BLUE AMAZON

THE BLUE AMAZON

is the region that comprises the sea surface, the waters above the seabed, and the marine soil and subsoil contained in the Atlantic extension that projects outward from the Brazilian coastline to the outer limit of the Continental Shelf. Through the Blue Amazon, more than 95% of Brazil's foreign trade flows, and about 95% of the nation's oil is extracted. It is also home to countless living and mineral resources, environmental sites, and strategic ports, as well as industrial and energy hubs.

More than a geographic space, the Blue Amazon must be understood as a political-strategic concept that underscores the importance of Maritime Power for Brazil. Located in the South Atlantic—an area of strategic relevance highlighted in high-level documents such as the National Defense Policy, the National Defense Strategy, and the Navy's Strategic Plan (PEM 2040)—the Blue Amazon is a national asset, a source of wealth and of potential disputes, to be protected, preserved, and sustainably exploited.

The dynamism and evolution of oceanopolitical scenarios, along with the breadth of associated interests, increasingly demand a strong presence of the Brazilian Navy in the Blue Amazon, as well as the development of monitoring and control systems capable of confronting both current and future threats.

It should be interpreted through four main lenses: economic, scientific, environmental, and sovereignty-related.

- 95% – Oil

- 80% – Natural Gas

- 45% – Fisheries

CONTINENTAL SHELF

The Continental Shelf of a coastal State, as defined by Article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), comprises the seabed and subsoil of submarine areas that extend beyond its territorial sea, throughout the natural prolongation of its land territory, up to the outer edge of the continental margin, or up to 200 nautical miles (M) from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured, in cases where the outer edge of the continental margin does not reach that distance.

ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION

Programs and projects aimed at the integrated management of coastal and marine environments have been primarily directed toward investing in the conversion of the harmful effects of pollution, in the urban revitalization of cities, in valuing the natural landscape—seeking the development of new activities such as ecotourism and environmental education—and in maintaining environmental quality.

Many of these programs serve as platforms for interaction between science and the reformulation of public policies, with a view to improving disaster prediction capabilities and understanding the socio-economic dynamics that have been rapidly changing in recent decades. Another effect of such programs and actions is the occasional access to appropriate environmental technologies and the use of environmental quality indicators.

The maintenance of biological diversity, the reconciliation of competing interests in marine and coastal zones, investment in sustainable activities, and the fair distribution of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources are pillars of the country's environmental policy, which involves cooperation with other nations and participation in multilateral forums. Important initiatives have already taken place, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, signed during the Rio-92 Conference and in force since 1994. The ultimate goal is to achieve a good ecological status of the marine environment and provide the predictability needed for activities that depend on the sea.

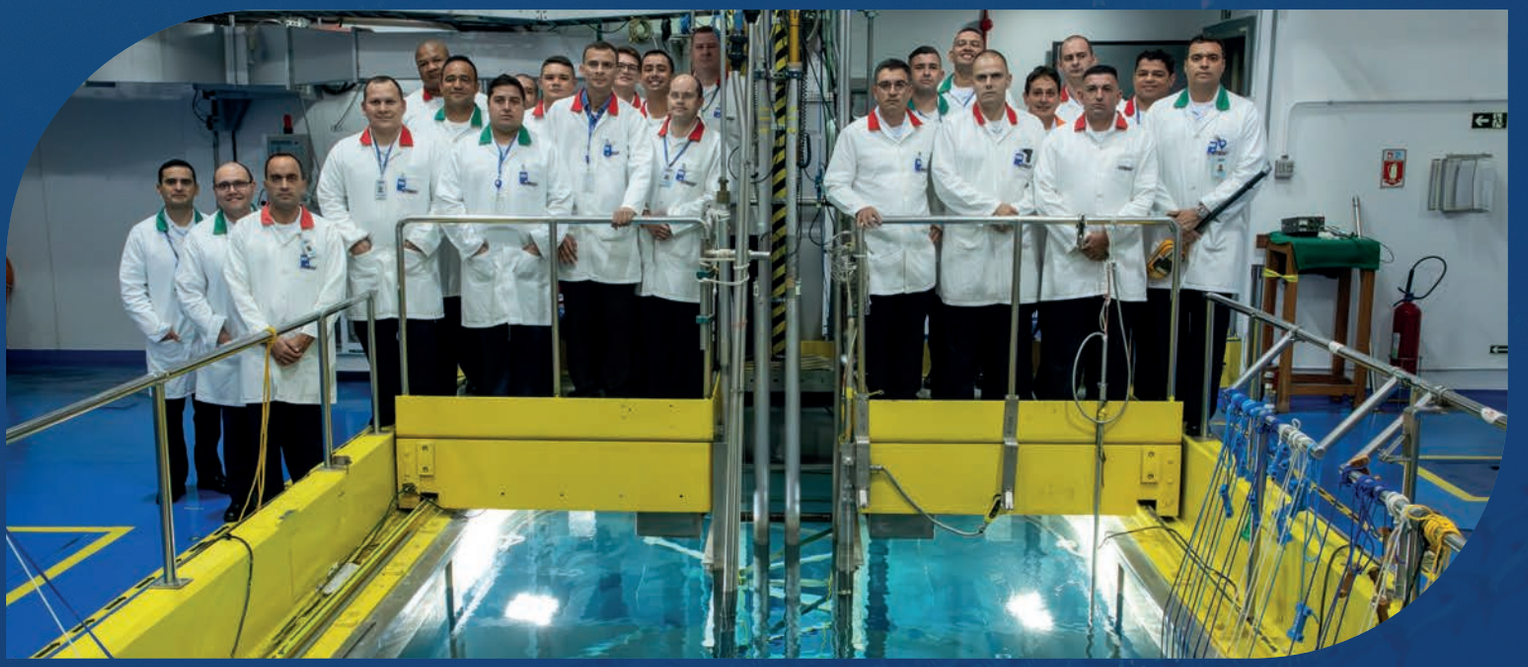
With regard to navigation safety in waters under national jurisdiction, Brazil approved the Waterway Traffic Safety Law (LESTA), Law No. 9,537/97, which established concepts, rules of conduct, and safety requirements for vessels, with the exception of warships.

Navigation safety and environmental standards are, in fact, the subject of a series of conventions, codes, and resolutions adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

The Commander of the Brazilian Navy, as the Maritime Authority, is responsible for the regulation and oversight of waterborne transport with respect to navigation safety, safeguarding human life at sea, and protecting the marine environment, and acts as the representative of the Brazilian government in international forums dealing with these matters.

These standards are managed by the Directorate of Ports and Coasts, a military organization of the Brazilian Navy, which provides guidance to sea users on navigation safety, the safeguarding of human life at sea, and the prevention of pollution in aquatic environments.

In the specific case of oil transport, in addition to the Maritime Authority, other agencies responsible for environmental protection and for regulating this industry in the country also play an active role.



SCIENTIFIC DIMENSION

At the institutional level, the National Policy for Marine Resources was the foundation for scientific programs associated with the exercise and guarantee of Brazilian sovereignty at sea. There are three major plans coordinated by the Interministerial Commission for Marine Resources (CIRM), directly linked to the "Blue Amazon": LEPLAC (Continental Shelf Survey Plan), PNGC (National Coastal Management Plan), and PSRM (Sectoral Plan for Marine Resources). The set of programs and actions encompassed by these plans primarily focuses on knowledge of the marine environment, its preservation, the rational use of resources, and the training of human resources.

Throughout history, the sea has been an important means of communication, trade, and food supply. Following World War II, as a result of technological development, issues such as the expansion of fishing grounds, increased drilling depths in the seabed, and marine pollution came to the fore. To address these matters, the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea was convened in 1973.

Brazil accompanied the geopolitical changes of that period and, in 1974, created the Interministerial Commission for Marine Resources (CIRM), a multidisciplinary collegiate body serving as a forum for ocean governance, tasked with coordinating research, promoting the sustainable use of marine resources, and ensuring the shared management of the maritime area belonging to Brazilians.

At the conclusion of the UN Conference, after ten years of debate, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was adopted in 1982. Brazil, however, had already moved ahead: in 1980, CIRM approved the National Policy for Marine Resources, initiating plans and programs to meet the challenges of the new ocean order. Over the years, CIRM expanded its representativeness and today is composed of 16 ministries, coordinated by the Navy Command. As a deliberative and advisory body regarding the scientific dimension of the Blue Amazon, CIRM coordinates actions related to the Sectoral Plan for Marine Resources (PSRM), approves the National Coastal Management Plan (PNGC), and oversees the Continental Shelf Survey Plan (LEPLAC).

Over the past five decades, CIRM has contributed to understanding the importance of the sea as an essential element for the survival, sustainable development, and prosperity of the country, by promoting studies on the influence of the sea on climate, the economy, food supply, health, and leisure. By fostering Marine Sciences and the pursuit of knowledge, CIRM coordinates actions so that marine resources generate social and economic benefits, create jobs and wealth, and drive the development of the Blue Economy.

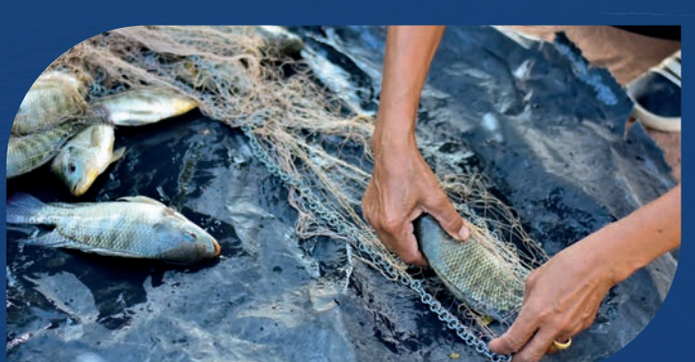
The PSRM is a four-year document that consolidates research planning, articulates actions for the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, and promotes human resource training. It adopts a decentralized implementation model, with projects conducted by ministries, the Navy, universities, environmental agencies, and research institutes. The PSRM comprises eleven main initiatives:

REVIMAR

Assessment, Monitoring, and Conservation of Marine Biodiversity, focused on evaluating and monitoring ecosystem biodiversity conservation.

BIOTECMARINHA

Marine Biotechnology, fostering innovation in marine biotechnology.



AQUIPESCA

Aquaculture and Fisheries, promoting sustainable development of mariculture and fisheries.

PPG-Mar

Graduate Program in Marine Sciences, encouraging the training of professionals in Marine Sciences.

REMPLAC

Assessment of the Mineral Potential of Brazil's Legal Continental Shelf, identifying areas of mineral potential.

PROAREA

Prospecting of Mineral Resources in the International Area of the South and Equatorial Atlantic, identifying mineral potential in international seabed areas.

PROILHAS

Scientific Research in Oceanic Islands, coordinating research and ensuring sovereign presence in the São Pedro and São Paulo Archipelago and the Trindade and Martin Vaz Archipelago, safeguarding ecosystems and sovereign rights over their Exclusive Economic Zones.

GOOS-Brasil

Brazilian Ocean Observing System and Climate Studies, monitoring the oceans to predict climate effects such as storms and hurricanes and supporting marine weather forecasting.

PRO AMAZÔNIA AZUL

Development and Sustainable Use of the Blue Amazon, advancing high-quality oceanographic research under the framework of the Blue Economy.

PEM

Marine Spatial Planning, a multisectoral, operational, and legal instrument for ocean governance and marine space management, driving the Blue Economy, creating jobs, revenue, legal security, and safeguarding environmental interests in Brazil's maritime domain.

PROMAR

Promotion of Maritime Awareness, disseminating Ocean Literacy and promoting a Maritime Mindset to strengthen Brazilian society's understanding of the importance of the sea for the nation's survival and prosperity.

Thus, through science, the PSRM contributes to sovereignty and prosperity in the Blue Amazon.

ECONOMIC DIMENSION

It is always important to emphasize that more than 95% of Brazil's foreign trade is transported by sea—an extremely significant figure, though not always remembered. Although 80% of the Brazilian population lives relatively close to the coast when compared to the vast dimensions of the country, there is still little awareness of the economic and strategic importance of maritime routes for Brazil and its people. Our heavy dependence on the sea highlights perhaps our greatest vulnerability: ensuring control of maritime trade routes. This reminds us that Brazil spends a considerable amount annually in its balance of payments on maritime freight transported by foreign-flagged vessels. A strong merchant fleet generates thousands of jobs and reduces this costly burden. In the same logic of vulnerability lies oil production. Now divided into two major offshore regions—the Campos and Santos Basins—oil production remains fundamental to the country's economy.

Brazil has developed complex technology to extract oil at depths greater than one thousand meters. This is how resources—whether natural gas or liquefied gas—are exploited in the Santos Basin, an area known as the pre-salt. Brazil's oil and gas reserves are entirely located offshore, demonstrating one of the key economic resources and sources of wealth in our "Blue Amazon," which the Brazilian Navy is tasked with protecting against external interests.

Another economic potential that must be safeguarded is fishing. Our coastline is frequently targeted by industrial fishing fleets from several countries. There is much more to be defended, which is why the Admiral Paulo Moreira Institute for Marine Studies, located in Arraial do Cabo, in northern Rio de Janeiro State, has carried out important research for the future of marine life.

If we wish to explore further opportunities, Brazil's coastline has attracted tourists from around the world, making tourism and sports activities additional sources of leisure and revenue. Tourism is one of the most recognized uses of the sea, even for those countries that do not have direct access to it. Nations without seacoasts have always highlighted the difficulties they face in exporting goods, underlining this vulnerability.

Given its natural beauty, the "Blue Amazon" has increasingly attracted shipping companies.

Tourism, therefore, represents an economic potential to be further developed in this area.

The islands and rocky outcrops of the "Blue Amazon" also hold great tourism potential, both due to their natural beauty and ecological value, in addition to their strategic importance. The Navy has installed in these locations an efficient navigation safety system, consisting of lighthouses, meteorological stations, and communication centers, thereby benefiting both national and international navigation.

SOVEREIGNTY DIMENSION

The National Defense Strategy established that the capabilities to control maritime areas, deny the use of the sea, and project Naval Power shall focus on: enhancing security and preparedness to defend oil platforms, naval and port facilities, and oceanic archipelagos and islands within Brazilian Jurisdictional Waters; promptly responding to any threat—whether posed by a State, non-conventional forces, or criminal groups—against maritime trade routes; and Brazil's increasing participation in peacekeeping missions.

It also specifies strategic maritime areas that will continue to require special attention, particularly regarding the need to control maritime access to Brazil: the stretch between Santos and Vitória, and the area surrounding the mouth of the Amazon River.

The Navy acts in accordance with constitutional principles and in alignment with national interests, contributing to the defense of the Homeland; guaranteeing constitutional powers and, upon their initiative, the maintenance of law and order; fulfilling subsidiary responsibilities established by law; and supporting Foreign Policy.

The Navy in the Defense of the “Blue Amazon”

Defense, as understood here, encompasses actions conducted against armed aggression by another State against the Nation.

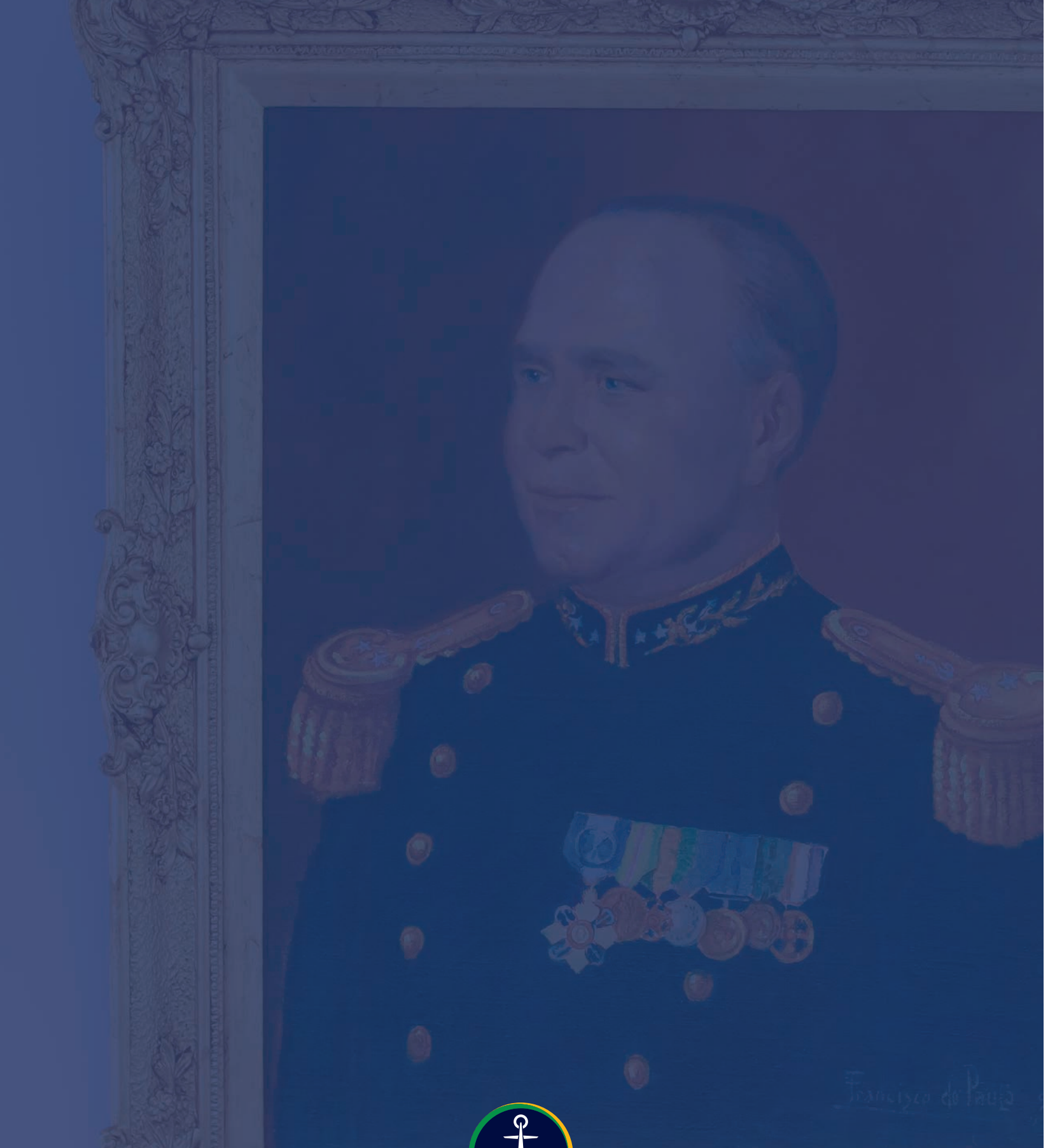
In fulfilling its Mission, the Navy contributes to a deterrence strategy in times of peace, through the permanent readiness of Naval Power, discouraging any potential military aggression by States, non-conventional forces, or criminal actors.

In terms of preparedness and employment for Defense, the Force is oriented toward conducting a variety of naval operations and actions, in order to support political measures by anticipating potential involvement in situations or areas of strategic interest for national defense. Accordingly, it concentrates significant efforts on the continuous monitoring, security, and defense of the “Blue Amazon,” considering the possibility of armed conflicts in the South Atlantic. Complementarily, hydro-oceanographic activities are carried out to improve knowledge of environmental factors that may affect operations for which Naval Power must be prepared.

The Brazilian Navy and Maritime Security in the “Blue Amazon”

Maritime security, as defined here, is the assurance—necessary and indispensable to a society and each of its members—against threats of any nature during peacetime.

Since 2001, the concept of “new threats” has emerged as a major concern for the international community. These include terrorism, drug trafficking, illicit arms trafficking, smuggling and customs evasion, human trafficking, and piracy. For countries to be able to combat such “new threats” and piracy, they must be properly structured, with a robust management and monitoring system, reinforced through partnerships, information sharing, and cooperation with other institutions and navies.



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