



REPUBLIC OF GHANA



NATIONAL INTEGRATED MARITIME STRATEGY (NIMS) OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA



August, 2023



MESSAGE BY

**H.E. NANA ADDO
DANKWA AKUFO-ADDO**

PRESIDENT OF GHANA

Safeguarding Ghana's territorial integrity and protecting the interest of all Ghanaians remain key priorities of government. These priorities have underpinned key decision-making and policy formulation, and significantly shaped the country's foreign policy.

Indeed, ongoing international discourse on the exploitation of the blue economy as a means of ensuring sustainable development of countries, particularly littoral states, has further emphasised the need for countries to safeguard their territorial waters. This is critical, particularly for coastal West African states, taking cognisance of efforts by governments to expedite the recovery of their respective economies from the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

More importantly, the heightened threat of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea underscores the need for littoral West African states to prioritise the security of their maritime

domains. The Gulf of Guinea has emerged as a hotspot for piracy activities, having accounted for the majority of piracy attacks occurring globally between 2020 and 2021, outpacing the Gulf of Aden.

Emerging within this context, the timing of this revolutionary National Integrated Maritime Strategy (NIMS) is critical. More significant is the fact that this document comes at a time when Ghana has assumed its position as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. The country will continue to leverage this position among the comity of nations to forge collaborations on priority areas which, among others, include mitigating the threats of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

Cognisant of the fact that the responsibilities of government are not limited to Ghanaians, but extend to the international community, the NIMS is underpinned by specific objectives, the attainment of which would better position the country to deliver on its regional and global obligations, while advancing its development and security imperatives.

It is expected that the successful operationalisation of the NIMS and its detailed implementation plan would bolster collaboration among all relevant stakeholders, notably the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies, actors within Ghana's security architecture, Civil Society Organisations, and international partners to achieve the vision of a completely safe and secure maritime domain with thriving blue economy sectors that would enhance the livelihoods of Ghanaians and boost GDP growth. I, therefore, urge all stakeholders to participate fully in the realisation of the vision and objectives of the NIMS to ensure that the interest of present and future generations are protected.



MESSAGE BY

HON. KWAKU OFORI ASIAMAH
MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT

The maritime sector remains an important bedrock on which economies thrive. It provides a significant portion of the global population with food and livelihoods. In addition to this, it facilitates global trade and tourism. Advancement in technology has opened up new frontiers of marine resource development, from bioprospecting to mineral extractions, including hydrocarbons, from the seabed. It is integral to the sustenance of national economies, particularly for coastal countries. However, there are major threats confronting the sustainable development of marine resources.

An analysis of threats to the sustainable development of Ghana's marine resources revealed as the areas of greatest significance piracy, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, robbery, illegal bunkering, ship-to-ship transfers, maritime boundary delimitation disputes, drug trafficking, pollution, terrorism, disruption to trade or freedom of navigation, transnational crimes, drugs and people smuggling. The Ministry of Transport has, therefore, collaborated with other stakeholders to develop a National Integrated Maritime Strategy (NIMS) and an

implementation plan with an overarching goal of contributing to the growth of Ghana's blue economy.

The development of the NIMS has gone through a series of consultations with key players and actors to ensure a coordinated approach to the promotion and enhancement of maritime safety, security and a clean marine environment. Indeed, NIMS emphasises interagency coordination and a holistic government approach to issues in the maritime industry in Ghana. I hope this will promote concerted action by all stakeholders including relevant Ministries, Departments and other Agencies (MDAs), to achieve the purpose of the NIMS.

In setting the tasks for achieving a developed and thriving blue economy, which is one of the strategic objectives of the NIMS, the implementation plan of the strategy has identified as a priority the development of a vibrant maritime industry, promotion of seaside tourism, facilitation of maritime job creation and management of fisheries resources. This will contribute to sustainable economic growth, development and national security. The Ministry of Transport will continue to play its role in the implementation of the NIMS to foster the creation of national wealth and enhance safety and security in the country's maritime domain.



MESSAGE BY

HON. ALBERT KAN-DAPAAH
MINISTER FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

The Gulf of Guinea has predominantly featured in recent discussions on maritime security particularly due to the growing threats of piracy in the region. This underscores the need for littoral states, particularly coastal West African States, to prioritise maritime security in view of the dire economic and security ramifications that would be occasioned by a failure to do so.

It is within this context that the imperativeness of a Maritime Strategy cannot be overemphasised. Indeed, the economic, social, and political implications of a vulnerable maritime domain have informed the need for coastal, island, and archipelagic states, worldwide, to constantly develop, assess and revise maritime strategies to make them responsive to existing and emerging security threats.

We, the players within Ghana's security architecture, recognise and accept the onerous responsibility of securing the country's maritime domain to not only bolster economic development but also safeguard the interests and livelihood of all Ghanaians.

To quote the 2050 Integrated Maritime Strategy of Africa (2050 Aim Strategy), an unsecured maritime domain portends a

"broad array of real and potential threats that could result in mass casualties and inflict catastrophic economic harm to African States. In addition to loss of revenue, they could fuel violence and insecurity. Some of (the threats) such as drug trafficking, could feed corruption, finance the purchase of illegal weapons, corrupt the youth, pervert democracy/rule of law, distort economies and destabilize communal life".

Against this backdrop, the Ministry of National Security, under the Security Governance Initiative (SGI), led inter-agency processes and engagements to develop this National Integrated Maritime Strategy (NIMS) and its associated Implementation Plan.

Surely, the quest to fully secure Ghanaian waters would not be without challenges; hence, there is the need for active collaboration and participation of all stakeholders in order to ensure a successful implementation of this Strategy. To quote from page 5 of the NIMS, "ensuring the safety and security of our maritime space is, without a doubt, a national security and development priority". I, therefore, entreat all stakeholders to contribute towards achieving the objectives for which the NIMS was developed.

Indeed, the dream of developing a NIMS has today become a reality; a feat that has been accomplished through the hard work of key personalities and agencies. I, therefore, commend all individuals, agencies, and institutions that contributed in diverse ways towards the development of the NIMS. I also appreciate the technical and financial support provided by our partners, particularly the Government of the United States of America, the Kingdom of Denmark, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Ayekoo to us all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Albert Kan-Dapaah'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

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PROLOGUE BY

DR. OSEI BONSU DICKSON

**CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL MARITIME
TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP;
JOINT MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON NIMS**

In 2015, a joint assessment team, comprising experts from the Ghana Maritime Authority (GMA), under the Ministry of Transport, the Ghana Navy (GN) under the Ministry of Defense, and the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) under the Ministry of National Security, conducted a national maritime threat assessment. The assessors advised that offshore and related blue crimes were likely to undermine the country's blue economy interests and pose a broader strategic threat to national security if no overarching maritime strategy was developed by government as a countermeasure.

In February 2016, the Government of Ghana executed the Security Governance Initiative (SGI) Joint Country Action Plan (JCAP) with the Government of the United States of America. The JCAP identified maritime security as one of three main focal areas.

In 2018, a National Maritime Technical Working Group (NMTWG) with inter-ministerial representatives from Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of the Government of Ghana with maritime responsibilities, as well as a team of international and local subject-matter experts from industry, civil society and academia were convened under the joint authority of the Ministers of Transport and National Security at the SGI Secretariat. The singular mission of the NMTWG was to produce

a National Integrated Maritime Strategy (NIMS) for the Republic of Ghana, through a non-partisan and inclusive process. This process culminated in extensive multilateral consultation, sector-wide reviews with foreign nations, legislators, defense, industry and civil society actors.

The NIMS underwent various stages of drafting and re-drafts, drawing inspiration from, among others, the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Ghana, the Economic Community of West African States Integrated Maritime Strategy (EIMS) and the African Union Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS). In 2022, the final re-draft was submitted to Cabinet, and subsequently to His Excellency President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo for approval.

President Akufo-Addo and Cabinet having declared final executive support for the document, plans for the public launch of the NIMS were agreed upon, and put into effect by the Joint Ministerial Committee on NIMS.

In the course of the last four years, various individuals and entities from the public service, civil society, partner states and international organizations provided unmatched support which culminated in the realization of the present strategy; to them, as well as to the Government of Ghana, immense appreciation is due and duly rendered. The Ministers for Transport and National Security played a pre-eminent role at every stage of the process, as indeed, the National Security Coordinator, the Chief of Naval Staff and the Director-General of the Ghana Maritime Authority. The Center for Maritime Law and Security, Africa (CEMLAWS), the Center for Strategic and Defense Studies, Africa (CSDS AFRICA), and the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Institute (GOGMI) deserve particular mention for exceeding themselves. The Embassy of the United States of America, the Danish Embassy, and the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) also deserve special acknowledgment for supporting the NIMS process.

To our nation and our wider region, it has been our highest honor to serve. To the people of Ghana and to posterity, we commit this national blueprint.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Osei Bonsu Dickson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Executive Summary

Ghana is a maritime nation. With a 540km coastline, an extensive Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and an extended continental shelf, the country encompasses a vast maritime space with huge potential to generate national revenue. The country's untapped hydrocarbon potential, fisheries resources and the strategic location of our coast along important international shipping lanes provide a sea of opportunities for ensuring food security, bridging income gaps, raising foreign investment, increasing national output and creating favourable terms of trade.

However, our maritime estate, if not properly managed, can also be a source of threats that undermine our sovereignty, national security and development. From the prevalent threat of piracy and armed robbery at sea across the sub-region to the mounting menace of Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing, over-fishing and plastic pollution, our seas face enormous challenges with serious repercussions.

Ensuring the safety and security of our maritime space is, without a doubt, a national security and development priority.

This National Integrated Maritime Strategy (NIMS) has been developed by a multi-agency Ghanaian team at a crucial moment in our history when there is a burgeoning awareness of the contribution of our oceans to sustainable development (as indicated by Goal 14 of the Sustainable Development Goals); a moment in our history when our oceans are faced with a convoluted set of maritime threats as well as increasingly complex conservation and management concerns.

This Strategy is intended to chart viable

courses of action towards addressing these issues to ensure that Ghana's maritime domain is globally considered safe and secure, with strong blue economy sectors that not only generate substantial national income, but also ultimately improve the living standards of our people.

The NIMS is guided by seven (7) core principles: national ownership, social inclusion and impact, synergy, accountability, partnerships and cooperation, technology, and innovation and sustainability.

Each of these principles is ingrained in the provisions mapped out in this document, making the NIMS a living strategy – one that takes into account current and future maritime threats and opportunities to advance Ghana through a sustainable and prosperous ocean economy, for the benefit of all Ghanaians.

The NIMS has been developed with six (6) strategic objectives in mind for the country:

1. Strengthen the framework for maritime governance
2. Ensure the safety and security of Ghana's maritime domain
3. Develop a thriving blue economy
4. Protect our marine and coastal environment
5. Promote capacity-building, research, awareness and knowledge-sharing in the maritime domain, and
6. Develop dynamic and diversified regional and international cooperation.

These strategic objectives are backed by recommended priority actions – specific goals that must be met to ensure that we attain the broad vision of the NIMS. This Strategy, supported by its implementation plans, will be executed by a National Maritime Council, chaired by the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana.

I. National Context

1.1 Blue Economy: A Sea of Opportunities

The value of Ghana's maritime estate is immeasurable. Over 25% of Ghanaians dwell directly in coastal communities and more than 50% of the population live within 50 km of the coast. The fisheries sector alone generates over US\$1 billion in revenue each year and accounts for, at least, 5% of Ghana's Agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) — a contribution that is likely to increase substantially with a better managed fisheries sector. The sector also provides livelihood for an estimated 10% of the population when its value chain is properly accounted for — a percentage that has the potential to increase three-fold if this Strategy is effectively implemented. Furthermore, Ghana is among the top ten fish-consuming countries globally, with an average per capita consumption of 23.7 kg per annum.

been one of the most active areas of oil and gas exploration globally, and revenue from the industry has progressively contributed to the country's socio-economic development. It is estimated that about 80% of the country's hydrocarbon potential, most of which lies offshore, remains untapped. Technological evolution has also made seabed mining feasible, offering the country additional great opportunities.

With Ghana's coast falling along strategic navigational routes linking Africa with North and South America, Europe and Asia, the shipping industry has remained steady as a major driver of our country's economy. Given our largely underdeveloped tourism sector, maritime tourism also holds great promise for generating national income, fostering prosperity and ensuring sustainable livelihoods of local communities.

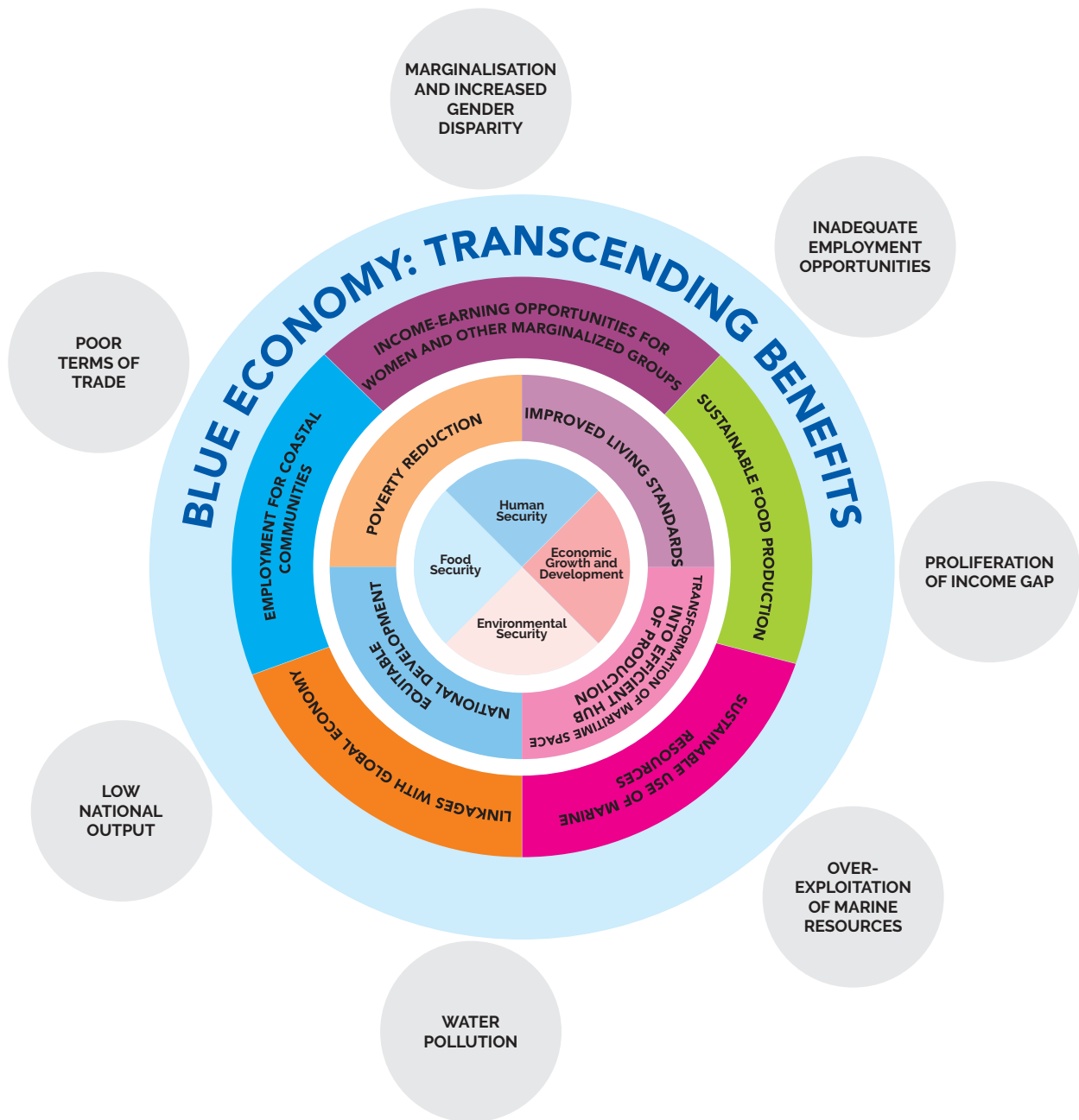
Equally important is the fact that in the last decade, the maritime space of Ghana has



Figure 1 below highlights the benefit of a maritime strategy that supports effective ocean governance and investments in the blue economy, as well as the long-term goals that have accentuated the need to strengthen Ghana's maritime industry. It also illustrates national indicators that flow from a well-managed, vibrant blue economy and the national, regional and global burdens that may arise from a poorly managed maritime sector

At the centre of the diagram, we have the four (4) major security and developmental variables ultimately enhanced by a resilient blue economy:

- Economic growth and development;
- Human security
- Food security; and
- Environmental security



- An illustration of national Indicators/benefits that flow from a well-managed ocean economy
- The grey outer circles show the negatives from the absence of a resilient blue economy

1.2 Threats Emanating from the Maritime Domain

To achieve the vision of this Strategy, concerted efforts are required to improve governance and ensure the security and safety of Ghana's maritime domain. Such efforts necessitate a fundamental understanding of the maritime threats faced by our country, as well as a recognition of how these threats adversely impact our core national interests.

1.2.1 Sovereignty and National Security

Ghana's sovereignty and national security interests extend from our land into our maritime space.

Our ability to monitor and control activities in our maritime space is a national security priority.

Ghana's long stretch of coastline and vast EEZ is an enormous opportunity but can equally be a source of threats that undermine the security of our nation. Illicit traffickers have been known to exploit maritime corridors for their activities, while piracy and armed robbery at sea are major threats to the safety and security of the country's maritime domain. The Gulf of Guinea ranks among the top piracy hotspots in the world and while incidents in Ghana's maritime space have been less in the context of the regional statistics, the reality of the threat and its implications for the security of our Sea Lines of Communication cannot be underestimated. Indeed, the increasingly sophisticated modus operandi adopted by these transnational criminal groups points to the potential escalation of piracy and armed robbery in Ghana's waters. Robust measures are needed to prevent, deter and respond effectively, while consistent levels of investment are necessary to guarantee the sustained protection of our waters.

1.2.2 National Economy

The inability to exercise effective governance over our maritime domain has negatively impacted our ability to boost the national economy through the sustainable exploitation of our offshore resources. Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing has resulted in dwindling stocks and lower catches, especially for artisanal fisher-folk whose livelihoods depend on the fisheries resources. The country, which was hitherto a net exporter of fish, now imports up to \$500 million dollars' worth of fish annually, depleting the country's scarce foreign exchange reserves, with possible trade imbalances. IUU fishing also triggers other repercussions, such as a reduction in protein intake and the consequent impoverishment of fishing communities. Altogether, the canker has cross-cutting implications for human security which will ultimately affect national productivity and economic growth.

Illegal bunkering and smuggling of petroleum products at sea is yet another serious threat to Ghana's economy and the dynamics of illicit trafficking of petroleum products are constantly increasing in complexity, particularly as a result of the lucrative nature of the trade. The escalating menace presents a number of reinforcing challenges to the nation; these include loss of national revenue, potential for environmental pollution, linkages with transnational organised crime and scores of other national safety and security concerns.

Our ports, landing sites and immediate coastal environments contribute substantially to Ghana's national revenue and serve as catalysts for economic growth. Moreover, currently and into the future, offshore oil exploration is evolving as the lifeline of our economy and development. The energy production

facilities, network of pipelines and submarine cables are key to economic advancement in Ghana. However, these critical infrastructures are susceptible to vulnerabilities resulting from easy accessibility by water and land, proximity to crowded metropolitan areas, and high risk of sabotage and terrorist attacks. Thus, a resilient national economy requires the protection and further development of our ports and other maritime infrastructure.

1.2.3 Marine Environment

Marine environmental pollution and other anthropogenic activities are seriously degrading the quality of the marine space and ultimately leading to depletion of Ghana's rich marine ecosystems and non-living resources, both of which are critical national assets. The activities of bunkering ships, improper disposal of industrial and domestic waste, and the operations of the offshore oil and gas industry undermine the current and future potential of our marine environment and blue economy.

Furthermore, the expansion of deep-water drilling in our waters presents economic opportunities but equally constitutes a major threat. As witnessed during the Deepwater Horizon incident in the Gulf of Mexico, United States, a spill in Ghana of that magnitude would be a huge disaster not only for us, but for all neighbouring countries.

Evidently, plastic pollution has continued to gain international prominence as one of the greatest threats to the marine environment globally. For Ghana, the situation is no different. Large volumes of plastics are washed into the country's coastal and marine space, imperiling several species, threatening otherwise viable ecosystems and negatively impacting seaside tourism.

1.3. Challenges to Maritime Governance

Several factors impede the country's ability to adequately govern its maritime space. These include shortfalls in security capacity, mismatches between resources and institutions, inadequate laws, and complicity of governing officials. Other factors include noncompliance with laws, conventions, and agreements, weak law enforcement and governance structures, institutional turf wars and poor collaboration amongst maritime institutions, and lack of capacity among personnel in the maritime environment.

The inability to effectively govern our maritime domain results in loss of revenues and has the potential to create insecurity throughout the country. Infrastructure such as ports, navigation aids, and communication capabilities are not only essential to maritime governance but are also crucial elements of seaborne trade, the fishing industry, tourism, offshore energy, and mineral exploration, among others.

1.3.1 Interagency Coordination and Governance Structure

Coordination among relevant agencies has been identified as a major challenge confronting effective maritime governance in Ghana. The Ghana Maritime Authority is statutorily tasked with the responsibility to monitor, regulate and coordinate activities in the maritime industry. There are over twenty (20) Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) with varying mandates and responsibilities on maritime issues. Without adequate coordination mechanisms, there is the tendency to duplicate efforts within these institutions, or to sub-optimally apply institutional capabilities and resources towards achieving shared objectives.

The absence of a governance structure in the maritime sector often results in a disjointed and uncoordinated approach. Given the complexities of the maritime domain, interagency collaboration must be documented, it must be cross-cutting, and also integrate multiple agencies. A national-level framework to facilitate the exchange of information and synchronize maritime sector decisions where multiple agencies are involved is a key element of implementing this Strategy, and it is directly linked to advancing the priorities of the highest levels of political, military, and diplomatic leadership.

1.3.2 Legal and Regulatory Framework

Without effective maritime regulation and enforcement, there cannot be sound ocean governance. Likewise, effective maritime regulation and enforcement require the presence of a comprehensive legal framework that allows for the criminalisation and prosecution of all maritime offences. Unfortunately, the country's maritime legal framework is characterised by legislative gaps and weak institutional mandates that cannot serve as adequate deterrents against criminal activities in our maritime domain. Furthermore, some of the international instruments essential to safeguarding our maritime domain have not been fully domesticated. Coupled with this is an absence of adequate legal, prosecutorial and judicial expertise in maritime law and security which is necessary in ensuring that criminal offences are effectively tried and brought to a legal finish. These legal and regulatory gaps will have to be addressed if Ghana's waters are to be free from criminal activities.

1.3.3 Political Will

Political will to properly resource security agencies and other relevant national

institutions has been one of the major challenges confronting Ghana. Maritime issues often emanate far out at sea beyond the remit and scrutiny of the critical populace. Moreover, governments are often faced with competing national agendas, which has often made it difficult for them to resist the tendency to relegate the resourcing of maritime agencies to the background. While it is politically expedient to concentrate resources on visible areas under public scrutiny, proper and targeted investments in maritime governance has the potential to generate huge revenues for national development. Although the burgeoning offshore oil and gas industry has scaled-up government's focus on the maritime industry, there still remains a deficit in many respects. As a matter of fact, low prioritisation of maritime governance at the political level has adversely affected the fisheries sector, specifically in terms of difficulties in enforcing fisheries laws and closed seasons to allow the country's declining fish stock to recover.

1.3.4 Technology and Innovation

Technology has always been a key driver of global development. While the use of technology in Ghana's maritime sector falls below the global average, some progress has been made in electronic surveillance through the installation of the Vessel Traffic Management Information System (VTMIS) and the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) – both of which have been shared with other security agencies. The Ghana Navy's surveillance capabilities have also been enhanced with the addition of the Maritime Domain Awareness Network Stations (MDANS). The robust technology and innovation are key requirements for ensuring effective surveillance, monitoring and control of the maritime domain. The harnessing of the socioeconomic potential of shipping, ports and other sectors is a function of innovation and technology

which must be leveraged for the promotion and development of the maritime sector. This NIMS is aimed at ensuring that current deficits and challenges in the use of technology in the maritime sector of Ghana are addressed..

The harnessing of the socio-economic potential of shipping, ports and other sectors is a function of innovation and technology which must be leveraged for the promotion and development of the maritime sector.

II. Vision and Guiding Principles

2.1 Vision

Our vision is that by 2040, Ghana's maritime space will be safe and secure, with thriving blue economy sectors that create social benefits with enduring impact on the livelihoods of every Ghanaian, contributing more than twice their current percentage to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth.

We aim to achieve this by ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of our marine resources, developing a vibrant and safe commercial shipping industry, making our ports the preferred destinations in West and Central Africa, strengthening our offshore oil and gas revenue base, developing the maritime tourism industry and ensuring that the maritime domain is free from criminal activities.

2.2 Guiding Principles

At the heart of this strategy are seven (7) guiding principles:

2.2.1 National Ownership

The overarching principle of the NIMS is to adequately reflect the broader interests of the Ghanaian populace and facilitate the buy-in of citizens through education and effective implementation. The Strategy is a product of active participation and productive deliberation of all relevant national stakeholders, and its objectives are structured in line with national developmental goals.

2.2.2 Social Inclusion and Impact

As reflected in its vision, at the heart of this Strategy lies the need to engender outcomes that benefit all Ghanaians. Thus, the strategy is intended to have a broad-based positive impact on people and communities across the country, including marginalised groups in society.



2.2.3 Synergy

With over 20 agencies operating in Ghana's maritime domain, there is the need to harmonise the overlapping interests and mandates of the multiple institutions and actors to ensure that these agencies collaborate effectively in safeguarding Ghana's maritime interests. Consequently, a core pillar of this Strategy is to foster interagency collaboration and ensure that the mandates and actions of all stakeholders are adequately coordinated in support of its desired outcomes.

Again, improved information sharing and multi-agency contingency plans are key to this principle. It is essential that capacity is regularly built within all relevant agencies; and that they collectively harness information, capacities and expertise towards addressing Ghana's maritime security concerns, especially in times of crisis.

2.2.4 Accountability

The Strategy should have mechanisms to ensure that each agency carries out its mandates as required, towards achieving its strategic goals. Agencies responsible for executing, implementing or managing stipulated priority actions will have to show measurable outputs. The advancement of Ghana's blue economy requires accountability for the efficient and sustainable use, not only of marine resources, but also of resources set aside for the implementation of this Strategy. The use of our maritime wealth must be continually prioritised, optimised, and monitored.

2.2.5 Partnerships and Cooperation

The intricate and cross-cutting nature of maritime governance issues calls for collaborative action. Effective ocean

governance cannot be achieved without working in close collaboration with partners at the national, regional and international levels. A critical aspect of Ghana's maritime governance will, therefore, be to harness maritime cooperation towards achieving shared goals. There must be fluid and ongoing interactions between governmental and private-sector actors in the maritime domain.

2.2.6 Technology and Innovation

Meaningful contribution of the maritime industry to our national economy requires the integration of innovation and technological advancements. This Strategy will, therefore, leverage innovative and technology-driven approaches to address the nation's maritime concerns and develop a national blue economy.

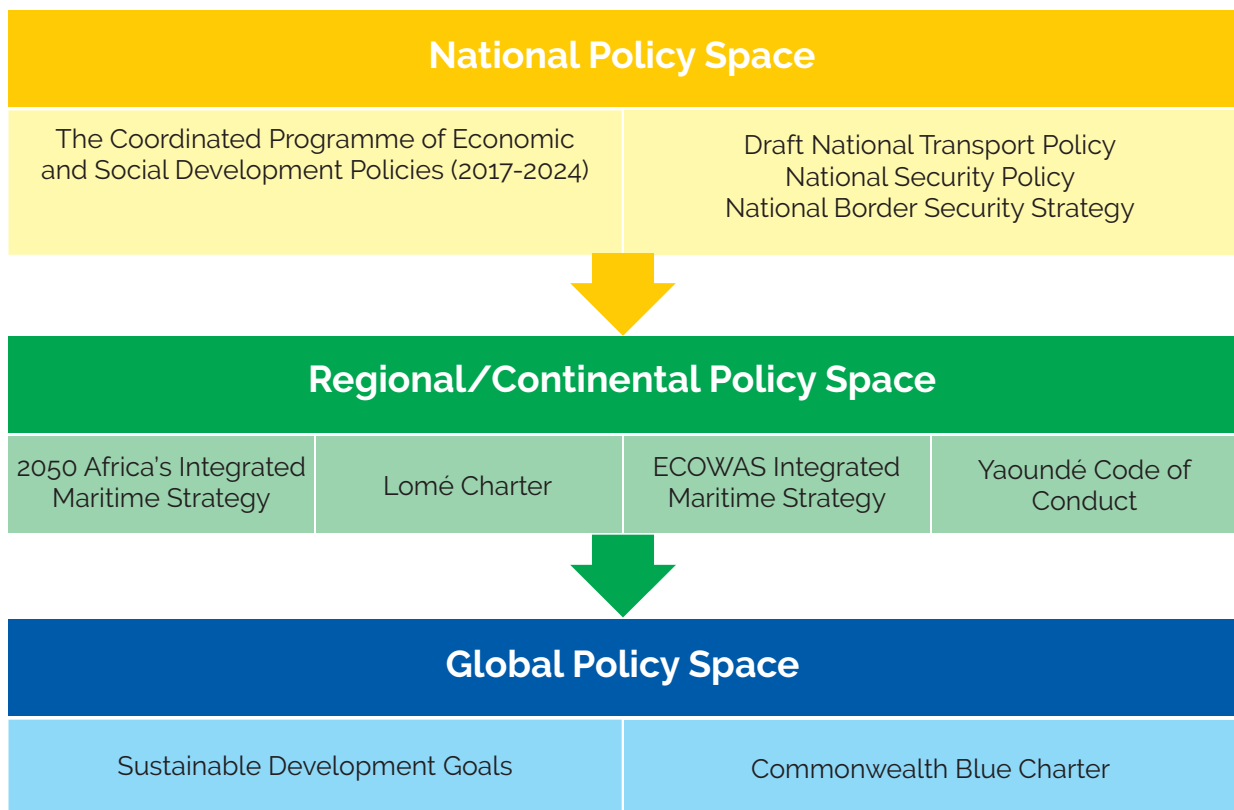
2.2.7 Sustainability of the Strategy

Finally, sustainability is core to the success of NIMS. To achieve sustainability, the NIMS must be fully integrated into all relevant institutions and agencies, with strategies aligned to achieve its objectives. Furthermore, interventions must be proactive and responsive rather than reactive, to ensure positive outcomes that can be sustained over long periods. It is also important that investments toward the implementation of the Strategy are predictable and available to ensure successful execution of the Strategy.

2.3 Linkages with National, Regional and Global Strategies

The NIMS is being developed to complement existing national, sub-regional and continental efforts; some examples are shown in the figure below:

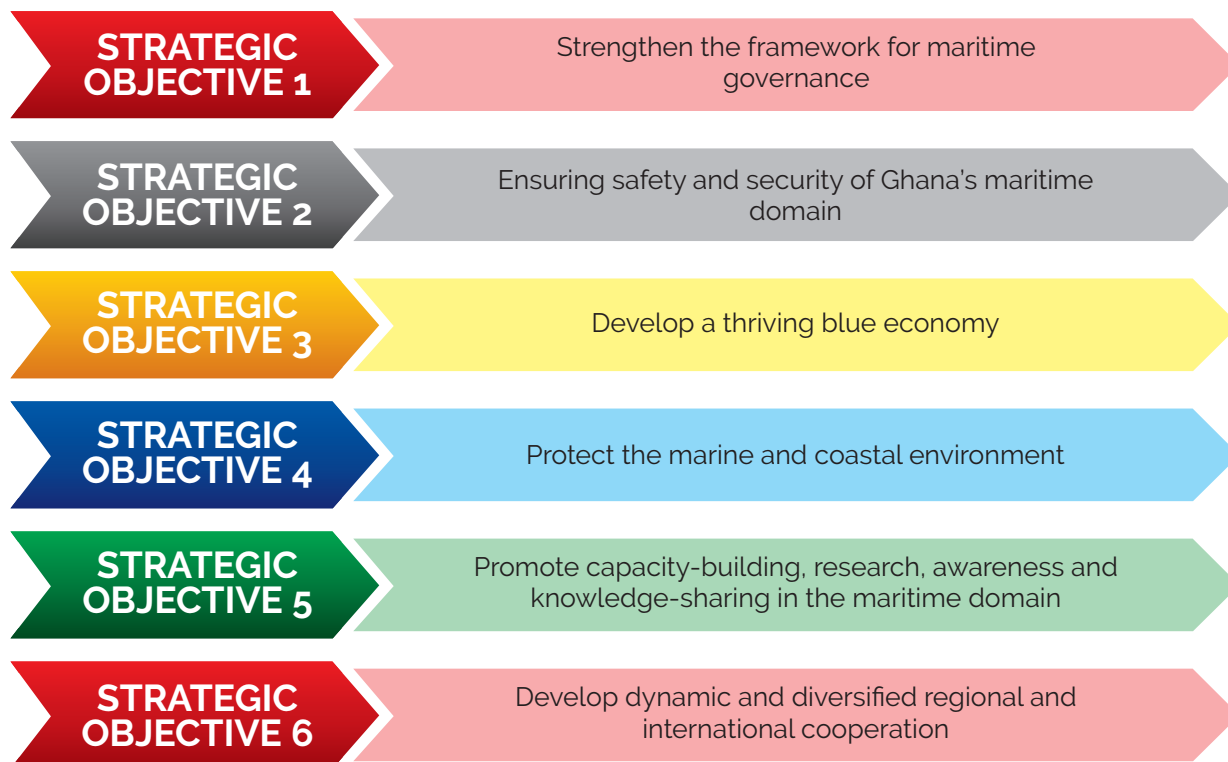
Figure 2: Linkages of NIMS with National, Regional and Global Frameworks



III. Strategic Objectives

In order to optimise and sustain the effectiveness of NIMS and its desired outcomes, it is necessary to achieve the following objectives:

Figure 3: Strategic Objectives of the NIMS



3.1 Strategic Objective 1: Strengthen the Framework for Maritime Governance

An effective maritime governance framework requires clear and robust decision making in government to generate policy, coordinate efforts, respond to incidents when they occur and, in some instances, gather evidence for effective legal prosecution. This Strategy sets out a more holistic approach to maritime governance, bringing together a myriad of government agencies under a coordinated governance structure.

The implementation of this Strategic Objective will involve the realisation of the

following priority actions:

3.1.1 Priority Action 1: Transform Institutional Arrangement

Strong institutional framework is necessary for the realization of the vision of the NIMS and meeting the strategic objective of strengthening maritime governance. While agencies will retain their autonomy in their day-to-day functioning, they must seamlessly work towards desired outcomes through a coordinated mechanism. To achieve this, the Strategy incorporates an implementation framework and mechanism in Part 4.1 of this document. The key ingredient here will

be effective leadership, which would also require that our political and institutional leaders remove the barriers to effective and coordinated governance that exist among the MDAs.

3.1.2 Priority Action 2: Strengthen Legal Framework

A robust legal framework is crucial not only for governance, effective maritime regulation and enforcement but also for the successful prosecution of maritime offenses. To address legislative gaps in the maritime domain, the Government of Ghana shall:

- Strengthen national maritime legal frameworks to address emerging and evolving maritime criminal activities and threats;
- Create a harmonised system/procedure for interagency collaboration.
- Enhance maritime legal, prosecutorial and judicial capacity through training of lawyers and judges;
- Domesticate global, continental and regional instruments relevant to advancing the vision of this Strategy and Ghana's national interests in our maritime domain;
- Ensure adequate articulation and defense of Ghana's national position on maritime issues at international fora. This should involve active engagement with all relevant stakeholders including civil society actors.

3.1.3 Priority Action 3: Develop Mechanisms for Accountability

In implementing this Strategy, the Government of Ghana shall develop and

implement adequate reporting and control mechanisms, including measures to prevent mismanagement of resources and to achieve accountability and transparency.

3.2 Strategic Objective 2: Ensure the Safety and Security of Ghana's Maritime Domain

The Government recognises that insecurity at sea is caused by a matrix of factors including governance challenges on the land. The land-sea nexus will, therefore, be considered in developing effective responses to maritime safety and security threats. Again, measures to enhance safety and security at sea will also be in tandem with regional initiatives and international partnerships. To this end, our priorities shall include:

3.2.1 Priority Action 1: Improve Presence at Sea and Safeguard National Interest in the Maritime Domain

Ghana's maritime area is an active space that is prone to maritime traffic. With the expansion in oil and gas exploration/exploitation, the combination of traditional and emerging uses of our maritime space will further increase our maritime traffic. Thus, there is the need for active presence at sea to monitor, deter and respond to safety and security issues while guaranteeing the legitimate and profitable use of our maritime space and safeguarding national interests in the maritime domain. The Government of Ghana shall commit to:

- Defend Ghana's maritime sovereignty and sovereign rights, including the sustainable use and exploitation of maritime resources for domestic priorities;
- Empower and fund the Navy and Marine Police to engage in consistent patrols of

Ghana's maritime space – including complementing naval (surface) assets with air patrols – for the purposes of maritime regulation and enforcement; and

- Expand national patrol capabilities to support regional maritime safety and security initiatives.

3.2.2 Priority Action 2: Prevent Transnational Organised Crimes in Ghana's Maritime Domain

Improving presence at sea must be corroborated by the prevention and deterrence of transnational organised crimes within Ghana's maritime space. To this end, the Government of Ghana shall commit to:

- Taking steps to prevent, deter and combat organised crimes such as piracy, illicit drug trafficking, human trafficking, arms smuggling, money laundering and terrorism in Ghana's maritime space; and
- Developing and implementing effective joint agency approaches to maritime interdiction operations.

3.2.3 Priority Action 3: Enhance Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)

Physical presence at sea must be complemented with a good framework of MDA – that is, a sound understanding of anything associated with Ghana's maritime space that could impact its safety, security, economy, or environment. Indeed, MDA is a great asset that can be leveraged for multiple purposes across the spectrum of maritime governance. In the context of maritime security, MDA is key to building an effective, recognisable picture of the maritime space in support of maritime security operations and interventions.

However, while the need for MDA may be well appreciated, attaining a good framework of MDA is often challenging due to the lack of capacity – absence of MDA equipment and systems – or failure to fully and effectively utilise and integrate capabilities that may be available. There is also the tendency to overlook other vital inputs to building effective MDA such as tapping into information from fisher-folk and coastal communities and utilising regional/multilateral arrangements (e.g., Ghana's hosting of ECOWAS Zone F) as a critical source of information to drive effective maritime governance.

In pursuit of this priority action, the Government of Ghana shall:

- Develop and expand the means for gathering information concerning actual or potential threats and activities in the maritime domain;
- Ensure rapid information/intelligence exchange among agencies at the national level, and with neighbouring States and partners where necessary; and
- Integrate multiple sources of information to produce holistic outlook of the maritime domain.

3.2.4 Priority Action 4: Ensure Seamless Collaboration of Agencies

While the Ghana Navy is the lead agency in maritime security operational response and enforcement, multiple agencies are involved in the response spectrum. The Government and all relevant agencies within the maritime space shall, therefore, commit to cooperating effectively with each other and coordinating their efforts and actions in addressing emerging maritime issues and solving problems that affect maritime security and safety. To

achieve this, steps shall be taken to:

- Clarify the mandates of relevant institutions pertaining to the maritime domain;
- Ensure the timely exchange of relevant information and effective interagency collaboration on the basis of the posits set out in Priority Action 1 of Strategic Objective 1;
- Institutionalise maritime safety and security Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across all relevant agencies; and
- Enhance information sharing and dialogue on the maritime domain in order to inform decision-making.

3.2.5 Priority Action 5: Improve Port Security and Safety

Security challenges often experienced in our waters centre on the anchorages of our ports as well as ships engaged in Ship-to-Ship (STS) transfers at sea. The International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code requires all ports and ships to take appropriate security measures based on a standardised risk assessment framework. Ghana will prioritise taking active measures to ensure full compliance with the ISPS Code for maximum security within her ports. More specifically, the Government of Ghana commits to:

- Encouraging effective application of existing legislation on the security of ports, port facilities and ships within Ghana and under the Ghanaian flag. Where appropriate, new policies and regulations shall be developed;
- Sharing best practices, risk analysis and threat information, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders and social partners acting in the ports and maritime

transport sectors.

3.2.6 Priority Action 6: Improve Maritime Cyber Security

The centrality of technology and innovation to this Strategy requires that we develop a resilient national maritime cybersecurity framework. To achieve this, the Government of Ghana shall:

- Facilitate the identification of Ghana's critical maritime cyber infrastructure and the assessment of cyber risks and threats to our maritime domain;
- Take anticipatory and responsive measures to limit the adverse effects or consequences of a cyberattack within our maritime domain;
- Collaborate with the private sector and international community, where necessary, to strengthen Ghana's maritime cybersecurity and facilitate information sharing about emerging threats and the best practices for effectively addressing them; and
- Incorporate resilient cybersecurity mechanisms into technologies adopted for use in the maritime domain.

3.3 Strategic Objective 3: Develop a Thriving Blue Economy

Ghana aims to develop a blue economy that will invariably generate "blue" jobs and infrastructural development. Our EEZ has many actual and potential assets that can be sustainably exploited to enhance economic growth and development. This Strategy aims to increase Ghana's creation of wealth through private sector participation in sustainable maritime resource exploitation and capacity building. The priority actions are listed below.

3.3.1 Priority Action 1: Ensure Sustainable Management of Fisheries Resources

Given our high dependence on the fisheries sector, sustainable management of fisheries resources is a necessity for safeguarding the livelihoods of Ghanaians. To ensure this, the Government shall:

- Ensure that the fish stock within Ghana's maritime space are exploited within biologically acceptable levels;
- Strengthen participatory decision-making (co-management) in fisheries management;
- Take active measures to protect marine habitats and bio-diversity including critical mangroves and spooning grounds; and
- Ensure that effective fisheries legislation and relevant international instruments are fully implemented and enforced.

3.3.2 Priority Action 2: Promote Maritime and Seaside Tourism

Coastal and maritime tourism is one of the sectors with great potential to boost economic growth and employment. To leverage our potential in coastal tourism, strategies shall be developed to:

- Market Ghana's coastal tourism potential;
- Include maritime and coastal tourism initiatives in the overall tourism drive of the country;
- Ensure efficient management of beaches and coastal areas to support coastal tourism;
- Ensure effective management of waste and marine litter; and

- Research Ghana's marine and coastal tourism potential and invest in areas that can result in maximum sustainable returns for the national economy.

3.3.3 Priority Action 3: Promote a Vibrant Maritime Industry

The maritime sector of Ghana continues to play an increasingly important role in the socioeconomic development of the country. Nonetheless, further development of Ghana's maritime industry can yield even greater benefits for the national economy if there is adherence to proper marine spatial planning and the potentials of our marine space are well harnessed. To achieve these, Government shall commit to:

- Conducting holistic spatial planning of Ghana's maritime domain;
- Making Ghana's ports safe, competitive and technologically advanced;
- Supporting the growth of indigenous shipping companies;
- Establishing other maritime industries such as ship design, construction and repairs, offshore and coastal engineering, which can ultimately contribute to national income;
- Developing or strengthening marine resource-based industries directly involved in the sustainable extraction and harvesting of marine resources such as offshore oil and gas, fisheries, marine-based pharmaceuticals, aquaculture and seabed mining; and
- Taking any other steps necessary to increase national revenue channels from the maritime industry, including through the exploration of Ghana's potential to harness renewable energy

from our maritime space.

3.3.4 Priority Action 4: Promote Maritime Job Creation

Ghana, like many other developing economies, has a burgeoning youthful population and high unemployment. Our maritime estate provides good job opportunities for current and future generations. To advance this goal, the Government of Ghana shall commit to:

- Prioritising local expertise and manpower in the implementation of all aspects of this Strategy;
- Developing, advancing or supporting training and capacity-building programmes aimed at building the capacity of individuals to gain employment in the maritime industry and other agencies operating within the maritime domain;
- Boosting the growth of shipping and related industries through public-private partnerships; and
- Promoting Cabotage in Ghana, especially in the oil and gas industry, in order to increase participation of indigenous shipping lines in the transportation of Ghana's sea cargo.

3.4 Strategic Objective 4: Protect the Marine and Coastal Environment

The coastal waters of Ghana are a haven for a large variety of marine life that provides fisherfolk with opportunities to earn a livelihood, support nutritional requirements and promote food security for the whole country. However, the resources therein have substantially depleted in the last few decades.

The priority actions to address this are outlined below:

3.4.1 Priority Action 1: Protect Marine Ecosystems and Biodiversity

Our marine resources and diversified ecosystems must be well managed for the benefit of current and future generations. To this end, the Government of Ghana commits to:

- Channeling resources towards researching, and implementing a comprehensive approach to guide the sustainable use and conservation of coastal and marine ecosystems and corresponding ecosystem services;
- Ensuring that national legislation on protection of marine and coastal ecosystems is adequately developed or strengthened and that the laws enacted are effectively enforced by relevant institutions;
- Ensuring that relevant regional and international frameworks on protection of marine and coastal ecosystems are adequately domesticated and enforced; and
- Equipping and empowering relevant national agencies to carry out their mandates pertaining to effective marine environmental protection.

3.4.2 Priority Action 2: Control the Environmental Impacts of Maritime Activities

Maritime transportation, while essential for generating revenue, is one of the principal contributors to the damaging of the marine ecosystem. For instance, the introduction of Non-indigenous Aquatic Invasive Species (NAIS) through ballast water discharge is a major source damaging the

marine ecosystem. Thus, the Government shall:

- Enhance the capacity of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to play an effective role in marine environmental management;
- Put adequate measures in place to ensure that maritime transport, offshore oil and gas exploration and potential seabed mining activities have minimal adverse impacts on the marine environment;
- Adequately domesticate and enforce existing international instruments on marine environmental impacts, such as the Abidjan Convention to which Ghana is a party, its protocols and programmes for the promotion of sound environmental management;
- Enhance national capacity to adequately address oil spills; and
- Ensure the development and enforcement of an effective ballast water management system.

3.4.3 Priority Action 3: Combat Marine Pollution

Marine life and ecosystems are constantly threatened by potentially hazardous marine pollutants such as marine litter and plastics, several of which are eventually assimilated into the food chain. Moreover, plastics constitute a major menace to marine and coastal tourism.

In combating all forms of marine pollution, the Government of Ghana shall:

- Commit to putting adequate measures in place to curb land-based pollution sources and activities affecting the marine environment;

- Ensure reduction in the generation of plastic waste in the country;
- Take adequate measures to clear plastic waste along the coasts and within Ghana's maritime space; and
- Integrate technological approaches in the waste management of land-based sources of marine litter.

3.5 Strategic Objective 5: Promote Capacity-Building, Research, Awareness and Knowledge-Sharing in the Maritime Domain

Research is crucial to contributing to knowledge on sustainable exploitation of resources, developing the blue economy and promoting maritime awareness. The focus of strategic communications will be to amass public support and understanding of the overall objectives of the NIMS and harness the efforts of all relevant stakeholders towards its implementation.

The following priority actions are required:

3.5.1 Priority Action 1: Increase Research in the Maritime Domain

Innovative technologies and processes are contributing to the improved efficiency, sustainability and effectiveness of operations. Maritime research would benefit from a clear vision of cross-sectoral needs and dual-use capabilities. Knowledge is the foundation of quality decision-making and needs to be continuously supported by relevant research that should inform action for policy and project implementation.

To advance this priority area, the Government of Ghana shall:

- Encourage research institutions to focus

on niche areas and share knowledge/findings with other States, especially neighbouring countries in West Africa. In particular, efforts must be made to study the potential impact of climate change on the marine environment, and to determine how these impacts can be effectively prevented or anticipated and prepared for;

- Support, enhance and/or develop competent maritime research, training, capacity-building and policy guidance institutions to support Ghana's maritime industry and all other MDAs within the maritime domain; and
- Develop a framework for MDAs to allocate and/or source funding for national and regional maritime training, research and education institutions, as well as training scholarships.
- Advance the development of academic and vocational programmes and curricula aimed at introducing maritime issues from the basic to tertiary levels of education and providing Ghanaians with skills and career prospects in the maritime sector and related fields; and
- Encourage all stakeholders to actively participate in and support the celebrations of *World Oceans Day, Africa Day of Sea and Oceans, World Maritime Day* and other similarly designated days.

3.5.2 Priority Action 2: Raise Awareness about Maritime Issues

One of the greatest challenges to maritime governance in Ghana is the limited awareness about maritime issues. There is the need to create awareness of the socio-economic benefits of the maritime domain as well as the need for stewardship and protection of the maritime space. In that regard the Government of Ghana will:

- Increase the awareness of decision makers, the general public and other stakeholders on the importance of the maritime domain, as well as the opportunities and challenges it presents;
- Raise the visibility and profile of the maritime industry in Ghana, and ensure that, through policy discourse and research, the issues that are applicable to the oceans are receiving attention;

3.6 Strategic Objective 6: Develop Dynamic and Diversified Regional and International Cooperation

Given the interconnected nature of the oceans, maritime safety and security is a shared international responsibility. There has been significant increase in maritime cooperation in the Gulf of Guinea region since the adoption and implementation of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct in 2013. Ghana is hosting the Multinational Maritime Coordinating Centre (MMCC) of Zone F, which comprises Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Burkina Faso. Continental efforts at cooperation are equally gaining traction under the African Union AIMS 2050 Strategy and other frameworks. In addition to these, Ghana has partnerships at bilateral and multilateral levels that create opportunities for cooperation towards enhancing maritime safety and security. In developing dynamic and diversified regional and international cooperation, the Government shall:

- Enhance cooperation at bilateral, regional and global levels in addressing shared maritime security concerns and adopting single coherent approaches to maritime safety and security;

- Integrate regional and international cooperation mechanisms into national maritime arrangements and policy frameworks; and
- Promote sharing of information and intelligence on the maritime domain where necessary.

IV. Sustainability and Implementation

4.1 Institutional Implementation Framework

As part of Priority Action 1 under Strategic Objective 1, the following institutional framework will be adopted for Ghana's maritime environment:

National Maritime Council

The National Maritime Council will be chaired by the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, and include relevant ministers of state, and heads of appropriate departments and agencies. The function of the Council will be to deliberate on maritime affairs including but not limited to governance, safety, and security issues and make policy decisions and issue relevant directives. The National Maritime Council shall have a secretariat headed by the NIMS Coordinator. The responsibilities of the NIMS Coordinator shall include:

1. Providing secretarial services to the National Maritime Council.
2. Managing the day-to-day business of the Council.
3. De-conflicting the development and implementation of maritime policies and strategies.
4. Overseeing efforts to develop the maritime economy, including shipping, fisheries, offshore energy, and maritime tourism, among others.
5. Overseeing the implementation of the NIMS.

6. Performing such other functions as may be directed by the Council.

Ghana Maritime Authority

- The Ghana Maritime Authority will be the coordinating agency with regard to maritime safety and security under a system of Integrated Maritime Management where the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA), Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), Narcotics Control Commission (NACOC), Ghana Navy, Ghana Airforce, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Ghana Revenue Authority – Customs Division (GRACD), National Intelligence Bureau (NIB), the Ghana Police Service, and other such institutions are part.

National Security Council Secretariat

- The National Security Council Secretariat, represented by the Security Governance Initiative (SGI) Secretariat and the intelligence agencies will coordinate national security community's support for the NIMS, and drive synergy between the NIMS and the National Security Policy (NSP), the Lomé Convention, among others.

National Maritime Technical Working Groups

The National Maritime Technical Working Groups shall serve as an advisory body to the NIMS Coordinator. The Technical Working Groups shall comprise of the following and such others as may be necessary from time to time:

- Safety and Security

- Operational Response
- Legal
- Research and Capacity-Building
- Intelligence
- Blue Economy

The Technical Working Groups shall be chaired or co-chaired by appropriate

agencies within each thematic area.

NIMS IMPLEMENTATION ARCHITECTURE



4.2 Financing Mechanism

The NIMS cannot be implemented effectively without the allocation of dedicated resources. The following provisions will apply to the implementation of this Strategy:

- The resources needed to finance the implementation of the NIMS will be included in the national budget;
- A Maritime Governance Fund will be set up and contributions into the Fund will come from multiple sources, including:
 - The national budget as indicated above;
 - A percentage of all fees, levies, licenses, taxes, and other such revenues generated from the maritime sector.
 - International funding mechanisms, grants, and other national and international investments.
- The National Maritime Council will manage the funds and ensure that they are disbursed in accordance with this Strategy's priority areas. Amongst other things, the Council will direct steps to establish a rationalisation of resources allocated to various agencies in administering their responsibilities under the Strategy and within the maritime domain;
- A comprehensive information system will be developed to facilitate decision-making by the Council. This system should include inventories of available resources and capabilities;
- An audit committee will be set up to regularly monitor the administration of the resources of the fund to ensure transparent, effective and efficient management.

4.3 Implementation Plans

The implementation of the Strategy will be carried out through a number of specific implementation plans. The plans shall detail the targeted outcomes and national indicators expected to result from this Strategy, the institutional framework for addressing concerns, as well as specific goals and objectives to be achieved within set time frames. The implementation plans will therefore be a critical aspect of this Strategy document.

4.3.1 Review

The NIMS will be reviewed every five years to ensure that it takes into consideration global developments, aligning government policies with prevailing best practices.

V. Conclusion and Next Steps

The exercise of sovereignty over maritime areas and the protection of Ghana's maritime domain remain a major challenge for the State. Maritime threats, whether they be of a security, socio-economic or environmental nature, justify the call for the adoption of a Strategy and the setting up of a national framework for its implementation.

Through this NIMS, Ghana endorses the principle laid down in the preamble of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea that "the problems of maritime areas are closely interrelated and must be considered as a whole." The National Integrated Maritime Strategy of Ghana invites the actors involved at sea to integrate and develop this logic of cooperation, first for the promotion of our blue economy and in the resolution of maritime issues. Through the NIMS, Ghana makes securing and developing its maritime area a strategic priority. Again, the NIMS reaffirms the urgent need to strengthen regional and global cooperation in all matters related to the maritime domain.

By strengthening our national capabilities and coordinating actions at the national, regional and global levels, Ghana will contribute to the effective and sustainable delivery of maritime safety, security and the development of a robust blue economy in its waters and beyond.

In order to meet the vision of socio-economic development by 2040, the following steps need to be taken:

- Develop additional Implementation Plans to complement the institutional framework provided in Section 4.1 and a robust Strategic Communications Plan.



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