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## CRIMARIO Newsletter

February 2026

Dear partners and friends,

I am pleased to share that **EU CRIMARIO** has officially entered its **third phase**, marking an important milestone in our continued support to partner countries across the Indo-Pacific region. This new phase also reflects a significant expansion of the **programme's geographical reach**, now extending to **Central and Latin American** countries with an **Atlantic coastline**. Subject to available funding, selected **Caribbean countries** may also be included, further strengthening our global maritime security engagement.

Following an initial period dedicated to **strategic planning and programme design**—including the development of new, tailor-made training packages and a comprehensive maritime exercise programme—**activities are now fully underway**.

In line with our commitment to building strong and trusted regional partnerships, January has been an especially dynamic month for EU CRIMARIO. The programme has been actively engaged in a wide range of **outreach initiatives**, highlighting its central role in fostering **international cooperation on maritime security**. While our experts have led these efforts on the ground, I began travelling across Latin America to engage with like-minded partners along the Atlantic coast and explore new avenues for collaboration.

Moreover, **EU CRIMARIO training and exercises** are currently being delivered across regions, from the **Horn of Africa** through to the **Pacific**.

We look forward to another year of close **cooperation and shared success** as we continue working together to **safeguard our seas and oceans**.

Martin Cauchi Inglott, EU CRIMARIO Project Director

## OPERATIONAL SUCCESSES

On the operational front, **IORIS** is supporting partners with some **notable success stories**, as exemplified below.

From **20 to 24 October**, EU CRIMARIO participated in the Colombian Navy's Multinational Strategy **ORION**, a global initiative led by **Colombia** that brings together more than 60 countries and international organisations to combat maritime drug trafficking and strengthen international maritime security cooperation.

During this period, project's presentations were delivered to liaison officers from participating countries, as well as to CCOPI International Operational Coordination Centre and CMCON International Centre for Research and Analysis Against Maritime Drug Trafficking personnel. Training sessions on the **IORIS platform** were also conducted to support operational cooperation.



### Search and Rescue

- In August, a missing fisherman 197 miles off Nauru was safely recovered through regional

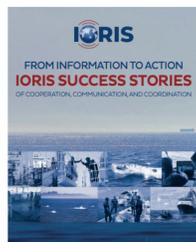
coordination on IORIS.

- On 25 September in Kenya, a crew member aboard MV *CMA CGM DA NANG* received urgent surgical treatment after safe transfer, all facilitated through IORIS.
- On 26 October, the Papua New Guinea Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre responded to a distress call from MV *Union Voyager*, successfully evacuating a crew member with acute appendicitis ashore.
- In early November, three fishermen missing for 28 days were located and rescued thanks to timely alerts and collaboration with Costa Rican authorities via the platform.
- In December, two tourists shipwrecked off Costa Rica were rescued by a local fishing vessel after IORIS-facilitated coordination with the Panamanian National Aeronaval Service, highlighting the essential role of local responders and shared maritime awareness

#### Drug Interdiction

- In late September, the Ecuadorian Coast Guard seized luxury vehicle parts and clothing worth 400,000 US \$ in collaboration with authorities in the Pacific.
- On 20 October, 632 packages of illicit substances bound for Germany were intercepted, disrupting a transcontinental trafficking route.
- In November led to seizures of high-value contraband and nearly 49 kg of narcotics, demonstrating how shared intelligence and real-time reporting enhance maritime security.

A new booklet highlighting the success stories achieved to date is now available [here](#). We would like to warmly thank all the partners we have worked with over the past years, whose collaboration and commitment have made these achievements possible.



## ENHANCING MARITIME CAPACITIES THROUGH EXERCISES

From **26 to 30 October**, EU CRIMARIO participated in the **DORELAH II** Exercise organised by **EU NAVFOR Operation ATALANTA** at the Djibouti Regional Training Centre, with the participation of the **Japanese Navy**. The exercise included a series of seminars and training sessions designed to enhance knowledge and strengthen coordination in maritime security operations. As part of the programme, EU CRIMARIO organised a tabletop exercise (TTX) on the IORIS platform, bringing together agencies from Somaliland, Somalia, Yemen and Djibouti to practise real-world information sharing and multinational cooperation.



Between **24 and 25 November**, the project organised an **IORIS Regional Tabletop Exercise in South-East Asia**, bringing together more than 30 participants from the **Philippines** and **Thailand**. Agencies from both countries worked through a series of maritime safety and security scenarios requiring close inter-

agency coordination at both national and regional levels, thereby reinforcing shared procedures and communication mechanisms.



## TRAINING

**IORIS onsite training** continued across the Indo-Pacific region, with various courses being organised in **Djibouti, Madagascar, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, Thailand, Tanzania and Tuvalu.**

For the first time, **online training activities** targeting **Latin American** agencies included Atlantic Ocean countries. In addition to **Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, and Panama,** participants from **Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, and Costa Rica** joined a refresher course.

In addition, dedicated training sessions were delivered online to EU naval operations **ATALANTA, ASPIDES, and IRINI** together with the EU Military Headquarters.

Similarly, online training was organised for the first time for private sector stakeholders—**Ambrey, Maersk Shipping and a Greek Ship**—to facilitate connectivity between naval forces and vessels, including those transiting the Red Sea.



## OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

EU CRIMARIO places strong emphasis on cooperation and coordination with other EU-funded projects and initiatives, actively seeking synergies whenever opportunities arise. This collaborative approach strengthens partnerships, promotes the sharing of expertise and best practices, and contributes to more effective and sustainable outcomes for partner countries.

*DG INTPA/EEAS*

- Between **2 and 5 December**, the EU CRIMARIO representative for the West Indian Ocean participated in the **EU Regional Maritime Security Week** held in **Nairobi, Kenya**. The week provided a comprehensive overview of EU maritime security priorities, ensuring harmonised approaches and operational synergies.
- Between **2 and 3 December**, the project Representative for Latin America took part in the **EU-Regional Maritime Security Week** held in **Nairobi, Kenya**. The week provided a comprehensive overview of EU maritime security priorities, ensuring harmonised approaches and operational synergies.

**Brazil workshop on maritime security in Lisbon, Portugal.** The workshop brought together European and Brazilian officials and experts to strengthen cooperation in the Atlantic, focusing on securing trade routes, combating illicit trafficking, and protecting undersea cables.



#### SEACOP

- Participated in **technical committee GRES Atlantic** in Sao Paolo from **25 to 28 August**



- Supported an **anti-narcotics workshop** in Costa Rica from **9 to 12 September**
- On **26–27 August**, the **Latin America Regional Representative** participated in a workshop organised under the **SEACOP VI GRES strategy** to support countries in conducting joint operations to disrupt criminal networks. The project delivered targeted IORIS training sessions to build participants' capacity in using the platform.

#### UNODC

- **Red Sea Programme** : On **3–4 November**, the Director participated in the UNODC's **Maritime Law Enforcement Dialogue** held in Nairobi, Kenya.



- **Maritime UN Sanctions Enforcement (MUSE)** project: Provided IORIS training to representatives from 20 shipping registries in Malta, many of which are outside CRIMARIO's area of responsibility. The project also financed additional AIS data for IORIS, allowing IORIS to expand effectively to the global maritime domain.

#### Global Centre for Maritime Sanctions Enforcement

- The Centre has now institutionalised IORIS globally and is attracting many more users to IORIS including the **UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen** based in Djibouti.

#### ESIWA

- On **5 November**, the Representative for Southeast Asia participated in a **Search and Rescue Conference**, coordinated by ESIWA in **Bangkok, Thailand**.

#### Senior-Level Meetings

- Between **10 and 12 September**, the Director attended the 4th edition of the **Coast Guard Global Summit**, in Rome, Italy. The event is the world's foremost platform for dialogue and cooperation among Coast Guard organisations worldwide.





- Between **30 and 31 October**, the Pacific Representative contributed to the **8th Pacific MDA Talanoa meeting**, involving Regional Security Secretaries from the Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC), the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP), the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the Pacific Fusion Centre (PFC), and the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO).



- From **12 to 14 November**, the Director attended the **8th DCOC (JA) High Level Meeting** held in Mauritius.

**Regional Workshops**

- Between **1 and 4 September**, the Director participated in the meeting of **Working Group 3** under the Djibouti Code of Conduct (JA) in Mombasa, Kenya.



- On **7–8 September**, EU CRIMARIO took part in the **Expert Group Meeting on Maritime Domain Awareness and Digital Evidence: Navigating Admissibility in Court and Human Rights Implications**, organised by UNODC in **Malé, Maldives**.
- Between **30 September and 2 October**, the Director participated in the **Search and Rescue Conference** organised by **Navy Leaders in Southampton, England**.



- On **16 October**, the EU CRIMARIO core team met with FPI, the funding partner, to illustrate the project's future activities in Paris, France, at Expertise France premises. (Implementing partner.)



- On **22–23 October**, the Director attended the **Shared Awareness and De-confliction (SHADE) Conference** in Manama, **Bahrain**. The event brought together naval forces, industry representatives, and regional partners to address maritime security challenges in the Western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden.

- Two **Pacific Round Tables** were held over the past months—one in **October** and one in **January**—focused on strengthening the use of IORIS across the Pacific region. Discussions centred on key operational aspects of IORIS, including Partnership Levels and Agreements, and National Exercises (NATEX). Participants also explored the use of open-source AI tools to enhance maritime analytics and support maritime domain awareness.



- On **27 and 28 of January** EU CRIMARIO participated to the **Fourth RSO Constructive Dialogue** on Countering People Smuggling, **Trafficking in Persons**, and Related **Transnational Crime**, organised by the Regional Support Office of the **Bali Process**.



## IORIS DEVELOPMENTS AND EVENTS

The **third IORIS Steering Committee Meeting (ISC)** was held in Manila, the Philippines, between 18 and 20 November 2026, building on previous editions that are shaping the regional governance of IORIS. Co-hosted by the National Maritime Centre, the 3<sup>rd</sup> ISC brought together **120 participants from 45 countries**, to strengthen **regional cooperation** through IORIS by sharing **operational successes**, discussing **platform developments** and future improvements, **planning training and exercises**, and addressing **legal aspects** related to digital evidence management.



During these months, **IORIS** was further **upgraded** (October 2025) to strengthen the monitoring and management of **Vessels of Interest (VOI)**. The update introduced a dedicated VOI lexicon, allowing users to tag AIS markers, record the rationale, and assign threat categories and levels. The AIS layer was also linked to the messaging function, enabling vessels to be connected to operational messages and supporting interactive information exchange among Community Area members, thereby enhancing shared situational awareness and coordination.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

The **4th IORIS Steering Committee High-Level Meeting** will take place in Kenya from 9 to 11 June 2026.

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