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Conference Paper

INDONESIA'S GLOBAL MARITIME FULCRUM AND ITS PERSPECTIVE ON GOOD ORDER AT SEA

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Abstract

Indonesia's strategic maritime vision under the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) policy reflects a comprehensive response to the contested and evolving security environment in the Indo-Pacific region. Located at the centre of global maritime routes, the Indo-Pacific is increasingly affected by territorial disputes, geopolitical rivalry, piracy, illegal fishing, climate change, and marine ecosystem degradation. Grounded in five strategic pillars, the GMF positions Indonesia as a maritime leader committed to promoting regional stability and a rules-based order. Using qualitative content analysis, this research examines key materials, including policy frameworks, institutional publications, international legal sources, and academic studies published over the past decade. The analysis highlights the interaction between maritime security and technological transformation. Findings demonstrate that Indonesia's integrated strategy, which links defence, diplomacy, sustainability, and environmental responsibility, supports regional cooperation and maritime governance. Advancing inclusive frameworks, improving naval partnerships, and expanding initiatives in ocean based economic sectors remain essential for achieving lasting maritime resilience and peace across the Indo-Pacific.

Keywords: blue economy, environmental governance, Global Maritime Fulcrum, Indo-Pacific, maritime security.

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Introduction

Indonesia's vision under the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) policy places strong emphasis on maintaining good order at sea within the increasingly complex maritime domain of the Indo-Pacific (1). Recognised as a strategic geopolitical and geoeconomic corridor, the Indo-Pacific accommodates a substantial share of global trade and economic activity. The region's significance, however, is accompanied by a broad range of maritime challenges, including territorial disputes, geopolitical rivalry, and the proliferation of non-traditional threats comprising piracy, illegal fishing, human trafficking, climate change, and environmental degradation (2). The evolving nature of those issues highlights the urgency of enhancing geo-maritime resilience as a foundation for promoting regional stability and ensuring maritime security. As competition among major powers intensifies, the Indo-Pacific has become an increasingly contested domain where strategic interests intersect and occasionally conflict (3). Accordingly, geo-maritime resilience emerges as a pivotal element not only in safeguarding national sovereignty and maritime safety, but also in preserving peace across the region and reinforcing a stable global maritime order.

Literature Review

Theoretical Studies

The Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) policy functions as a strategic framework that positions Indonesia as a central actor within both regional and global maritime dynamics (4). The policy comprises five interrelated pillars, which collectively establish the theoretical foundation for interpreting Indonesia's commitment to maritime resilience, national sovereignty, and regional diplomacy.

The first pillar emphasises the revitalisation of Indonesia's maritime culture, rooted in the nation's historical identity as a seafaring archipelago. This cultural reconnection establishes the normative basis for national maritime consciousness and realigns development priorities with maritime heritage. The second pillar focuses on the sustainable management of marine resources, reflecting an ecological-economic theoretical orientation. It integrates environmental stewardship with long-term resource governance to ensure intergenerational equity and food security. The third pillar centres on the enhancement of maritime infrastructure and connectivity. From a spatial-developmental perspective, this pillar responds to the logistical and territorial challenges inherent in Indonesia's archipelagic configuration. Strengthening connectivity facilitates national integration, promotes equitable development, and expands access to essential public services in peripheral areas.

The fourth pillar relates to the reinforcement of maritime

defence, which corresponds with realist security theory that prioritises sovereignty and territorial protection in response to conventional and non-traditional threats. Effective maritime defence not only enables deterrence but also supports rapid responses to piracy, smuggling, and other cross-border crimes. The fifth pillar advocates maritime diplomacy and peaceful conflict resolution, drawing upon liberal-institutionalist theories that underline the significance of multilateral cooperation, inclusive dialogue, and adherence to international norms. This orientation reinforces Indonesia's commitment to ASEAN centrality and rules-based maritime governance. Collectively, the five pillars articulate a multidimensional approach to maritime governance, integrating cultural identity, environmental sustainability, infrastructure development, national security, and diplomatic engagement. The GMF framework, therefore, advances both domestic priorities and regional maritime cooperation. Through participation in initiatives including the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships (ReCAAP), Indonesia reaffirms its leadership in fostering a stable, collaborative, and legally grounded maritime order across the Indo-Pacific.

Empirical Studies

The Indo-Pacific region increasingly functions as a strategic geopolitical and geoeconomic axis, accounting for a significant share of global trade routes, energy flows, and maritime commerce (5). Empirical findings, however, indicate that this prominence coincides with a growing range of maritime challenges. Regional security reports, shipping industry analyses, and environmental assessments consistently demonstrate a rise in non-traditional threats including piracy, illegal unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, human trafficking, and other transnational maritime crimes (6). These developments not only disrupt economic activities but also weaken governance structures and strain the capacity of law enforcement agencies.

Concurrently, the region faces escalating strategic rivalry among major powers (1). Naval deployments, military exercises, and contested claims, particularly in the South China Sea, exemplify how maritime space is shaped by geopolitical competition. The presence of overlapping security agendas and fragmented cooperation frameworks increases the risk of escalation and hampers efforts to maintain peace and stability.

Climate change and environmental deterioration add further complexity to maritime security. Rising sea levels, coastal erosion, fish stock depletion, and frequent natural disasters affect coastal populations and infrastructure, highlighting the urgency of adaptive and sustainable resilience strategies.

Empirical evidence also underscores the relevance of regional institutions in responding to these issues. Arrangements coordinated through ASEAN-led platforms and mechanisms such

as the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships (ReCAAP) have supported coordination and capacity building. Nonetheless, their effectiveness depends on the level of political commitment, institutional capability, and inclusiveness among participating states.

Methods

This analysis applies a qualitative content approach to examine textual data related to maritime security and regional cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. The examination draws upon policy frameworks, international legal instruments, institutional publications, and peer-reviewed sources released over the past decade; all selected for their relevance to maritime law enforcement and Indonesia's Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF). The unit of analysis focuses on how a rules-based maritime order is operationalised through Indonesia's diplomatic, naval, legal, and environmental initiatives. Core themes include the protection of civilians and infrastructure, governance of sea lines of communication, and responses to hybrid threats involving cyber risks and climate-driven maritime challenges. Credibility is reinforced through triangulation, with findings cross-verified using official documents, regional agreements, and independent expert reviews. Additional references from multilateral naval exercises and regional forum statements serve to contextualise institutional practices and evolving regional norms. The investigation was conducted over a twelve-month period with continuous validation.

Results and Discussion

Indonesia holds a central position in advancing maritime security and regional stability across the Indo-Pacific, drawing upon its strategic location between the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Geographic connectivity enables Indonesia to function as a maritime hub, managing sea lines of communication while advocating for a rules-based order. Since the introduction of the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) in 2014, Indonesia has reaffirmed its maritime identity and strategic vision (1). Findings indicate that the GMF has strengthened national capabilities in maritime governance through multidimensional efforts encompassing defence, diplomacy, economics, and environmental stewardship. Resilience-building has become a national priority in response to conventional threats, hybrid challenges involving cyber intrusion, and climate-induced vulnerabilities. Indonesia actively participates in regional and multilateral forums, including ASEAN, IORA, the East Asia Summit, and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting, to facilitate dialogue, build trust, and prevent conflict escalation. Confidence-building measures, including joint patrols and collaborative naval exercises such as the Multilateral Naval

Exercise Komodo (MNEK), further reinforce Indonesia's commitment to regional cooperation and operational interoperability.

Indonesia's naval modernisation and increased patrol coordination have improved surveillance over strategic chokepoints and strengthened enforcement against maritime crime. The Navy, Coast Guard, and other enforcement agencies now respond more effectively to illegal fishing, smuggling, and trafficking. A whole-of-government approach embedded within the GMF has improved institutional integration and policy coherence among maritime stakeholders. Indonesia consistently upholds international maritime law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982 (7), by promoting sovereign rights, freedom of navigation, and peaceful dispute settlement. Findings also suggest that strengthening regional institutions, expanding information exchange, enhancing naval collaboration, and integrating sustainable maritime economic strategies remain essential to regional resilience. The GMF continues to guide Indonesia's maritime engagement through shared norms, collaborative mechanisms, and long-term strategic planning. As highlighted during the Western Pacific Naval Symposium, "we are united by the seas, strengthened by collaborations. Our cooperation will determine a secure and thriving region that will sustain our livelihoods. Alone, we can swiftly prosper, but together, we will sustain longer." This expression captures Indonesia's commitment to solidarity, sustainability, and collective security throughout the Indo-Pacific.

Conclusion

Indonesia's strategic position in the Indo-Pacific is anchored in its geographic advantage, maritime heritage, and comprehensive vision articulated through the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) policy. By adopting a multidimensional approach to maritime governance, Indonesia integrates defence, diplomacy, economic sustainability, and environmental stewardship. Empirical evidence demonstrates that its initiatives in maritime security cooperation, development of the blue economy, and promotion of rule-based diplomacy have contributed significantly to regional stability and resilience. In response to escalating challenges, including geopolitical competition and climate-induced disruptions, Indonesia consistently advocates inclusive, cooperative, and multilateral strategies. The strengthening of regional frameworks, advancement of naval collaboration, and continued investment in sustainable development further reinforce Indonesia's leadership in shaping a secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific. As the sea serves both as a connector and a shared resource, ensuring lasting maritime security demands collective responsibility. Through the

GMF and active engagement in regional forums, Indonesia continues to affirm that enduring peace and prosperity at sea depend on collaboration, mutual trust, and a shared commitment to maintaining good order.

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