Priorities

Improving maritime security and safety.

- Contain trans-regional threats to and emanating from seas and oceans.
- Combating piracy and armed robbery at sea.

The EU’s approach to maritime security is cross-sectoral and comprehensive in order to provide an integrated and shared strategic framework that can bring together all players.


Did you know?

Interesting fact/facts about the country or EU relations with it:

Water covers more than two-thirds of the earth’s surface and affects life everywhere. Virtually every major issue facing European Union, including global economy, security and stability of states and regions, global competitiveness and job creation, environment etc. can be seen through a maritime dimension.

23 of 28 EU Member States are coastal States; there are 26 EU Flag States; over 20% of world tonnage is registered under EU Member States flag and over 40% of world fleet is controlled by EU companies.

The EU is a net importer of energy, much of which comes in oil and gas tankers by sea – thus energy supplies in the EU are dependent on the free and safe navigation. This puts threats to maritime security, in this case mostly maritime critical infrastructure (sea lanes of communication, platforms) of great concern for the EU.

Top 3 Facts

Piracy and armed robbery has reached its lowest levels since 2011 with a significant drop in hijackings, from 237 incidents in 2011 to 15 in 2013. The last large commercial vessel to have been hijacked and held for ransom by Somali pirates was the MT Smyrni, which was taken in May 2012.

An estimated USD 339 - 413 million had been paid in ransoms in 2005 – 2012.

While the intensity of activities at sea is rising, so is insecurity, various forms of illegal trafficking, degradation of the marine environment, falling biodiversity and aggravated effects of climate change. In addition to loss of revenue, these threats could fuel violence and insecurity.
Main links:

Maritimes Affairs:

European Security Strategy:

The EU fight against piracy in the Horn of Africa:

The EU initiative to combat piracy in the Gulf of Guinea:

Critical Maritime Routes information portal: