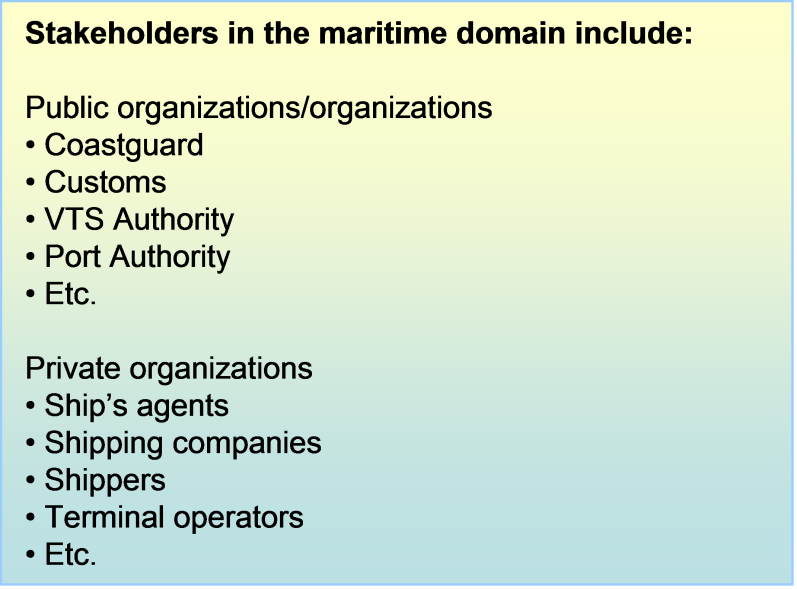
**STRENGTHENING CO-OPERATIVE PERFORMANCE IN MARITIME TRANSPORT**

**Challenges and opportunities in the maritime domain**

There have been substantial changes in the global shipping environment, such as an increase in the volume of vessel traffic, increasing pressure on navigable waters, increasing dependency on an interconnected global supply chains and the rapid development and availability of modern and more efficient technologies; dependencies that may however easily be hampered or complicated by for instance conflicts of interest or insufficient interoperability between the many stakeholders involved. Trends like globalization and the extensive use of new information and communication technologies have already provided opportunities for enhanced interaction and information sharing, not only between ships and shore-based authorities, but also with and between many other stakeholders in the maritime domain and those in the administrative and logistic environment surrounding that domain; given the international nature of maritime transport, such issues may not be solved on a national level and/or by technology alone.

Various stakeholders have already taken advantage of such offerings by implementing local or regional co-operation arrangements, as it was recognized that optimal co-operation could not be achieved by technology alone. However these activities are, in general driven on case-to-case basis and mostly not in a uniform manner, as the responsibilities and tasks of stakeholders in the maritime domain differ from country to country, even from port to port.

Public authorities used to have a knowledge monopoly. This is no longer the case. Knowledge is everywhere. In addition, many authorities nowadays do need the support from other stakeholders in order to meet their responsibilities and to fulfil their tasks.

This combination makes the (information) position of the authority vulnerable. The authority is increasingly becoming dependent on the performance of other (cooperating or contracted) parties. Consequently, new cooperative arrangements - on top of what is already in place – may be needed; in particular those affecting the marine environment and/or the safety, efficiency and security of maritime traffic. These new arrangements should address the relation between stakeholders, which of their processes need to be aligned or integrated, which measures and services could satisfy the agreements between them, and which information need to be exchanged between them, for what purpose and when.

These arrangements should also meet the need:

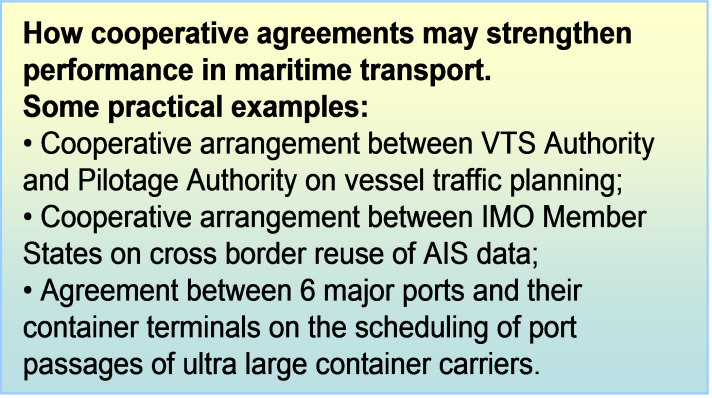
* for a sustainable marine environment, and to guide all marine activities (managing risks),
* for harmonization – both onboard and ashore - of vessel traffic handling and information exchange (arranging efficiency), and
* of Coastal States and ports, to protect their investments and environment (controlling space).

In order to prevent multiple conflicting practices in a changing maritime domain, a harmonized, consistent and coherent practice is required. There is a need to incorporate present and future arrangements, measures and services contributing to the safety, security, and efficiency of maritime transport and the protection of the marine environment into a broader concept.

At the same time, there is presently no global concept as a common framework for cooperative arrangements; neither is there any ongoing concerted action towards the development and implementation of such a concept or framework. For instance, the ongoing work of the IMO with regard to e-navigation, although related, focuses on navigation and communication systems capabilities, needs and requirements. The ongoing (regional) EU-work with regard to e-Maritime is equally related, but focuses on the facilitation of maritime traffic, in particular that of short sea shipping. Those initiatives are not expected to address the broader issue of co-operative agreements between maritime stakeholders, including the VTS Authority.

**Challenges for IALA**

According to its Constitution, the aim of IALA is to foster the safe, economic and efficient movement of vessels, through improvement and harmonization of aids to navigation worldwide and other appropriate means, for the benefit of the maritime community and the protection of the environment. One of the key-elements of IALA’s work is the international harmonization of vessel traffic services (VTS). The IMO Guidelines for VTS recognize a distinct role of VTS in its relation to so-called allied services, i.e. services actively involved in the safe and efficient passage of the vessel through the VTS area.

Other functions of a VTS relate to Co-ordination and liaison between vessels and third parties; they may be performed by a VTS as support of allied activities. For various reasons it would be in the best interest of maritime authorities, in particular VTS authorities, if IALA would assume such leadership.

A common approach to cooperative arrangements within the VTS community would prevent conflicting practices and would foster harmonization within the maritime transport chain. A common approach by IALA, also in its role of guiding VTS authorities and safeguarding their interests, will strongly contribute to the harmonization of arrangements between the current -and future- services within the transport chain.

A common approach by IALA, in its role to guide VTS Authorities in this respect, will contribute to the harmonization of arrangements between the current (and future) arrangements within the transport chain. A common approach to these arrangements within the VTS community would prevent conflicting practices and foster harmonization within the maritime transport chain. It is in the best interest of the VTS community that IALA takes action in this respect. Co-operative arrangements between VTS Authorities, allied services and the port community – including Government agencies as Customs, Immigration etc. – is a case for the VTS Committee, and is not expected to be fully addressed by the concept of e-Navigation.

The required concept of such a common approach should aim at the development of a functional framework of harmonized arrangements, supporting the cooperation between stakeholders within the maritime domain, to enhance the safety, security and efficiency of shipping and the protection of the marine environment in al navigable waters.

**MATCH, meeting IALA’s challenge**

The idea is that IALA takes up this new challenge by launching a new initiative: “MATCH”, i.e. the initiative to develop –in cooperation and consultation with other stakeholder organizations- a global concept for Maritime Transport Co-operation and Harmonization. The development of the concept should include that of a functional framework of harmonized arrangements that support and facilitate cooperation between stakeholders in the maritime domain, with the common aim to enhance safety, security, and efficiency of maritime transport and protection of the marine environment in all navigable waters, in particular through interaction and exchange of information.

Co-operative arrangements within the MATCH framework should ensure that stakeholders’ needs are met, in order to support:

* co-operative decision-making in matters concerning maritime safety and security;
* efficiency of vessel movements and vessel traffic flow;
* prevention of marine pollution and emissions from vessels;
* terminal planning;
* co-ordination of allied services and efficient employment of assets;
* coherent and efficient operation of all public and private services involved;
* optimum use of marine infrastructure; and co-ordinated services, such as search and rescue and incident and accident response.

MATCH will not in any way dictate how authorities should fulfill their responsibilities and what their internal arrangements or organization should look like. Neither is it the intention of the concept: to alter or replace current arrangements made by competent authorities; to affect the responsibilities of the master of a vessel.