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‘Sustainability as Maritime Security: A Small Island Developing State Perspective?’

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Abstract

The paper begins the process of outlining the way in which maritime security challenges are publicly articulated by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in order to better understand the backdrop against which security policy and practice emerge. To do this the paper discusses the results of an initial content analysis of UN SIDS conference documents framed by the central research question, ‘In the SIDS’ public conceptualisation of sustainable development, how are maritime security threats articulated?’ The paper argues that for SIDS their conceptualisation of maritime security is inextricably wrapped up in concerns about sustainable development, with concern about challenges such as illegal fishing being pinpointed as threats to food security. The paper calls for more research on the extent to which SIDS’ conceptualisation of maritime security differs regionally; highlights a vulnerability straitjacket SIDS may find themselves wearing; and suggests that SIDS consider the development of holistic Sustainable Blue Growth strategies to bring multiple stakeholders together to enhance human wellbeing. To conclude, the paper argues that ultimately efforts to pursue enhanced maritime security by SIDS will be determined by how they chart a path between emphasising their own vulnerability and the opportunities associated with their maritime domain.

Policy Implications

- The relationship between sustainable development and maritime security thinking and practice should be explored in greater detail if the global community is to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. Here SIDS represent valuable case studies.
- It is necessary to understand in greater detail the way in which SIDS have articulated maritime security threats in their public conceptualisation of sustainable development before we can consider what effective governance and capacity-building initiatives may look like, and how they may be successfully implemented.
- There is a need for recognition that the maritime security concerns of SIDS go well beyond climate change, with maritime crime posing particular challenges.
- SIDS should be acknowledged and treated as autonomous and capable partners in oceans governance and capacity-building activities.

‘For us as small island developing states, however, the question of sustainability is not an abstruse, arcane concern. It is rather a matter that affects the very nature of our existence. It is therefore crucial for us to fully sensitize the international community about the issues and to promote greater understanding of the vulnerabilities and special circumstances that apply to our countries.’ (*Mr Erskine Sandiford, 1994*)

‘Island issues affect us all. I see SIDS as a magnifying glass. When we look through the SIDS lens we see the vulnerabilities we all face. And by addressing the issues facing SIDS we are developing the tools we need to promote sustainable development across the entire world.’ (*Mr Ban Ki-moon, 2014*)

At the 1992 Environment and Development Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) were formally recognised as ‘...a special case both for environment and development’ (UN 1992). Highlighting the strategic importance of the ocean and coastal environment for SIDS, the Summit’s outcome document ‘Agenda 21’ included a specific section on these states (UN 1992, paras. 17.123-17.136), providing formal acknowledgement that SIDS were a distinct category of state worthy of further attention and support. Here, over the course of the subsequent 25 years, the United Nations (UN) has organised three global conferences on the sustainable development of SIDS (1994, 2005, 2014), alongside a series of periodic reviews (1999, 2010) of the associated Programme of Action (PoA).

Recognising this specific genealogy of the conferences around the environment and development, it comes as little surprise that one of the most prominent and recurring challenges associated with efforts to attain the sustainable development of SIDS has been climate change, presented as an existential threat to some SIDS associated with, say, rising sea levels (UN, 1994, p. 3 and pp. 10-13). This emphasis on existential threat, reminds us that for SIDS challenges such as climate change have an inherent security dimension for both states and wider society. These are not the only explicit security challenges faced by SIDS with, for example, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime maintaining a Global Maritime Crime Programme that has, amongst other things, encapsulated efforts to improve responses to fisheries crime amongst Indian Ocean states, including islands such as the Seychelles (UNODC 2015).

For SIDS, there is also a clear and undeniable maritime dimension to their security. Indeed it can be argued that SIDS security and maritime security are in many ways

indistinguishable from each other. More generally, the focus on challenges such as climate change and illegal fishing, illustrates a trend within both academic and policy circles over the same 25 year period to conceptualise security more broadly. Here conceptualisations of threat have widened looking beyond those associated with military activities, and deepened moving focus beyond considerations of the survival of nation-states alone. Today academics and policy-makers are just as likely to consider the characteristics and implications of transnational organised crime on specific social groups, as they are to spend time calculating the geo-political implications of a conventional arms race between two, independent states.

Set within this context this paper's principal objective is to kick-start the process of examining the maritime security considerations of SIDS by beginning what is a multi-phased process to evaluate the extent to which the existence of a specific Small Island Developing State perspective on maritime security can be claimed. The paper's operating premise is that it is only with greater clarity over the way in which SIDS conceptualise their maritime security that we can move forwards to better understand maritime security policy and associated security practice relating to these states, alongside the role of SIDS vis-à-vis efforts to improve oceans governance as a whole.

To meet this principal objective, the paper looks to the SIDS conferences and associated five year PoA reviews around the environment and development and begins to map how maritime security threats have been articulated. To do this a content analysis of the official outcome documents from each event is undertaken. These outcome documents encapsulate the official and public position of SIDS thus allowing initial trends in to the way in which maritime security has been discussed over time to be mapped and the potential research and policy implications of these trends to be noted. The content analysis is framed by a singular, central research question: *'In the SIDS' public conceptualisation of sustainable development, how are maritime security threats articulated?'* Attention does then fall on highlighting where maritime security tropes are evident in the sustainable development discourse, alongside discussing the characteristics of these tropes by, for example, acknowledging trends over time.

It should be emphasised that this paper represents just the first phase of determining the extent to which a SIDS perspective on maritime security can be claimed. Due to limitations of space and access to appropriate documentation, the paper does not for

example conduct a detailed discourse analysis of say, the way in which SIDS articulation of maritime security evolved between drafts of the outcome documents, nor how regional dynamics played out. Both would represent subsequent phases of examining how SIDS conceptualise their maritime security. Nevertheless, in conducting and discussing this initial content analysis the paper aspires to shed light on the development-maritime security relationship, provoke discussion and flag up a diverse future research agenda to be pursued.

In the next section of the paper it will be argued that since the end of the Cold War in particular there has been growing recognition of the nexus between sustainable development and security; a relationship that has been increasingly highlighted with regards to the maritime domain specifically in recent years. This relationship, the paper continues, provides a lens through which we can more clearly conceptualise the needs of SIDS. With this complete the paper moves on to summarise the main findings of the content analysis undertaken of key conference and review outcome documents. More specifically, the paper notes the way in which the sustainable development - maritime security relationship is evident in public discourse before going on to elaborate how specific threats are communicated. The paper draws to a close by discussing some of the key implications associated with this public discourse, making a series of recommendations for academics, policy-makers and practitioners wishing to better understand the maritime security considerations of SIDS.

The Sustainable Development – Maritime Security Nexus

The inclusion of a specific section of Rio's 'Agenda 21' document on SIDS in 1992, alongside the subsequent organisation of three global conferences on the sustainable development of these islands; demonstrates the existence of a shared identity between these states, alongside sufficient international political goodwill to highlight their needs. Prominent amongst these needs has been addressing the negative, even existential implications of climate change. As the Barbados Declaration that emerged out of the first of the SIDS global conferences noted:

While small island developing states are among those that contribute least to global climate change and sea level rise, they

are among those that would suffer most from the adverse effects of such phenomena and could in some cases become uninhabitable (UN 1994, p.3).

The subsequent Barbados PoA placed ‘Climate Change and Sea Level Rise’ as its first priority area (UN 1994, pp. 10-13).

Beyond climate change however, many other barriers to sustainable development have also been highlighted over the last 25 years. In the ‘Samoa Pathway’, the outcome document of the third global conference, challenges such as ‘sustainable energy’, ‘water and sanitation’, ‘sustainable transportation’, and ‘food security and nutrition’ were also highlighted. While a maritime dimension to each exists, the link to the maritime domainⁱⁱ is no more explicit than in the section of the Pathway on ‘Oceans and Seas’. Here the Pathway document notes:

Healthy, productive and resilient oceans and coasts are critical for, inter alia, poverty eradication, access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, livelihoods, economic development and essential ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, and represent an important element of identity and culture for the people of small island developing States. Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, coastal tourism, the possible use of seabed resources and potential sources of renewable energy are among the main building blocks of a sustainable ocean-based economy in small island developing States (UN 2014, para. 13).

While unsurprising for islands, the central importance of the oceans is effectively captured in Samoan Prime Minister Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi’s description of SIDS as ‘sea-locked nations’ (UN 2014, p. 67). More recently still, the inclusion of a Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 14 on the oceans provides a formal and global recognition that the effective management of the blue economy is a key plank of global development efforts. Ultimately for SIDS the maritime domain encapsulates vast potential in terms of development, but it is potential that is not always straightforward to tap. This situation is only exacerbated by the vast expanse of the oceans SIDS have responsibility over, coupled with their generally more limited resources to effectively govern these spaces. Moreover, these governance challenges open up opportunities for the maritime domain to be exploited by those with ill intent. Collectively this situation can have very real, negative implications for SIDS and their populations as we witness the diminishing of both state and human security.

This relationship between sustainable development and security is one that has been increasingly recognised and embraced in academic circles over recent decades as more persistent debates over the contours of the international security agenda – what security is, what it means to be secure or how this security can ultimately be realised - have taken place. Undoubtedly security has been and continues to be heavily debated as a concept (Walt, 1991; Baldwin, 1997; Terrif et al. 1999). Such debates have been further energised by key events internationally, such as the end of the Cold War, or the terrorist attacks in the United States (US) on 11 September 2001 (Buzan 1991; Dannreuther 2007). Security is ultimately an example of what W.B. Gallie termed an ‘essentially contested concept’, one where there is ‘no one clearly definable use [...] which can be set up as the correct or standard use’ (Gallie quoted in Buzan 1991, p. 7). Despite this situation, efforts to emphasise commonalities between research agendas through conducting surveys of the use of the concept have continued (Williams, 2008; Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Collins, 2009).

Within this context the work of the Copenhagen School, encapsulating scholars such as Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, is particularly interesting because of the way in which, in the aftermath of the Cold War, they highlighted the potential that security could be about more than just military issues and the survival of the state (Buzan 1990; Waever et al. 1993; Buzan, Waever & de Wilde 1998; Buzan & Waever 2003). Rather they focused on five broad areas in which threats may transpire – the military sector, the political sector, the economic sector, the societal sector and the environmental sector – and subsequently argued that ‘a multisectoral approach to security’ demands that other referent objects have ‘to be allowed into the picture’ (Buzan, Waever & de Wilder 1998, p. 8). Picking out three of these sectors, the economic sector’s focus on access to the resources necessary to sustain power and particular standards of welfare, the societal sector’s focus on the sustainability of a particular language, culture and identity, and the environmental sector’s focus on the maintenance of local and the planetary biosphere (Buzan, Waever & de Wilde 1998, p. 19); directly maps against the importance of the oceans and seas to SIDS highlighted in the ‘Samoa Pathway’ extract in this paper.

This broadening of the international security agenda to potentially include challenges well beyond military threats and to consider the survival of actors beyond the state has also been witnessed in shifting policy priorities. The articulation of Human Security

within the 1994 United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report is one prominent example. Here the conceptualisation of threat shifted from territory to people, with threats positioned around seven categories: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security (UNDP 1994, pp. 24-25). If outsiders were in any doubt that this broadened security agenda was inextricably connected with the idea of sustainable development the report made it explicit arguing, ‘the search for human security lies in development, not arms’ (UNDP 1994, p. 1). This vision has filtered through to the recently published SDGs where the need for the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development is an explicit goal (Goal 16). In relation to the SIDS specifically, the relationship was also acknowledged at the 1994 Barbados Global Conference. Erskine Sandiford, Prime Minister of Barbados and conference President argued that the first fundamental guideline that should shape the conference’s work was that, ‘sustainable development will best be achieved under conditions of peace, not war’ (UN 1994, p. 79).

Shifting emphasis on to the maritime domain specifically, the relationship between sustainable development and security has been increasingly highlighted in recent years, particularly in the nascent academic literature on Maritime Security as a concept. The historically dominant focus on naval power has been met by scholars interested in a more comprehensive conceptualisation of security in the maritime domain (Till 2009; Bueger 2015; Germond 2015; Chapsos 2016; Chapsos and Malcolm 2017). Here interest has fallen on challenges such as illegal fishing or drugs trafficking by sea, and understanding the implications of insecurity on groups such as coastal communities; an approach influenced by broader concepts such as Human Security. While this academic proliferation in many ways represents a more micro-level mirroring of trends in security studies as a whole, its emergence must also be seen against the backdrop of efforts to better understand and respond to piracy in and around the Gulf of Aden. The interconnections between state failure in Somalia, piracy, and the challenge it posed to key global trade routes, understandably grabbed international political attention. Moreover, scholars emphasised the need to recognise the relationship between (in)security on land and (in)security at sea (Shortland 2012). It was increasingly clear that Gulf of Aden piracy could not be fully tackled at sea alone. Rather there was a need to tackle Al Shabaab’s dominance on land, build appropriate national and regional institutions, tackle poverty and beyond. Such an approach has been captured in practice with, for example, the European Union’s

Programme to Promote Regional Maritime Security (MASE) supporting capacity-building efforts for Somalia's police and criminal justice systems (EEAS).

Overall the relationship between sustainable development and (maritime) security which has been increasingly acknowledged and accepted in both academic and policy circles, provides a clear lens through which to examine the needs of SIDS. For these islands the development-maritime security nexus can be more pronounced, reliant as they are on ocean resources and, due to their smaller size, often finding themselves lacking the capacity to effectively respond to maritime insecurity. Many SIDS are also in significant geo-strategic positions, subsequently garnering the attention of a myriad of actors from larger states to huge multi-national corporations. Collectively this situation means that many SIDS have found themselves being acted upon by others; be that those criminal entities seeking to exploit their maritime domain, or varied outside parties offering to help build maritime security capacity. While clearly different in intent, these experiences raise questions about what appropriate and effective governance and capacity-building efforts might look like for SIDS seeking to enhance their maritime security and facilitate sustainable development.ⁱⁱⁱ

Yet before such questions can be addressed, it is both logical and necessary to begin to consider the way in which SIDS have articulated maritime security threats in their public conceptualisation of sustainable development. While it is clear that climate change is a significant concern for SIDS, what about beyond this? This emphasis on public articulation rests on a belief held by the author that there is an element of social construction to both what is regarded as being a threat and whom is understood to be being threatened (the referent object). This meaning to maritime security is constructed inter-subjectively between different actors through the processes of the negotiation and contestation of ideas (see: Adler 1997; Hopf 1998; Farrell 2002). These ideas can be articulated through varied means of communication, verbal and non-verbal. Overall, as an approach to conceptualising maritime security it results in greater emphasis being placed on contextual understanding - the assumptions, beliefs and ideas that subsequently shape political decision-making and implementation processes. Methodologically, to examine the articulation of ideas about maritime security both content and discourse analysis are useful methods. The former can be a precursor to the latter, enabling analysts to pinpoint key phrases within documents to highlight trends in usage over time, and in order to set the initial, basic parameters of

a more detailed subsequent process of deconstructing threat narratives undertaken through a discourse analysis. As this paper is interested in providing an opening glimpse in to how maritime security threats have been publicly articulated in UN SIDS environment and development conferences, content analysis was subsequently selected.

Methodology – Undertaking the Content Analysis:

The first step in the process of undertaking the content analysis for this paper was to establish an appropriate dataset from which to address the research question - *'In the SIDS' public conceptualisation of sustainable development, how are maritime security threats articulated?'* Here the three global UN conferences (1994, 2005 and 2014) were selected because they represented the largest coming together of SIDS, designed exclusively with a focus on their sustainable development since the Rio 1992 summit. Examining documentation from the three conferences collectively also allowed for trends in the articulation of maritime security threats over time to be highlighted. Indeed to enhance this process and increase the size of the total dataset, documentation from the two, UN-led, five-year review of the PoA (1999 and 2010) were also analysed. As a result 5 documents totalling 313 pages of content represented the dataset.

These documents came out of those publicly available documents available in the English language published either via the UN's official online document repository (UN docs), the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform or from the conference websites themselves. Perhaps unsurprisingly when we consider the expansion of the internet in the period since 1994, the available documentation associated with each selected milestone - conference and review - has tended to grow over time. While the Samoa 2014 conference website includes hundreds of documents ranging from official UN resolutions, through to individual statements, and discussion group summary reports; the Mauritius 2005 website has a number of out-of-date web links; while there is no stand-alone Barbados 1994 conference website.

Although all available UN resolutions, outcome reports, meeting statements and committee reports were downloaded, for this initial content analysis the 5 outcome documents were selected to be processed through the QDA Data Miner software package (Provalis Research n.d.). These outcome documents were selected because of

their role as the final summary of agreed reflection and decisions from those conference/review attendees. Whilst there is a danger that such outcome documents can encapsulate a general and somewhat sanitised snapshot of views on an issue; their inclusive nature stems from the potency which they have as the governing frameworks within which SIDS subsequently act. While these documents do not then capture all the nuance around maritime security nor the regional differences, when seeking to kick-start the process of better understanding how SIDS as a whole conceptualise their maritime security as this paper aims to do, they are a firm starting point. Indeed when seeking to peel away the layers of meaning around maritime security, it makes sense to start with the most public articulation of views and then deconstruct back from there.

To summarise then the dataset consisted of:

- The Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 26 April – 6 May 1994.
- The Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly, 1999.
- The Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-15 January 2005.
- The Outcome document of the High-level Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, 24-25 September 2010.
- The Report of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, Apia, Samoa, 1-4 September 2014.

The adoption of the final outcome documents listed above is the result of a series of prior events conducted on a near continuous basis. Prior to the Samoa conference for example, each of the SIDS was expected to produce a national report to evaluate their progress in implementing previous Programmes of Action. The SIDS would also meet at a regional level to discuss their concerns with meeting reports and outcome documents for each of the three regional groupings - 'Caribbean', 'Pacific', 'Atlantic,

Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS)' - written. A synthesis report of the discussions held at the regional level was then written by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). It is DESA who provides UN support to SIDS on a continual basis through its SIDS Unit housed within the Division for Sustainable Development (UN DESA nd). While these broader documents did not form part of this initial content analysis, a wide range were read to help contextualise the paper's findings.

The analysis of the documents began with a simple frequency check of all words encapsulated within the dataset, a process QDA Miner facilitates with ease (Provalis Research n.d.). With this base level of understanding in place, a series of retrieval searches were initiated. The most important of these retrievals sought to locate every paragraph across the five documents where any key word associated with commonly understood maritime security threats, excluding climate change, were located. Drawn from the more comprehensive conceptualisation of maritime security outlined earlier in the paper and the 2008 UN Secretary-General's 'Report on the Oceans and the Law of the Sea' (UN 2008), the threats searched for were: piracy, armed robbery at sea, terrorism, illegal fishing, arms trafficking/smuggling, drugs trafficking/smuggling, people trafficking/smuggling, and the spillage or dumping of hazardous waste at sea. The decision to exclude climate change from the search rested on a prior acknowledgement that climate change has been the principle threat highlighted by SIDS, a point demonstrated by the genealogy of the conferences themselves. As such the intention of the content analysis was to gain a fuller picture of the articulation of maritime security threats beyond this. Overall the software located 299 paragraphs in total, these were read in full to more effectively contextualise the deployment of a key word or phrase, to allow the author to make links between occurrences, and to highlight questions and/or issues of interest, such as the way changes around the delineation of Exclusive Economic Zones may have influenced concern around fisheries.

The vulnerabilities of SIDS

It is at this point that the paper moves on to lay out and subsequently discuss the main findings of the content analysis of the key documents selected.

Maritime Security

The first main finding was that at no point across the dataset was the term ‘maritime security’ utilised. Indeed there were no references to potentially alternative terms such as ‘marine security’ or ‘oceans security’ either. This is not particularly surprising given the dataset’s focus on the environment and development, alongside maritime security’s relatively recent emergence as a term. Whether a term is deployed is, of course, only a small part of the wider picture. It is highly unlikely that all SIDS would define maritime security the same anyway, with regional and local interests likely to shape wider understanding. Indeed in recent years a range of maritime security strategies have emerged at a national and regional level (African Union 2014; European Union 2014; United Kingdom 2014) all of which have conceived security in the maritime domain in subtly different ways. Despite this absence of references to maritime security and associated terms there were occasions where a reference to security directly connected to the maritime domain; the most common of which was repeated references to the importance of the sustainable use of the oceans for food security. Food security, as noted earlier in the paper, is one of the seven categories encapsulated in the UN’s conceptualisation of human security.

The sustainable development-security relationship

Indeed while SIDS do not seem to have embraced the term ‘maritime security’ specifically within these formal outcome documents, acceptance by SIDS of the sustainable development – security relationship from which the more comprehensive conceptualisation of maritime security put forward in this paper stems, was clear. There were periodic explicit references to the relationship with, for example, paragraph 9 of the 2005 ‘Mauritius Strategy for Implementation’ arguing: ‘Peace, security, stability and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, as well as respect for cultural diversity, are essential for achieving sustainable development and ensuring that sustainable development benefits all’ (UN 2005, p. 8). In order to delve deeper here in to the way this relationship is presented it would be useful to analyse the individual national reports from SIDS relating to their progress on the MSI or Samoa Pathway to note where occurrences of security are explicitly referenced.

Organised Violence:

When considering the articulation of specific maritime security threats, it was striking to notice the relative lack of direct references to those threats associated with organised violence such as piracy, armed robbery at sea and terrorism. Across all five documents there was just one reference to piracy found in the 2014 Samoa report. There were no mentions at all of armed robbery at sea, and just five paragraphs that made direct reference to terrorism, all of which emerged at the 2005 conference. Although it is entirely possible that such threats were more widely discussed in other conference/review documentation and simply did not emerge in the final outcome documents, it is interesting that these more traditional of threats have not in this context been explicitly articulated as relevant to sustainable development efforts. The low number of references to piracy and armed robbery is particularly difficult to comprehend when we consider the role both Mauritius and the Seychelles have played in processing suspected Somali pirates. Indeed the national report of Seychelles prior to the 2014 Samoa conference does note the impact of Somali piracy on the country (Republic of Seychelles 2013).

In terms of terrorism it would of course be fair to suggest that SIDS are not primary targets for terrorist organisations, but the relative spike in references to terrorism in 2005 demonstrates that SIDS, like all states, were not immune to being influenced by the global response to security threats, here 9/11. Indeed SIDS emphasised their commitment to the global fight against terrorism, but raised concerns over the financial burden this placed on them, alongside the need to ensure such a response didn't diminish their wider development efforts. This line of argument from SIDS is interesting because it reminds us that these outcome documents, emerging as they do through the UN are very much written for, and in order to influence the international community, specifically wealthier states, to be good global citizens.

Maritime Crime

While there were no direct references to smuggling across the dataset there were periodic references to trafficking in multiple forms. There was a reference to the dangers posed by arms trafficking (UN 2005); the trafficking of people (UN 2005; UN 2014); and most commonly in five paragraphs the trafficking of drugs. In fact there was at least one reference to drugs trafficking in each of the three conference reports demonstrating that this threat has been on the radar of SIDS since 1994. Without a shadow of a doubt however when considering maritime crime, the most

prominent threat highlighted was illegal fishing. In eight paragraphs within four of the five documents analysed illegal fishing was highlighted. The 1999 Barbados+5 review emphasises that Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported Fishing must be addressed, ‘...to ensure essential sources of food supplies for island populations and economic development’ (UN 1999). Of further interest is that while the importance of fisheries is regularly highlighted in the 1994 report there was no direct mention of illegal fishing. This suggests that concerns around illegal practices and their negative implications have grown over time. Where this is greater consistency however is the acknowledgement by SIDS of their need to more effectively monitor their waters in order to attain greater control. The 1994 report notes the extension of the Exclusive Economic Zones to 200 nautical miles and the need for effective management of this vastly increased resource.

Environmental Threats

Finally, while the content analysis did not seek to look at every reference to climate change across the dataset, there were other threats of an environmental character articulated. The most common of these threats was around hazardous waste. This threat was recognised as being multi-faceted with concerns expressed around the accidental deposit of hazardous waste at sea due to poor safety procedures, alongside more overt dumping activities. Indeed the land-sea nexus was also evident here with SIDS being acutely aware of how weaknesses in waste management as a whole might result in a negative impact on the marine environment, with concerns over say, the way industrial waste from land-based operations may be dumped at sea.

Towards a Small Island Developing State perspective on Maritime Security?

While the dataset utilised in the content analysis is relatively small, synthesis of the key findings laid out in the previous section does find a picture emerging of the broad parameters of how, in the SIDS’ public conceptualisation of sustainable development, maritime security threats are articulated. While climate change still dominates, there has over the past 25 years been a range of other threats that have gained in prominence such as illegal fishing. This concern about illegal fishing also illustrates the central focus on food security held by the SIDS. While some threat trends have emerged over decades, it is also interesting to note that agenda changes can emerge

more suddenly as shown in the way in which terrorism rose up the agenda post-9/11. SIDS, like all other states, were not immune to the reach of the global ‘war on terror’.

More generally the content analysis highlights three areas worthy of further consideration by policy-makers, practitioners and academics when thinking about SIDS’ maritime security.

1) A SID collectivity?

While this initial content analysis suggests a high level of commonality between SIDS in their articulation of maritime security threats, more work is needed to assess this fully. The commonality recognised is perhaps unsurprising when we consider outcome documents tend to encapsulate a more united front from participating states. Further analysis on a wider range of documentation is therefore required as a next phase in the process of determining the extent to which a specific SIDS perspective on maritime security exists. In particular it would be useful to analyse where threats highlighted in regional reports have and have not made it in to the outcome documents, adding a geographic dimension to this temporal analysis. Beyond this, after a content analysis of the national and regional preparatory documents have taken place, it would be useful to analyse individual statements made at the international conferences to highlight prominent phrases. This would then allow for a more detailed discourse analysis to take place where we can determine who specifically is speaking about what threats.

Nevertheless, in undertaking this initial content analysis the way in which SIDS have set-up and utilised the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) as a lobbying and collective-agenda setting apparatus has arisen, and this is a potentially interesting case study for those interested in how marginal voices can be heard on the global stage. The parallel existence of three regional SIDS groupings – ‘Caribbean’, ‘Pacific’, ‘Africa, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS)’ - also has potential for those interested in understanding how states facilitate collaborative efforts. Here more research is required to determine the coherence and reach of these regional identities. The AIMS region for example is particularly broad and has no permanent secretariat to enhance its coherence. Yet it may well be the case that while SIDS have been effective in being recognised as a special case for the environment and development, they do not have the raw power to ensure their collective voice is

resilient in the face of regional politics and larger powers with a strategic interest in activities within the maritime domain.

2) *A 'Vulnerability Straightjacket'?*

As the content analysis was undertaken it was also noticeable how vulnerability was emphasised by SIDS. This led to an additional data retrieval being undertaken with 173 appearances of either the word 'vulnerable', 'vulnerability', or 'vulnerabilities' located across the dataset. SIDS are certainly not shy about highlighting the challenges they face, with regular instances of references to being a 'special case'. There is little doubt that SIDS do face many disadvantages and require considerable support, while the emphasis on being special has helped to imbue their agenda with relative global prominence. Yet it could be argued that there are associated risks that continual references to being a special case, may lead SIDS to overly focus on their weaknesses and/or lead outsiders to treat them as lost causes. It is particularly striking that while SIDS do recognise in the dataset that they have primary responsibility for their own development, they also regularly bemoan the lack of outside, particularly financial, support. Here it is worth considering whether there is a case for SIDS to more explicitly emphasise the huge potential associated with their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ's); to acknowledge that in one sense they are ocean superpowers. Here Ban Ki-moon's argument that SIDS are 'a magnifying glass' (Ban Ki-moon 2014) is particularly important to remember. There is very real potential for SIDS to position themselves as ocean governance innovators, able to move quicker and adapt more effectively than larger states. Here information really could be power and as such SIDS could consider publishing more reviews of their progress in meeting the PoA targets and encourage outside innovation

3) *The need for a sustainable blue growth approach?*

Finally, while SIDS have evidently not yet consistently deployed the term maritime security within these international outcome documents, the sustainable development-maritime security relationship is very evident. As already noted maritime security is a relatively new term, moreover it is worth recognising that while carefully selected and consistently deployed terminology can shape agendas, buzzwords are only pervasive if the underlying concept is persuasive. As SIDS continue to share their experiences at a regional and international level, and SIDS and the wider international community

seek to meet the SDGs, it is highly likely the term will become more prominent. After all, there is little doubt that for good or ill a reference to security can imbue an issue with a sense of urgency as scholars such as the Copenhagen School have argued (Buzan, Waever & de Wilde 1998). Nevertheless there is scope to consider whether both enhanced development and security would be more effectively attained and sustained through the creation of ‘Sustainable Blue Growth’ strategies for SIDS. Such strategies would more explicitly recognise the deep relationship between development, security and good governance and may offer greater scope to encourage multiple stakeholders - who may otherwise feel excluded or uncomfortable with an agenda that is seen to prioritise development over security or vice versa – to support SIDS.

Conclusion

For SIDS the security of their maritime domain is of significant importance. More specifically, it is clear from the initial content analysis undertaken in this paper, that the concepts of sustainable development and maritime security are inextricably related. Concern over climate change continues to dominate the established inter-state gatherings of these islands. Here there is explicit recognition that beyond the existential threat posed by rising sea levels, the negative implications of climate change on say, food security must be addressed. Yet alongside climate change SIDS are increasingly recognising that they are no more immune to incidents of maritime crime than any other coastal state. Indeed when it comes to illegal fishing in particular, these small states are recognising the particular challenges they face that are associated with monitoring and securing vast EEZ’s. Ultimately, while there is plenty more research that must be undertaken to better understand how SIDS articulate their maritime security concerns, the contours of a contest between two broad, meta-narratives of SIDS security can be said to be emerging. The first meta-narrative emphasises vulnerability, the second meta-narrative emphasises opportunity. How SIDS chart a path here between conceiving of themselves as sea-locked nations or ocean superpowers respectively will fundamentally shape policy decisions made in the decades to come.

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ⁱ Defined in this paper as a state's Exclusive Economic Zone, territorial waters, coastal areas, ports and harbours.

ⁱⁱⁱ In this paper 'governance' is understood broadly as the rules and regulations established, alongside the resources deployed, in a specific environment to enhance maritime security. 'Capacity-building' meanwhile draws our thinking down to the micro-level and encapsulates the ways and means through which perceived gaps between what should and can be done in terms of enhancing maritime security are addressed