

THE NATIONAL PRESENCE IN THE GULF OF GUINEA: INTEGRATING PORTUGAL'S INSTRUMENTS OF POWER ¹

PRESENÇA NACIONAL NO GOLFO DA GUINÉ: INTEGRAÇÃO DOS DIFERENTES INSTRUMENTOS DO PODER

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Abstract

The sea has a decisive influence on the global economy, which naturally extends to the African economy. Therefore, efforts have been made locally, regionally and internationally to promote a blue economy that leverages the regional economy. However, this potential is currently underexploited. One of the reasons for this is the existence of threats to the security and sustainability of the economy of the sea, that is, maritime insecurity. This study analyses the Gulf of Guinea and proposes measures that the national instruments of power can take to enhance their role, promote maritime security and strengthen the national interests in the region. The investigation used an inductive reasoning methodology supported by a qualitative research strategy and a case study research design, a literature review and semi-structured interviews. The analysis revealed that, despite these national and international efforts, maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea has not decreased, contrary to the wider trend in other areas of the globe. Therefore, cooperation with the region's countries and organizations should be enhanced by improving linkages and coordination between all actors in the region.

Keywords: Gulf of Guinea, maritime security, instruments of national power.

Resumo

O mar tem uma importância determinante para a economia mundial e, naturalmente, para a economia africana, pelo que têm sido envidados esforços, local, regional e internacionalmente, para promover uma 'economia azul' que alavanque a região. No entanto, este ensejo não está a ser aproveitado e uma das razões apontadas resulta da existência de uma diversidade de

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ameaças à segurança e à sustentabilidade da economia do mar, nomeadamente a insegurança marítima. Assim, considerou-se pertinente analisar o Golfo da Guiné, com o intuito de propor medidas para dinamizar os instrumentos do poder nacional, promover a segurança marítima, e, deste modo, cimentar os interesses nacionais na região. A investigação seguiu um raciocínio indutivo, assente numa estratégia de investigação qualitativa e num desenho de pesquisa de estudo de caso, recorrendo-se à análise bibliográfica e documental e a entrevistas semiestruturadas. Desta investigação resultou que, apesar do esforço nacional e internacional, a insegurança marítima no Golfo da Guiné não mostra sinais de diminuir, ao contrário da tendência generalizada nas outras áreas do globo. Neste sentido, importa continuar a incrementar as ações de cooperação com os países e instituições regionais, garantindo uma maior articulação e coordenação entre todos os atores presentes na região.

Palavras-chave: *Golfo da Guiné, segurança marítima, instrumentos do poder nacional.*

1. Introduction

The importance of the ocean to the world's economy, well-being and development is commonly accepted. According to a report of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS), over 90% of the world's trade is carried by sea, 95% of global telecommunications and over \$10 trillion of financial transactions are transmitted using submarine cables each day (ACSS, 2019).

In Africa, as in the rest of the world, the ocean is the lifeblood of the economy and, in many cases, is central to food security (ACSS, 2019). In 2011, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization estimated that fisheries in Africa generated \$24 billion to the local economy (Benson, 2018).

Recent data indicate that Sub-Saharan Africa may hold 203 billion barrels of recoverable oil, accounting for 30% of global oil and gas discoveries made between 2009 and 2014 (Benson, 2018).

Therefore, Africa, and in particular the countries of the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) region, should be primed to develop a blue economy that will in turn boost the regional economy.

However, this opportunity is not being seized, and one of the reasons is the existence of threats to the security and sustainability of the ocean economy, from piracy and armed robbery at sea to illicit activities linked to oil, trafficking, smuggling of various goods and environmental crimes (ACSS, 2019).

Portugal and other International Organizations (IOs) have developed several initiatives to reduce or mitigate the threats to Maritime Security (MarSec) in the GoG region. The Portuguese Navy (PN) deploys capabilities to the "Mar Aberto" [Open Seas] missions on a regular basis and has a permanent patrol vessel stationed in São Tomé and Príncipe (STP), the NRP *Zaire*.

Despite these national and international efforts, the GoG has witnessed a rise in maritime insecurity over recent years. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) (2020, p. 24) has stated that there are serious threats to the security of vessels operating in the GoG region.

This study will thus analyse the GoG, focusing on threats to MarSec, the presence and

operations of the instruments of national power in the region, and the initiatives of IOs and States – particularly Portugal – that operate in the area. Based on this analysis, the study will propose measures to use the instruments of national power to promote MarSec and strengthen the national interests in the region.

The object of study of this investigation is thus the GoG, and the study analyses the presence and operations of the instruments of national power in the region.

However, given the vast scope of this topic, the study was delimited as advised by Santos and Lima (2019, pp. 41-43):

- Temporally, the study covers the last ten years (2009-2019), as major security developments in the region occurred during this period and maritime insecurity in the GoG was at its peak;
- Spatially, the study analyses the maritime region of the GoG as defined by the European Union (EU), that is, the 19 countries of the West African coast from Senegal to Angola, including the archipelagos of Cape Verde (VC) and STP;
- In terms of content, the study addresses MarSec, focusing on threats to security, as this is the aspect that raises the most concerns among the international community, and has the most relevance to the national interests. The analysis focuses on the diplomatic, military and economic instruments of national power; the intelligence instrument of power is not covered in this study due to the sensitive and classified nature of the literature on the topic.

The General Objective (GO), Specific Objectives (SO) and corresponding Research Question (RQ) of the study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – General and specific objectives and research question

GO	To propose measures that the national instruments of power can take to enhance their role, promote MarSec and strengthen the national interests in the GoG,
SO1	To analyse maritime (in)security in the GoG.
SO2	To analyse the strategies and initiatives that international organizations are developing in the GoG.
SO3	To analyse the strategies and initiatives that the national instruments of power are developing in the GoG.
RQ	What measures should the national instruments of power take to enhance their role, promote MarSec and strengthen the national interests in the GoG?

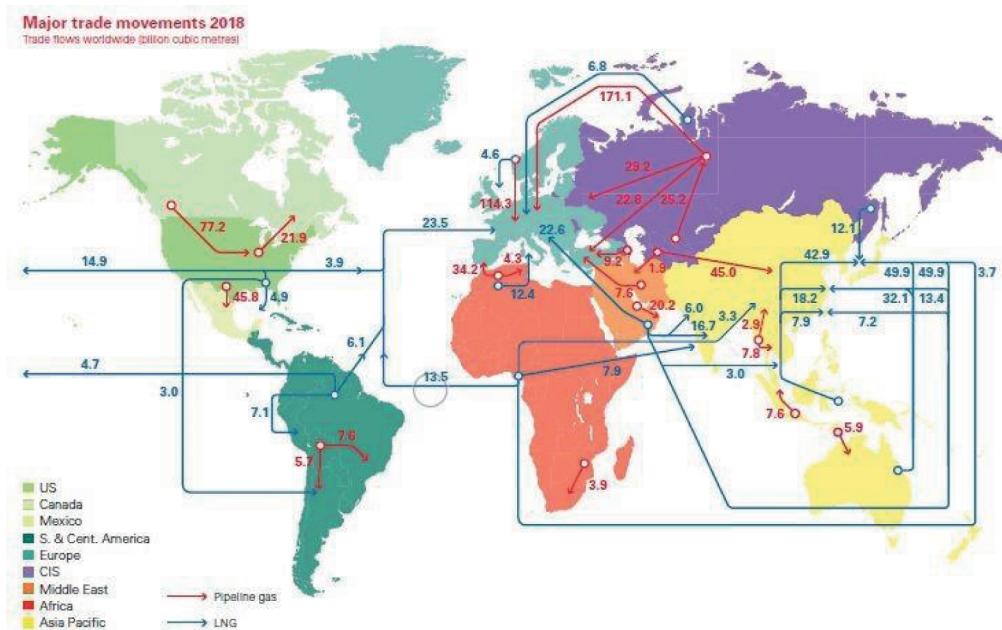
2. Theoretical and conceptual framework

This chapter presents the state-of-the-art, the key concepts and the analysis model.

2.1. State-of-the-art

Carmona (2019, p. 35) described the GoG as “[...] a region of high strategic interest for Portugal”. This economic interest is reflected in the trade balance. In 2018, Portugal’s imports and exports to GoG countries were worth more than €2 billion, which corresponds, respectively, to 11.7% and 15.8% of the trade with non-EU countries (Statistics Portugal, 2019).

As Figure 1 shows, the GoG region acts as a natural gas distribution hub for different regions of the world, supplying 3.7 billion cubic metres to China alone (British Petroleum [BP], 2019, p. 41). This region is also of interest to Europe, as EU Member States (MS) import 10% of their oil and 4% of their natural gas from the GoG (EU, 2014).



Furthermore, over 90% of trade with GoG countries is carried by sea (ACSS, 2019).

The sea's importance to the region should be reason enough to promote the development of a blue economy. However, according to Benson (2018, p. 1), Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, has a significant maritime area that could drive its economic development if it were not underexploited.

One of the reasons for this underutilization of the ocean is the existence of threats to the region's MarSec. In 2019, the area of the globe that was most affected by piracy and armed robbery at sea was the GoG (IMB, 2020). In 2017, these threats had an estimated cost of US\$ 818.1 million in revenue to the region, an increase of about 10% when compared to 2016 (Pigeon, Sadic, Duncan, Ridgway, & Soeth, 2018).

With regards to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, an analysis conducted by researchers from the EU's European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) states clearly that African states lose billions of dollars in revenue each year and that the livelihoods of fishing communities may be in jeopardy (Pichon & Pietsch, 2019).

Given the increasing significance of the GoG region, the issue of the region's MarSec has attracted the attention of several IOs. The United Nations (UN), through the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), issued two resolutions (2018 (2011) and 2039 (2012)) condemning all acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea and encouraging the countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) to develop a MarSec strategy, take measures to combat piracy and armed robbery at sea, and

implement transnational and transregional maritime coordination centres in the GoG region (UNSC, 2011, 2012).

In 2012, the African Union (AU) published the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM), which aims to "[...] foster increased wealth creation from Africa's oceans and seas by developing a sustainable thriving blue economy in a secure and environmentally sustainable manner [...]" (AU, 2012, p.11). Other initiatives that have been implemented include the agreement signed by the leaders of ECOWAS, CEEAC and GGC countries in 2013 in Yaoundé, known officially as the Yaoundé Code of Conduct (YCOC), to foster cooperation in countering transnational organized crime at sea, maritime terrorism, IUU fishing and other illegal activities (YCOC, 2013). As a result of the YCOC, a coordination and information sharing framework was created to improve maritime situational awareness in the GoG region.

In 2014, aware of the importance of the region for European countries, the EU issued a strategy and a plan of action for the GoG, through which it helps countries strengthen their maritime capabilities, ensure the rule of law and implement effective governance (EU, 2014, p. 3).

In 2017, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) established the Strategic Direction-South Hub, a forum that connects allies and partners with experts from local and regional institutions (NATO, 2019).

The Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) has had a strategy for the oceans since 2009 and, in 2018, this IO reaffirmed its intention to "[...] promote the development of maritime security and safety strategies" (CPLP, 2018, p. 3).

Portugal has a strategic interest in the GoG and has several cooperation initiatives with the region's countries.

Furthermore, the region has diplomatic ties with Portugal, as five of the nine CPLP countries are located in the GoG. Augusto Santos Silva believes that "Portugal has a role to play in developing the Euro-African partnership. I dare to think that it can even play a critical, pivotal role for stakeholders in both continents" (Silva, 2019, p. 6).

Portugal has developed several defence cooperation initiatives with countries in the region. As Ana Santos Pinto emphasises, "Portugal should put its experience in security (and surveillance) and maritime security to use through multilateral and bilateral cooperation" (Pinto, 2019, p. 11).

The PN has played an important role in implementing cooperation initiatives such as the "Mar Aberto" initiative and the mission to train the STP Coast Guard, which includes a permanent patrol vessel stationed in the archipelago, the NRP *Zaire*.

In economic terms, "[...] in recent decades, Africa has gone from being a 'hopeless continent' to an attractive, albeit risky, market" (Mah, 2019, p. 123). This has allowed "[...] a very significant number of national companies to operate quite successfully in various Sub-Saharan African countries, in a wide range of sectors" (Mah, 2019, p. 126).

Despite these initiatives, maritime insecurity in the GoG region does not show signs of decreasing. According to the Stable Seas website (2019), the Maritime Security Index (MSI) fluctuates between 38% and 60% in most GoG countries (only CV and Senegal have scores higher than 60%).

According to Pinto (2019, p. 8), one of the reasons for this is the “[...] lack of linkages between African sub-regional structures, and even within the AU itself, as well as between those structures and the UN [...] this lack of linkages leads to effectiveness gaps in key aspects of African security.”

2.2. Analysis model

The EU strategy states that maritime security is “[...] a state of affairs of the global maritime domain, in which international law and national law are enforced, freedom of navigation is guaranteed and citizens, infrastructure, transport, the environment and marine resources are protected” (EU, 2014, p. 3).

The definition adopted by the EU is comprehensive and addresses both safety and security. According to Silva (2017, p. 213),

‘safety’ refers to the prevention of accidents at sea and to the procedures that must be followed when such accidents occur, [and] ‘security’ concerns the protection of persons, property, facilities and ships from threats or intentional unlawful acts, including terrorism, piracy and similar activities.

In this study, MarSec refers to the security aspect of the EU definition.

According to the definition used in the NATO Allied Joint Doctrine, the instruments of national power are: the diplomatic instrument, the military instrument, the information instrument and the economic instrument (NATO, 2017, pp. 1.3-1.4).

The document clarifies that the diplomatic instrument of power consists of a State’s ability to negotiate, broker agreements and manage relationships between potential partners. The information instrument refers to the use of strategic communications to advance the State’s interests (NATO, 2017, p. 1.3).

The military instrument of power covers the use of military force, both in combat and as a means of deterrence, conflict prevention, humanitarian relief, stabilisation and reconstruction. Finally, the role of the economic instrument is to exercise economic influence through foreign investment, capital and trade (NATO, 2017, p. 1.4). This study uses NATO’s definition of national instruments of power.

The study was carried out using the analysis model presented in Table 2.

Table 2 – Analysis model

General Objective	To propose measures that the national instruments of power can take to enhance their role, promote MarSec and strengthen the national interests in the GoG.				
Specific Objectives	Research Question	What measures should the national instruments of power take to enhance their role, promote the Mar Sec and strengthen the national interests in the GoG?			
	Subsidiary Questions (SQ)	Concepts	Dimensions	Indicators	Instruments
SO1: To analyse maritime (in) security in the GoG.	SQ1: What are the threats to maritime security in the GoG?	Maritime security	Security	Threats	Literature review. Document review. Semi-structured interviews.
SO2: To analyse the strategies and initiatives that are being developed by international organizations in the GoG.	SQ2: What strategies and initiatives that are being developed by international organizations in the GoG?	Instruments of national power	Diplomatic.	Actors. Strategies. Initiatives.	
SO3: To analyse the strategies and initiatives that are being developed by the national instruments of power in the GoG.	SQ3: What strategies and initiatives that are being developed by the national instruments of power in the GoG?		Military. Economic	Obstacles. Linkages. Military actions.	

3. Methodology and method

This chapter describes the research methodology and method used in the investigation.

3.1. Methodology

This study uses inductive reasoning, which “[...] consists of a mental operation that begins by observing facts [...] associating them to draw generalisations that can be used to formulate a [...] theory” (Santos & Lima, 2019, p. 18). In terms of methodology, the study uses a qualitative research strategy and a case study research design.

3.2. Method

This subchapter describes the study sample, the procedures, the data collection tools and data processing techniques.

3.2.1. Participants and procedure

Participants. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten experts from the national instruments of power. The interviewees were: the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, the Director-General of National Defence Policy, the Fleet Commander, the Chairman of the idD Board, the General Manager of EDISOFT, a Consultant to the UNODC, and AICEP Portugal Global.

Procedure. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, or, when this was not possible, by email. The participants were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their answers, which all waived.

3.2.2. Data collection instruments

The data were collected through a literature and document review and semi-structured interviews. An interview script with six questions was prepared to guide the semi-structured interviews, which addressed the indicators analysed in the study, providing an answer to the subsidiary questions.

3.2.3. Data processing techniques

The internal and external factors that affect the instruments of national power and the MarSec of the GoG were identified through literature and document review. The data obtained from the interviews were processed using categorical content analysis, as described by Guerra (2006), to obtain emerging factors, which were added to the factors identified a priori, which were obtained during the previous phase.

The factors identified during the data collection process were examined using a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, as described by Wheelen and Hunger (2012), and Strategic Lines of Action (SLA) were elaborated based on this analysis.

The SLAs obtained from the SWOT analysis were validated according to suitability, feasibility and acceptability criteria described by Ribeiro (2017, pp. 190-195) as 'strategy tests'.

This process served to identify measures that can be implemented by the national instruments of power.

4. Data presentation and discussion of results

This chapter presents the data collected in the study and discusses the findings, which were obtained by answering the three SQs and corresponding RQ.

4.1. Maritime (in) security in the GoG

The GoG is plagued by threats to MarSec, from piracy and armed robbery at sea to illicit activities linked to oil, trafficking, smuggling of various goods and environmental crimes (ACSS, 2019). Thanks to these myriad threats, the region has one of the lowest scores of the MSI (Figure 2).

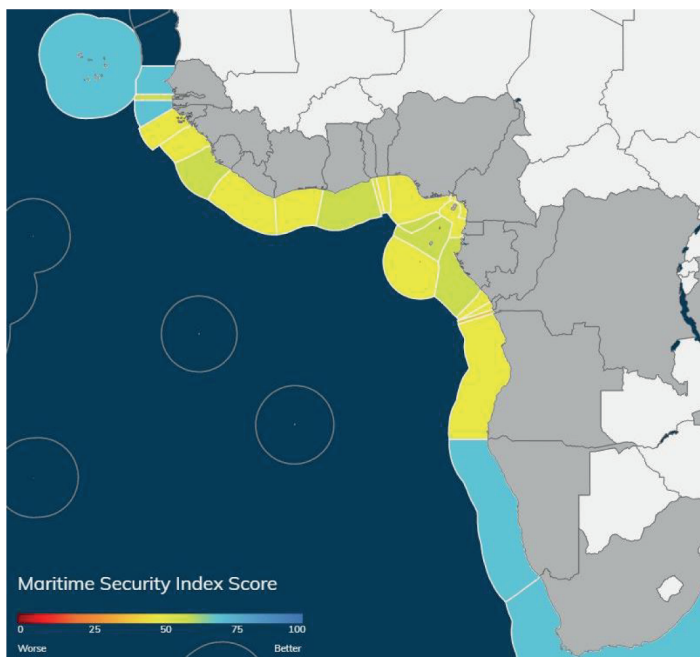


Figure 2 – MSI of the GoG region

Source: *Stable Seas* (2019).

As Figure 3 shows, the GoG was the only region of the globe that reported an increase in the number of incidents between 2008 and 2018. The rest of the world witnessed a significant decrease in reported incidents during the same period (Pichon & Pietsch, 2019).

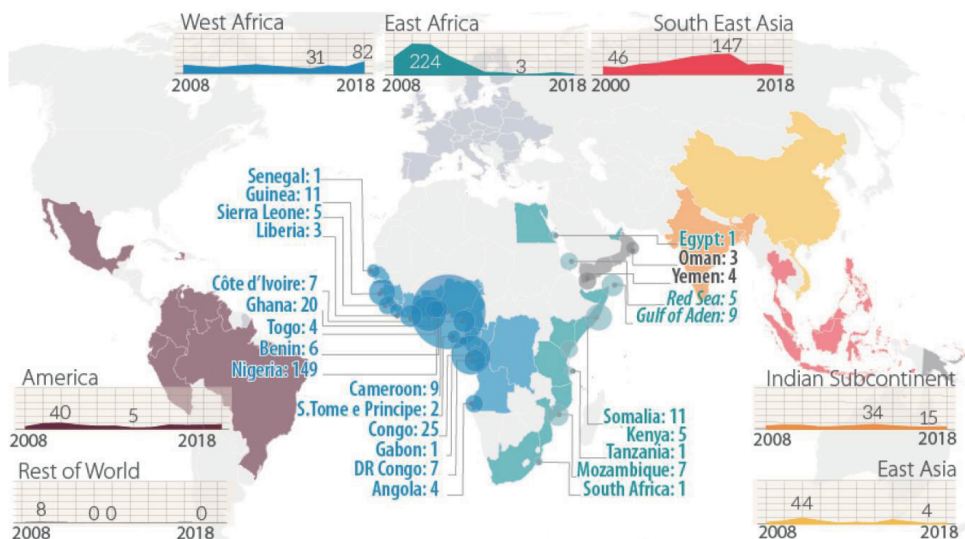


Figure 3 – Actual and attempted attacks

Source: IMB 2010-2018 cited in Pichon and Pietsch (2019).

According to the IMB (Figure 5), in 2019, there were 162 incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea worldwide. Of these incidents, 71 (or 44%) occurred in Africa. These 162 incidents included four vessels hijacked, 17 attempted hijackings, 130 vessels boarded and 11 vessels attacked with firearms (IMB, 2020).

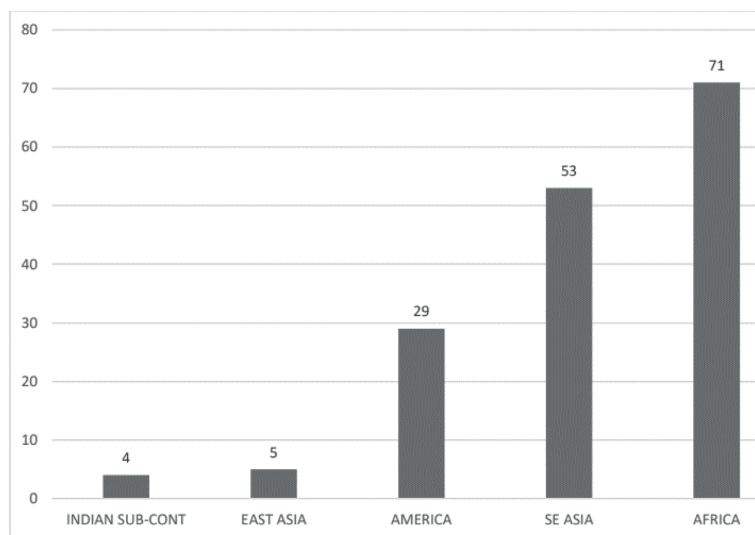


Figure 4 – Incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea in 2019

Source: Adapted from IMB (2020).

A detailed analysis of the data on Africa shows that, of the 71 incidents in that continent, 64 occurred in the GoG, and that, even though the 2019 figures represent a decrease when compared to 2018, this is still the region of the globe that reported the most incidents (IMB, 2020). Furthermore, the GoG reported 90% of the 134 crew abductions that occurred in 2019, which represents an increase of almost 50% compared to 2018 (IMB, 2020).

Four ships were hijacked in 2019, all in the GoG, and ten out of 11 reports of vessels fired upon occurred in this region (IMB, 2020). Not only does the GoG region report the most incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea, but it is also the region where these attacks are most violent.

The high number of incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea has a high cost for the region's economy. These incidents are estimated to have represented losses of approximately US\$ 818.1 million in 2017, an increase of about 10% when compared to 2016 (Pigeon, Sadic, Duncan, Ridgway, & Soeth, 2018).

Piracy and armed robbery at sea are not the only problems plaguing the GoG. According to Marques (2018, p. 95),

[...] trans-regional trafficking in drugs, arms, human beings and other illicit trade in goods and services fuels insecurity and instability in the [GoG] and across West Africa. Furthermore, [IUU] fishing, and waste dumping [...], are also common occurrences in the region that cause serious damage to ecosystems and have long-term consequences for local economies.

With regards to transregional drug trafficking, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) found that large quantities of cocaine (Figure 7) worth billions of dollars are transported through the region, and that most seizures are made at sea by navies that do not belong to the region's countries, which points to major regional gaps in combatting drug trafficking. According to this agency, there is strong evidence of high-level involvement in drug trafficking in several West African countries (UNODC, 2013).

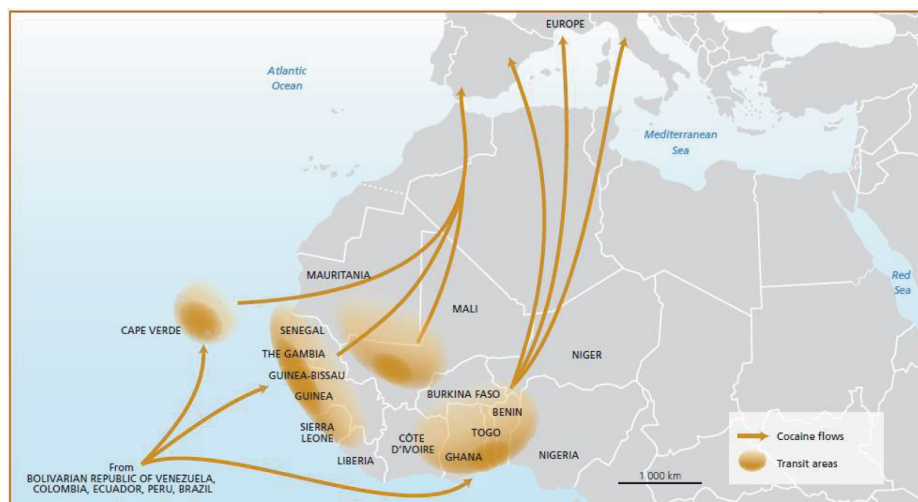


Figure 5 – Cocaine trafficking routes

Source: UNODC (2013).

With regards to fishing, an analysis conducted by researchers from the EPRS revealed that IUU fishing costs African States billions of dollars in revenue each year, and that the livelihoods of fishing communities may be in jeopardy (Pichon & Pietsch, 2019).

Maritime pollution caused by unintentional, reckless or deliberate actions is a growing threat to the security of coastal states, and the GoG is not an exception. It affects not only the environment, but also navigation and coastal development, and has considerable socioeconomic impact (Pichon & Pietsch, 2019).

According to Pavia (2016, p. 12), the maritime insecurity in the GoG region is linked to the “[...] the region’s States’ inability to control their coastal areas and exercise their sovereignty rights in their territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone.”

Furthermore, “[...] fragile States [...] – States that are unable to provide security, dispense justice and protect the welfare of their populations – can easily become safe havens for pirates, drug traffickers and terrorist networks” (Pavia, 2016, p. 12). The money from these illegal activities “[...] perverts fragile economies of an already decaying society” (Pavia, 2016, p. 16), promoting impunity and, consequently, maritime insecurity.

Other factors are land rather than ocean-based, such as governments’ lack of knowledge of ocean issues, the region’s high unemployment and poverty rates, domestic and regional disputes, and the lack of a legal framework to combat these threats. These conditions are

conducive to the proliferation of MarSec threats and restrict States' ability, and sometimes willingness, to combat those threats (Jacobsen & Nordby, 2015).

4.1.1. Brief overview and answer to SQ1

Based on the above analysis, the answer to SQ1 is that the main threats to MarSec in the GoG are indisputably piracy and armed robbery at sea.

However, piracy and armed robbery at sea are not the only threats to MarSec in the region, as other phenomena – such as trans-regional trafficking in drugs, arms, human beings and other illicit trade in goods and services, IUU fishing and maritime pollution – fuel insecurity and instability in the GoG.

The causes for these threats have been clearly identified. First, the States of the region are unable to control their coastal areas and exercise their sovereignty. Other factors are land rather than ocean-based, such as governments' lack of knowledge of ocean issues, the region's high unemployment and poverty rates, domestic and regional disputes, and the lack of a legal framework to combat these threats. These factors create an environment conducive to illicit activities.

4.2. Strategies and initiatives developed by the IOs operating in the GoG

The increasing insecurity in the GoG has provoked a reaction from IOs. The UNSC issued two resolutions – 2018 (2011) and 2039 (2012) – condemning acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea along the coastlines of the countries in the region.

These resolutions encourage the GoG countries to develop an integrated strategy to combat maritime insecurity by adopting measures to: develop laws and regulations to prosecute acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea; develop a regional framework to combat piracy and armed robbery at sea through information sharing and operational coordination mechanisms; develop and strengthen national laws and regulations that enable the implementation of international MarSec agreements, as foreseen in international law (UNSC, 2011).

Furthermore, international partners are encouraged to provide support to regional States and organizations in enhancing their capabilities to counter piracy and armed robbery at sea, including their capacity to conduct regional patrols, establish and maintain joint coordination centres and information-sharing centres, as well as in implementing an effective regional strategy (UNSC, 2012).

In 2012, the AU published the 2050 AIM and a plan to implement it. The strategy aims to “[...] foster increased wealth creation from Africa's oceans and seas by developing a sustainable thriving blue economy” (AU, 2012, p.11).

The most significant agreement was signed in Yaoundé in 2013 by the leaders of ECOWAS, CEEAC and GGC countries. This agreement resulted in the elaboration of the YCOC, which aims to foster cooperation to counter transnational organized crime at sea, maritime terrorism, IUU fishing and other illegal activities (YCOC, 2013).

A coordination and information sharing framework was created to improve maritime

situational awareness in the GoG region. Despite numerous implementation challenges, the GoG information sharing framework envisioned in Yaoundé is now a reality. The scheme in Figure 6 shows the implementation status as of 2019.

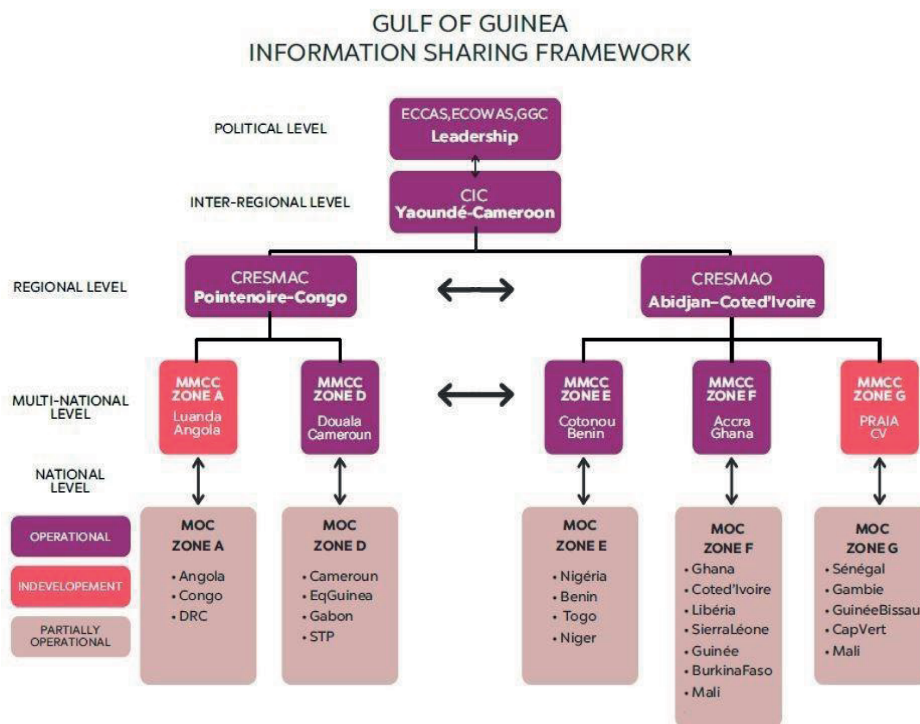


Figure 6 – GoG information sharing framework

Source: Stolpe (2019).

In 2013, the G7++ Friends of Gulf of Guinea group was established. Portugal is a member of this group, which aims to

[...] support the maritime security architecture which was developed under the Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy, Armed Robbery against Ships and Illicit Maritime Activities [...], such as illegal fishing or different types of trafficking, including human beings, drugs, weapons, animals and natural resources. (Gulf of Guinea Inter-regional Network Watch, 2019)

The International Maritime Organization (IMO), a UN agency that specialises in MarSec, has developed cooperation efforts with some GoG institutions and countries. Furthermore, the strategy for implementing sustainable maritime security measures in West and Central Africa published in 2014 includes a programme to support the implementation the Yaoundé framework (IMO, 2017a).

Several seminars and exercises have been held under the aegis of the West and Central Africa Maritime Security Project to help GoG countries develop their maritime capabilities (IMO, 2017b).

Concurrently, in 2014, UNODC expanded the scope of operations of the Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP) to address the challenges posed by maritime crime in West Africa, focusing on the GoG (UNODC, 2019). As mentioned by J. M. Silva (face-to-face interview, 28 January 2020), this programme has two components: legal and operational.

In 2014, aware of the importance of the GoG to the MS, the EU issued its Strategy on the Gulf of Guinea and the Gulf of Guinea Action Plan 2015-2020 in the following year, both of which aim to establish close cooperation with partners across West and Central Africa, in order to

[...] take all appropriate measures to combat maritime crime, including piracy and armed robbery at sea, illegal fishing, smuggling of migrants and trafficking of human beings, drugs and arms, and to address the underlying causes to foster long-term security and stability in the region. (UE, 2015, p. 2)

The EU's concerns about the (in)security in the GoG are reflected in the strategy outline, which states that the EU and the region's countries have many economic, development, trade and security interests in common. For example, at least 30 ships flying European flags travel in the region at any given moment, and 10% of oil and 4% of gas imports from European countries come from the region (EU, 2014).

Furthermore, some MS have active bilateral cooperation agreements. France keeps a standing naval force in the GoG through mission *Corymbe*, and has been developing the *Asecmar* project, which aims to strengthen the region's MarSec services, since 2011 (EU, 2015).

The region's importance has not gone unnoticed by NATO, an organization that has had a maritime strategy since 2012. In 2017, aware of the importance of the 'southern flank' for the Alliance's defence plans, it established the Strategic Direction-South Hub to serve as a forum that connects allies and partners with experts from local and regional institutions, including universities, research centres and non-governmental organizations from North Africa, the Middle East, the Sahel and Sub-Saharan Africa. The goal is that all matters that affect the South can be better discussed, understood and, where possible, resolved (NATO, 2019).

Five of the nine members of the CPLP are located in the GoG region, and this IO has had a strategy for the oceans since 2009. In 2018, through the Declaration on Seas and Oceans at the XII Conference of Heads of State and Government of the CPLP, it reaffirmed its intention to "promote the development of maritime security and safety strategies" (CPLP, 2018, p. 3).

The United States of America have been developing several actions with the same goal, including exercises and initiatives, such as the Africa Partnership Station (APS), which aim to improve MarSec by increasing awareness, response capabilities and maritime infrastructure (United States Africa Command [AFRICOM], 2020).

Despite the numerous initiatives being developed by IOs in the region, for all these programmes to contribute to the same goal, there is a need for "[...] coordination [...], in relation to financing and joint actions [to] enable greater complementarity between different projects to achieve greater cumulative effect". (EU, 2015, p. 18).

4.2.1. Brief overview and answer to SQ2

Based on the above analysis, the answer to SQ2 is that IOs are aware of the international importance of the GoG, and thus have been developing various initiatives to increase the region's awareness of the scale of the threats and of their impact on regional economies, as well as to support the creation of regional information-exchange mechanisms.

Even though these efforts have had some success, as in the case of the regional information exchange architecture – the Yaoundé framework – implemented with the support of the region's countries and their partners, the threats to MarSec have not only not disappeared, but show no signs of decreasing.

Therefore, there is a need for greater coordination between the different projects to maximise their effect and help counter the threats to MarSec.

4.3. Strategies and initiatives developed by the national instruments of power operating in the GoG

For Teresa Ribeiro, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (SENEC), the GoG region “is not only relevant for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is extremely important for Portugal, strategically” (T. Ribeiro, face-to-face interview, 6 February 2020).

Portugal has developed several cooperation actions in the field of diplomacy, economy and defence with GoG countries, mainly with the Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOP).

With regards to diplomacy, Portugal has several ongoing projects which, as T. Ribeiro (op. cit.) refers, cover “[...] a diverse range of actions, in a variety of areas [...], addressing economic, social and sovereignty aspects.”

An example of this is the Lusophone Compact project, “[...] a financial mechanism created in coordination with the African Development Bank (ADB). [...] This instrument finances the private sector through the ADB, with the Portuguese State contributing about €400 million in guarantees (T. Ribeiro, op. cit.).

Other projects are being developed in different areas, such as “[...] justice, good governance, institutional capacity building, education, health, etc. These cooperation initiatives span a variety of interrelated areas” (T. Ribeiro, op. cit.).

Furthermore, Portugal currently participates, through an indirect management agreement, in the Support to West Africa Integrated Maritime Security (SWAIMS) project, which aims to support and improve MarSec in the GoG through a combined legal, technical and operational approach. Portugal participates in this project through the Camões Institute, in partnership with the PN and the National Maritime Authority. The global budget for this project is €29 million (EU, 2017, pp. 2-3).

According to T. Ribeiro (op. cit.) the SWAIMS project “[...] will allow Portugal to play a more relevant role, not only for our traditional partners, but also to extend our influence to other ECOWAS countries that are not usually on our radar, which is why we are so committed to it.”

With regards to military projects, several Defence Cooperation (CDD) initiatives have been developed, which indicates that Portugal has given priority to cooperation with the

countries of the GoG region.

N. P. Torres (face-to-face interview, 15 January 2020) affirms that “[...] cooperation projects are developed with the region’s countries through negotiation and through the adoption of cooperation framework programmes, which include a project to support the navies or coast guards of those countries and thus promote MarSec.”

These framework programmes include initiatives in several areas of action. One of those areas is training – for example, training cadets from the Angolan Naval Academy, who will ensure the MarSec of their country and the GoG region in the future.

Other initiatives provide support to navies or coast guards by training them to protect their coastal waters – for example, Portugal has a naval unit stationed in STP on a permanent basis, the NRP *Zaire*, which, as N. P. Torres (op. cit. Torres (op. cit.)), “[...] is an excellent example of a Portuguese initiative that contributes to MarSec in the GoG, not only in STP but also in other regions of the GoG.”

Still with regards to MarSec, the PN contributes with naval capabilities to an initiative that is highly relevant for Portugal. The “Mar Aberto” initiative is “[...] biannual and consists of a 3-month deployment, and its mission is to cooperate with the countries of the region through diplomatic networks, promote Portugal’s image and contribute to the region’s MarSec” (G. e Melo, face-to-face interview, 20 December 2019).

N. P. Torres (op. cit.) confirms that the “[...] “Mar Aberto” initiative is one of the most important projects for both Portugal’s foreign relations in the region and MarSec.”

Portugal has also cooperated with non-PALOP countries. N. P. Torres (op. cit.) adds that, with regards to “[...] expanding its CDD relations to other countries, [...] Portugal’s first defence agreement with a non-Portuguese-language country on the West African coast, Côte-d’Ivoire, was signed last year [2019].”

With regards to CDD, Portugal, a country with limited financial resources (N. P. Torres, op. cit.), could act as a facilitator in trilateral cooperation arrangements such as the one between Portugal, Luxembourg and CV, through which Luxembourg finances the training of CV Coast Guards in Portugal.

One of various initiatives developed by Portugal is the recent creation of the Atlantic Centre (CdA). Despite not being exclusively dedicated to the GoG, this centre has the potential become, according to N. P. Torres (op. cit.), “[...] a capacity building centre of excellence, and should therefore also address the MarSec of the GoG.”

In economic terms, the GoG represents an investment opportunity for national companies. As “[...] a region rich in natural resources that are still little explored, especially hydrocarbons and fish, there is huge potential for maritime trade, resource extraction and, consequently, economic development” (Portugal Global - Trade & Investment Agency [AICEP], email interview, 2 March 2020).

Several national companies are aware of this potential and have invested in the region. GALP Energia, SGPS, S.A. (GALP) has operations in CV, STP, Guinea Bissau and Angola, where it explores, produces, refines and distributes energy products (GALP, 2020). Mota-Engil, SGPS, S.A. (Mota-Engil) is another national company with ties to GoG markets. It has several engineering and construction projects in Angola, Guinea Conakry, Cameroon

and Côte d'Ivoire. These projects generated a turnover of over €1,000 million in 2019 (Mota-Engil, 2020)

With regards to the defence economy, as H. C. Macedo (email interview, 31 January 2020) points out, “[...] there are several opportunities for the [Defence Technological and Industrial Base (DTIB)], especially in Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and STP, [as] maritime insecurity [is] reflected in the demand for arms and equipment.”

Some of these opportunities have already materialised into business, such as the contract between UAVision and the Nigerian Armed Forces for the supply of drones (H. C. Macedo, op. cit.).

For the defence sector to gain a foothold in the region, linkages must be established between “[...] the strategic triangle of cooperation that is critical to defence industries, with the ministry at the top, acting as a coordinator [...] for the lower level, with the defence industries on one side, [...] in a consortium, [...], and the Armed Forces as a customer on the other [...]” (S. Barbedo, face-to-face interview, 29 January 2020).

These initiatives are a few examples of the multiple projects that Portugal is developing in the GoG region, some in bilateral cooperation and others in coordination with third parties.

However, if Portugal wishes to make its presence in the region more relevant, “[...] coordination between all entities – political, military, economic – is crucial” (AICEP, op. cit.).

T. Ribeiro (op. cit.) confirms this, stating that “we need coordination between all initiatives and we need to understand that the link between security and development is crucial, one does not exist without the other.”

Moreover, G. e Melo (op. cit.) emphasises the importance of defining

[...] a vision [...] that not only identifies our interests, but prioritises them. Once we have the vision, we must define a strategy that explains how to best serve those interests [...]. And [...] this strategy cannot be a military strategy [alone], it must be [...] broader.

4.3.1. Brief overview and answer to SQ3

Based on the above analysis, the answer to SQ3 is that the GoG is a strategic region for Portugal, and that Portugal has several diplomatic, economic and defence projects in the region. These projects are based on inclusive cooperation, mainly with the region's PALOP countries, but are being gradually extended to other GoG countries.

One of these inclusive cooperation projects are the “Mar Aberto” missions which the PN carries out in the GoG, the support provided to STP by the NRP *Zaire*, numerous training actions both in the countries of the region and in Portugal, and the Lusophone Compact project.

Thus, the region has many potential opportunities. However, greater coordination is needed between the Ministry, the Armed Forces and the defence industry, preferably based on a national strategy for the region.

4.4. Measures that should be taken by the instruments of national power

Internal and external factors were identified when answering the SQs (Table 3). After a SWOT analysis, those factors were translated into SLA.

Table 3 – SWOT analysis

Internal Factors	
Positive Factors	Negative Factors
Strengths S1. There is political willingness to cooperate with countries in the GoG region. S2. The Armed Forces are fully capable of developing CDD actions in the GoG. S3. Portugal has vast experience in the field of cooperation. S4. The instruments of national power can manage cooperation / investment actions in the GoG. S5. The CdA is located in Portugal. S6. The military instrument of power can be used as a deterrent. S7. Portugal already has ties with the PALOP countries in the GoG region. S8. Portugal has experience in the implementation of cooperative projects in the field of defence. S9. The idD and the AICEP act as agencies that promote the national industry. Opportunities O1. General agreement regarding the importance of the GoG to the national, regional and international economy. O2. A European strategy and plan of action for the GoG already exist and include financing for cooperation actions in the region. O3. There are third countries interested in cooperating in the region through intermediary countries. O4. The region's countries are willing to engage in inclusive cooperation. O5. Maritime insecurity generates the need for foreign support to GoG countries. O6. The region has great potential for investment in defence, maritime trade and resource extraction O7. Five CPLP countries are located in the GoG region.	Weaknesses W1. Lack of linkages between the national instruments of power when planning cooperation actions. W2. Lack of financial resources to carry out the required cooperation actions. W3. Few diplomatic ties to the GoG region. W4. Lack of a strategy for the GoG region that integrates all instruments of national power. W5. Portuguese businesses' lack of knowledge of the region's markets. W6. Lack of an effective business intelligence platform to identify business opportunities. W7. Lack of a forum to connect all actors operating in the GoG. Threats T1. There are serious threats to MarSec in the GoG. T2. The region's countries are plagued by political instability and high-level government corruption. T3. Conflicting interests and competition between the international actors operating in the GoG region. T4. Insufficient cooperation and coordination between international initiatives. T5. Lack of awareness by GoG countries of the importance of the sea as a driver of economic development. T6. GoG countries have limited financial resources. T7. GoG countries have limited ability to intervene at sea and counter threats to MarSec. T8. GoG countries lack an appropriate legal framework to counter threats to MarSec. T9. Lack of interagency cooperation in GoG countries.
External Factors	

The LOA were identified using the following logic: Strengths are used to take advantage of Opportunities (SO); Strengths are used to avoid Threats (ST); Opportunities serve to overcome Weaknesses (WO); Weaknesses are minimised and Threats avoided (WT). The following SLAs were identified:

- SO1. Increase cooperation actions with PALOP countries in the GoG region;
- SO2. Foster cooperation actions with non-PALOP GoG countries, particularly Nigeria, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire;
- SO3. Use the Armed Forces expertise and ability to develop cooperation actions with GoG countries and thus contribute to MarSec;
- SO4. Enhance Portugal's role in the cooperation actions developed by the EU, the MS and third countries with interests in the GoG region;

- SO5. Use the CdA to connect GoG countries to countries interested in developing cooperation actions in the region;
- SO6. Increase the participation of the national military instrument in cooperation initiatives that aim to improve MarSec in the GoG;
- SO7. Contribute to the CPLP's image as an organization that promotes the development of GoG countries;
- SO8. Promote the national defence industry, through the idD, particularly in the PALOP countries of the GoG region;
- SO9. Promote the national industry, through the AICEP, particularly in the PALOP countries in the GoG region;
- ST1. Intensify contacts with policy makers of GoG countries to foster maritime awareness;
- ST2. Explore the possibility of negotiating new bilateral agreements similar to the ones that Portugal has with CV and STP, through which it may conduct joint patrols in maritime areas under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of GoG countries;
- ST3. Extend cooperation to administrative / legal matters related to the exercise of State powers / duties in the maritime areas under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of GoG countries;
- ST4. Enhance Portugal's role at the EU and other multilateral forums as a relevant partner for cooperation with the GoG region;
- ST5. Create a maritime operations centre at the CdA to connect the Yaoundé coordination and information sharing framework with other countries with interests in the GoG region;
- ST6. Create a CdA commission for the GoG to liaise and coordinate all national and international cooperation actions in the region;
- ST7. Hold seminars at the CdA to improve maritime awareness in GoG countries;
- ST8. Deploy national naval / air capabilities, on a permanent basis, in coordination with countries in the region that do not have their own naval capabilities, similar to the NRP Zaire's mission in STP;
- ST9. Increase the number of missions in which national naval units are deployed to deter illicit activities in the GoG, in coordination with countries in the region, similar to the "Mar Aberto" initiative;
- ST10. Encourage allied and friendly countries to participate in joint and combined forces, in coordination with GoG countries, to promote MarSec in the GoG region;
- ST11. Leverage Portugal's privileged ties with PALOP countries to facilitate linkages with other GoG countries;
- ST12. Present Portugal as an experienced partner in implementing cooperative defence projects with GoG countries through the idD;
- WO1. Establish linkages between the instruments of national power when planning cooperation actions in the GoG;
- WO2. Use the resources allocated by the EU to develop and implement cooperation projects in GoG countries through an indirect management mechanism similar to the SWAIMS project;

- WO3. Enhance Portugal's participation in projects with third countries interested in financing cooperation actions in the GoG, taking advantage of Portugal's operations and presence the region;
- WO4. Expand the national diplomatic and consular networks in GoG countries, as this will allow Portugal to enhance its foreign relations in the region and defend its national interests more effectively and efficiently;
- WO5. Develop a national strategy for the GoG that integrates the different instruments of national power, focusing on inclusive cooperation, particularly with PALOP countries, and on combating maritime insecurity;
- WO6. Inform Portuguese businesses of the potential of GoG markets through the idD and the AICEP;
- WO7. Develop a business intelligence platform to identify investment opportunities in the GoG region;
- WO8. Create an international forum for the GoG at the CdA to connect all regional and international actors with interests in the GoG region;
- WT1. Increase coordination between the instruments of national power when planning cooperation actions, in order to combat threats to MarSec more effectively and efficiently;
- WT2. Use the financial resources provided by the EU and by third States to finance cooperation actions in the GoG region;
- WT3. Develop and use the national diplomatic network in the GoG to promote best practices and interagency cooperation in the countries of the region;
- WT4. Develop a national strategy for the GoG that focuses on raising the region's awareness of the link between security and development;
- WT5. Create an international forum at the CdA that connects all national, regional and international actors, in order to educate the region's countries about the importance of the ocean to the development of the region's economies;
- WT6. Create an international forum at the CdA that links all national, regional and international actors, in order to educate the region's countries regarding the importance of inclusive interagency cooperation.

The SLAs were validated according to suitability, feasibility and acceptability criteria by the SENE, the military advisor to the National Defence Committee of the Portuguese Parliament, the deputy director of the DGPDN, and the idD Chairman. The SLAs were then translated into measures that aim to enhance the role of the instruments of national power in the GoG, promote MarSec and strengthen the national interests in the region.

The measures (M) are grouped into four areas (A) of action, each referring to an instrument of national power.

A01. Measures that should be taken in coordination by the instruments of national power:

- M01. Develop a national strategy for the GoG that integrates the different instruments of national power, focusing on inclusive cooperation, particularly with PALOP countries, and on combating maritime insecurity (WO5, WT4);

- M02. Establish linkages between the instruments of national power when planning cooperation actions in the GoG, in order to combat maritime insecurity more effectively and efficiently (WO1, WT1);
 - M03. Increase cooperation actions with GoG countries, especially with PALOP countries, Nigeria, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, extending that cooperation to administrative / legal matters related to the exercise of State powers / duties in the maritime areas under those countries' sovereignty or jurisdiction (SO1, SO2, ST3);
 - M04. Create an international forum / commission for the GoG at the CdA that links all national, regional and international actors, liaises and coordinates all cooperation initiatives, and raises the region's awareness of the importance of the ocean to the development of the region's economies and of the need to foster interagency cooperation (SO5, ST6, ST7, WO8, WT5, WT6);
 - M05. Create a maritime operations centre at the CdA to link Yaoundé's coordination and information sharing framework with other countries with interests in the GoG (ST5);
- A2. Measures that should be taken by the diplomatic instrument:
- M06. Expand the national diplomatic and consular networks in GoG countries, as this will allow Portugal to improve its foreign relations in the region and strengthen its national interests (WO4);
 - M07. Enhance Portugal's role at the EU and other multilateral forums as a relevant partner for cooperation with the GoG region due to its privileged ties with PALOP countries (SO4, ST4, ST11);
 - M08. Promote the CPLP as a relevant organization for the development of GoG countries (SO7);
 - M09. Use the resources allocated by the EU and by third States to develop and implement cooperation projects in GoG countries through an indirect management mechanism similar to the SWAIMS project, taking advantage of Portugal's operations and presence in the region (WO2, WO3, WT4);
 - M10. Intensify contacts with political decision makers in GoG countries through the national diplomatic network to raise the region's maritime awareness and promote interagency cooperation (ST1, WT3);
- A3. Measures that should be taken by the military instrument:
- M11. Increase cooperation, using the Armed Forces know-how and capabilities to improve MarSec in the GoG (SO3, SO6);
 - M12. Explore the possibility of negotiating new bilateral agreements similar to the ones that Portugal has with CV and STP, through which it may conduct joint patrols in maritime areas under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of GoG countries (ST2);

- M13. Deploy national naval / air capabilities, on a permanent basis, in coordination with countries in the region that do not have their own naval capabilities, similar to the NRP Zaire's mission in STP (ST8);
- M14. Increase the number of missions in which national naval units are deployed with units from allied and friendly countries, in coordination with countries in the region, to deter illicit activities in the GoG and promote MarSec in the region, similar to the "Mar Aberto" initiative (ST9, ST10);

A4. Measures that should be taken by the economic instrument:

- M15. Identify investment opportunities in GoG countries by implementing a business intelligence platform, and inform Portuguese businesses of those opportunities (WO6, WO7);
- M16. Promote the national industry, especially the national defence industry, through the idD and the AICEP, presenting Portugal as an experienced partner in implementing cooperative defence projects with GoG countries (particularly PALOP countries) (SO8, SO9, ST12).

4.4.1. Brief overview and answer to the RQ.

The above analysis provided an answer to the RQ, in the form of a set of measures that can be summarised as: developing a national strategy for the GoG; creating an international centre at the CdA to liaise, coordinate and distribute information on cooperation actions; enhancing the diplomatic and consular network in the region; enhancing the use of the national military instrument; leveraging the experience and know-how of the idD and the AICEP to encourage national companies to invest in the GoG region.

5. Conclusions

The sea is a source of progress and innovation for all countries, and those located in the region of the GoG are no exception. Therefore, the sea should act as a driver of regional development.

However, maritime insecurity in the GoG – as several studies, analyses and reports confirm – is a major obstacle to the development of a blue economy in the region.

Piracy and armed robbery at sea are the main threats to MarSec in the region. However, other threats, such as trafficking in drugs, arms, human beings, IUU fishing and maritime pollution are also relevant factors that fuel insecurity and instability in the GoG and contribute significantly to the current underexploitation of the region's maritime resources.

The main causes for these threats are: States' inability to exercise their sovereignty and jurisdiction rights; governments' lack of knowledge about ocean issues; the region's high rates of unemployment and poverty; domestic and regional disputes; the lack of a legal framework to combat maritime threats.

Aware of the importance of the GoG for regional development and international trade, several IOs have implemented initiatives to: increase the region's awareness of the ocean's development potential; support the creation of information exchange mechanisms; and train

the region's countries to combat the current threats to MarSec.

These international efforts have made it possible, for example, to develop the regional information exchange architecture known as the Yaoundé framework, which is now operational thanks to the commitment of all participants.

To establish itself as a promoter of international security, Portugal has used its diplomatic, military and economic instruments of national power to improve MarSec in the region through inclusive cooperation actions. Most of these initiatives are developed in cooperation with the PALOP countries in the region, but are gradually being extended to other GoG countries.

The "Mar Aberto" missions are an example of an initiative through which Portugal cooperates with the region's countries, expands its diplomatic network, improves its foreign relations, and, at the same time, contributes to the MarSec of the GoG.

As GoG countries have limited naval capabilities, the region holds many potential opportunities for the development of defence projects. However, to make those projects a reality, greater coordination is needed between the Ministry, the defence industries and the Armed Forces.

Furthermore, efforts should be made to increase linkages and coordination between all actors operating in the GoG region to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of cooperation projects.

This coordination can be achieved by developing a national strategy for the GoG region that integrates all instruments of national power.

This study, titled "National Presence in the Gulf of Guinea: Integrating the Different Instruments of Power", is both current and relevant because it proposes measures to enhance the role of the instruments of national power in the GoG, promote MarSec and strengthen the national interests in the region.

An inductive reasoning methodology was used to conduct the study, supported by a qualitative research strategy and a case study research design.

The data were collected through a literature and document review and semi-structured interviews, after which internal and external factors were identified. The factors were analysed using a SWOT analysis and translated into SLA, which were validated by experts from the instruments of national power, and, finally, unfolded into measures that were deemed suitable, feasible and acceptable.

The GO and RQ were divided into three SO, each corresponding to a SQ.

The answer to SQ1 revealed that piracy and armed robbery at sea are the main threats to MarSec in the region. However, other threats, such as transnational trafficking in drugs, arms, human beings, IUU fishing and maritime pollution, are also relevant factors that fuel insecurity in the region.

The answer to SQ2 revealed that IOs are aware of the implications that maritime insecurity has on the regional economy and international trade and have been implementing a wide range of cooperation measures with countries in the region. However, despite these efforts, the region's MarSec shows no signs of improving. Therefore, efforts should be made to increase linkages and coordination between all actors involved.

The answer to SQ3 revealed that Portugal is a relevant actor in the region, and that it is aware of the region's importance for the national economy. While its numerous cooperation actions with the region's countries, especially PALOP countries, confirm this, these initiatives should be planned according to a national strategy for the GoG region, as this would make them more effective and efficient, thus improving Portugal's image as a promoter of security.

Having answered the SQs, it was possible to identify measures that can be implemented by the instruments of national power, which can be summarised as:

- Developing a national strategy for the GoG that integrates the initiatives of the instruments of national power, raising awareness of the link between security and development, and increasing inclusive cooperation actions to combat maritime insecurity and thus strengthen the national interests in the region;

- Creating an international forum / centre at the CdA to liaise, coordinate and distribute information on cooperation actions in the GoG, in order to generate synergy effects, eliminate duplication and combat maritime insecurity more effectively;

- Enhancing the national diplomatic and consular networks in the GoG to strengthen the national interests in the region;

- Increasing the use of the national military instrument in the region to deter and suppress MarSec threats;

- Using the experience and know-how of the idD and the AICEP to encourage national companies to invest in the GoG region.

The study's main **contribution to knowledge** is that it provides an analysis of the threats to the region's MarSec and the initiatives that IOs and instruments of national power are developing in the GoG. The identified measures can be used by the national instruments of power to provide relevant information to decision makers when planning initiatives in the region.

The study had three **limitations**. The first is that it does not address the information instrument of power, which would have enriched the study. The second is that few interviews were conducted with experts from the national economic sector, as not all responded to the request for an interview. The third is that the safety aspects of security and the risks inherent to MarSec, which also have an impact on the GoG, were not included in this analysis.

Therefore, **future studies** may examine how the CdA contributes to the MarSec of the GoG region.

The study's **recommendations** consist of developing a national strategy for the GoG region that integrates the different instruments of national power, and creating an international forum at the CdA to liaise and coordinate cooperation actions in the GoG.

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