

Proposal of Research Project

Proposed Title

An International Perspective on Interactive Relations between Marine Policy and Marine Environmental Management in Taiwan

Name of Applicant:

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Research Motivation

As Taiwan is an island nation surrounded by ocean, marine policy, marine environmental management and international developments on the oceans can affect Taiwan's welfare as a whole. The impact could even extend to international trade and diplomacy.

The Ocean was once upon a time open to all and had no boundaries. The human race used to perceive the ocean as being boundary free, and believed that the supply of its natural resources was inexhaustible. Any capable individual or nation could make use of the ocean as they wished, and develop the resources arbitrarily. However, following the progress of human technology and a better understanding of the oceans, people's attitude towards the ocean has gradually changed. The intense exploitation of marine resources and abuse of the marine environment has gradually disturbed the marine eco-system. The competition to seize and exploit these resources has caused conflicts and disputes between nations. Therefore, regulations governing people's use of the ocean were established as an international covenant. The intension of such an act is stressed in the preface to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982. The preface clearly declares that each of the nations acknowledges the signing of this convention, while recognizing each nation's sovereignty; it is necessary for the establishment of legislation to facilitate international interactions. Those regulations govern, for instance, promotion of maritime harmony, non-discriminatory rights over efficient usages of marine resources, protection and research of the resources, protection and security of marine environment, and so on.

Together with the clearly expressed motivation and determination in the preface, the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea endows each coastal nation with various rights and duties such as: 1) preventing violation of the harmless right of way; 2) management and control of regulations governing customs, finance, immigration and health and hygiene in coastal areas; 3) maintenance and usage of biological resources, and sovereignty and related jurisdiction of the development of mineral resources in exclusive economic territorial waters and offshore reef; 4) protection and security of the marine environment; 5) agreement on scientific marine research and related jurisdiction.

Consequently, each coastal nation upholds its rights by legislating internally for relevant regulations, and establishing appropriate enforcement power. Marine policy and marine environmental management are instituted with the purpose of maintaining law and order and securing the right to the sea. As a matter of fact, most international members make relevant laws governing their territorial waters based on the spirit of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the sea and the regulations stipulated therein. Owing to the fact that international signatories uphold their rights to their territorial waters, it is apparent that the era of enforcement of territorial waters has arrived.

Given the fact that Taiwan is an island country, various issues and incidents consistently come from the sea. Therefore, a solution to the question of establishing an appropriate and adequate marine framework is the major concern of this research. Nevertheless, it is believed that this question should be looked into based on the interactive relations between marine policy and marine environmental management from international perspective.

Background

Taiwan is surrounded by seas, and has a total coastal line of 1,653 KM. The island is located between the East China Sea, the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean. Due to the busy international sea traffic in this area, Taiwan's marine transportation industry is highly developed. Owing to the massive scale of the surrounding waters, Taiwan is in possession of rich marine resources. The surrounding seas are the regular routes of both south and north bound fish. Large quantities of other fish, including shellfish, as well as seaweed, sea cucumbers and other various types of high-value products exist in Taiwan's seas. There are also rich gas and oil deposits in the reefs within Taiwan's territorial waters. As the island's usable land is relatively small, yet, over-populated, land resources and living space are extremely limited. Therefore, any industrial, economic and daily activities on the island could have a significant impact on its marine environment. As a result, the most important issue is the establishment of international marine policy, while properly utilizing the rich and valuable marine resources. Enforcement authority of the territorial waters plays a very important role in organizing and implementing all related relevant policies and administration. One of the top priorities is good quality of both practical and natural environments in order to realize adequate marine management and usage. To achieve this goal, necessary actions must be taken according to proper and appropriate laws and policies, for instance, regulations governing smuggling, illegal entry and

unauthorized departure, coastal control, security of fishing harbors, sea rescue, sea traffic control, and so on. Equally importantly, policies relating to protection of the biological and natural environment must be implemented.

Research Method

As the proposed research seeks to discuss the interactions between marine policy and marine environmental management, the case of United Kingdom will be analyzed and compared, as it was the first country who considered the significance of marine security in national security. Not only was the establishment of British marine policy and marine environmental management ahead of the rest of the world, but also played an extremely important role among international members. This research, therefore, intends to adopt the comparison and analysis method to deal with the information collected on the British case. Then, based on an international perspective, the possibility and degree to which the British scenario could be applied or practiced in Taiwan will be discussed. On the other hand, the conclusion on interactive relations between marine policy and marine environmental management will be a major reference when reassessing Taiwan's position, hence providing a basis for the government to alter and recreate marine policy and regulations governing environmental management.

Timetable

First academic year:

- collecting and studying British marine policy and marine environmental management, and relevant source material.

Second academic year:

- 6 months on field study in Taiwan to collect and study documents and information on Taiwanese marine policy and environmental management.
- 6 months on field study in Holland: visit the International Marine Court and case study of examples from various countries.

Third academic year

- writing up the thesis
- preparing Viva after submitting the thesis

Limitations

The purpose of the proposed research is to reveal the roles of marine policy and environmental management in national security, while clarifying interactive relations between the two. However, Taiwan's maritime interactions and cooperation with other international members are confined within its political difficulties with Japan in the north, China in the west, and the Spratly Islands in the south. Due to the fact that Taiwan has numerous unresolved political and territorial issues with its neighbors, the question of the relationship between marine policy and environmental management has drawn much attention from the government when making national policy. Therefore, it is hoped that professional knowledge obtained through the study, and the research result achieved would be of use in Taiwan for both academic and practical purposes.

Reference

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