



## Indonesia's New Ocean Policy: Analysing the External Dimension

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### ABSTRACT

On February 20, 2017, Indonesian President Joko Widodo signed Presidential Regulation no. 16 on the "Indonesian Ocean Policy". The national policy was issued as the guideline for, and to coordinate, all maritime-related policies and programmes across different ministries and agencies. Prior to this, Indonesia was long criticised for lacking an integrated ocean policy and ocean-based strategies. Aside from domestic urgency, the narrative through which the new policy is introduced portrays a strategic document that projects Indonesia's interest and strategy in the region, and globally. Emphasising these two dimensions of the policy (domestic and external), this paper argues that on the domestic front the policy document has a clear elaboration of the important aspects of ocean management, and functions appropriately in its aim to coordinate maritime-related policies. On the other hand, the external dimension of the ocean policy is still unclear, particularly in terms of how this document will interact with and affect regional geopolitics.

### KEYWORDS

Indonesia; ocean policy;  
ocean management;  
geopolitics

## Introduction

During his presidential campaign and in the early days of his presidency, Indonesian President Joko Widodo generated wide support when he announced a shift in the country's development agenda. He vowed to take advantage of the country's maritime resources and spread welfare across the nation, particularly to the remote eastern region, known to have abundant fish and energy resources, as well as huge maritime tourism potential, under the so-called "Global Maritime Fulcrum" (GMF) vision. With this shift of agenda, President Widodo declared that he would rebuild Indonesia's maritime culture with the goal of emerging as a respectable power in the Indian and Pacific oceans. The introduction of GMF inevitably calls for stronger maritime security measures, an area that Indonesia has long neglected.

On February 20, 2017, President Widodo issued Presidential Regulation no. 16 on the Indonesian Ocean Policy.<sup>1</sup> The Presidential Regulation states that the "Indonesian Ocean Policy is the general guidelines on ocean policy and its implementation through programs and activities of ministries or non-ministerial government institutions in the area of ocean affairs that is adopted to accelerate the implementation of Global Maritime Fulcrum". As stipulated in Article 2, there are two documents: (1) the National Document on Indonesian Ocean Policy; and (2) the Plan of Action of the Indonesian Ocean Policy.<sup>2</sup> The former

is the policy document itself, containing a long-term framework, and the latter is a 5-year action plan (2016–2019) that details how each of the points in the policy will be implemented.

As such, the new policy document serves as the guideline for all maritime-related policies and programmes across different ministries and agencies, and also as a reference for the public in general. Aside from the domestic need, the narrative through which the new policy is introduced portrays a strategic document that projects Indonesia's interest and strategy in the region, and globally. Emphasising these two dimensions of the policy (domestic and external), this paper argues that on the domestic front the policy document, including the plan of action, has a clear elaboration of the important aspects of ocean management, i.e. protecting and advancing the country's ocean economy, strengthening its territorial border control and law enforcement of its sea territory, and protecting its ocean environment. It also functions appropriately in its aim to coordinate maritime-related policies. On the other hand, the external dimension of the ocean policy is still unclear, particularly in terms of how this document will interact with and affect regional geopolitics.

### **Towards an Integrated Approach, Transparency and Clarity: The Need for a National Ocean Policy**

Indonesia has long been criticised for lacking an integrated ocean policy and ocean-based strategies. In 2016, 1 year before the ocean policy was issued, a think tank did a study on the existing challenges in the maritime domain.<sup>3</sup> The study found that there was a lack of strategic coherence, political certainty and institutional stability in the maritime domain in Indonesia. It suggested that a multisectoral approach was needed, which required a strong authority to manage these different sectors.

The lack of an integrated ocean policy has not been a problem exclusively for Indonesia, as a lot of other countries go through the same complexity when managing their ocean resources. Traditionally, ocean management has been focused on individual sectors and separate regulations for each ocean activity. One ocean activity may be regulated by overlapping regulations and overseen by multiple agencies with different mandates. This is an issue that has been recognised for decades. One study in 1994 identified the institutional problems in the area of formulating and implementing ocean policies, as well as integrating them into national strategies.<sup>4</sup> These problems can be classified as structural and functional in nature. According to the study, the problems of a structural nature originate from the location of the management of ocean affairs within governmental bureaucratic structures, multiple sectorial divisions, and geographic sub-divisions. On the other hand, the problems of a functional nature are related to the process of formulation, planning and implementation of policies. The main functional problem is the lack of an integrated national ocean policy, and as a result there are fragmented processes of decision-making, overlaps between entities, and duplicated efforts in them.

In general, it is widely acknowledged that a national ocean policy is necessary. Hence, states, particularly those that aspire to make optimal use of their sea, feel the need to have such a document. In the past, most coastal nations relied on a variety of sectoral policies to manage different uses of the ocean, such as shipping, fishing and energy extraction. This is no longer the case.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) published a collection of national ocean policies of several countries.<sup>5</sup> In the introductory chapter of the publication, the Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, Patricio Bernal, explained that the increased exploitation of the ocean shows the sectoral approach has many shortcomings.<sup>6</sup> He argued that this was driven by the exponential growth in the use and exploitation of the coast and its resources, the increasing occupation of the continental shelf and the expansion of some activities such as oil and gas exploration, both offshore and deep-sea. Motivations are several: better use of available resources and knowledge, increased economic efficiency, avoidance of conflicts of use, better priority-setting for public- and private-sector action and increased accountability to the public.

Highlighting the importance of an integrated approach, Bernal offers the following definition:

*In essence, an integrated approach means that sector policies will have to be subsidiary to the principles and standards of a common National Ocean Policy, i.e. that objectives, programs and measures (policies) to manage the marine environment and its resources will be developed in such a way that the different objectives, programs and measures are mutually consistent across different sectors. This requires that the instrument that fixes the national policy be explicit in setting the standards, baselines and benchmarks upon which that consistency will be measured.*<sup>7</sup>

Nonetheless, paths towards a national ocean policy have been different for many states, and the experiences of the countries that have published integrated ocean policies show that they encountered difficulties in implementing the new standards contained in the ocean policy instruments over and across varying other standards under which each ocean sector operates.

Let us study some examples. For a big country like the United States, their current national ocean policy is a relatively new document, issued in 2010 by Executive Order 13547 titled “Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes”. The document not only reaffirms the US’ commitment to protecting its oceans and coasts, it also defines new approaches to reach such objectives. The US National Ocean Policy (NOP) states that federal agencies will

*ensure the protection, maintenance, and restoration of the health of ocean, coastal and Great Lakes ecosystems and resources, enhance the sustainability of ocean and coastal economies, preserve our maritime heritage, support sustainable uses and access, provide for adaptive management to enhance our understanding of and capacity to respond to climate change and ocean acidification, and coordinate with our national security and foreign policy interests.*<sup>8</sup>

An interagency National Ocean Council was created to oversee the implementation of the policy. In early 2012, the council released for public comment the draft implementation plan. The final implementation plan incorporates suggestions on the draft, including key support for local and regional capacity and self-determination, and the development of more and better information related to ocean conditions. The plan specifies that regional stakeholders will determine the scope, scale and content of collaborative marine planning, that participation is voluntary, and that regional planning bodies will be established only in regions that want them.

The 2010 document was the culmination of over six decades of concerted ocean planning and protection. One scholar noted that “in an era that demands both protection and productivity of our nation’s oceans, this is exactly what is needed: a strong, coherent national policy based on science and informed by local stakeholders”.<sup>9</sup> Another commentary highlighted that one keystone recommendation of the US ocean policy is the support for implementing a process known as coastal and marine spatial planning, or CMSP, which recognises that as new potential uses of ocean space become increasingly viable, the exclusive economic zone will grow more crowded. Thus, in order to ensure efficient prioritisation of these uses and to reduce conflicts, it makes sense to solicit input from stakeholders up front rather than allowing a first-come, first-served land-grab mentality to dictate how our invaluable ocean resources will be managed.<sup>10</sup>

In Canada, the first proposal to elaborate a national ocean policy was made in 1987 by the federal government. By the mid-1990s, the Canadian government recognised that Canada’s policies related to the ocean had been fragmented, with particular concerns being the over-exploitation of fish and the degradation of the ocean environment.<sup>11</sup> In 1996, the first phase of the development of a Canadian ocean policy was undertaken with the enactment of the Oceans Act. The Oceans Act was adopted by the parliament in December 1996 and came into force in January 1997.

Looking at Canada’s experience, “fragmentation of policies” was the main drive behind the need for the Oceans Act. Nonetheless, even with the act in place, challenges still remain in the effort to diminish this fragmentation. One study in 2011 noted that the most fundamental problem is the lack of adequate governance mechanisms that will ensure compliance by all parts of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and by other federal departments, and enhanced collaboration with all levels of government.<sup>12</sup> As there continued to be inadequate funding, no timelines for completion of plans for marine protected areas, and lack of accountability mechanisms, the study suggested that Canada’s ocean estate should continue to be managed using the piecemeal, sector-by-sector approach that the Oceans Act was meant to replace.

In Australia, the country’s oceans policy was released in 1998, and was claimed as “a milestone in marine resource management”.<sup>13</sup> The policy outlined a new, national approach for ecosystem-based ocean management, and sought to integrate sectoral and jurisdictional interests through the establishment of new institutions and the adoption of new implementation methods.

Initially, the Australian government’s aim was to develop a policy that would integrate sectoral interests with each other and with the jurisdictional interests and responsibilities of the Australian government and state/territory governments. However, a study by Vince et al. in 2015 argued that 17 years after its release, Australia’s oceans policy has not lived up to its promise as the major instrument driving ocean management in Australia. The study claimed that while it was once referred to as “world leading” in its design and implementation methods, the policy document did not deliver the integrated management that was originally intended, as marine activities in the ocean domain continued to be sector based. The study recognised, nonetheless, that while the policy itself may not have achieved much of the intended direct impact, its influence and indirect impact on the policy setting and broadening of environmental objectives for sectoral management have been significant.<sup>14</sup>

Japan promulgated the Basic Act of Ocean Policy on July 20, 2007. The act was drafted by members of parliament of several political parties, in order to formulate and execute a

comprehensive and systematic policy regarding oceans by unifying and coordinating the competencies of various ministries and local governments. In accordance with the act, the cabinet adopted the Basic Plan on Ocean Policy in March 2008.

The purpose of the Basic Act on Ocean Policy is to stipulate the basic principles of Japan's ocean policy, clarify responsibilities and promote comprehensive measures to address ocean-related issues.<sup>15</sup> Similar to the other examples, Japan's case was also driven by the need for integration and coordination, and emphasises the harmonisation of ocean development. The Act provides for the establishment of a Headquarters for Ocean Policy, with the prime minister as its head, a decision intended to improve overall coordination activities. One study claims that during the first 5 years of implementation, the act has already produced a number of important achievements in the multi-sectoral management of ocean spaces and conservation and the development of marine resources.<sup>16</sup>

These are just a few examples, which show that the formulation of national ocean policies is recent phenomenon brought about by the need for an integral approach, transparency and clarity. Another common feature is the emphasis on sustainability in ocean management. Nonetheless, there are differences, particularly on the details of the implementation of the process.

### **The Answer to Indonesia's Ocean-Related Challenges?**

At the beginning of his presidency, President Widodo's articulations on GMF were generally seen as an important step forward in Indonesia's effort towards developing a grand maritime strategy. He is the first president to publicly propagate a maritime doctrine, and the international public admired his vision to transform Indonesia into a maritime power. At the East Asia Summit in November 2014, he introduced the maritime doctrine, and explained its five pillars, namely:

1. *Rebuild Indonesia's maritime culture. As a country consisting of 17,000 islands, Indonesia should be aware of and see the oceans as part of the nation's identity, its prosperity and its future are determined by how we manage the oceans.*
2. *Maintain and manage marine resources, with a focus on building marine food sovereignty through the development of the fishing industry.*
3. *Provide priority to the development of maritime infrastructure and connectivity by constructing sea highways along the shore of Java, establish deep seaports and logistical networks as well as developing the shipping industry and maritime tourism.*
4. *Through maritime diplomacy, Indonesia invites other nations to cooperate in the marine field and eliminate the source of conflicts at sea, such as illegal fishing, violations of sovereignty, territorial disputes, piracy and marine pollution.*
5. *Indonesia has an obligation to develop its maritime defense forces. This is necessary not only to maintain maritime sovereignty and wealth, but also as a form of our responsibility to maintain the safety of shipping and maritime security.*<sup>17</sup>

Prior to the ocean policy, there was no detailed document on the implementation of GMF. Thus, as time went by, GMF became more of a rhetoric, despite the strong focus on the maritime sector in President Widodo's policies. The lack of clear guidelines created multiple interpretation of the doctrine. Moreover, there was the seemingly

heavy prioritisation of maritime infrastructure, leaving behind all the other pillars. GMF was particularly rhetorical in the way it was clearly missing its “global” strategic dimension, which was insinuated by the name.

The new ocean policy was a bid both to answer the criticism regarding GMF and to respond to the phenomenon of the need for an integrated approach, transparency and clarity. It is the result of over 1 year of difficult processes involving various ministries/agencies, with earlier drafts directly presented to the president.

In the new document, GMF is now officially defined as “The vision of Indonesia as a sovereign, advanced, independent, strong maritime nation that is able to provide positive for peace and security in the region as well as to the world in accordance with its national interest”.<sup>18</sup> As stipulated in Article 5 of the Presidential Regulation, the ocean policy serves as:

1. *Guidelines for ministries/non-ministerial institutions and local governments to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate the development in the maritime sector in order to implement [the] Global Maritime Fulcrum; and*
2. *Reference for society in general in [the] private sector to participate in the development of maritime sector in order to implement GMF.*<sup>18</sup>

GMF’s initial five pillars are expanded to seven, which are further detailed into 76 strategic (main) policies. In the Plan of Action 2016–2019, these 76 strategic policies are further detailed into 425 activities designed to achieve 330 targets, spread across dozens of ministries and agencies. The pillars and the corresponding strategic policies are designated as the “road map”.

The seven pillars are as follows:

1. Marine and human resources development. Within it are 21 main policies: nine marine resource development policies and 12 human resources development policies.
2. Maritime security, law enforcement and safety at sea. Within it are eight main policies.
3. Ocean governance and institutions. Within it are three main policies.
4. Maritime economy development. Within it are 20 main strategies: eight maritime economy policies, seven maritime infrastructure policies and five welfare enhancement policies.
5. Sea space management and marine protection. Within it are 12 main strategies: six marine spatial development policies and six marine protection policies.
6. Maritime culture. Within it are five main policies.
7. Maritime diplomacy. Within it are seven main policies.

When the ocean policy came out, it was met with both appreciation and criticism. The press release by the Cabinet Secretariat highlighted how it is high time for Indonesia to finally have an ocean policy, which was the main point picked up by most news reports. The general observation is that there is optimism the new policy document would function to respond to the existing maritime-related challenges in Indonesia.

Criticisms of the new policy document generally question the lack of clarity of implementation of the main policies, and also what difference it would have on the implementation of GMF, which has previously been long criticised. One commentary

questions how there is no single authoritative agency to corral the ministries or agencies into concerted action. Although the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs is now tasked with monitoring, coordinating and evaluating the ocean policy, and the Coordinating Minister is tasked to report the implementation of the policy to the President annually, the planning, budgeting and execution of the various programmes are still done by the respective ministries and agencies.<sup>19</sup>

There is also the concern that the second document, the Plan of Action of the Indonesian Ocean Policy 2016–2019, merely repeats existing programmes and projections. This concern is valid, because if we scrutinise the main (strategic) policies, we do not find any new programme or initiative. However, this is actually very logical, because as was discussed, integration and coordination is the purpose. As clearly stated in Paragraph 14 in the introductory chapter of the policy document:

Global Maritime Fulcrum can be realized if there are precise, effective and competitive policies and programs. These programs of maritime development are widespread within various Ministerial and Non-Ministerial government institutions. Therefore, the National Document of the Indonesian Ocean Policy is important to synergize and harmonize all ocean development programs to be more focused and targeted so that the results can be measured.

The plan of action gives the details on how this integration and coordination are planned for the immediate 5 years, which is categorised into five clusters of priority programmes: (1) maritime boundary, ocean space and maritime diplomacy; (2) maritime industry and sea connectivity; (3) ocean resources and services industry, and marine environment management; (4) maritime defence and security; and (5) maritime culture.

In the 178-page document, all these priority programmes are laid out in a matrix, specifying the type of activity, the objective, the intended output, the timeline, the ministry/agency in charge, other related ministries/agencies, and the source of funding. There is clear elaboration of the important aspects of ocean management, particularly activities in the advancement of the country's ocean economy, territorial border, law enforcement and ocean environment protection.

As the ocean policy aims at connecting pre-existing policies and programmes across ministries and agencies, criticisms that question the lack of new programmes are out of place. In fact, learning from the experiences of other countries that have gone through the process of issuing a national ocean policy, the main problem is not the lack of initiative/programmes; rather, as was argued earlier, it is the integration and coordination of existing frameworks and activities. In this regard, the Indonesian Ocean Policy is heading the right direction.

## The External Dimension

In scrutinising the elements of the new policy document, and grasping the responses – both positive and negative – to it, this paper offers one angle of analysis. One of the distinctive features of the Indonesian Ocean Policy is its regional and global outlook, which this paper calls the “external dimension”.

First let us go back to GMF, and the confusion surrounding it. GMF was thought to be a strategic vision to transform Indonesia into a maritime power in the region. The fact that it was introduced in the East Asia Summit insinuated that it would serve as a doctrine that

would affect regional politics. However, more than 2 years after its introduction, GMF was clearly missing its “global” strategic dimension, in the midst of prioritisation of maritime infrastructure and resources.

Among the most popular maritime-related policies under President Widodo are the fight against illegal fishing and the efforts towards reforming and improving the bureaucratic structures of relevant government institutions and infrastructure on the ground, such as port authorities. The fishing sector is a key part of Indonesia’s economic development, and the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries has attracted positive public feedback for its successful efforts in combating illegal fishing and improving the sector, with the most visible being the “sink the vessels” policy. Another visible manifestation has been the Sea Toll project, which started in November 2015 and is aimed at enhancing inter-island connectivity and strengthening the country’s port infrastructure. The project also aims at reducing price disparity caused by poor connectivity, thus boosting national commerce. These are the types of projects that have been most visible and largely picked up by the media, not to mention requiring the most funding and investment. It is logical to assume that, thus far, manifestation of GMF has been mostly inwardly orientated, and set within a developmental strategy to narrow the economic gap in the archipelago. Considering the need for development in these sectors, this is a very reasonable focus.

It is also reasonable that this focus is to be extended and expanded in a clearer and more detailed manner in a national policy document. What creates the confusion – or, to a large degree, misperception – is how the Indonesian Ocean Policy has been described as having a large geopolitical and external component. This was the confusion with regards to GMF, and now the national policy document is apparently repeating the same narrative, without giving answers to the existing confusion.

The introduction of the document begins with an elaboration of Indonesia’s strategic geographic location and features, followed by the emphasis on “[Indonesia’s] important position in the global environment, namely in influencing political and economic stability and also influencing regional and international security”.<sup>18</sup> Only after a lengthy introduction on the strategic elements is there a mention of Indonesia’s rich maritime resources. Yet it still does not portray the value of these rich maritime resources to Indonesia’s development and economy as a rationale for the ocean policy. It is apparent that both the rationale for and the foundation of the ocean policy is the age-old national narrative about Indonesia’s considered strategic position.

Even more ambitiously, the introduction to the policy document also puts GMF in parallel with other regional initiatives. It mentions the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Community, One Belt One Road of the People’s Republic of China, Act East from India and the Rebalance Policy from the United States of America. The document states that “the vision as the Global Maritime Fulcrum should be able to be synergised with those various initiatives consistent with the national interest and in order to give positive contribution for peace”.<sup>18</sup>

Since the policy document was issued, there have been several socialisation activities with various stakeholders, led by the Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs. The Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs, Luhut Pandjaitan, gave a public lecture at the University of Indonesia, attended by both academics and practitioners. Another socialisation event was held in cooperation with the Indonesian Maritime Center of the University of Indonesia, during which the Deputy Coordinating Minister for Maritime

Affairs, Arif Havas Oegroseno, gave a speech. Both events occurred in a public education setting. There have also been other socialisation activities done in government agencies, including the military.

The new policy document has been introduced to international audiences – a move that is in line with the document’s narratives. At the occasion of the United Nations Ocean Conference held at United Nations Headquarters in June 2017, Minister Pandjaitan used his time on stage to introduce the country’s new ocean policy, including its seven pillars. In a press statement prior to the meeting, the minister said that the launch of the ocean policy would be one of the main agendas in the plenary meeting.<sup>20</sup>

Deputy Minister Oegroseno gave a public lecture at a university in Singapore in August 2017. Interestingly, and perhaps to suit its international audience, the information on the poster for the public lecture highlighted mainly the external dimension of the new policy. It says: “The lack of a coherent sea policy has made its maritime power projection inferior in relation to its majestic economic size and strategic position in global geopolitics”. Most importantly, it also says: “Aside from its domestic use, the document is also seen by many as a strategic document that projects Indonesia’s interest and adaptive strategy to adapt to and counteract strategies of various key players in the region”.<sup>21</sup> In his presentation, the deputy minister touched upon the relations between Indonesian ocean policy and regional initiatives, mentioning the Belt and Road Initiative, Open and Free Indo Pacific, and US Rebalance in Asia. He implied that there are of course the regional and international elements of the policy, but noted that there is no hegemonic ambition of Indonesia by issuing a national ocean policy.

It is true that strategic and security aspects are also found in other countries’ ocean policies, including those that were discussed as examples earlier in this paper. US Executive Order 13547, for example, begins with the statement:

*The ocean, our coasts, and the Great Lakes provide jobs, food, energy resources, ecological services, recreation, and tourism opportunities, and play critical roles in our Nation’s transportation, economy, and trade, as well as the global mobility of our Armed Forces and the maintenance of international peace and security.*<sup>22</sup>

This shows that there is a strategic element to it. However, looking at how the Indonesian Ocean is introduced, the external dimension takes up a large portion of the underlying narrative – too large considering the priority of programmes set out in the action plan is on other sectors.

Of the five clusters of priority programmes in the plan of action, two clusters have external elements. These are the first cluster on maritime boundary, ocean space and maritime diplomacy, and the fourth cluster on maritime defence and security. These two clusters have a total of 56 activities planned for 2016–2019. This is already a small percentage of the total activities in the plan of action, which is 425. If we scrutinise these activities more closely, the numbers with clear relations and direct impact to Indonesia’s external relations and geopolitics is even smaller.

In the first cluster, there are four priority programmes: negotiation and conclusion of maritime boundaries (with four activities, most under the authority of the Foreign Ministry); strengthening maritime diplomacy (with 11 activities, mostly in the form of norm building and involvement/participation in multilateral forums/organisations); conclusion of toponyms (three ongoing activities); and maritime space management (16

activities, mostly mapping and survey activities). The activities in the first- and second-priority programmes are mostly in the form of bilateral negotiations and involvement in multilateral forums. The activities in the third and fourth, on the other hand, are domestic.

In the fourth cluster, there are three priority programmes: maritime defence (with five activities, all of which are under the responsibility of either the military or Ministry of Defence, and mostly deal with procurements and facilities); maritime security (with four activities, mostly related to patrolling the territorial sea); and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing (with 13 activities, which is among the programmes with the highest number and most detailed activities). Of these 22 activities in the fourth cluster, only one has a completely foreign policy element, which is active participation in regional and defence and security cooperation. All the others are domestic activities, most involving sea patrol and maritime operations, although those in the IUU fishing programmes would have external elements, as they relate to foreign fishing vessels as well.

With only a small percentage of the total activities planned/prioritised in the immediate 5 years related to Indonesia's regional and international presence, how the ocean policy will interact with and affect regional geopolitics is ambiguous. The final question of this paper is: Would this ambiguity then make the Indonesian Ocean Policy a bad policy document? The answer is no. The decades-long challenge in Indonesia, similar to that in many other countries, was the lack of an integrated ocean policy and lack of strategic coherence in ocean-based sectors. This is a domestically generated need, which is to respond to domestic ocean-related challenges. As it stands, the policy document has clear elaboration of the important aspects of ocean management, i.e. protecting and advancing the country's ocean economy, strengthening its territorial border control and law enforcement at its sea territory, and protecting its ocean environment. More importantly, the plan of action details the priority programmes and under which agency the programme falls.

The ambiguity, and the consequent misperception, lies with the narrative through which the new policy is introduced. As the narrative portrays a strategic document that projects Indonesia's interest and strategy in the region, and globally, there are certain expectations that have not been met by the new policy document. These are the same expectations that were also generated by GMF narratives.

## Concluding Notes

This paper made three key points with regards to Indonesia's new national ocean policy. First, for many countries, the formulation of national ocean policies is triggered by the need for an integrated approach, transparency and clarity. Ocean management is traditionally focused on individual sectors, and there are separate regulations for each ocean activity, which may overlap as they are overseen by multiple agencies. It is the same case in Indonesia, where the country has long been criticised for lacking an integrated ocean policy and ocean-based strategies.

Second, Indonesia's new national ocean policy is a bid to respond to the need for an integrated approach, transparency and clarity. The new policy document is designed to be a guideline for all maritime-related policies and programmes across different ministries and agencies. As a document generated by domestic needs, this paper finds that it includes a clear elaboration of the important aspects of ocean management, and functions appropriately in its aim to coordinate maritime-related policies.

Third, while the Indonesian ocean policy has the potential to tackle domestic maritime challenges, the audience at the regional and international level is more interested in the implication it has for Indonesia's regional and global standing. Unfortunately, the narrative through which the Indonesian ocean policy is introduced creates misperceptions and thus unfulfilled expectations, because the policy document and the accompanying plan of action heavily prioritise domestically orientated programmes. With such misperceptions, there are bound to be more demands for clarity with regards to Indonesia's geopolitical power projections.

## Notes

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