan to accidental marine oil pollution, which was adopted by Benin in 2006, is not operational yet.<sup>16</sup> To date the national centre for operations against accidental marine pollution envisaged under this plan has not been operationalised either.

### Port of Cotonou – prone to congestion, works on its security

Compared to the ports of Abidjan, Tema and Dakar, the port of Cotonou is a small port with cargo traffic of 8.8 million tonnes a year.<sup>17</sup> However, Cotonou benefits from its geographic position, which makes it the top transit port in the region for traffic to and from Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Chad and some states in Nigeria (see Figure 1).

Designed to receive a maximum of 2.5 million tonnes of cargo, the port is prone to congestion, which has the potential to increase maritime insecurity.<sup>19</sup> In addition, the disorderly parking of trucks awaiting loading, offloading or customs documents long hampered the port's operations.

However, the situation has normalised since the president has become involved.<sup>20</sup> He has ordered the purchase of heavy equipment to speed up the handling of cargo and forbade the prolonged parking of trucks and containers in the port area. In addition, the port of Cotonou now implements the

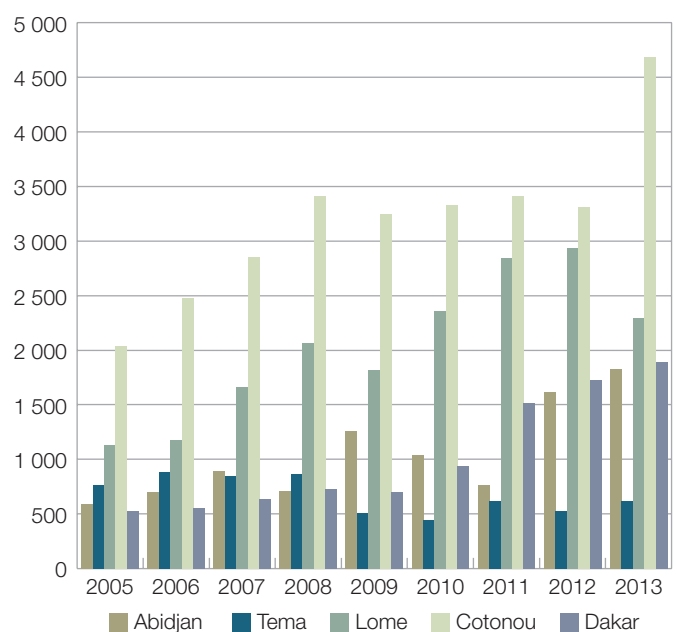
International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) code and increasingly gives the impression of being a secure port. Entrances are clear of obstacles; trucks wait in an area known as the 'non-ISPS zone' and it is mandatory at all port facilities to wear an identifying badge. Armed military and police are posted at the entrance and movements within the port are under continuous camera surveillance. According to the maritime authorities, the port of Cotonou has a regularly updated security plan that indicates which procedures must be followed at each security level.<sup>21</sup>

## Benin's solutions to maritime insecurity

### Operation Prosperity: successful South-South cooperation

In reaction to the numerous pirate attacks on ships in their maritime areas, Benin and Nigeria signed an agreement on 28 September 2011 to jointly combat piracy. The initiative, dubbed 'Operation Prosperity', consisted of organising joint maritime patrols at their common border over six months. Nigeria wanted to support its neighbour and allow it to take advantage of this period to better arm itself against maritime offenders and criminals. The Nigerian government provided the operation with four ships, two helicopters and 150 naval officers under the command of an admiral, who was given tactical command of the operation. Benin supplied two speedboats and the majority of the troops, and was responsible for the operational

**Figure 1: Comparison of transit traffic in five West African ports, in thousands of tonnes (2005–2013)**



Source: Comparative study of port costs between the ports of Abidjan, Tema and Dakar, April 2015, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire<sup>18</sup>.

command of the joint patrols. The operation was also based on an information-sharing system.

On the legal front, according to the arrangement, suspected pirates of Nigerian nationality would be handed over to the Nigerian navy for trial by the country's courts. This arrangement gained the trust of Nigerians, who were assured that compatriots suspected of piracy would not be treated unfairly in a foreign country.

The operation was successful in the sense that the pirates deserted Benin's waters and moved to Togo and Côte d'Ivoire,<sup>22</sup> where maritime surveillance was not yet as rigorous. This success also motivated Ghana – which experienced four attacks or attempted attacks in 2014 – to collaborate with Benin's navy to benefit from its experience.

### International cooperation supporting the Benin maritime sector

The French project 'Priority Security Funds – Support to the Maritime Security System Reform' (ASECMAR) was launched at a seminar organised by Benin and France from 8–10 November 2011 in Cotonou. It aims to reinforce maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea and covers Benin, Ghana, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Nigeria. The project was initiated when the president of Benin, who was also president of the African Union at the time, drew the international community's attention to the challenges posed by piracy and transnational organised crime in the Gulf of Guinea.<sup>23</sup>

The project draws upon the French concept of state action at sea in order to help the affected countries – like Benin – through three primary areas of intervention:

- Governance, organisation and regulation
- Civil and military staff training
- Strengthening regional cooperation

As part of this project, officers from the French navy assist Beninese naval and civil officers. According to Benin's maritime authorities, the ASECMAR project contributes to the current success of the country's fight against maritime criminality.

Benin also benefits from a partnership with the European Union through the Critical Maritime Routes of the Gulf of Guinea (CRIMGO) project, which also includes Togo, Nigeria, Ghana, Gabon and São Tomé et Príncipe. The CRIMGO project supplies a platform for information-sharing on maritime security and contributes to strengthening the capacity of maritime actors. In the framework of this project, naval officers from Benin participate in classes on action at sea as well as simulation exercises on security incidents. The project, launched in 2012, will come to an end in 2015. The French company 'Expertise Internationale', created in 2010 to promote technical assistance and French expertise abroad, leads the project.

The United States (US) also made technical contributions to Benin to organise its maritime security system. For example, it offered Benin the electronic system 'Sea Vision', which allows Benin's navy to monitor vessels in the vicinity of the port of Cotonou that are outfitted with an automatic identification system. The navy also received technical support from the US and the French to connect Sea Vision to the radar surveillance centre in Cotonou. The same process is planned for the radar surveillance centre in Grand-Popo and the port's watchtower. This will improve long-distance surveillance in Benin's maritime territory, and as a result specialists say the country may no longer need to construct a third centre in Sèmè.

### Important maritime dates for Benin

**1 December 1964:** Start of activities at the port of Cotonou

**30 December 1964:** Docking of the first ship, named Foch, at the port of Cotonou

**1 August 1965:** Official inauguration of the port of Cotonou

**18 September 2011:** Operation Prosperity is launched by Benin and Nigeria to combat maritime piracy

**30 December 2013:** President signs decree number 2013-551 on the national maritime protection, security and safety strategy

**31 December 2014:** President signs decree number 2014-785 on the creation, organisation, functions and operationalisation of the national authority of state action at sea

**13 March 2015:** Inauguration of the Multinational Coordination Centre for ECOWAS Maritime Zone E in Cotonou

The US' presence is also felt through the inspections – followed by recommendations – that the US Coast Guard conducts in the port of Cotonou under the ISPS code implementation.

### Impact of security measures on port traffic

The main concern of the Beninese authorities, while taking all of these security measures, is maintaining the increase in maritime traffic to the port of Cotonou, which is described as the 'lung' of the national economy.

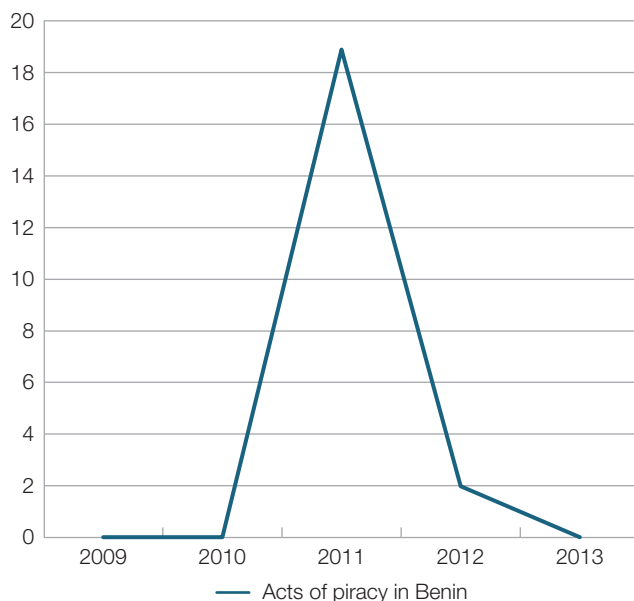
For example, the acts of piracy in 2011 and 2012 (see Figure 2) were accompanied by a reduction in traffic to the port of Cotonou. At the end of 2012 Cotonou had lost 172 ships, a reduction of 14% on 2010 (see Table 1 and Figure 3). Ship traffic increased again in 2013, when cargo traffic reached a record level of 8.8 million tonnes, after remaining around 7 million tonnes a year between 2010 and 2012 (see Table 2).

**Table 1: Ship traffic in the port of Cotonou, 2009–2013 (number of ships)**

Types of ships	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Merchant ships	1 170	1 186	1 121	1 026	1 154
Non-merchant ships	129	59	80	47	255
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 299</b>	<b>1 245</b>	<b>1 201</b>	<b>1 073</b>	<b>1 409</b>

Source : Data obtained at the Autonomous Port of Cotonou, on 14 March 2015

**Figure 2: Acts of piracy, Benin**



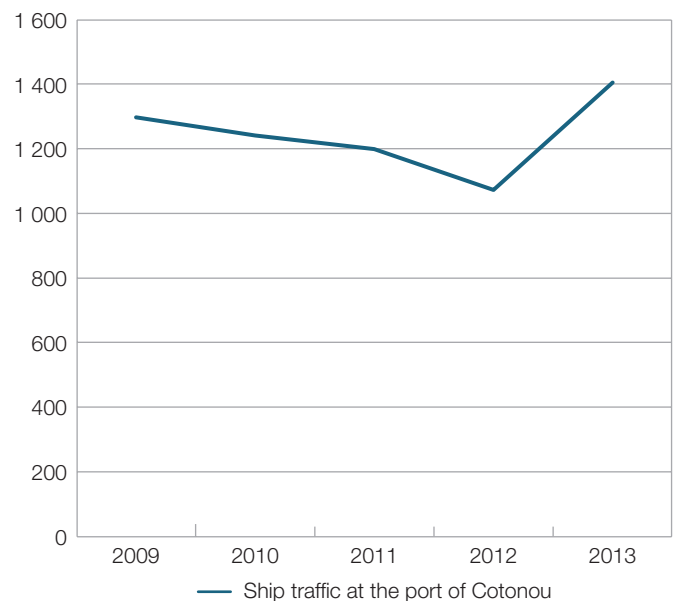
Source : International Maritime Bureau, Piracy and Armed Robbery against ships, Report for the period 1 January – 30 September 2014 (<http://www.hellenicshippingnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/2014-Q3-IMB-Piracy-Report-ABRDGED.pdf>)

This suggests that maritime criminal activities negatively affect port traffic and that ship owners tend not to send their ships into potentially dangerous zones, which has a cost for the port community and the national economy.

The ships that were 'lost' between 2010 and 2012 represent an average direct loss of 5.5 billion CFA francs (about US\$11 million) in revenues. This sum is calculated on the basis of the port costs per type of ship, including handling fees, port tax, consignment or agency commissions and all other relevant charges levied against ships and cargo by the port operators (see Table 3).

If the insecurity had continued, the decline would have been prolonged, which would have had significant socio-economic consequences. Ship owners would have become increasingly reluctant to call on the port of Cotonou, and those prepared to take the risk would have imposed higher freight rates, taking into account the increase in insurance charges. As Benin's economy depends heavily on imports, which represent approximately 22% of its GDP, market prices would have risen and increased the inflation rate, which, according to Africa Economic Perspectives, was estimated at 6.7% in 2014.<sup>25</sup> The reduction in port traffic would also have resulted in a drop in customs revenues, which could have a negative impact on the national budget. In addition, employment directly and indirectly linked to port activities would have been affected.

**Figure 3: Ship traffic, 2009–2013**



Source: Data obtained at the Autonomous Port of Cotonou on 14 March 2014



**Table 2: Cargo traffic at the port of Cotonou, 2009–2013 (metric tonnes)**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>Imports</b>					
Sub-total imports	5 967 121	6 239 616	5 757 327	6 274 414	7 956 732
<b>Exports</b>					
Sub-total exports	731 244	719 739	1 047 307	1 164 892	882 287
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 698 365</b>	<b>6 959 355</b>	<b>6 804 634</b>	<b>7 439 306</b>	<b>8 839 019</b>

Source: Data obtained at the Autonomous Port of Cotonou on 14 March 2014

**Table 3: Port fees by type of ship**

Type of ship	Docking fees in CFA francs
Bulk carrier of 56 000 dead-weight tonnage (dwt) <sup>24</sup>	72 900 000
Cargo of 13 000 dwt	33 200 000
Container ships of 4 500 20-foot equivalent units (TEU)	31 000 000
Container ships of 1 500 TEU	14 500 000
Roll on –Roll off ships of 24 000 dwt	9 400 000

Source: Survey conducted in the period 2 February – 1 March 2015 in Cotonou, on behalf of a private shipping company based in Cotonou.

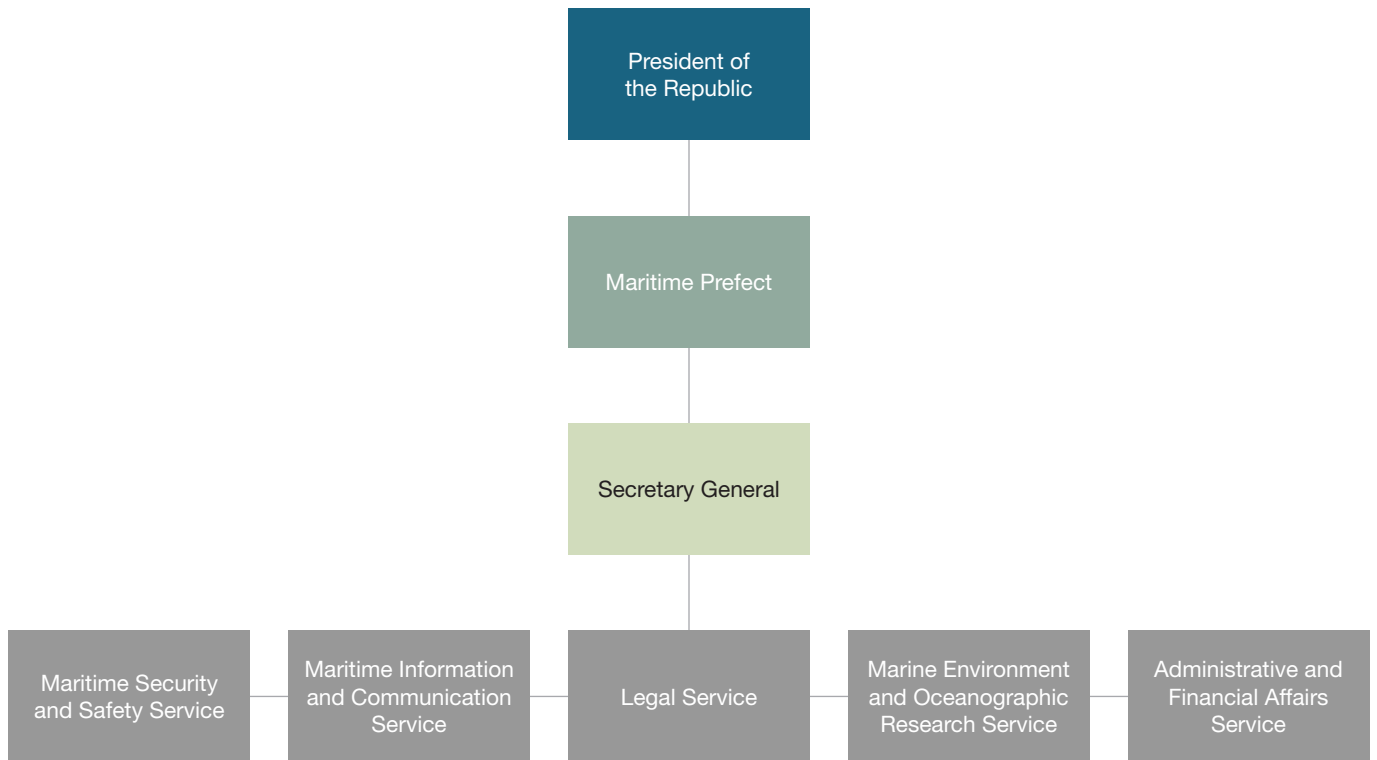
## From stopgap measures to a sustainable framework

Since 2011 Benin has focused on increasing the level of security in its maritime zones. However, the authorities are aware that the country will not fully gain the confidence of foreign ship owners and shippers until there is some guarantee of a sustainably secure environment. As a result the country has developed a strategic and institutional framework entitled ‘National Strategy for Maritime Protection, Security and Safety’, adopted by the president under decree number 2013-551 on 30 December 2013. A second decree of 31 December 2014 complements the first one.<sup>26</sup> The latter decree lays out the creation, organisation, functions and operationalisation of the national authority in charge of state action at sea.

The country will not fully gain the confidence of foreign ship owners until there is some guarantee of a sustainably secure environment

Benin’s maritime strategy is centred on a national authority under the direct supervision of the presidency and in which the maritime prefect is the most senior manager. A secretary general, a pool of experts and technicians assist the maritime prefect, who is appointed from among the admirals of Benin’s navy and has the rank of minister. The secretary general is the deputy of the maritime prefect and is chosen from the civil management of the administrations from which the members of the pool of experts are drawn. The relevant administrations are the merchant marine, national police, civil protection, national gendarmerie, customs, air force, navy, fisheries department, environment department, the secretary general of the ministry of foreign affairs and the secretary general of the ministry of justice.

Figure 4: Structure of Benin's maritime strategy



Source: National maritime protection, security and safety strategy, 30 December 2013, Cotonou, Benin, Unpublished document.



## Recommendations

- 1** Benin, in order to implement its maritime strategy effectively, should first make haste with the nomination of its maritime prefect and staff members.
- 2** The country should strengthen, in terms of skilled personnel, the authorities in charge of the merchant marine, fisheries and oceanographic research, by recruiting and training young officers at middle and senior levels. It should also provide these authorities with the appropriate material means.
- 3** Regarding regional cooperation, Benin should benefit from the experience of other ECOWAS countries in terms of maritime reform to, for instance, transform the directorate of its merchant marine into an agency endowed with financial autonomy. At the same time, Benin's maritime strategy, which is a good example of the coordination of state action at sea, could inspire other countries in the region that are considering drawing up maritime strategies.
- 4** In terms of environmental issues, Benin should establish and operationalise its national centre for preventing and combatting accidental marine pollution, as outlined in its 2006 contingency plan. The country should also continue to combat coastal erosion, and cooperate with its neighbours in this matter.
- 5** International partners should encourage the government's initiatives in maritime matters by providing technical, financial and material support.

## Conclusion

Benin's maritime security is confronted with multidimensional threats that challenge the national authorities. The country has been making notable progress since it became a theatre of piracy acts and armed robberies in 2011 and 2012.

From its initial stopgap measures Benin is increasingly moving towards structural solutions intended to gain the confidence of maritime operators. As a result, a national maritime strategy was adopted that is articulated around the coordination of state action at sea, with the maritime prefect as focal point. The latter has the authority to serve as the manager of a team in which all the major actors likely to influence maritime activities are represented.

The main challenge remains the effective implementation of this strategy, in which everyone should fully play his/her role to ensure a safer and more prosperous Beninese maritime domain.

## Notes

- 1 F Vidjningninou, La bonne forme du port de Cotonou, *Jeune Afrique*, 30 May 2014, <http://economie.jeuneafrique.com/regions/afrique-subsaharienne/22190-la-bonne-forme-du-port-de-cotonou.html>.
- 2 Statistics of the International Maritime Bureau.
- 3 The head of state of Benin sent a letter to the UN Secretary General in July 2011 to bring the international community's attention to the challenges posed by maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea. Thus, under Resolution 2018 of 31 October 2011 an assessment mission was deployed in the region from 7 to 24 November 2011. Its outcomes were considered by the Security Council in Resolution 2039 of 29 February 2012. The latter, among others, stressed the need to convene a joint summit of Gulf of Guinea states to develop a regional strategy aiming at combating maritime insecurity.
- 4 Information consolidated from civil servants interviewed in Cotonou on 27 November 2014.
- 5 Information obtained from military sources in Cotonou on 28 November 2014.
- 6 The seamen's book costs 20 000 FCFA and the cost of ships' technical visits varies between 120 000 FCFA and 150 000 FCFA, depending on ship sizes. There are not many technical visits because the Abuja memorandum of understanding imposes a minimum period of six months between two visits to the same ship.
- 7 In addition, UEMOA's study is incomplete since it ignores demersal species.
- 8 It also comes from oil purchased at Nigerian service stations along the border between Benin and Nigeria, and transported in poor conditions.
- 9 Despite the existence of numerous service stations in Togo, some Togolese buy this low-quality fuel as it is relatively cheap. It costs 375 FCFA per litre compared to 590 FCFA at a service station in Benin.
- 10 N de La Casinière, Golfe de Guinée: trafics de pétrole, d'otages, de tout, *La veille: revue de l'Observatoire géopolitiques des criminalités*, 17 June 2013, <http://ogc-veille.info/golfe-de-guinee-trafics-de-petrole-dotages-de-tout/>.
- 11 The annual catch of continental fishing is approximately 30 500 tonnes; [http://sirs.agrocampus-ouest.fr/prostat/wiki/index.php/Structure\\_de\\_la\\_p%C3%AÄche\\_au\\_B%C3%A9nin](http://sirs.agrocampus-ouest.fr/prostat/wiki/index.php/Structure_de_la_p%C3%A4che_au_B%C3%A9nin).
- 12 Phosphate levels in the region, according to one study, are between 2.28 MD/L and 2.58 MD/L; this is higher than the accepted norm of 0.03 MG/L; <http://herboko.blog.lemonde.fr/2013/05/18/le-phosphate-togolais-a-lassaut-des-cotes-beninoises/>.
- 13 Since 2014 the case has been dealt with at the regional level, under the 1981 Abidjan Convention (Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal environment of the West and Central African Region and protocol) with a focal point in Benin.
- 14 Despite a sea current that runs from west to east, an oil spill in the zone could affect the Beninese coastline. S Opara, Lagos oilfield to start production in 2014, 2 January 2013, <http://www.punchng.com/news/lagos-oilfield-to-start-production-in-2014>. <http://www.universalis.fr/encyclopedie/nigeria/6-l-economie-nigeriane/>.
- 15 Nigeria possesses small, private refineries, often out of order, and refines some of its oil in Côte d'Ivoire; <http://economie.jeuneafrique.com/dossiers-2/569-hydrocarbures--les-juniors-locales-au-relais/23408-en-cote-divoire-la-sir-pare-au-plus-presse.html>.
- 16 Decree of 26 April 2006; [http://www.giwacaf.org/userfiles/contingency/3/Benin\\_NOSCP\\_2010\\_FR.pdf](http://www.giwacaf.org/userfiles/contingency/3/Benin_NOSCP_2010_FR.pdf).
- 17 In 2013, the cargo traffic at these ports were 21.5 million tonnes for Abidjan, 12.2 million tonnes for Tema and 12.2 million tonnes for Dakar.
- 18 Survey conducted for an Ivorian association of employers called 'Confédération générale des entreprises de Côte d'Ivoire', Unpublished document.
- 19 Thieves, traffickers and terrorists tend to profit from such confusion to infiltrate port facilities and docked ships.
- 20 The president went personally to the port and gave instructions to the port authorities. He has replaced those who do not follow his instructions; <http://construirelebenin.over-blog.com/tag/actualite/314>; <http://construirelebenin.over-blog.com/article-port-de-cotonou-retour-a-la-competitive-119402913.html>.
- 21 Unverified information as, according to maritime authorities, the port security plans should not be made public.
- 22 Following Benin, Togo recorded 17 attacks and Côte d'Ivoire recorded four in 2012 and 2013.
- 23 See note 3.
- 24 The dead-weight is the ship's total transport capacity, in other words its total weight in charge minus its weight uncharged.
- 25 Benin, Africa economic perspectives, <http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/fileadmin/uploads/aeo/PDF/B%C3%A9nin%20Note%20de%20pays%20PDF.pdf>
- 26 Decree number 2014-785 of the President of Republic.

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## Contributors

- Barthelemy Blédé, senior researcher, Conflict Management and Peacebuilding Division, ISS Dakar
- Fatimata Ouédraogo, consultant
- Ousmane Aly Diallo, consultant

## Contact

ISS Dakar  
Ouakam Road,  
Atryum Building,  
4th floor, PO Box 24378  
Dakar, Senegal  
Tel: +221 33 8603304/42  
Fax: +221 33860 3343  
Email: dakar@issafrica.org

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