The role of France in the elaboration of the Integrated Maritime Policy of the European Union

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Summary

Based on Europeanisation and regulatory competition as conceptual framework, this qualitative research aims at contributing to the understanding of the EU policy-making process. It explores an aspect of Europeanisation which is rather rarely the object of present research: the role Member States play in the EU policy-making process. This thesis is a study of the elaboration of the EU IMP (Integrated Maritime Policy). The research objective is to find out the way individual Member States influenced its policy-making process in order to upload their ideas and preferences. With France as case-study Member State, this thesis researches how France has influenced the development of the EU IMP since it appeared on the EU agenda in 2005. The policy-making process of the IMP has been divided in different stages leading to the elaboration of the policy, and the strategies of France have been identified for each of them. The research also proposes an evaluation of the influence of France to see if the promotion of its interests and ideas over the whole process has born its fruits.

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Chapter 1: Introduction, research question and objective

Since 2005 the EU is active in the domain of maritime affairs and has been working on an Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) for the Union. This latter was anchored on the political scene in 2007 with the publication of the Blue Book for an Integrated Maritime Policy for the EU. This objective of the IMP is summed up as following in the Blue Book: "The Commission's vision is for an integrated maritime policy that covers all aspects of our relationship with the oceans and seas. This innovative and holistic approach will provide a coherent policy framework that will allow for the optimal development of all sea-related activities in a sustainable manner" (European Commission 2007b p. 4). Therefore, the goal of the IMP is to coordinate all sea-related sectoral policies and guarantee a sustainable use of the sea. But this policy is the subject of discussion. Indeed the competences of the EU in this field are not clearly defined. The IMP does not have a clear legal basis in the Treaties. As a result, some Member States argue that maritime policy falls within the competence of the national level. This discussion about the legal foundation of the IMP has been impacting its development and policy-making process.

In that context, this thesis proposes a study of how the IMP was designed, more precisely it explores the way Member States made their voice heard during the policy-making process of the IMP. The research uses Europeanisation as an explanatory framework. Europeanisation describes the relations between the Member States and the EU as an interactive process. It is usually conceptualized as a "two-way process" (Börzel 2002 p. 193). As a consequence, it has a downloading and an uploading dimension: The EU institutions on the one side and the Member States on the other, influence each other. As Héritier put it: "Member States are keen to transfer their own regulatory traditions to the European level and the Commission itself has a vested interest in expanding regulatory activities" (Héritier 1996 p. 159). This thesis focuses on the uploading dimension of the process, in other words on the "bottom-up pressures" (Featherstone and Kazamias 2001 p. 6) that took place during the policy-making process of the EU IMP.

The uploading of domestic ideas or policies is not an easy task. Indeed the EU policy process has been described as a "multi-level, multi-arena game" (Richardson 2006 p. 7). This implies that it is the playground of a wide variety of actors trying to upload their preferences to the EU level, leading consequently to a "clash in the European arena" (Héritier 1996 p. 149). The different policy traditions of Member States and all sorts of diverse interests are brought together during the phase of the elaboration of EU policies. That is the reason why the EU policy process can be described with terms such as "contest" and "competition". This idea of rivalry is reinforced by the nature of the EU system: "The EU does not have an elected government with a policy programme based on the voter's support and supported by community-wide parties with a majority in parliament" (Ibid. p. 164). Therefore this system keeps the door open to the possibility of influencing directly the EU policy-making process and makes it 'permeable' to influences from all sides, all actors having a chance to influence it. A quotation of Eichener concerning the EU Commission, the only EU institution with the right to submit proposals, sums up the situation as following: "The Commission officials listen (in the committee as in informal preconsultations) to everybody, but are free to choose

whose ideas and proposals they adopt" (Eichener 1995 p. 54; cited by Héritier 1996 p. 152). This quotation underlines the fact that the EU Commission makes its choice in the market of ideas: The Commission has "considerable latitude in choosing from among the policy options of the European 'policy market'" (Héritier 1996 p. 153). This shows the challenge actors are facing in order to make their voice heard. Member States represent one category of actors in this complex policy process.

The objective of this research is to investigate the role Member States played in the EU policy-making process of the IMP. It does not need to be proven anymore that they play a role in the EU process: Wallace explains that "national governments provide much of the operating life-blood of the EU" through their deep implication in all stages of the EU policy-making process (Wallace 2010 p. 89). Since this process is competitive, as shown in the previous paragraph, the research goal is to find out how Member States have influenced and shaped the elaboration of the IMP in a way that fits their interests. This research wants to identify the strategies they used in order to upload their ideas during all the "complex negotiations" (Radaelli 2002 p. 112) taking place during the elaboration of the IMP.

This research objective required the author to make choices in order to formulate a manageable research question. The Member State considered for this research is France. It is through the example of France that the influence of Member States on the development of the IMP will be explored. More details concerning the choice of this case-study Member State are to be found in the chapter dedicated to the methodology.

Now that all elements of this research have been presented, the research question can be formulated:

How has France influenced the development of the EU IMP?

To answer it, the research will go through six sub-research questions:

1. *What is the present state of progress of the EU IMP?*

This question is descriptive and will be answered in the second chapter. It provides background knowledge about the IMP: the reasons for putting it on the EU agenda, the milestones of its development, and its originality.

2. *How can the EU policy-making process be conceptualized?*

The third chapter will answer this question by setting out the theoretical framework of this research. A conceptual framework has been elaborated in order to be tested by the empirical analysis.

3. *What are the key Member States in the process of developing the EU IMP?*

This is the first empirical question out of four, which will be answered in the fifth chapter. This step is necessary for the research because it made it possible to choose the case-study Member State.

4. *What were the strategies of France in shaping the EU IMP and uploading French ideas to the EU policy?*

This empirical question is focused on the case-study Member State. The strategies used by France during each stage of the policy-making process of the IMP will be identified.

5. *In how far have French initial ideas been taken up?*

The aim of this question is to find out in how far French initial ideas were reflected on the EU level. This will be done from the perspective of the French actor.

6. *In how far does the unique nature of the IMP impact its policy-making process?*

The IMP is different from other EU policies, as it will be explained in the context (Chapter 2). In relation to this discussion, the conclusive chapter will deal with the consequences of this originality on the policy-making process. The specificities of the IMP policy-making process will be presented.

The originality of the IMP accounts for the societal and scientific relevance of this research. As it will be explained in more detail in Chapter 2, the competences of the EU in the maritime field are not clearly defined. Indeed, the EU action in this policy area cannot be justified with a legal basis and often faces discussions about its relevance. This issue makes the case of the IMP particularly interesting. In such a confused environment, it is interesting to see how Member States manage to influence the policy process. Next to this, another argument for the relevance of this research lies in the unusual objective of the IMP. The IMP is different from all other EU policies because it aims at doing something others do not do: It integrates. With the IMP, the EU does not follow its traditional sectoral approach, but a cross-sectoral one. As a consequence, it is interesting to explore how the policy-making process of such a policy took place, and how the challenge of integration can be taken up. Talking now more broadly, the focus on the uploading perspective proposed by this thesis is particularly relevant since the regulatory activities of the EU are expanding. With this expansion of EU legislation and enhancement of the power of the Commission, having access to the policy-making process in order to influence it by injecting national ideas is crucial for the Member States.

Chapter 2: Policy context

2.1. Importance of maritime areas

This chapter draws the context of emergence of the maritime issue and describes its historical evolution. It aims at answering the first sub-research question ("What is the present of progress of the EU IMP?"). The purpose of this chapter is to identify the reasons for putting the IMP on the EU agenda as well as the milestones of its development.

To better understand the relevance of this research topic, it is necessary to describe the significance of the maritime field for the EU. The capital place of maritime areas is to be observed in different domains.

The most obvious domain is geography. Over two thirds of the EU borders are coastal (Schäfer 2009), 22 out of the 27 EU Member States have a coastline (European Commission 2013c), see Figure 1.
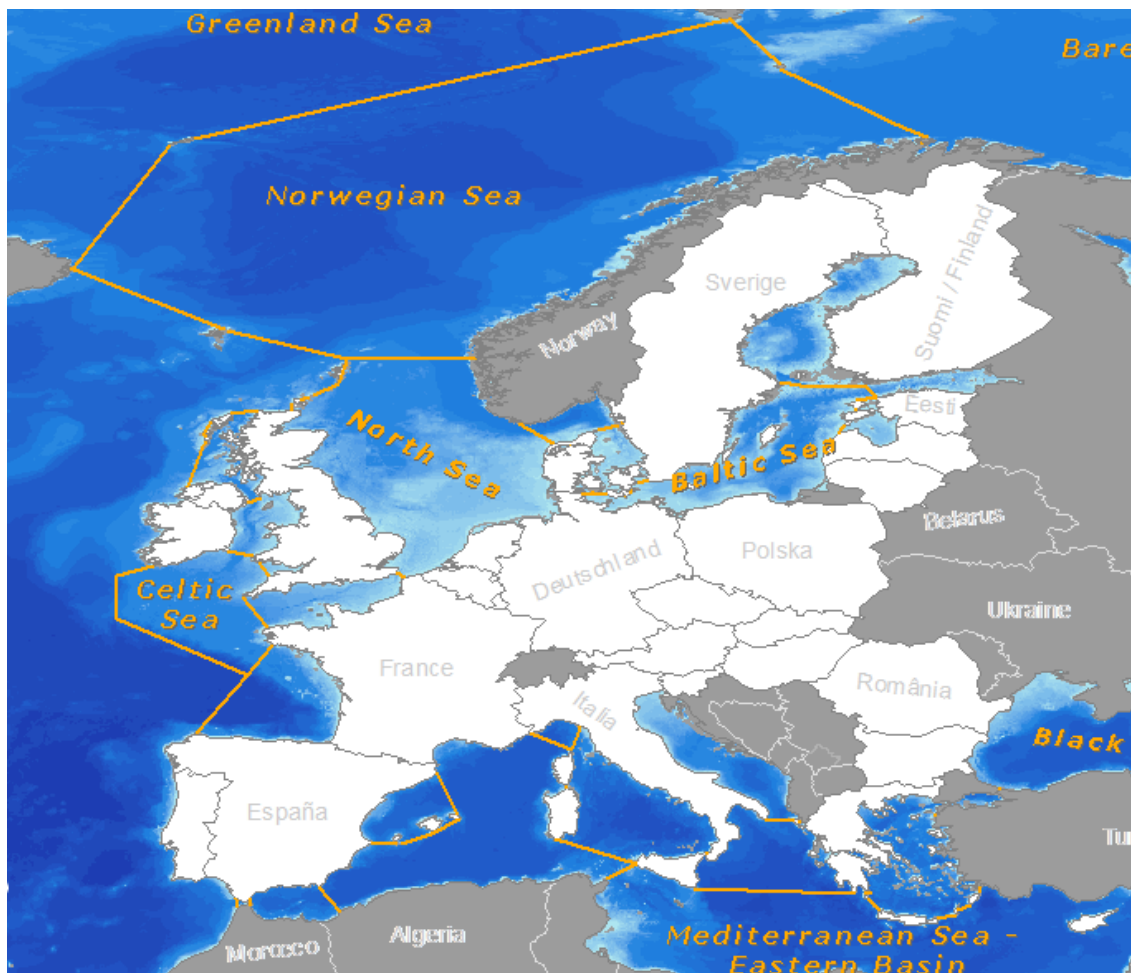

Figure 1: The EU coastline (taken from (European Commission 2012b))

In terms of length, the EU coastline is "7 times as long as the US' and 4 times as long as Russia's" (European Commission 2013c). Considering the surface area, "the total maritime area under the jurisdiction of EU Member States is larger than the EU total land area"

(European Commission 2011b p. 8). Also, the EU has the world's largest maritime territory (European Commission 2013c). The undeniable importance of maritime areas is also confirmed by demographic figures. Indeed, in 2008 the EU coastal regions accounted for 41% of the EU population (Eurostat 2012). Moreover the population in maritime areas grows faster than the EU average (European Commission 2008 p. 16).

From an economic point of view, maritime regions have a significant economic impact and play a key role in the competitiveness of the EU. Generally speaking, they account for 40% of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the EU (Ibid. p. 5). 90% of EU external trade and 40% of its internal trade pass through the EU ports (Ibid. p. 11). The amount of passengers is high as well: more than 400 million passengers embark or disembark in the EU ports each year (European Commission 2011b p. 7). In many maritime domains, the EU is world leader or has a very good ranking in the international competition. That is the case for tourism: "According to the World Tourism Organisation, the Mediterranean is the region that receives most tourists in the world" (Ibid. p. 6). In terms of fisheries and aquaculture production, the EU is the fourth largest producer in the world (Ibid. p. 7).

Judging from the geographical and economic importance of maritime areas, it appears obvious that seas deserve more political attention.

2.2. Reasons of the emergence of the IMP as a political issue

The attention of the political arena for maritime areas started to rise a few decades ago, when the international community became aware of the increasing pressure on maritime areas. This pressure is the result of the cumulated effects of two elements.

First of all, the number of activities taking place in maritime areas is getting more and more important. In the study on the economic effects of Maritime Spatial Planning of 2010, the European Commission listed all maritime activities taking place in European seas: dumping of dredged materials, fisheries and aquaculture, marine aggregates (sand and gravel extraction), maritime services (such as research and development, ship supply), maritime works (dredging and ship wreck dismantling), nautical cables and pipelines, navy and coastguard, offshore activities (oil and gas exploration, carbon capture and storage for example), offshore supply (such as the construction of platforms), recreational boating, renewable energy, shipping, and tourism (diving, recreational fishing) (European Commission 2010c p. 9). Among all these activities, some have grown substantially, and others have recently appeared. Shipping is a good example of a rather traditional activity which has been constantly rising. Globalisation has led to an increase of maritime traffic and "despite the current economic downturn, more ships were carrying more goods than has been the case in the past 20 years", as the European Maritime Safety Agency states (European Maritime Safety Agency 2009 p. 2). The increase can even be noticed from one year to the next: In 2008, the movements in ports increased by 5.8% in comparison to 2007 (Ibid.). At the same time, new activities have appeared and are now in a boom. The best example is the development of offshore wind farms. In 2010, the offshore wind energy accounted for 0.23%

of the total maritime value added in Europe, and it is expected to account for 11% by 2020 and for 22% by 2030 (European Commission 2010 p. 9). This wide range of activities leads to a conflict of uses (European Commission 2008 p.2). The most famous is probably the one between traditional fishing and wind farms: Wind farms are considered a threat by fishers since they intrude in their fishing area and can cause dangerous navigational situations.

The second element that contributed to the growing awareness for maritime areas is the environmental issue. It is known that seas host a great diversity of marine life and play a major role in the stability of climate. For example, meadows of seagrass sequester carbon, produce oxygen and represent a nursery area for the marine fauna (European Commission 2011b p. 7). But marine ecosystems are threatened by several dangers, caused by human maritime activities. In its report "Seas for life" in 2011, DG Environment examines the consequences of those activities. The example of shipping is revealing. It does not only emit greenhouse gases but can also damage ecosystems. Firstly it causes biological disturbance by introducing non-indigenous species that are going to spread in new areas and this way change the species composition (European Commission 2011a p. 32). Secondly, the risk of accidents, pollution and oil spills exists, with a long-term disastrous impact on the development of sea plants and fauna. Concerning pollution of seas in general, the case of the North Sea speaks for itself: In 40% of the locations monitored by a quality status report in 2010, an unacceptable level of lead was found (OSPAR Commission 2010). To mention the effects of another marine activity, fishing sometimes results in over-exploitation: According to DG Environment, "88% of Europe's fish stocks are being fished beyond their maximum sustainable yield and 30% are being fished beyond safe biological levels, which means that they may not be able to replenish" (European Commission 2011b p. 10). The quality status report also refers to an assessment of species and habitats, and the results are alarming: Only 10% of the habitats assessed and 2% of the species were in good condition (Ibid.).

This description of the current situation accounts for the awareness of the necessity to give a political answer to the maritime issue in order to put an end to this uncoordinated use of the sea. Political actors have realized that it is time to coordinate the different uses and the policies that manage them, such as transport, fisheries, energy, and tourism. As the European Commission stated, the present situation makes "the current fragmented decision-making in maritime affairs inadequate, and demands a more collaborative and integrated approach" (European Commission 2008 p. 5).

Having analysed the reasons of the appearance of seas on the political agenda, the following section will be devoted to the progressive wave of political actions in this field.

2.3. Historical evolution of the maritime issue on the political scene

2.3.1. The international level as initiator

The sea first appeared as a political issue on the international level. Indeed Europe was no forerunner since the first IMP was implemented in Australia: "Although fairly new at the

European level, MSP (Maritime Spatial Planning) originally started as a management approach for nature conservation in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act, already in 1975" (Schäfer and Barale 2011 p. 238). This Act established an Authority responsible for the control and development of the Park and set up several strategies to reach its goal. First, it provided for the zoning of the Park. Second, it focused on the compatibility of economic activities with the environment: It "regulates, including by a system of permissions, use of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in ways consistent with ecosystem-based management and the principles of ecologically sustainable use" (Australian Government ComLaw, undated). The third strategy was the establishment of a collaboration process "with traditional owners in management of marine resources" as well as with the Queensland government (Ibid.). Even if this Act did not require international cooperation, it is the first initiative in maritime policy.

Following this first experience, international conventions were signed. One of the most important is the UNCLOS, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea concluded at Montego Bay in 1982. Its preamble says "the States Parties to this Convention [are] conscious that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole" (United Nations 2013). The Convention promotes the idea of an integrated vision of the sea. But little progress was made. Twenty years later, the Johannesburg Summit tackled this topic once again, made it become a public policy object and set up a working group on seas and oceans to promote their sustainable management (Saliou 2008 p. 253).

2.3.2. Reaction of the EU level

This favorable international context aroused the attention of the EU and resulted in "turning a world issue into a European issue" (Saliou 2008 p. 4).

The European Commission, as representative of the EU on the global stage, took part in international debates and fora. It is also a member of important international institutions in this field, for example the UNESCO's International Oceanographic Commission (Ibid. p. 5). This "new way of looking at maritime issues" emerging during international fora was little by little transmitted to European political circles (Ibid.).

The next step was reached when the Commission put the maritime issue on the EU agenda and started publishing documents. The Commission is the institution which possesses the right of initiative in the EU. It proposes legislation in the areas defined by the Treaties manages and implements EU policies. The Commission's intervention in maritime issues is based on the Lisbon and Gothenburg Strategies, of respectively 2000 and 2001 (Ibid. p. 10): The EU has to reconcile the objectives of economic growth and sustainability (Europa 2007). As the maritime field is concerned by this problematic of compatibility between economy and sustainability, the IMP was declared as one of the objectives of the Commission for the period 2005-2009 (Europa 2008).

In 2006 the European Commission published its first document concerning the IMP: The Maritime Policy Green Paper entitled "Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European Vision of the Oceans and Seas". In the EU terminology, a Green Book is a discussion document that includes propositions and ideas on a precise topic and aims at stimulating a debate or a consultation process (European Commission 2012a). This Green Book highlights the importance of the maritime sector for the EU economy and enumerates the pressures on the marine environment. Its aim is to promote a competitive and environment-friendly maritime industry (Europa 2007). In order to achieve these aims, the Green Book proposes new concepts such as a new European marine data network to improve the harmonization and the access to the data for a better control of the range of activities. It also proposes to develop spatial planning principles so that the coexistence of different activities is guaranteed (Ibid.). Regarding maritime governance, the key word is the "integration of policies" (Ibid.). Such a cross-cutting approach of the seas is a challenge for the EU since the maritime domain is tackled by different sectoral EU policies like the environment policy or the Fisheries policy.

The adoption of the Maritime Policy Green Book launched a one-year consultation process from June 2006 to June 2007 which gathered comments of stakeholders (Ibid.). It was a success since "both the scope and depth of the participation in the consultation process are unprecedented" (European Commission 2007c p. 2). Indeed, the Commission received contributions not only from European institutions and national and regional parliaments, but also from citizens, all kinds of stakeholders, individual companies and non-governmental organizations. Following this success proving the great interest for the IMP, the EU Commission published its second document: The Blue Book for an Integrated Maritime Policy for the EU in 2007. A Blue Book is a concrete proposal from the Commission for an EU action (European Commission 2012a). The Blue Book presents the vision of the Commission for an IMP and is accompanied by an Action Plan enumerating a set of actions. The Blue Book is the founding document of the IMP. It identifies the three cross-cutting tools of the IMP necessary "to help policy makers and economic and environmental actors to join up their policies, interlink their activities and optimize the use of the marine and coastal space in an environmentally sustainable manner" (EUR-Lex 2013a). These three tools are: maritime surveillance, maritime spatial planning, and a comprehensive source of data and information (European Commission 2007b p. 5).

Since the IMP started to take form after the publication of the Blue Book, a new department was created within the Commission. Indeed, the EU Commission is divided into several departments, called DGs, Directorates-General, each of them being responsible for a particular policy area (European Commission 2013b). As mentioned before, the maritime domain is handled by several sectoral policies, which means that several departments are competent. In line with its declarations about policy integration, the Commission put an end to this situation by creating DG Mare, the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, in March 2008 (De Cacqueray 2011 p. 94), which is in charge of the IMP.

After the publication of the Blue Book, documents concerning the three tools of the IMP identified in the Blue Book were published. The first one concerns the tool spatial planning

and is called Roadmap for Maritime Spatial Planning and published in 2008. The second tool for the IMP introduced by the Blue Book is maritime surveillance. In 2009, the Commission published a Communication entitled "Towards the integration of maritime surveillance" in order to improve maritime safety and security as well as the control on maritime activities (Europa 2010b). Improving knowledge of the seas is the last tool identified in the Blue Book. The Commission published a communication entitled "Marine Knowledge 2020: Marine data and observation for smart and sustainable growth" in 2010. Its aim is to put an end to the fragmentation of the current marine observation system in order to create a common and integrated environment that guarantees free access to marine data and more dialogue between the Member States' data centers (Europa 2010a)

Next to the concept of policy integration, the environment is the other constituent of the IMP. The Maritime Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) was published in 2008 and is considered the environmental pillar of the IMP. Its goal is to "achieve good environmental status of EU's marine waters by 2020" (European Commission 2011b p. 13). To that end, three pillars are put forward: the protection of ecosystems, the sustainable use of resources and the cooperation at EU and regional level (Ibid. p. 12).

2.3.3. The EU IMP: an unusual EU policy

Before going any further, it is necessary to have a closer look at the nature of the IMP. As already mentioned in the introduction, the IMP is a special case. It has in common with other EU policies that it is managed on the basis of the Community method which is "the EU's usual method of decision-making, in which the Commission makes a proposal to the Council and Parliament who then debate it, propose amendments and eventually adopt it as EU law" (Europa 2013c). The intervention of the EU institutions takes place within the frame of the Treaties, which define their competences and areas of action. Judging from what has been described in the previous section, this is the method used for the IMP since the Commission has seized this issue and published documents. But despite this, the IMP is not like every other EU policy: Even if the use of the Community method supposes an EU competence, the IMP does not have a clear legal basis. Indeed the IMP is not mentioned in the Treaties, unlike other EU policies which are clearly mentioned in an article. As a result, the EU action in maritime policy is based on several articles. In a document dated from 2010, the Commission states the following: "The EU's Integrated Maritime Policy has no explicit legal basis in the Treaty. However, it covers many EU sectoral policies with a bearing on the seas and coasts such as fisheries, freedom, security and justice, transport, industry, territorial cohesion, research, environment, energy, and tourism. That is why the proposed legislative act is based on Article 43(2), Article 74 and 77(2), Article 91(1) and 100(2), Article 173(3), Article 175, Article 188, Article 192(1), Article 194(2) and Article 195(2)" (EUR-Lex 2013b). This situation results from the unusual aim of the IMP: It is not a classic policy because it integrates several sectoral policies. The IMP does not follow the traditional sectoral approach. In the usual sectoral approach, each DG is responsible for a particular policy area and manages it according to its competences defined in the Treaties. But the challenge of

integration creates complexity on the EU level: With the several DGs involved, it is not clear who is competent for what. This confusion appears when considering the documents concerning the IMP presented in the previous section: While the Green and Blue Books and the documents dealing with the three tools of the IMP (Maritime Spatial Planning, Maritime Surveillance, Marine Knowledge) belong to DG Mare, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive belongs to DG Environment. Therefore, maritime affairs seem to be the territory of several DGs.

The specificity of the IMP does not only trigger confusion about competences on the EU level, but also about the share of competences between the EU and the national level. Indeed the theme of subsidiarity is recurrent in the discussions. Subsidiarity "is the principle whereby the Union does not take action (except in the areas that fall within its exclusive competence), unless it is more effective than action taken at national, regional or local level" (Europa 2013b). Since the IMP does not have a legal basis, Member States argue that the EU should only take action if the national level cannot effectively undertake action. Towards this delicate topic of subsidiarity, the Commission justifies its action in the maritime field by explaining that it is complementary with the actions undertaken on the national level: "Action at Union level aimed at implementing the Integrated Maritime Policy would not negatively affect similar measures taken in Member States or regions. Rather, cross-sectoral actions taken at various level of government would mutually complement and enhance one another" (EUR-Lex 2013b). The Commission also puts forward the argument of the necessity of the EU action which will bring added-value: "Action at Union level in the field of Maritime Policy is likely to produce clear benefits by reason of its scale and effects, compared with activities and actions pursued only at the level of Member States and regions" (Ibid.).

Taking into account this delicate context, the IMP is still a 'soft' policy: No legally binding EU document forces the Member States to implement it. But a first step has been made on the way to formalization: The Commission published on 12.03.2013 a "proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management" (European Commission 2013d). This draft directive "aims to establish a Common European framework for maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management" (European Commission 2013a). In order to implement the directive, Member States will have to "develop maritime spatial plans and integrated coastal management strategies, and establish appropriate cross-border cooperation among them" (Europa 2013a).

To sum up about the EU IMP, Figure 2 presents the major milestones in its development and illustrates the competence question between DGs in an analytical way.
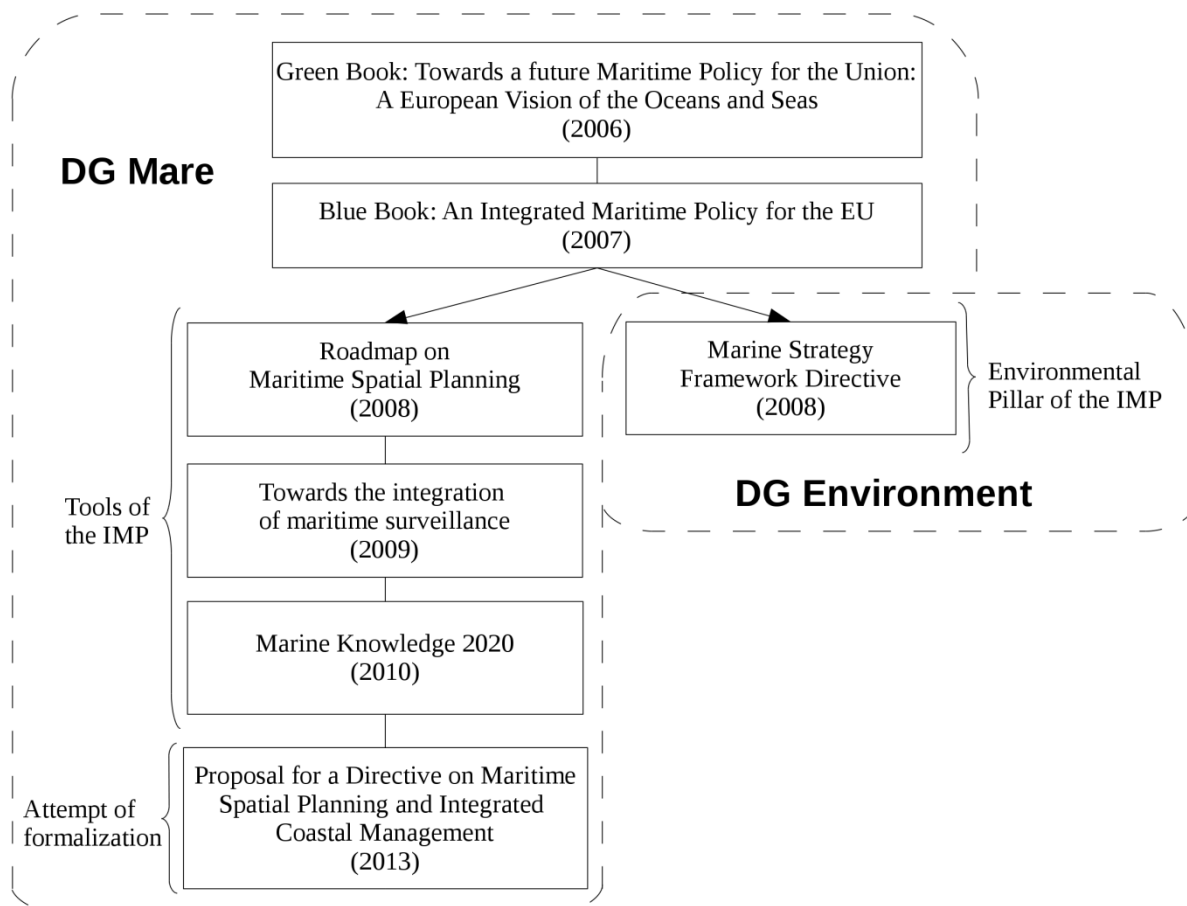
Figure 2: Overview of the EU documents on the IMP

Next to this discussion about the specificities of the IMP and the competence question, this section proved that the impetus launched on the international level has been followed on the EU level. Let us switch now to the national one to see the extent of the progress there.

2.3.4. The current situation in the EU Member States: an uneven progress

The initiative of the international scene has almost exclusively had an impact on the European level: the call for an integrated management of the sea formulated in the Law of the Sea of 1982 went unheeded in most of the countries (Saliou 2008 p. 254). Indeed, the Progress Report on the IMP published by the Commission in 2009 notices that "at the time of the Green Paper, only a few initiatives for integrated approaches in Member States existed. Two countries, France and the Netherlands, reported having the administrative structure in place to organize policy coordination of sea-related matters. Portugal had then already initiated concrete work towards an ocean strategy" (European Commission 2009b p. 8). Consequently, the key words for characterizing the current state of the IMP on the national level are probably 'diversity' and 'disparity' between EU Member States. The same observation is made a few years later in a progress report on MSP published by the Commission in 2010. Even if the report observes that "significant developments on MSP in many Member States"

have taken place and that there is "a general trend towards an increasing use of MSP" (European Commission 2010b p. 7), the situation in EU Member States is still very diverse: "Different administrative structures and legal systems give rise to a variety of policies, ranging from no policy or legislation, through policies on ICZM that also reach out to sea, and partial use of MSP, all the way to full MSP application in the territorial sea and/or EEZ" (Ibid.).

The reasons accounting for this great variety of policies are located in national particularities. According to Luis Suarez de Vivero, the progress made depends on geopolitical and economic factors, such as the size of the exclusive economic zone, the maritime volume of employment, the value added and the gross national product (Suarez de Vivero 2012 p. 20). He argues that the progress of countries in maritime policy depends on the nature of the maritime sector, whether it is powerful and innovative or based on a still traditional maritime economy (Ibid. p. 18). These elements of the national framework determine the maritime focus of a state and impact "the course of action that can be chosen regarding the management of marine space to an enormous extent" (Ibid. p. 24). Taking into account the discussion about the competence question, the political structure of the Member States also explain the diversity of situations between them. Making progress is easier for those who already have an administrative structure in charge of coordinating.

This asymmetrical situation provides the Commission with a further justification for an EU action in this field (European Commission 2010b p. 11).

To sum up about the policy context, this chapter explained the geographical, economic and environmental relevance of the maritime field. It gave an overview of the different EU documents that constitute the framework of the IMP on the EU level. It also pointed out that the IMP is different from all other EU policies. Indeed, it does not have a clear legal basis in the Treaties, and its objective of policy coordination does not follow the usual sectoral approach. This is an important element which should be kept in mind.

Chapter 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The influence of France on the policy-making process of the IMP is being researched, using Europeanisation as explanatory framework. The Europeanisation perspective is useful for this research: It provides a frame explaining the existence of a bottom-up pressure which influences the EU policy-making process.
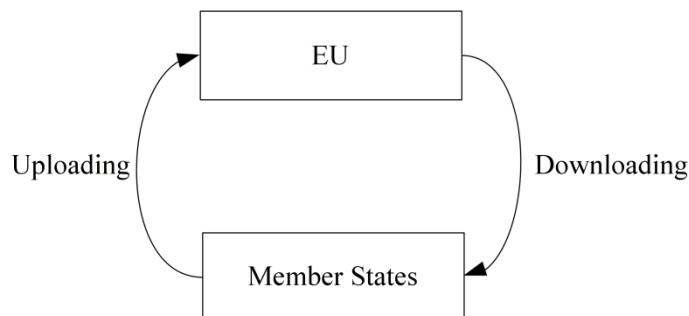
3.1. Europeanisation

3.1.1. Definition of the concept of Europeanisation

Europeanisation is a fashionable concept which has been increasingly used in the last years (Featherstone 2003 p. 5). There are a lot of definitions of Europeanisation, but the most complete and recognized one is Radaelli's: The concept of Europeanisation consists of "processes of (a) construction (b) diffusion (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things', and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures, and public policies" (Radaelli cited by Featherstone 2003 p. 17). In this perspective, Europeanisation is defined as a downloading process since the EU shapes the ways of thinking and doing of its Member States. There is an abundant literature on this phenomenon describing in detail the way it works. Indeed research distinguished the different mechanisms through which the EU changes the domestic framework (See Knill and Lehmkuhl 1999; cited by Featherstone 2003 p. 14). The domains of Europeanisation have been identified in order to know precisely what domestic elements are europeanised (See Radaelli 2002 p. 112). Also, the effects of the downloading process have been assessed and the factors accounting for its variable impact on Member States were discovered (See Radaelli 2002. p. 116 and Wishlade et al. 2003 p. 4). The focus of most books and articles on the top-down process of Europeanisation is to the detriment of the other dimension of Europeanisation.

3.1.2. The neglected bottom-up process

Another dimension of Europeanisation has been identified. It has been less researched until now but it is as important as the downloading process. Indeed the common definition of Europeanisation and the current state of research present an important shortcoming: They consider this process only in a downward perspective and do not take into account the exchanges between the different levels (Saliou 2008 p. 257). This top-down conceptualization "has been criticized for ignoring the interactive nature of Europeanisation through mutual influence between EU and domestic institutions" (Dühr et al. 2010 p. 105). It appears too restrictive to imagine that the EU is an entity existing per se. A quote of Wishlade explains clearly this fact: "The EU does not exist independently out there over and above the Member States. The EU is also the product of Member States actions" (Wishlade et al. 2003 p. 7). Therefore it would be missing a part of the whole process to imagine the Member States being inactive: "Member States are not merely passive recipients of EU legislation, but also try to

influence or shape EU policy to suit their own interests" (Ibid. p. 5). As a result, Europeanisation is far from being a one-way-process. Featherstone argues that it could be defined as a "two-level bargaining structure" (Featherstone and Radaelli 2003 p. 9), as Figure 3 shows.

Figure 3: The Europeanisation process

This implies that negotiations take place between the EU and the Member States. Member states play a role when it comes to elaborating EU policies: "This complex interpenetration between the 'domestic' and the 'European' level creates a variety of opportunities for actors to exploit" (Ibid.).

There are several reasons for Member States to influence the EU policy. First, they want to promote their ideas or model in order to see them reflected in EU policies. Second, Member States would like to minimize the costs generated by the downloading of European norms. Börzel summed up the argument as following: "The better the fit between European and domestic policies, the lower the implementation costs at the national level" (Börzel 2002 p. 194). Since Member States have different regulatory traditions and economic interests (Héritier 1996 p. 150), it is crucial for them to promote their ideas so that EU policies are similar to their domestic policies. According to Börzel, another reason for uploading originates in the awareness that some issues cannot be solved at the national level and need to be dealt with on the European one (Börzel 2002 p. 196). This is related to the notion of transnationality of some issues. Indeed, some issues cross national borders and therefore cannot be tackled efficiently by Member States alone and require cooperation on the European one, such as environmental issues. In that case, Member States can encourage the EU to put an issue on the agenda so that all Member States can benefit from an EU action.

This section shows that the influence between EU and Member States is mutual. For several reasons, Member States do influence the policy-making process so that the EU policies fit their interests. Taking an uploading perspective, the following section will describe the EU policy-making process.

3.2. The EU policy-making process

3.2.1. The EU policy-making process: The result of a contest

By taking a closer look at this uploading dimension, it appears that the EU policy-making process can be compared to a competition between several actors trying to upload their ideas or policies. As Young explains, all policy-making processes result from interactivity between actors: "Wherever policy-making occurs – within states, in the EU, or in the wider international arena – it involves the interaction of multiple actors that want different things and bring different resources and capabilities to the policy process" (Young; cited by Wallace 2010 p. 48-49). The EU is no exception and the words used to describe its policy process range from "complexity" to "messiness" (Richardson 2006 p. 6). The EU is like an "open market for policy ideas and frames" (Ibid. p. 25). This means that a wide range of actors hold knowledge and expertise, and in this way are also involved in the elaboration of the EU policies. That phenomenon results from several elements. Watson argues that the number of actors has risen in parallel with the increase of the powers transferred to the EU by the treaties: "National organizations have gradually realized that they need to argue their case in the corridors of Brussels, Luxembourg, and Strasbourg" (Bomberg 2003 p. 96). Next to this, Nugent has identified several factors that favor the multiplicity of actors in the EU policy-making process: "the informal nature of much EU policy-making; the multiplicity of interests at EU level that are anxious to have access to policy-makers; the highly technical (…) nature of much EU policy content; the powerful policy positions held by senior officials, especially in the Commission and especially in the early stages of policymaking; and the heavy reliance of officials on outside interests for information and advice about policy content and policy implementation" (Nugent 2003 p. 491). The last point shows that "the Commission deliberately employs networking as a strategy" (Faludi 2002 p. 903), letting the door open to the expression of interests. To sum up, the EU policy-process is loosely structured and enables the existence of alternative views of an issue. Peters argues that "in such a relatively unstructured situation as exists within the EU there is an even more pronounced need for policy entrepreneurs than there is in other political settings" (Peters 2001 p. 80).

As a result, a relevant theoretical approach for analyzing the EU policy process is the policy network model. Networks are defined as "arenas in which decision-makers and interests come together to mediate differences and search for solutions" (Nugent 2003 p. 490). This theory applies to situations "where power is dispersed" (Rosamond; cited by Cini 2007 p. 127), which is the case in the EU policy-making process since it is not only the result of the interaction between EU institutions but also with a lot of different actors. The EU policy process bases on the mobilization of a large number of actors (Richardson 2006 p. 6) with divergent interests.

This situation has major consequences on the EU legislation. Héritier has identified two of them (Héritier 1996 p. 159). The first one is the expansion of the EU legislation. Indeed, it is in the interest of both the Member States and the EU Commission to develop more EU legislation. On the one hand, Member States are willing to upload their regulatory traditions to the EU level, as explained in the previous section, and on the other hand, the Commission

is interested in extending or deepening its regulatory activities "in order to enhance its own power" (Ibid. p. 152). The combination of those interests leads to an "ever-increasing and thickening network of European regulations" (Ibid. p. 159). The second consequence of the regulatory competition is that the EU regulation is a "policy patchwork" (Ibid. p. 149). Princen explains that "the relative importance of different (types of) stakeholders has differed between cases, with a Member State government sometimes taking the initiative to place an issue onto the EU agenda, or sometimes the Commission or the European Parliament, or interest groups" (Princen 2009 p. 161). This means that none of the actors involved in the EU policy-making process constantly has the upper hand to impose its regulatory style. As a consequence, the elaboration of EU policies is the result of a mix of ideas, models and styles. Wishlade argues that "no one state can consistently have its preferred model adopted at the EU level" (Wishlade et al. 2003 p. 7) and Héritier explains that "one European measure may be modelled after the regulatory style of one Member State, while the next follows the regulatory approach of another" (Héritier 1996 p. 149).

This section showed that a lot of "competing interests" (Bomberg p. 90) take part in the elaboration of EU policies. Based on this framework, the following section will present the strategies Member States use during the policy-making process in order to make their voice heard.

3.2.2. Policy cycle and Member States' strategies

In order to identify the Member States' strategies to influence the EU policy-making process, this study is based on the policy cycle framework. This section will give a brief presentation of the policy cycle before identifying the Member States' strategies. Since the EU policy-making process is characterized by competition, it is the result of "a process of interest accommodation" between actors (Héritier 1996 p. 150). For each stage of the policy process, the "coordination pattern" (Ibid. p. 149) will be defined in this section as well.

3.2.2.1. The policy cycle

The policy cycle is not specific to the EU, but it is a useful analytical framework for this thesis because it divides the policy-making process in stages. Later on, the strategies of Member States will be identified stage by stage.

The policy-making process is a very complex phenomenon but for simplification purposes, it is considered a "policy cycle" composed of five stages (Young; cited by Wallace et al. 2010 p. 46). The first stage is the agenda-setting, that is, when the decision is taken to put an issue on the political agenda. This stage is followed by the policy formulation phase which proposes different courses of action to solve the problem. One of these problem-solving approaches is chosen and voted during the policy decision stage, which is the third stage. Next stage is the implementation: The policy chosen is put into effect. The last step is the evaluation of the implemented policy in order to have feedback about its intended and unintended effects (Wallace 2010 p. 46). Figure 4 helps visualizing this cycle.
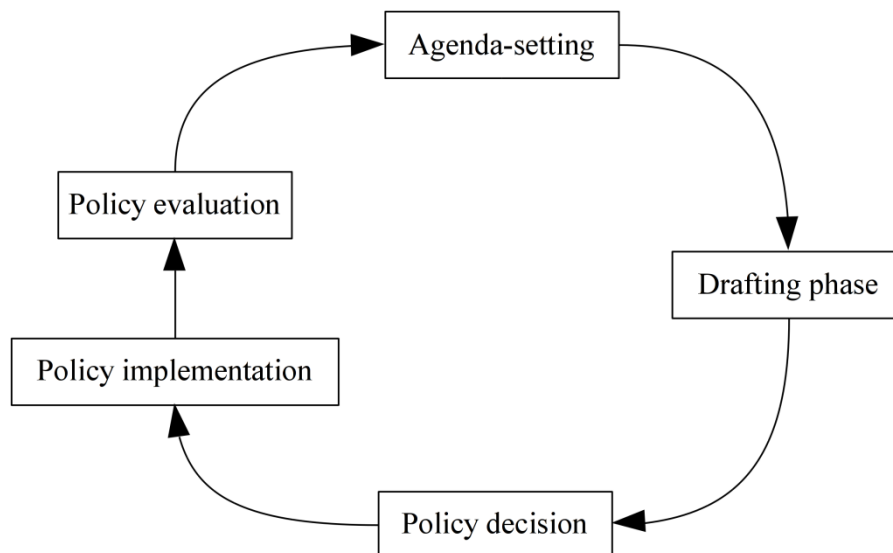
Figure 4: Policy cycle

Since the focus of this research is to find out how France influences the elaboration of the EU IMP, the stages that are relevant for this thesis are the three first ones: agenda-setting, policy formulation and policy decision. Indeed these stages are those which lead to the elaboration of a policy. The following sections will deal with them one by one and identify the Member States' strategies in each of them.

3.2.2.2. The agenda-setting phase: The strategy of the first move

The agenda-setting is a key milestone in the policy process: It is decided what issues political attention will be devoted to and will be subject to decision-making. But this decision is "far from self-evident" (Princen 2009 p. 3). Indeed, the probability for an issue to get political attention does not only depend on its urgency. Wallace explains that on the one hand "whether an issue attracts political attention in part reflects the character of the issue – how serious the problem is; whether there has been a change in the severity of the problem" (Wallace 2010 p. 52), but on the other hand it also includes "contingency" (Ibid. p. 53). In other words, the context plays an important role for an issue to become part of the political agenda, such as events which "can also be crucial for creating opportunities for policy entrepreneurs to promote policies" (Ibid. p. 53). Consequently, policy entrepreneurs can seize an opportunity and put an issue on the agenda.

Since the choice of putting an issue on the agenda is "far from self-evident" (Princen 2009 p. 3), Member States can play a decisive role and "try to get the EU to take up some issues or to drop others" (Ibid.). Héritier argues that the process pattern in the agenda-setting phase is the strategy of the first move (Héritier 1996 p. 150), and she defines it as follows: "It is generally countries with a strong regulatory tradition that approach the Commission with a policy proposal for a problem which, in their view, calls for Community measures" (Ibid. p. 151). So the Member State acting as the first mover takes the initiative and pushes forward its own

policy proposal in order to put the issue in question on the EU agenda. The policy proposal is then the first strategy used by a Member State willing to upload its ideas to the EU level during the phase of the agenda-setting. Liefferink argues that a "way to influence Commission policy is through various types of written statement. These can range from suggestions or designs for specific policy measures to general strategic memoranda" (Liefferink 1998 p. 265).

But this is not enough to shape the EU agenda. Indeed, the role of the Commission is to be the "gatekeeper" and "process manager" (Faludi 2002 p. 903-904). Therefore the Commission receives a lot of policy proposals and is free to choose among them "the ones which it wants to put on the legislative track" (Héritier 1996 p. 152). At this point, Member States make use of another strategy in order to win the support of the Commission: They offer expertise. Héritier argues that "the Commission's responsiveness to such policy proposals is no act of generosity. Having relatively few personnel of its own, it depends on Member States to provide policy expertise" (Ibid.). If this strategy is successful, the first mover wins the support of the Commission and sees its policy proposal being put on the EU agenda (Ibid.).

Setting up the strategy of the first move requires two conditions: On the one hand the existence of established domestic policies that can be exported and on the other hand the "capacity to push them" despite the opposition of other Member States (Börzel 2002 p. 199). As a result Member States are not equal in their capacity of doing so. Not all Member States have a high degree of domestic regulation nor are able to equip themselves with a big staff and to produce a high degree of expertise.

To illustrate the strategy of the first move, the article of Wegge provides us with a case-study about Norway and its role in the elaboration of the EU IMP. Even if Norway is not an EU Member State, it has managed to make its voice heard and to inject its national preferences in the EU policy process. Indeed Norway can be considered as a first mover concerning the interest in the Arctic. Wegge argues that the EU's new interest in the Arctic originates in the successful uploading of the Norwegian interests. During the analysis Wegge makes of Norway's role concerning this point, it appears that Norway acted as a first mover and made use of the strategies described above. This is particularly obvious with the offer of expertise and information. Norway has been producing written documents which were no policy proposals (since Norway is not part of the EU) but position papers containing its ideas and interests, such as the Norwegian contribution to the anticipated Green Paper, and the Norwegian response to the Green Book. Norwegian expertise has also been spread in the EU arena through Norwegian experts who have been very active. The Norwegian delegation to the EU also played a decisive role: It "was actively engaged in presenting the Norwegian viewpoints, including sharing its expertise on many issues and developing relationships with key representatives in the Commission, the Task Force and the European Parliament" (Wegge 2011 p. 339). These strategies resulted in the success of Norway as first mover: It managed to raise the EU's attention for this area. Indeed Wegge argues that "the High North or the Arctic was only referred to briefly in one sentence" in the Green Book (Ibid. p. 338): "Norway and the EU also share common interests in regions such as the Barents Sea and the waters around Svalbard" (European Commission 2006 p. 45). The situation has evolved in the Action Plan

accompanying the Blue Book in 2007: A paragraph is dedicated to the Arctic Ocean. Not only does the Action Plan highlight the importance of this region: "A better understanding of the diverse interests within Europe relating to the Arctic Ocean will provide an important basis for the future integrated maritime policy" (European Commission 2007a p. 30), it also plans the publication of a Communication of the Commission on this issue: "In 2008, the European Commission will produce a report on strategic issues for the EU relating to the Arctic Ocean (…). The aim of this action is to lay the foundation for a more detailed reflection on the European interests in the Arctic Ocean and the EU's role in this respect" (Ibid.). This report was indeed published by the Commission in 2008. So thanks to the publication of written statements and the work of its experts, Norway managed to put the Arctic region on the EU agenda.

To conclude about this policy stage, the Member States willing to shape the EU agenda act as first movers. This enables them to upload an important issue for them, and their proposal for an EU action as well. Their strategies consist in writing policy proposals and offering information and expertise to win the support of the Commission.

3.2.2.3. The drafting phase: The time for expertise

Once an issue has been put on the agenda during the first stage, it is now about bringing a solution to it. The objective of the drafting phase is to formulate proposals for action. The first mover has the advantage in this phase since its success in the agenda-setting phase puts its own approach of solving the problem in the front of the scene: The first mover "'anchors' his problem definition and policy approach (…) and offers a 'frame' for 'problem-solving'" (Ibid. p. 153). The first mover tends to define the framework of the discussion about the way of analyzing and solving the problem. But this is just an advantage, since the EU institution in charge of drafting new legislation is the Commission. This is more precisely the task of "the civil servants of the Commission's Directorates-General in collaboration with the relevant Commissioner and their cabinet" (Dühr et al. 2010 p. 151). But the work of the Commission does not take place in a vacuum. During the drafting process, the Commission consults a wide range of expert committees: "between 300 and 400 temporary expert committees and about 150 standing advisory groups" (Egeberg; cited by Cini 2007 p. 150). This has been defined as the "comitology system": "The Commission relies on an extensive network of expert committees composed of national officials and experts on a whole range of subjects" (Ibid. p. 123). As a result, the drafting phase is dominated by the technical discourse. Experts sit together and aim at drafting coherent policy proposals. Héritier explains that "technical, scientific and legal experts, who are more interested in pragmatic problem-solving, dominate the debate" (Héritier 1996 p. 155). This stage ends with the choice of a policy solution by the EU Commission, which is, "as process manager, able to choose between policy proposals" (Ibid. p. 156). More precisely, the College of Commissioners approves a policy proposal (Dühr et al. 2010 p. 153).

Since this phase is a "discourse of regulatory national experts" (Héritier 1996 p. 155), Héritier called "problem solving" the coordination pattern of this phase (Ibid.). This implies that the

drafting phase would escape from "hidden power games" (IEP 1989 p. 107; cited by Ibid.) and from the logic of competing. Therefore, the promotion of interests and all tentative to shape the policy process would not find their place during this stage.

However, other authors argue that resorting to external expertise is not without consequence. The comitology system is not that impervious to the expression of Member States' interests. Indeed, even if "the Commission is the pre-eminent political entrepreneur in the EU and it actively frames policy proposals", it is "constrained in that it needs external support (…) if the agenda it is promoting is to have a realistic chance of adoption" (Wallace 2010 p. 53). As a result, there is room for Member States trying to have an impact on the drafting of new EU legislation. This is possible because the committees and groups of experts are composed of national officials and experts, "who issue opinions on the Commission's proposed implementation measures" (Hix 1999 p. 41). The extent of the committees' power depends on their type and on the procedure they are operating under. Under the advisory committee procedure, the Commission has to take the 'utmost account' of the national experts' advice but can ignore it. Under the management committee procedure, the Commission cannot enact a measure if the committee opposes it. And under the regulatory committee procedure, the measure of the Commission has to have the support of the committee otherwise it is sent to the Council (Ibid. p. 43). The positive side of the comitology system lies in the fact that "the Commission and national experts work together to solve policy issues in a 'non-hierarchical' and 'deliberative' policy style" (Ibid. p. 45). Additionally, this system contributes to the emergence of "collective identities" (Ibid.). In other words, it encourages a process of mutual learning and the diffusion of shared concepts between expert communities. But the comitology system makes it possible for Member States to go on promoting their interests in the drafting phase because "in all procedures, the Commission must consult the relevant committee of national experts on the proposed implementation measures" (Ibid. p. 43). That is why conflicts can emerge between the Commission and national experts on technical issues if the latters push forward their government's position (Ibid. p. 45).

To summarize this phase, the strategy of Member States to upload their ideas is to offer expertise during the drafting of policy proposals, in other words to "second experts with specific knowledge to help prepare a directive" (Börzel 2002 p. 199). As a result, Héritier argues that it can happen that the problem-solving phase is dominated by a Member State (Héritier 1996 p. 163). But once more, all Member States do not have the same resources in terms of staff and expertise allowing them to be "present in the various networks that prepare and accompany the European negotiation process" (Börzel 2002 p. 200).

3.2.2.4. The policy decision phase: The negative coordination

Once a problem solution has been drafted and approved by the Commission, it is put to a decision in the two legislative bodies of the EU: the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament (Dühr et al. 2010 p. 153). Indeed, the legislative system of the EU is characterized by bicameralism. The Council of Ministers represents the governments of the Member States (Hix 1999 p. 56), so it gathers the ministers from the national governments (Ibid. p. 63),

whereas the Parliament represents the EU citizens (Hix 1999 p. 56) who directly elect its members. A policy proposal is first submitted to the Council, and once this one adopted a common position, the proposal is debated in the Parliament, whose decision-making power depends on the policy sector (Bomberg 2003 p. 139). In the last decades, the Parliament has won more power and stands nowadays on equal terms with the Council for most legislation areas (Dühr et al. 2010 p. 155). This is the so-called co-decision procedure concerning around 75 per cent of the EU legislation (Bomberg 2003 p. 104-105).

Héritier names the pattern of this stage: "negative coordination, bargaining and compensation" (Héritier 1996 p. 157). Indeed actors now discuss the policy proposal in terms of costs and benefits (Ibid. p. 156). Member States decide on their position and therefore divergences occupy the front of the scene: "The decision process rapidly becomes polarized and clear-cut conflict lines emerge" (Ibid.). As a consequence, it is difficult for the first mover to maintain his structural advantage in this stage (Ibid. p. 150-151), because opponents can challenge its proposition. These opponents can be divided into two groups: the "foot-draggers" and the "fence-sitters" (Börzel 2002 p. 194). The aim of the foot-draggers is the exact opposite of the first mover's: "stopping or at least containing the attempts of other Member States to upload their domestic policies to the European level" (Ibid. p. 203). Foot-draggers can be low-regulation countries without alternative policy to upload and without resources to be present during the elaboration of EU policies (Ibid. p. 204), or Member States which do not share the opinion of the 'first mover' because of their significant different regulatory tradition and interests. Next to the foot-draggers, fence-sitters can also get involved and challenge the first mover's position. Their strategy can best be described in terms of "neither… nor": They "neither set the pace nor put the brake on EU policies. Rather, they tend to take an indifferent and neutral position" (Ibid. p. 206).

To cope with the opposition from "foot-draggers" and "fence-sitters", the first mover Member State makes use of strategies to make sure its proposal is adopted. In the Council, coalitions tend to be formed by Member States with similar policy preferences (Hix 1999 p. 71). Liefferink argues that "particularly for the formation of blocking minorities, but also in order to exert more positive pressure on the political process in Brussels, alliance-building between countries is important" (Liefferink 1998 p. 262). Furthermore, a bargaining process takes place in order to overcome the resistance of opponents: The first mover proposes compensations and makes concessions "to 'buy off' the threatened veto" (Héritier 1996 p. 156). In other words, the opponents give their support in exchange for which they obtain some compensation, in the form of temporary exemptions (derogations), financial compensation (side-payments) or concessions in other issue areas (package-deals) (Börzel 2002 p. 205). Within this complex process, everything is calculated, from the position of the Member States to the frequency of concessions made to others. Before negotiations start, Member States "carefully decide on which issues they are not willing to make concessions, which are negotiable and which can be 'sacrificed' altogether" (Héritier 1996 p. 157). The negotiation that follows is based on the concept of "diffuse reciprocity" (Ibid.): Making a concession implies that another Member State will in its turn make an effort in future negotiations.

Therefore, the whole bargaining process happens "under the shadow of the future", as Héritier put it (Ibid.).

Since the Parliament is more and more involved in the decision-making, it is also important for first movers to make sure that their interests are promoted there. The Member States' strategy is to have good relations with their national MEPs (Members of European Parliament), through briefing notes and meetings, in order to inform them about the Member State's position in the Council negotiations (Liefferink 1998 p. 266). Liefferink concludes that "this is one more way for Member States to propagate their viewpoints" (Ibid.).

To sum up about the decision-making phase, Member States have resources to enhance their position in the Council on the one hand, by bargaining to buy off the support of their opponents; and in the Parliament on the other hand, by maintaining contacts with their national MEPs.

3.2.2.5. The evaluation of these strategies

Now that the strategies of Member States in the EU policy process have been presented, it is interesting to see how they can be evaluated. To assess in how far the policy adopted by the EU reflects the initial policy initiative of the Member State, Héritier has distinguished four possible outcomes (Héritier 1996 p. 158).

In the first scenario, the initiative of the first mover is a total success: It does not only manage to convince the Commission to put the problem on the EU agenda, but also to deal with it by using its problem-solving approach. This is a "clear home run" (Ibid.). The second scenario is the "saddled home run": The success of the first mover to push through its policy proposal generates so much interest that there are additional similar proposals and in the end a "comprehensive piece of legislation is enacted" (Ibid.). In the third scenario, the "moderated home run" (Ibid.), the initiating Member State has to make concessions, but the basic policy approach is saved. The fourth scenario is called the "thwarted home run": Another Member State totally opposes the first mover and proposes a different policy approach. In the end, "either a third joint solution is developed or, alternatively, additional policy instruments are included from which Member States can choose in order to reach a broadly set policy objective" (Ibid. p. 159). According to Héritier, the scenario depends on the degree of complexity of the issue. The more an issue is technically complex, the less favourable it is to a political mobilization (Ibid.). To conclude, different scenarios are possible when assessing in how far Member State's ideas have been be taken up on the EU level.

3.3. Summary: Conceptual framework

Figure 5 presents in an analytical way what is to remember from this chapter. It is the conceptual framework of this research. Based on the theory, it recalls the coordination pattern

of each stage and lists all strategies Member States can use in each of the three stages of the policy-making process leading to the elaboration of an EU policy.

Coordination pattern:
First mover strategy

Strategies:
- Written statement
- Information and expertise

Coordination pattern:
Problem-solving

Strategies:
- Experts in committees
- Seconding national experts to help drafting

Coordination pattern:
Negative coordination

Strategies:
- Coalitions
- Bargaining (concessions, compensations)
- Contact with national MEPs

Agenda-setting

Policy evaluation
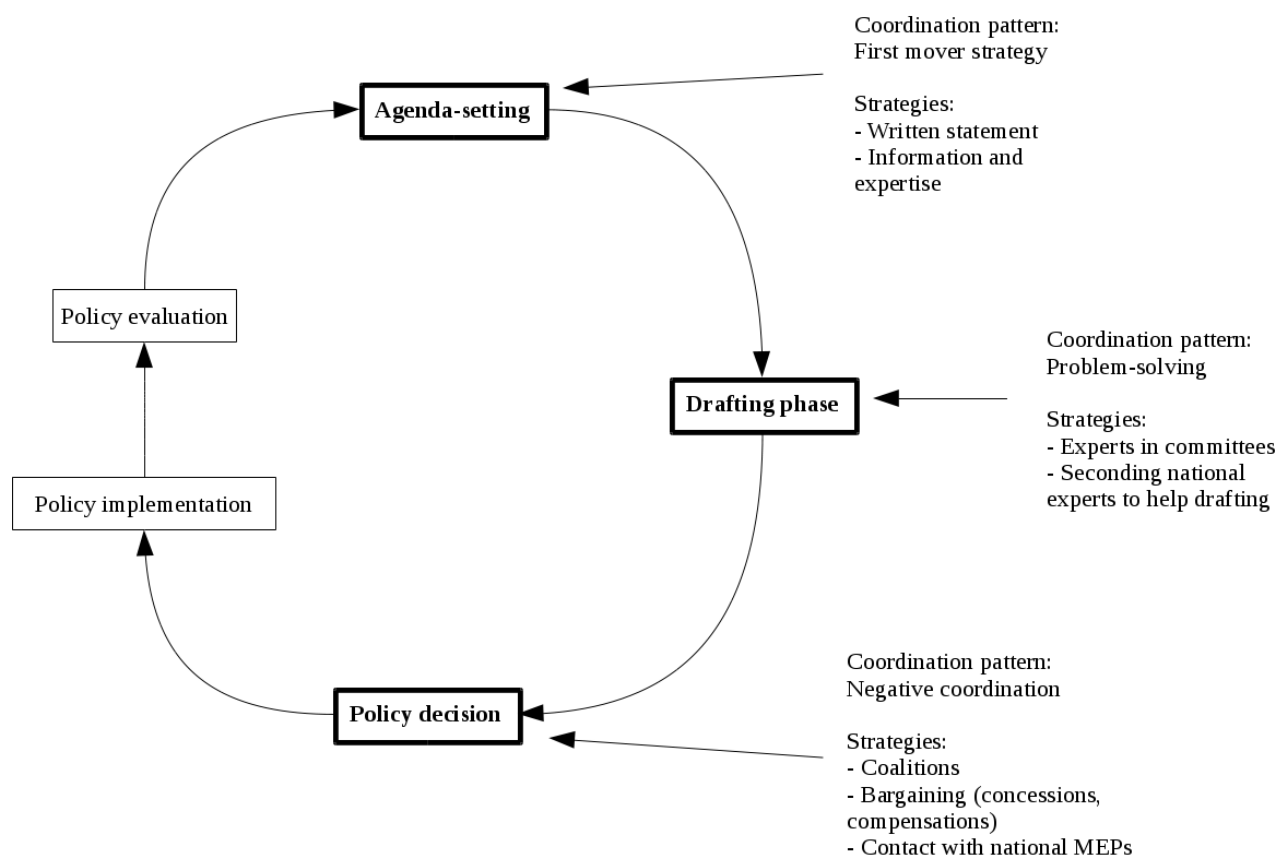
Policy implementation

Drafting phase

Policy decision

Figure 5: Conceptual framework

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1. Research strategy

Before discussing the research strategy, it is important to make clear what research approach has been used. This thesis is a mostly deductive research, as it is strongly guided by its theoretical approach. Saunders explains that a deductive approach is about testing theory: "It involves the development of a theory that is subjected to a rigorous test" (Saunders et al. 2003 p. 86). This method is the one followed by this research since it bases on the theory of the EU policy-making process and aims at testing it through an "empirical inquiry" (Ibid.). In this empirical research, the EU policy considered is the European IMP, and the influence of Member States is explored through the case of France (the choice of France will be explained in detail further in this section). Consequently, this thesis is deductive, since it is moving "from theory to data" (Ibid. p. 89). But, as in most social sciences research studies, research approaches can be combined, and it is often advantageous to do so (Ibid. p. 88). This thesis has also an inductive dimension. This is explained by the fact that the IMP is still a young policy and there is not much literature available on it. Saunders explains that a topic with a small quantity of literature tends to require an inductive approach: "With research into a topic that is new, is exciting much debate, and on which there is little existing literature, it may be more appropriate to generate data and analyse and reflect on what theoretical themes the data are suggesting" (Saunders et al. 2003 p. 90). This is the case of this thesis, which also aims at gaining a better understanding of the research and policy context of the IMP. To sum up about the research approach, there is both a deductive and an inductive dimension to this research.

The data collected for this research are of qualitative nature. The characteristic of this kind of data is that they are collected through words and not through numbers, as pointed out by the table of distinctions between quantitative and qualitative data developed by Saunders (Ibid. p. 378). Since this thesis wants to collect data in order to explore the IMP process, conducting interviews with the actors involved in this process is the most appropriate research method, as will be explained in more detail in the following section.

Concerning the research strategy itself, a case-study approach has been adopted. It has been defined by Gorman and Clayton as "an in-depth investigation of a discrete entity (which may be a single setting, subject, collection or event) on the assumption that it is possible to derive knowledge of the wider phenomenon from intensive investigation of a specific instance or case" (Gorman and Clayton 2005 p. 47). If we use the terms of Gorman and Clayton, the Member States' influence on the IMP policy-making process represents the "wider phenomenon" about which it is possible to gain knowledge by investigating the "specific case" of France.

This leads to the other important element of the research strategy: the choice of the case-study Member State among those pushing forward the EU IMP. This choice could be made after the first stage of the research was completed, that is to say after the interviews conducted in the European Commission (the research method will be explained in detail in the following section). Indeed these interviews pointed out what Member States have been active in pushing

forward the EU IMP: France, Spain, Portugal, and Ireland. Malta and Cyprus have also been mentioned because of their growing interest (Interviewee 1, 2, 2012). But researching all those active Member States would exceed the dimension of a Master thesis, considering notably the issue of limited time. On the basis of the responses to the interviews conducted with the EU Commission, France has been chosen as case-study Member State. Two reasons account for this choice. First, the author found interesting to focus on a Member State involved since the early days of the EU IMP. Indeed, France wrote a common contribution with Spain and Portugal to the Green Book (Interviewee 2, 2012). This joint contribution was delivered in the form of a memorandum to Commissioner Borg in 2005 (EMEPC, undated), so even before the EU published its first document on maritime policy. The early involvement of France enables to research the whole policy process of the IMP. Second, practical considerations had to be taken into account when choosing the case-study Member State, in terms of travel and language. The author being French, it is easy to travel to France, conduct the interviews in the mother tongue of the interviewer and interviewees, and analyse French documents.

4.2. Research methods

In order to answer the first two research questions, the research method has been the same: a desk-study. The first research question ("What is the present state of progress of the EU IMP?") could be answered by a literature study which helped identify the reasons for the IMP to be put on the EU agenda, and described its historical development. It was also point out that the IMP is different from all other EU policies.

The second research question ("How can the EU policy-making process be conceptualized?") was also answered by a desk-study. Books and articles about the EU policy-making process were read in order to set up the theoretical framework. Based on the theory, a conceptual framework was elaborated in order to test the theory with the empirical data.

To answer the following research questions, which are empirical, the research has been divided in two stages. Each of them has its own purpose and research method.

The first stage of the research had an exploratory role. Its purpose was to obtain background information about the policy context. The research method was to conduct interviews. As already mentioned before, since there is not much literature about the topic of the EU IMP, conducting interviews is an appropriate way to explore it and gain knowledge about it. The interviews helped understand the process of the EU IMP and more precisely they identified the Member States that have been pushing forward the IMP. This enabled to answer the third sub-research question ("What are the key Member States in the process of developing the IMP?"). Next to this, these interviews had a second purpose: They helped the author shape the methodology. On the basis of the interview responses, the research questions could be refined, and more precisely the choice of the case-study Member State could be made.

The information that this first stage of research was looking for is held by the EU Commission. That is why all three interviewees are working for this institution, more precisely for DG Mare, the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. DG Mare is a particularly relevant interlocutor for this research since it is the DG which elaborates the EU IMP and is therefore in contact with the Member States. Taking into account the geographical proximity of Brussels, the author was able to travel and conduct face-to-face interviews. Since the purpose of these interviews is to gain a good understanding of the IMP, their nature can be described as qualitative, exploratory and unstructured.

Once this first stage of the research was completed, the second stage was to answer the remaining sub-research questions. They all concern the case-study Member State so they were answered by interviews conducted about France. These interviews are more structured than the ones of the first stage since their purpose is different. It is now about narrowing down to the specific case of France. The interviews can be described as qualitative and semi-structured and they were made face-to-face as well. These interviews answered the fourth sub-research question ("What are the strategies of France in shaping the EU IMP?") and the fifth one ("In how far have French initial ideas been taken up?"). The latter required the identification of French initial ideas in order to discover if they were reflected on the EU level and included in the final documents. This question was answered from the perspective of France with the interviews. In order to supplement the results of the interviews, document analysis was conducted. A comparison was made between the documents in which France promoted its ideas and the EU documents. The analysis of the French documents focused on the concepts that were identified as French ideas in the interviews. The Blue Book, since it is the founding document of the IMP, was then analysed to see if the French initial ideas were reflected in it. The analysis also took into account other EU documents, to find out if French ideas were the subject of further EU publications. Figure 6 gives an overview of the French contributions and the EU documents they were compared to.

French documents	EU documents
Portugal, Spain and France (2005) Joint contribution (Portugal, Spain and France) to the Green Paper on EU Maritime Policy	European Commission (2007) An Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union (Blue Book)
Autorités françaises (2007) Réponse de la France au livre vert sur la politique maritime européenne (résumé) (French authorities (2007) Answer of France to the Green Book (summary)	European Commission (2009) Towards the integration of maritime surveillance
	European Commission (2009) Developing the international dimension of the Integrated Maritime Policy of the EU
Autorités françaises (undated) Pour une action renforcée de l'Union Européenne en mer (French Authorities (undated) For a reinforced action of the UE at sea)	European Commission (2010) Marine Knowledge 2020

Figure 6: Overview of the documents analysed

The interviews of the second stage of research also answered the last sub-research question ("In how far does the unique nature of the IMP impact its policy-making process?"). This research question is not in relation with the case-study Member State. It deals with important issues which emerged during the interviews. This is the challenge of inductive research: Issues connected to the specificity of the IMP policy-making process came up in the interviews. These issues are presented in the conclusion in order to answer to the last research question.

4.3. Data collection and analysis

Before explaining in detail the data collection and analysis of each research stage, one remark has to be made concerning both research stages. Following the wish of several interviewees not to be named in this thesis, all of them have been anonymised. They are referred to with a number and the date of the interview, for example: Interviewee 1, 2012. The judgments and criticism made by the interviewees only represent them and not the opinion of the institution they work for.

For the first stage of the research, as already mentioned, the interviews were conducted face-to-face and were unstructured. The interviewees could speak freely, but the interviewer had still prepared a list of questions in order to cover all important themes. This list of questions was sent beforehand to the interviewees (See Appendix B). Since the purpose of these interviews was to obtain background information and explore in depth the topic, the aim of the researcher was not to collect spontaneous answers. Having the questions beforehand, the interviewees could have an idea of the discussion and do some preparation if necessary. For the same reason, the interviews have not been taped, and instead the interviewer took notes.

The interviewer felt comfortable with making notes and was aware of the drawbacks of recording interviews (See Saunders et al. 2009 p. 264). The interviews have been conducted either in English or in French, depending on the mother tongue and preference of the interviewees. In total three interviews with EU policy officers have been conducted, all three working for DG Mare but in different departments: One of them in the unit for Maritime Policy in the Baltic and North Sea (Interviewee 2) and the two others in the unit for Maritime Policy in the Atlantic, outermost regions and Arctic (Interviewee 1, 3) (See Appendix A).

As the number of interviews was small and they were unstructured, it was not necessary to provide a very structured approach for the analysis. The data was categorized in two groups: on the one hand the data answering the third sub-research question and on the other hand the data bringing background knowledge about the IMP process. Appendix D present the categories used for the analysis and the research question these categories refer to.

The interviews for the second stage of the research were conducted face-to-face and semi-structured. The interviewer had prepared a list of questions (See Appendix C) but the interviews were still quite flexible concerning the order of questions or additional questions, as it can be the case during semi-structured interviews (Saunders 2003 p. 247). The questions varied a bit depending on the role the interviewees played and their knowledge about the different stages. The identification of the interviewees has been made through a snowballing procedure. The interviewees were asked who else should be interviewed. Since the number of people involved in the process was small, the interviewees could give the names of the people that took part in it. All interviews were held in French, mother tongue of all interviewees. As in the previous stage of research, the questionnaire was sent beforehand, in case preliminary research was necessary. The interviews have not been taped neither, for the same reasons as for the first research stage. As a consequence, the interviewees will not be quoted directly. The number of interviews is this time higher: Six interviewees have been conducted, with interviewees working for different institutions or administrations (See Appendix A). The first one (Interviewee 4) is working at the European Parliament and involved in the intergroup on the IMP. The second one (Interviewee 5) works at DG Mare, the third one (Interviewee 6) as well but as seconded French national expert. The fourth one (Interviewee 7) is member of cabinet of an EU Commissioner and was French national expert during the elaboration process of the IMP. The next interviewee (Interviewee 8) works at the SG Mer in Paris, in charge of the EU IMP. The last one (Interviewee 9) works at the CRPM in the department Maritime Affairs.

Concerning the analysis, a different approach has been chosen. In comparison to the first stage of research, there are more interviews and they are more structured. The data has been categorized depending on the kind of information they brought. The first category gathered all the data that enabled to reconstruct the IMP process stage by stage and identify the French strategies. The second category represents the data leading to the assessment of the French involvement in the process. The third category is dedicated to the data that concerns the IMP itself and its specificities (See Appendix D).

To sum up about the methodology, this research adopted a case-study approach. In order to answer the research questions, the research has been divided in two stages. The first one aims at gathering background information and is based on exploratory interviews. The second one is focused on the case-study Member State. It uses two research methods: semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis.

Chapter 5: Empirical analysis

5.1. Analysis of the stage 1 interviews

As explained in the methodology, the purpose of the first stage of the research is to answer the sub-research question 3 which is about identifying the key Member States in the process of launching the EU IMP. The results of these interviews enabled the author to choose the case-study Member State. The interviews of this stage also gave a general overview and increased the understanding of the IMP process. Some of the challenges mentioned will find an echo in the analysis of the second stage interviews and will be more deeply explored.

5.1.1. The genesis of the EU IMP

Let us begin with the main purpose of this first stage of research. When the interviewees were asked about the genesis of the EU IMP, all explained that Barroso has been the very first initiator (Interviewee 1, 2, 3, 2012). The idea of the IMP came from him. When he became President of the Commission in 2004, he wrote a paragraph about the IMP in the program of his mandate (Interviewee 2, 2012), and when the portfolios for the Commissioners were being divided, he added the IMP to the fisheries (Interviewee 3, 2012). Therefore, the original idea of the IMP was transferred from Portugal to the EU by Barroso, assisted by two persons: Tiago de Pitta e Cunha and John Richardson (Interviewee 1, 2012). Tiago de Pitta e Cunha already played an important role in elaborating the IMP in Portugal when Barroso was Prime Minister of Portugal. Indeed the latter appointed him "coordinator of the Portuguese Oceans Strategic Commission, a high level policy working group with the mandate to design the Country's national oceans integrated policy" in 2003 (De Pitta E Cunha 2012). With the first Barroso Commission in 2004, he became member of the Cabinet of the Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Joe Borg, and was in charge of coordinating the development of the EU IMP (Ibid.). The other person who initiated the process with Barroso and Pitta e Cunha was John Richardson. He was the Head of the Maritime Policy Task Force which was created in 2005 to develop the EU IMP. The Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Joe Borg, started this policy from scratch and travelled through the EU to get the support from regions concerned by the IMP (Interviewee 3, 2012). An interviewee compared this stage to a period of "evangelization" (Interviewee 3, 2012).

This shows that the IMP was an initiative of the Commission through the action of Barroso and a small group of people, and not from a Member State. Therefore, some Member States reacted and got strongly involved in the process only after the Commission put the IMP on the agenda. These key Member States are Portugal, France and Spain (Interviewee 1, 2, 2012). Those three countries gave life and substance to the idea of the IMP through the common paper they wrote (Interviewee 2, 2012). This paper is the joint contribution of Portugal, Spain and France to the Green Paper on EU Maritime Policy, published on 04.04.2005. These three Member States created the concepts which enabled the IMP to take shape. Next to these three key Member States who are active since the beginning, some other Member States have been

mentioned by the interviewees. Ireland is very interested in the IMP and plays an important role (Interviewee 1, 2, 2012), and the interest of Malta and Cyprus is growing (Interviewee 1, 2, 2012). The IMP was indeed one of the priorities of the Cyprus Presidency of the EU which took place from July until December 2012 (Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU 2012b). The involvement of Cyprus in the IMP led to the Limassol Declaration signed by the European Ministers responsible for the IMP and the Commission on the 07.10.2012.

The involvement of these key Member States proves that the uploading dimension of Europeanisation is not to be forgotten. Even if they only got involved after the impetus of the Commission, they seized upon the topic of the IMP right away, understood the added-value of such a policy and, for three of them, produced a document to promote their ideas and shape the concepts of the future EU IMP. The genesis of the IMP is a proof of the mutual influence between EU institutions and Member States, as the theory suggests.

The reason why France, Spain and Portugal acted as forerunners is that the IMP was a national concern for them (Interviewee 2, 2012). They were more advanced than other Member States in the awareness that the IMP is important for their economic future (Interviewee 1, 2012). Nowadays, some other Member States are getting involved in the IMP process because they are interested in a particular field (Interviewee 2, 2012) and try to promote it. For example Greece and Malta are interested in maritime surveillance, Ireland in marine research, Poland in the topic of social conditions and employment, the Scandinavian countries in what concerns renewable energies, Germany in maritime industry (Interviewee 2, 2012). This shows once more that Member States promote the topics they would like to see developed on the EU level.

5.1.2. An insight in the IMP process

Next to the identification of the key Member States in the field of maritime policy, these interviews gave a general overview of the IMP process. This sub-section will present the elements that give a better understanding of the way the IMP works.

The reflection around the development of the IMP takes place in three structures of discussion (Interviewee 2, 2012). The Member State Expert Group on Integrated Maritime Policy is one of them. This group meets every three months and is composed of one expert per Member State. During these meetings, experts report on the progress made in maritime policy in their Member State, on the discussion of draft texts on the domestic level, as well as on the implementation of projects (Interviewee 2, 2012). Next to providing a forum for the exchange of best practice, the meetings of this group enable the Commission to "receive the views of the Member States on issues to be adopted" and "early input from Member State into Commission proposals (European Commission, undated). The High Level Focal Points represents another place of discussion. It is a more political group meeting every six months, depending on the Presidency of the EU, which can choose whether to bring together the members of this group or not (Interviewee 2, 2012). For example, Denmark did not do it during its Presidency in 2012 (01-06.2012) (Interviewee 2, 2012). The group brings together

the Member States and the Commission in order to discuss "the strategic orientation of the IMP (…) and the main priorities" (European Commission 2010a). The last discussion area to be mentioned is the group in the Council called "The Friends of the Presidency Group on IMP" (Interviewee 2, 2012). It was created in 2008 and meets every six months. The group is ad hoc: It deals with projects that are temporarily limited, such as the budget (Interviewee 2, 2012). That is why the project of having a permanent group on the IMP in the Council is currently being discussed (Interviewee 2, 2012).

This first stage of research identified the key Member States promoting the IMP, but it is also interesting to know which Member States stand on the opposite side. Some are indeed not in favor of the IMP and tend to slow down its development. This is particularly the case of the UK (Interviewee 2, 3, 2012). The UK has its own maritime policy and for this reason does not see why Brussels should decide what is to be done (Interviewee 3, 2012). As a result, the UK managed to slow down the development of the Strategy of the North Sea which was planned for 2011 but is now in a dead end (Interviewee 2, 2012). Some other Member States are also hard to convince and reluctant: The Netherlands (Interviewee 3, 2012), Denmark and Sweden (Interviewee 2, 2012).

The interviews also revealed that some non-EU Member States are interested in the development of the EU IMP. The first one is Norway. Norway is a great support and was among the first countries to reply positively to the EU action in the maritime field (Interviewee 2, 2012). The reason for this early interest in the IMP is that Norway has understood the economic resource that the sea represents and is advanced in the domain of renewable energies (Interviewee 1, 2012). Norway has seconded an expert to DG Mare in order to follow the development of the IMP (Interviewee 1, 2012). The second non EU-Member State interested in the IMP and the fisheries is Iceland (Interviewee 1, 2, 2012). Norway and Iceland have a particular status since they both have an observer taking part in the meetings of the Member State Expert Group (European Commission, undated).

When the interviewees were asked about the methods of Member States to make their voice heard in the IMP process, experts were mentioned. They are seconded to the Commission and make a report to their home country every two or three months (Interviewee 2, 2012). For instance, there are a Spanish expert on climate change and an Irish expert on marine research in DG Mare (Interviewee 2, 2012). Furthermore, it appeared in the interviews that the involvement of Member States can vary over time. Their involvement is indeed dependent on political changes in Member States (Interviewee 2, 2012). For example, the Netherlands had always been promoting the idea of maritime clusters but this involvement decreased around two years ago (Interviewee 2, 2012). Changes in the staff of Member States can also have a big impact on their strategy on the EU level (Interviewee 2, 2012). For instance, the successor of the person who was here since the beginning of the IMP may have less experience in this field and less motivation than his predecessor (Interviewee 2, 2012). Such situations represent a danger because the EU is very dependent on persons (Interviewee 2, 2012).

To complete the insight in the IMP provided by the interviews, it is necessary to mention the position of other EU institutions apart from the Commission. The Parliament has been

supporting the IMP since the beginning (Interviewee 2, 2012). Some MEPs are interested in the IMP, most of the time because the regions they come from are concerned with it (Interviewee 1, 2012). The Parliament has shown its support to the IMP during the discussion about its budget for 2012-2013. While the Council wanted to reduce it, the Parliament supported the proposition of the Commission of 50 million Euro (Interviewee 2, 2012). Moreover there is an intergroup in the Parliament, called "Seas and coastal areas", which makes sure that the Parliament supports the IMP (Interviewee 2, 2012). It has 39 members and its President is the French MEP Corinne Lepage (Mers et Zones Côtières 2013a). The aim of this intergroup is to "give MEPs a working structure capable of acting horizontally and across party lines" (Mers et Zones Côtières 2013b).

This sub-section provided us with the framework in which the development of the IMP takes place. This development seems to be difficult, as the next sub-section will show.

5.1.3. The challenges of the IMP

The interviews highlighted several important issues the IMP is facing. As already said, these challenges will be explained in more details in the analysis of the second stage interviews. The purpose of this section is to broadly present the challenges to get a general understanding of the IMP.

5.1.3.1. A prevailing reluctance

The IMP suffers from a widespread reluctance expressed by different categories of actors. Member States represent one of these categories. This is explained by their disappointment towards the IMP. Indeed the beginning of the IMP was promising: The consultation for the Green Paper has been the longest one ever (Interviewee 3, 2012), and the number of contributions received, around 500, is the highest number of contributions ever received for a consultation (Interviewee 2, 2012). This success justified the EU action in this field, and the Green Paper created a lot of expectations (Interviewee 2, 2012). The IMP was very ambitious and was thought to be able to quickly improve the situation (Interviewee 2, 2012). But this excess of enthusiasm soon created disappointment: It is not possible to improve the situation from one day to the next (Interviewee 2, 2012), effects can only be visible on the long term. In addition to this, Member States tend to be suspicious towards the concept of "integration". For many Member States, the word "integrated" refers to European integration and represents a danger for their sovereignty (Interviewee 2, 3, 2012). So the IMP is a policy that still needs to convince (Interviewee 3, 2012).

The reluctance towards the IMP also originates from another side: Well-established policy fields tend to oppose it. The second chapter already pointed out that the IMP is an original policy because it promotes a cross-cutting vision of the sea. Consequently, several policy fields are concerned, which historically belong to other DGs. As a result, the new IMP faces well-established sectoral policies and DGs: DG Environment, DG Transport and the fisheries (Interviewee 3, 2012). The Committee for fisheries in the European Parliament is not in favor

of the IMP and argues that fisheries prevail over the IMP (Interviewee 2, 2012). An interviewee compared the present situation to a paradox (Interviewee 3, 2012): According to him, the place devoted to the fisheries is more important than the one devoted to the IMP, although it should be the opposite, since the fisheries represent one aspect of maritime affairs (Interviewee 3, 2012).

In this quite unfavorable context, the Commission can still count on the support of another category of actors: the regions. They are a great support for the Commission because they are aware of the necessity of coordinating (Interviewee 2, 2012). Some regions are particularly advanced in maritime policy, such as Goteborg, Zeeland, and Schleswig-Holstein which have already developed their own integrated strategy (Interviewee 2, 2012). The French region Brittany is also a forerunner: it leads an integrated maritime policy since 2006 (Région Bretagne, undated), reinforced by the Brittany coast charter of 2010 (Interviewee 2, 2012). Such regional initiatives justify the EU action against its opponents (Interviewee 2, 2012). In the end, the regions support the Commission more than their Member States do (Interviewee 2, 2012).

But despite this support, the IMP still faces challenges that jeopardize its future, as the following section will show.

5.1.3.2. An uncertain future

Taking into account the opposition from different sides, the survival of the IMP lies in the formalization. The IMP is right now in an important moment, more precisely in a transition period (Interviewee 1, 2012). The phase of reflection and theory is ending, and the phase of concrete action starting (Interviewee 1, 2012). As explained in the second chapter, the first step on the way to formalization has been made in March 2013 with the Commission's proposal for a directive on MSP. An interviewee made clear that a directive would assess the success of the IMP (Interviewee 3, 2012). From a pessimistic perspective, the future of the IMP will be decided with the end of the mandate of Barroso as President of the Commission: Will its successor keep the IMP or attach it to another DG such as DG Environment or DG Transport? (Interviewee 3, 2012).

Moreover, the IMP has troubles concerning its budget. The debate about it is lively, and the economic crisis is worsening the situation. Member States want to control the expenses more than before (Interviewee 2, 2012). The IMP being not old enough to resist to the difficult economic context, it is not sure that the EU will have the necessary budget for the IMP in the coming years (Interviewee 2, 2012). In order to adapt and justify its existence, the IMP has set a new priority called "Blue Growth". The theme of growth and jobs was one of the elements of the Blue Paper, but it has now become the main focus of the IMP (Interviewee 3, 2012). The IMP is now considered a way to reach the objective of Europe 2020: The new question is therefore: How can the IMP create growth and jobs (Interviewee 1, 2012)?

Those were the important points in order to understand the context and the conditions of development of the IMP. To sum up about the main findings of the first research stage, three Member States, France, Spain and Portugal, reacted to the initiative of the Commission and more precisely of its President, Barroso. Their reaction took the form of a common contribution to the Green Book. But the context around the IMP development is not favorable. Some Member States and the well-established sectoral policies are reluctant. The Commission tries to justify the soundness of the IMP with the concept of Blue Growth, and makes progress on the way to formalization with the draft directive on MSP.

This difficult context makes it even more interesting to analyse how the case-study Member State has been promoting its ideas.

5.2. Analysis of the stage 2 interviews: The case-study Member State France

The purpose of this section is to present the results of the interviews conducted about France in order to answer the fourth ("What were the strategies of France in shaping the EU IMP and uploading French ideas to the EU policy?") and the fifth ("In how far have French ideas been taken up?") sub-research questions. The strategies of France to influence the elaboration of the IMP are identified for each stage of the process, and an assessment of the French involvement is made.

5.2.1. Reconstruction of the process

5.2.1.1. Stage 1: Agenda-setting

Barroso, very first mover

To avoid any misinterpretation, some interviewees made clear that, strictly speaking, France is not the first mover. Indeed France did not put the IMP on the EU agenda (Interviewee 7, 8, 2012). France only "replied" to an invitation and contributed to strengthen this policy (Interviewee 8, 2012). This invitation was made by Barroso. As mentioned in the previous section, Barroso was Prime Minister of Portugal and launched the Portuguese IMP. As President of the Commission, he wanted to bring something new to the EU (Interviewee 8, 2012). That is why he included the idea of an IMP in the Strategic Objectives of the Commission for 2005-2009. The Communication presenting these objectives dates from 26.01.2005 and mentions the future IMP in a few lines: "In view of environmental and economic value of the oceans and the seas, there is a particular need for an all-embracing maritime policy aimed at developing a thriving maritime economy and the full potential of sea-based activity in an environmentally sustainable manner" (European Commission 2005). Next to this, Barroso extended the portfolio of the Maltese Commissioner Joe Borg by adding the Maritime Affairs to the Fisheries (Interviewee 7, 8, 2012). The next step in the birth of the IMP is the Communication of Barroso and Borg titled "Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European vision for the oceans and the sea" published in March 2005 (Interviewee 8, 2012). This Communication describes the present situation in the European

seas: the increasing competition for space between the maritime activities in greater number each year, and the increased pressure on the marine environment (Europa 2005). The Communication argues that the present fragmented management of individual maritime activities is not appropriate, since all activities impact each other (Ibid.). It also justifies geographically, economically and legally an EU action in this field and explains that the European added-value is obvious. The document explains the role of the Task Force and announces the preparation of a Green Book (Ibid.). The Task Force was created in 2005 in order to begin the reflection and elaborate the concepts (Interviewee 7, 2012).

The Commission, through Barroso and the Task Force, is therefore the first mover. France was not the first mover because it did not have the concept of the IMP nor the structure (Interviewee 7, 2012). France was trying to have an integrated management, but the attempts to make things move had been failing for years (Interviewee 8, 2012). An integrated structure, the Ministry of the Sea ("Ministère d'Etat de la Mer"), was created by President François Mitterrand but it disappeared in 1993, when the maritime field was split into two different Ministries. In 1995, President Jacques Chirac created the Secrétariat Général de la Mer (SG Mer), which embodies the emergence of a coordinated vision of the sea (Interviewee 7 2012). But since the French attempts to elaborate an IMP were unsuccessful, France was not the initiator of the EU IMP.

To sum up about this historical part, France did not launch the processs, but it reacted as soon as it was initiated by the Commission. Once France decided to take part in the process, it has been an essential driving force (Interviewee 7, 2012).

Motivations of France

This section analyses the reasons why France decided to get involved and be on the front line for the promotion of the IMP.

The first reason that comes to mind when discussing the involvement of France in the IMP process lies in the nature of the French territory itself. France has several maritime assets (Interviewee 4, 6, 7, 2012) which give it de facto a leading position in the IMP (Interviewee 4, 2012). This maritime potential includes a vast territory, coastal tourism, scientific research, the overseas departments, and marine renewable energies. It is impossible for France not to be interested in the emerging IMP (Interviewee 6, 2012). Some resources are still underused, such as marine energies in comparison the UK which is more advanced than France in this field (Interviewee 4, 2012).

But next to this objective interest, France had a motivation of a different nature. The involvement of France in the IMP process is above all the result of opportunism (Interviewee 7, 8, 2012). As one of the interviewees made it clear, opportunism is in that case to be understood as a concept and not as something negative (Interviewee 8, 2012). As already mentioned, France was trying for years to elaborate a national IMP, without being successful. When the EU level launched the reflection about a future IMP, it became obvious that France

could not miss this opportunity. France used the EU as an instrument to make things move on the national level (Interviewee 8, 2012). An interviewee explained that the involvement of France resulted more precisely from the interest of one single structure: the SG Mer (Interviewee 7, 2012). The SG Mer understood the interest of the IMP for France and for the SG Mer itself. The SG Mer was a weak structure in comparison to the SG for European Affairs for example. It had no political weight, it was only coordinating. The SG Mer understood that the EU IMP would help in its task and reinforce its effort of coordination. For this reason, the interest of France for the IMP was actually at the beginning the interest of an administration which seized the opportunity to ensure its task and its existence (Interviewee 7, 2012). Since the EU process was going to be useful for the French one, France had to take part in it. The interviewees described the necessity and urgency of reacting: France wanted to be the leader in what was developing (Interviewee 7, 2012), and did not want to let the EU go further without France (Interviewee 8, 2012). This opportunism explains the early involvement of France in the IMP process. France promoted several ideas to shape the content of the EU IMP: first of all, the concept of integration itself. It supported the ideas of a cross-sectoral approach and of a coordination of sectoral policies which would bring an added-value (Interviewee 7, 8, 2012). Furthermore, with the important maritime traffic along its coasts, France was very concerned about integrated maritime surveillance. This topic has always been an important point for France (Interviewee 4, 5, 8, 2012).

Strategies of France

The motivations of France being cleared, the focus is now on the strategies used by France in this agenda-setting phase to become a leader of the process.
France wrote a paper in collaboration with Spain and Portugal: Their common contribution to the Green Paper which was sent in anticipation to the Commission on 04.04.2005. This paper represents the basis of the French involvement and includes it in the group of the IMP leaders (Interviewee 7, 8, 2012). France understood that it had to enter the process with other Member States in order to have more weight. That is why France always acted in convergence with Spain and Portugal (Interviewee 8, 2012). This coalition made the contribution valuable: It was elaborated by three marine Member States, two of which are present on two marine frontages (Interviewee 8, 2012). This very big document significantly helped the Commission by providing a lot of concepts (Interviewee 8, 2012).

The role of Portugal and Spain should not be forgotten. There were several bilateral meetings between France and Portugal. An interviewee often went to Lisbon in the name of the SG Mer (Interviewee 8, 2012). The alliance of those three Member States is logical. As already mentioned, Portugal was ahead in the field of maritime policy. The sea is historically and culturally important for Portugal, which still has a strong connection with Brazil and its former colonies. The sea is also economically important since it only has one neighbor: Spain. These elements account for the very transatlantic vision of Portugal (Interviewee 7, 2012). Another reason explains the alliance of France, Spain and Portugal: They all have overseas territories. More precisely, they are the only Member States having outermost regions. The

Canary Islands are Spanish, Azores and Madeira are Portuguese, and France has four overseas departments: The French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Réunion. This common aspect linked these three Member States together, which are also all Atlantic (Interviewee 7, 2012).

To sum up about the agenda-setting stage, the strategy of France was to create an alliance with two other marine Member States and write a common contribution to the Green Paper providing the concepts (policy coordination, maritime surveillance) France wanted to see promoted on the EU level. This strategy is similar to the one identified by the conceptual framework: a written statement providing expertise.

5.2.1.2. Stage 2: Drafting phase

A technical phase

As the theory of the EU policy-making process explained, the drafting phase is a technical discussion between experts elaborating the best approach possible. During this discussion, the Task Force listened to speeches of experts, and reviewed documents (Interviewee 8, 2012). The Commission, through the Task Force, constantly proved the absolute necessity to do something in the maritime field and insisted on the added-value brought by integration. Its argumentation also relied on the example of other countries which already have an IMP: Canada, the USA, Australia, and the UK. All those countries have a point in common: They are all federal. The Commission argued that it is logical that the EU, as wide association of countries spread over three maritime frontages, should also have an IMP. The drafting phase was therefore the moment for the Commission to convince the Member States to buy into the concept (Interviewee 8, 2012). In the course of the discussion, three topics stood out little by little: maritime surveillance, marine knowledge and maritime spatial planning (Interviewee 8, 2012). As a consequence, the technical character of this phase is obvious and the drafting only belonged to the Task Force (Interviewee 8, 2012).

The influence of France

Even if the Commission handled the drafting as its exclusive task, France could still make its voice heard. Since the Commission is the gatekeeper of the process as the theory explained, France had to second someone to the EU level in order to win the support of the Commission: an expert. The Task Force, created in 2005, was composed of eight people: on the one hand European civil servants, and on the other hand experts from Member States: one Spanish, one Greek and one French. As national expert seconded to the Commission, the expert had to be loyal to the Commission since it represents his new employer. But he also does not forget that he is sent by France. His role was to provide the Commission with his expertise and with the contacts he had in the Member States so that the Commission could easily contact the right persons (Interviewee 7, 2012). Giving an expert to the Commission was the strategy of France to influence the elaboration of the concepts and later on the drafting process of the Blue Book. France gave its best expert (Interviewee 8, 2012).

Furthermore, an interviewee attended the meetings of the Task Force since the very first one, in the name of the SG Mer (Interviewee 8, 2012). France could that way always refer the Task Force to the common contribution of France, Spain and Portugal so that the ideas included in this document appear in the draft of the Blue Book (Interviewee 8, 2012).

The special status of the SG Mer should also be mentioned. Since the Commission insists a lot on the improvement of governance, the SG Mer is a good example. Indeed the SG Mer is different from a usual administration for two reasons. First it makes sure that sectoral policies are coordinated, and second it depends on a high political level since it is under the authority of the Prime Minister. Since France already placed the idea of coordination above the level of a Minister before the EU IMP process was launched, it is considered a good example by the Commission and is therefore a privileged interlocutor (Interviewee 8, 2012). This probably explains why John Richardson first came to France after he created the Task Force and was warmly welcome (Interviewee 8, 2012).

The interviews show that France could make its voice heard during the drafting. Seconding an expert, regularly taking part in meetings, writing papers and taking positions are the strategies France made use of (Interviewee 7, 2012). France also showed its political support to the IMP by organizing the Conference in Antibes in June 2006. It was the first ministerial conference about the EU IMP (Interviewee 7, 2012).
These elements prove that the drafting phase is both technical and political.

An emerging reluctance from some Member States

While the IMP was progressively being developed, some Member States started opposing it. An interviewee explained that it would be lying to say that Member States are enthusiastic about the IMP. The most widespread feeling about the IMP is reluctance, except for France and Portugal (Interviewee 8, 2012). Another interviewee proposed to classify the Member States in three categories. The first one would be the category of the "believers" with France, Spain, Portugal, and Greece. Another category would be composed of the Member States with "no opinion" such as Germany and the Baltic countries. The last category includes the "non-believers": Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK (Interviewee 7, 2012). Many countries are focused on maritime transport and relate everything to it, like Germany, Denmark, Poland, and the Northern States. That is why some Member States are represented during the IMP meetings by their Ministries in charge of transports; this is for example the case of Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands (Interviewee 8, 2012). This shows the lack of enthusiasm of most Member States for the IMP and highlights once more the challenge of setting up coordination mechanisms.

The case of the UK is special. The UK argues that the sea is the business of the Member States (Interviewee 5, 2012) in the name of the subsidiarity principle. It also claims to be the unique legitimate country to speak about the sea because it is an island. According to the UK,

the continent should not decide what to do. Another reason accounts for the British opposition to the IMP: The discussion about the EU IMP took place at a moment which was not opportune for them. Indeed at the same time, the UK was organizing a consultation on the national level which was the base of its national IMP, the Marine Bill. This document, including the issue of governance as well as the one of environmental protection and wind energy, proves that the UK is ahead (Interviewee 7, 8, 2012). The EU IMP process simply started at the wrong moment for the UK (Interviewee 7, 2012).

To sum up, this phase had both a technical and political character. France was present in the drafting process while opposition from some Member States started to rise. The theory pointed out that the first mover Member State has the advantage in this phase. Even if France is not the first mover, its quick reaction to the initiative of the Commission enabled it to have its policy approach in front of the scene: With the common contribution, France, Spain and Portugal offered a frame for the discussion to which they could refer to during the meetings of the Task Force. France managed to comfort its advantage by offering an expert to the Task Force.

Let us turn to the last phase of the policy process in order to analyse how the draft of the Blue Book was adopted.

5.2.1.3. Stage 3: Decision-making phase

An unusual process

In the EU policy-making process, the decision-making is the task of the two other EU institutions: the Council and the Parliament. The discussion about the Blue Book took place in 2007, before the Treaty of Lisbon which increased the powers of the Parliament. For this reason, the Parliament had no role to play in the adoption of the Blue Book in 2007. There was no adoption in the Parliament (Interviewee 7, 2012).

The Council is therefore the only legislative body left where the IMP had to be put to a decision. But an interviewee explained that the decision-making process did not happen as usual. The consultation of the Green Book took place from June 2006 until June 2007, and on the 10.10.2007 the Communication on the Blue Book was adopted by the College of Commissioners. This is the important point: the Blue Book was adopted by the Commission, and not by the usual decision-making part. The interviewee added that having the Blue Book adopted by other EU institutions has never been planned (Interviewee 8, 2012). This specificity links back to the discussion about the legal basis of the IMP: Since the IMP does not have a legal foundation in the Treaties, it was not adopted through the formal legal procedures. Consequently, the Council could only mention the Blue Book in its conclusions. The Blue Book was mentioned the first time by the General Affairs Council on the 10.12.2007. Its conclusions report that the Council decided what issues will be addressed by the next European Council to be held in Brussels on the 14.12.2007. The words "maritime policy" appear in the list of the items to be discussed (Council of the EU 2007 p.7). The Blue

Book was then discussed in the European Council of the 14.12.2007, under Portuguese Presidency (from July to December 2007). This is the first time it is mentioned in the conclusions of the Council in order to welcome it. Paragraph 58 of the conclusions is devoted to the IMP, it approves the action of the Commission: "The European Council welcomes the Commission communication on an integrated maritime policy for the European Union and the proposed Action Plan which sets out the first concrete steps in developing an integrated approach to maritime affairs" (Council of the EU 2008 p. 18). The conclusions define the task and the added-value of the IMP and at the same time make clear that it should respect the principle of subsidiarity (Ibid.). Finally, the European Council encourages the further development of the IMP: "The European Council invites the Commission to come forward with the initiatives and proposals contained in the Action Plan and calls on future Presidencies to work on the establishment of an integrated maritime policy for the Union" (Ibid.). The role the Council played in the adoption of the Blue Book is therefore limited, since it only said that it was pleased about it.

Strategies of France

Taking into account the way the decision-making phase took place, there is not much to report about strategies France could have used to make its voice heard. Since there was no vote in the Council, France did not have to make use of strategies (Interviewee 8, 2012). An interviewee mentioned the role of the French Minister of State for European Affairs, Jean-Pierre Jouyet, during the meeting of the General Affairs Council. He was enthusiastic about the Blue Book and promoted it in front of the Ministers of the Member States (Interviewee 7, 2012). This can be seen as a proof of the continuous promotion of the IMP. Another element shows the importance of France during this phase: An interviewee said that the Commission consulted France on some chapters of the Blue Book before the Communication was published. The Commission wanted to secure the full support of France in the Council (Interviewee 7, 2012).

No fundamental opposition

As explained before, most Member States were not enthusiastic and rather indifferent about the IMP. But despite this, there was no fundamental opposition in the Council (Interviewee 7, 8, 2012). The reason for it is simple: the Blue Book is a Communication and not a legislative text (Interviewee 7, 2012). As a consequence, the IMP is a soft policy (Interviewee 8, 2012) which is only about promising (Interviewee 7, 2012). The IMP promises growth and jobs, and a considerable added-value, for example with the pooling of resources to improve maritime surveillance and marine knowledge (Interviewee 7, 2012). This also explains why there was no need to make concessions (Interviewee 7, 2012). In the end, most Member States remained indifferent and simply keep an eye on the IMP to make sure it does not interfere with their national interests, such as the UK (Interviewee 8, 2012).

The analysis of this stage proved that things did not happen as the theory states. The Council did not have the opportunity to vote the IMP but could only welcome it in its conclusions.

Now that the policy-making process has been reconstructed, it is interesting to make an assessment of the strategies of France to see in how far French ideas have been taken up.

5.2.2. Evaluation of the involvement of France in the elaboration of the IMP

The objective of this section is to find out what French ideas were reflected or lost in the EU process leading up to the Blue Book. This requires an analysis of the common contribution of France, Spain and Portugal, basis of the French involvement in the IMP process. It should then be compared with the Blue Book, which launches the EU IMP, in order to identify the genesis of the ideas (Interviewee 8, 2012). Further EU publications will also be considered, in order to see if the French ideas found an echo in them. This section will end with a reflection on the weight of France as Member State.

5.2.2.1. The French ideas taken up

As already mentioned in the agenda-setting phase, France was promoting the concept of integration (Interviewee 7, 2012). An interviewee said that the IMP has a French touch through the idea of integration (Interviewee 9, 2013). The analysis of the common contribution proves that the concept of integration was indeed an important one. Half of the introduction explains the absolute necessity of integration. This part of the introduction is entitled "Inadequacies due to management dispersed by sector" (Portugal, Spain and France 2005 p. 1) and describes the present management of the sea as "too sectoral, purely national, insufficient, short-term, inadequate" (Ibid. p. 1-2). The section following the introduction presents the "principles and main guidelines" of the future IMP (Ibid. p. 2). The first principle mentioned is integration: "Develop a truly European vision of the sea, based on the principles of integrated management, precaution and sustainable development, and supported by consistent action" (Ibid.). This consistency should be achieved both on the European level between EU policies and on the national level, since "the policy should encourage European coastal states to adopt consistent national strategies" (Ibid.). This focus on the integration is reflected in the Blue Book which defines the purpose of the EU IMP in the introduction: "The Commission proposes an Integrated Maritime Policy for the European Union, based on the clear recognition that all matters relating to Europe's oceans and seas are interlinked, and that sea-related policies must develop in a joined-up way if we are to reap the desired results" (European Commission 2007b p. 2). The Blue Book also explains that both European and national levels are concerned, and announces that the Commission will "invite Member States to draw up national integrated maritime policies" (Ibid. p. 5).

Next to the concept of coordination, other French ideas appeared in the Blue Book. As explained in the second chapter, the Blue Book identified the three tools of the EU IMP: "a European network for maritime surveillance", "Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management" and "Data and information" (Ibid. p. 5-6). An interviewee said

that two out of these three tools were French ideas (Interviewee 8, 2012). Indeed the tool "Data and information" refers to one of the four principles of the common contribution: "Develop the knowledge of the oceans" (Portugal, Spain and France 2005 p. 2). The common contribution calls for "an ambitious and coordinated policy in this area" (Ibid. p. 2) guaranteeing the "harmonization of data collection", "exchange between Member States" and the development of "coordinated observation networks" (Ibid. p. 4). In its answer to the Green Book in 2007, France insisted again on this point: France is in favor of the setting up of a European network of research on the marine environment (Autorités françaises 2007 p. 1). This idea is embodied by the creation of the European Marine Observation and Data Network announced by the Blue Book (European Commission 2007b p. 7). The topic of marine knowledge has remained successful in the following years with the publication of "Marine knowledge 2020" in 2010.

The same analysis can be made about the second instrument of the IMP, maritime surveillance. Several interviewees explained that this was a French idea (Interviewee 4, 5, 8, 2012). Maritime surveillance is one of the four principles of the common contribution: "Protect against the sea", more precisely against "natural risks" and "human threats" (Portugal, Spain and France 2005 p. 2-3). The contribution proposes more cooperation between Member States concerning the equipment: "harmonization of resources and action, pooling of information and databases, interoperability between systems, and standardization of procedures" (Ibid. p. 7), as well as human resources: "involvement of all the navies of European Union Member States and other police forces" (Ibid.). These propositions correspond to the measures announced in the Blue Book: "The Commission will promote improved cooperation between Member States' Coastguards and appropriate agencies; take steps towards a more interoperable surveillance system to bring together existing monitoring and tracking systems" (European Commission 2007b p. 5-6). France seems to be particularly attached to the topic of surveillance: After its answer to the Green Book, France wrote another contribution dedicated to the topic of surveillance. This complementary contribution was entitled "For a reinforced action of the EU at sea" and makes propositions to improve the quality and the share of the data, and the governance in the field of maritime surveillance (Autorités françaises, undated p. 5-7). France managed to generate an interest in the topic of maritime surveillance, since it was later on the object of the Communication "Towards the integration of maritime surveillance" published in 2009. France, more precisely the SG Mer, is also the lead partner of the Blue Mass Med Project (Interviewee 8, 2012), a pilot project for the integration of maritime surveillance on the Mediterranean Sea, involving six Member States: Portugal, Spain, France, Greece, Italy, and Malta (BlueMassMed Project, undated).

Next to the concept of integration and the two instruments of the IMP (marine knowledge and maritime surveillance), several "action areas" of the Blue Book were present in the chapter "Implementation" of the common contribution. These common topics range from maritime transport (shipping, European seaports, short-distance maritime transport, promotion of maritime jobs), marine resources (fisheries, aquaculture, energy) to marine technology and the protection of marine heritage. The example of maritime careers illustrates the similarities between the French and the EU documents. The Common contribution of France, Spain and

Portugal worries about the European disinterest in maritime careers and proposes some EU measures such as "issuing EU certificates", "an appropriate training course architecture", and "the establishment of a genuine European maritime labour market" (Portugal, Spain and France 2005 p. 10). The answer of France to the Green Book in 2007 also deals with this topic: France advises the Commission to lead a pro-active policy in order to make maritime careers more attractive (Autorités françaises 2007 p. 2). This concern is reflected in the Blue Book which announces two measures: "The Commission will reassess, in close cooperation with social partners, the exclusions affecting maritime sectors in EU labour legislation" and "promote a Certificate of Maritime Excellence" (European Commission 2007b p. 9).

This analysis has proved that most of the ideas contained in the Blue Book have roots in the documents published by France to promote its ideas.

5.2.2.2. The ideas on hold

When the interviewees were asked if some French ideas were lost, it appeared that two elements did not get as much attention on the EU level as France hoped. First, an interviewee explained that the topic of the international dimension of the EU IMP had not been explored enough. Taking into account its important maritime territory, France cared a lot about this topic (Interviewee 7, 2012). This concern is spread in all chapters of the common contribution which underlined the tasks of the EU on the international level, among them a better representation of the EU's interests in all international bodies such as the IMO (Portugal, Spain and France 2005 p. 3) and the promotion of international Conventions to have them enforced by as many States as possible (Ibid. p. 6). In its answer to the Green Book, France insisted on this topic: France recalls that is considers very important the strengthening of the efficiency of the EU action in international arenas (Autorités françaises 2007 p. 2). Reflecting this concern, a chapter of the Blue Book, entitled "Promoting Europe's leadership in international maritime affairs", is dedicated to this objective (European Commission 2007b p. 13). A Communication entitled "Developing the international dimension of the Integrated Maritime Policy of the European Union" was published in 2009 (European Commission 2009a), but the interviewee argued that there was only this one Communication and nothing more. This is, according to him, something that France can regret (Interviewee 7, 2012).

The second element which was left out during the development of the IMP is the question of governance (Interviewee 7, 2012). As explained before, the institutional aspect was crucial: In the French way of thinking, the IMP was about the governance of the sea and not about the economic aspect like today (Interviewee 9, 2013). But the topic of governance triggered a lot of critics from Member States because the sea is still strongly linked to their sovereignty. If the Commission can say that a better organization for the management of the sea is necessary, Member States consider that it is not its role to impose the way to do it (Interviewee 7, 2012). That is why the topic of governance did not develop as expected.

To sum up about the uploading of the French ideas, some have been largely reflected in the Blue Book and were the subject of further EU publications. Some others have not been taken

up as much as France hoped. Of course, this evaluation is not definitive, since all ideas cannot be all implemented at the beginning and will be spread over time (Interviewee 8, 2012).

5.2.2.3. A special weight of the Member State France?

Analyzing the extent with which the French ideas have been taken up raises a question: whether France has a special weight as Member State that would help influencing the EU policy-making process.

The interviewees said that the interest of France over the process has been maintained (Interviewee 7, 8, 2012), which is confirmed by the analysis made in the previous section. Taking into account its maritime potential, France has a voice that counts (Interviewee 6, 2012). Another interviewee explained that France benefits from a special weight in the EU process and gave the example of Joe Borg. Joe Borg comes from Malta and was appointed Commissioner right after Malta became member the EU. Coming from a recent and small country did not make the situation easy for him. Having France on his side was an important support (Interviewee 7, 2012).

However, this point of view has been qualified by another interviewee. According to him, France has influence in policy fields such as agriculture but not in the domain of the IMP. The IMP is the "weakest link" of France (Interviewee 8, 2012). This weakness concerning the IMP results from the fact that France did not have an IMP, but used the EU process to maintain pressure on the national level in order to develop one. This strategy has born fruits. After the initiative of the Commission, the Groupe Poséidon was created in 2005 and met once a month during twelve months (Interviewee 8, 2012) in order to elaborate the French IMP. The Groupe Poséidon published its report, "A maritime ambition for France" in December 2006 (Secrétariat Général de la Mer 2007). It led to the adoption of the French Blue Book in 2009 and the speech held by President Nicolas Sarkozy in Le Havre the same year (Interviewee 7, 2012). This speech announced the key points of the national IMP. The French process goes on today: Minister Frédéric Cuvillier has a portfolio for the sea. This is by relying on the EU dynamic that he can maintain the pressure on the national level and further develop the French IMP (Interviewee 7, 2012). Progress has been made very recently: The national Council for the sea and coasts ("Conseil national de la mer et des littoraux") met for the first time in January 2013. It is a Council for reflection and debate which can make propositions to the government. During the first meeting of this Council, the Minister Frédéric Cuvillier launched the "Assises de la mer", a series of meetings about the maritime ambition taking place until July 2013 (Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement durable et de l'Energie 2013). The progress of the French IMP following the development of the EU IMP shows once more that Europeanisation is a process of mutual influence and that circular learning processes take place.

If France is a Member State that usually counts in the EU policy-making process, this special influence is not that strong in the field of the IMP. France is pushing an EU policy that it did

not manage to launch on the national level before the European initiative. The reason for it lies once more in the originality of the IMP and the challenge of integration it is implying.

To sum up about the main findings of this second research stage, it appeared that opportunism is an important reason accounting for the involvement of France in the IMP process. France made its voice heard in the agenda-setting and the drafting phases by writing contributions and seconding an expert to the Task Force to help elaborating the IMP. The originality of the IMP in comparison to other EU policies resulted in an unusual decision-making phase, since the Blue Book was not adopted through the formal legal procedures (in that case, a vote in the Council). In the end, the EU documents took up most of the ideas France had promoted. Even so it cannot be concluded that France had a special weight in the IMP process because France used the EU process to make its own national IMP progress.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1. The specific policy-making process of the IMP

Before concluding about the role of France in the elaboration of the IMP, it is necessary to step back because important issues about IMP specificities emerged in the interviews. As explained in the second chapter, the IMP is an unusual EU policy. The discussion about its legal basis and the competence question has impacts on its policy-making process. The interviews regularly pointed out that it is specific and answered the sixth research question ("In how far does the unique nature of the IMP impact its policy-making process?"). The particularities of the IMP policy-making process will now be presented.

6.1.1. Powerful policy fields versus the influence of individuals

Since the objective of the IMP is to coordinate, it has to challenge strong sectoral interests. Well-established policy areas are powerful and reluctant towards the IMP because they are afraid it encroaches on their territory (Interviewee 6, 2012). The second chapter already explained that the Marine Strategy Framework Directive belongs to DG Environment, and not to DG Mare. The case of the MSFD can be considered the symbol of the resistance of other DGs. The MSFD was already in preparation when the Commission started working on the IMP (Interviewee 8, 2012). DG Environment put forward two arguments to defend its directive. First it already started working on the marine environment before the IMP was launched; and second, it argued that the word "environment" prevails over "maritime". In the end a compromise was made: The first mover, the Task Force, recognized the MSFD as environmental pillar of the IMP in the Blue Book (Interviewee 8, 2012). This shows how strong the resistance of well-established policy areas can be. The same resistance is to be observed in the European Parliament. For example, during the discussion about the budget of the IMP, the Committee for fisheries argued that dedicating a budget to the IMP would lead to a reduction of the budget allocated to the fisheries (Interviewee 4, 2012).

Despite the reluctance of powerful policy fields, the IMP policy-making process still went on: It relied on the action of individuals who played an important role in the process. As explained in the previous chapter, a single person put the IMP on the EU agenda: the President of the Commission, Barroso. He was assisted by a small group of persons, among which were the Commissioner for Maritime Affairs Joe Borg, and Tiago de Pitta e Cunha. The influence of France also took place through the action of individuals. An interviewee explained that the French involvement depended on the coming together of a small number of persons who believed in this policy which did not exist yet (Interviewee 7, 2012). The French support to the IMP comes from the initiative of a single person, the Secretary-General of the SG Mer who seized the opportunity (Interviewee 7, 2012). Taking into account the reluctance of the French sectoral administrations, the action of the SG Mer did not have political support from a Minister. The IMP only had the support of two political decision-makers who embodied the support of France in the EU process. They were successively Ministers of European Affairs (Catherine Colonna from 2005 until 2007 and Jean-Pierre Jouyet from 2007 until 2008) (Interviewee 7, 2012). The Ministry of European Affairs was a relevant Ministry

and even more important, a neutral one, in order not to generate additional troubles between sectoral administrations (Interviewee 7, 2012). Later on, the influence of France on the Task Force and the drafting process went through the presence of one person: the French expert seconded to the Commission. Therefore, the originality of the IMP is the reason why its policy-making process is very dependent on individuals. An interviewee confirmed this by stating that for the specific case of the IMP, the initiative has to come from the very top: To further develop, the IMP needs to have the support of the President of the Commission (Interviewee 7, 2012).

To sum up about this first particularity of the IMP policy-making process, individuals played a crucial role and managed to make things progress despite the resistance of well-established and historically legitimate entities.

6.1.2. The regions, political entrepreneurs

The next particularity of the IMP process is the important role of the regions. Indeed several regions were mentioned as pushing the agenda and playing an important role. This regional involvement was embodied by the action of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR). The CPMR is a lobby created in 1973 to promote the interests of its 160 member regions (Interviewee 9, 2013). The regions members are very interested in the IMP for several reasons: Some are concerned by the colossal size of the container ships along their coasts and ask for a greater cooperation between Member States in order to improve maritime safety (Interviewee 4, 7, 2012). Others are particularly affected by environmental disasters such as the Bretagne by the oil spill of the Erika, or are willing to take up the challenge of the wind power sector and therefore ask for European help (Interviewee 4, 2012). In order to promote these interests, the CPMR took very early part in the IMP process. It acted as an assistant, a political partner by calling up elected representatives of the regions, producing documents, political positions and organizing meetings. These political seminars gathered Member States in order to sell them the idea of an EU IMP (Interviewee 9, 2013). The CPMR also discussed the concepts of the IMP with some individuals, such as Tiago de Pitta e Cunha. The CPMR was a political driving force assisting the Commission (Interviewee 9, 2013). Since the IMP was generating reluctance from and inside the Member States, the involvement of the CPMR helped the Commission: It was the proof that the Commission was not the only political entity to be interested in the IMP. Thanks to the CPMR, the Commission did not stand alone in front of the Member States; it could rely on the dynamism and mobilization of the regions (Interviewee 9, 2013). The regions which were particularly active belong to the Member States which were leaders on the EU level: the Portuguese regions such as the Azores, the French regions like the Bretagne, and the Spanish regions, with the Basque Country and the Galicia (Interviewee 7, 2012). But other regions were active as well, although their Member States were not active or reluctant: Some German regions have been driving forces, such as Schleswig-Holstein which has its own IMP, and some English regions as well: Hampshire, Scotland, and the Shetland Islands (Interviewee 9, 2013). This shows that the regions bypassed the national level and lobbied directly the EU level through the CPMR. The role of

the regions gathered in the CPMR is a key element in the policy-making process of the IMP. With this convergence of interests between the Commission and the CPMR (Interviewee 9, 2013), the IMP process went on, despite the reluctance of other actors.

Let us turn now to the last point of this section: the formalization. Obviously, each policy goes through this step but the one of the IMP is somewhat different.

6.1.3. From the exciting first ideas to the sensitive subject of formalization

The way the IMP is being formalized represents the last particularity of its policy-making process. In the phase of institutionalization of a policy, the enthusiasm generated during the launch phase usually decreases because it is about adopting texts (Interviewee 9, 2013). This is particularly true in the case of the IMP. The innovative approach it pursues makes the formalization phase more difficult than usual. If the IMP has a dedicated administration (DG Mare), it does not have the other two elements every other EU policy has: a legal basis, as explained in Chapter 2, and a budget (Interviewee 7, 2012). Having a dedicated budget has been a challenge for the IMP. For the first time, the IMP has one for the period 2011-2013, despite the opposition of some Member States (Interviewee 4, 2012). The discussion about its budget for the coming funding period (2014-2020) is very lively. A common budget has been allocated to the IMP and the fisheries brought together in the EMFF, the European Maritime and Fisheries Funds (Interviewee 4, 2012, Interviewee 9, 2013). But this decision is far from having unanimous support. The Committee for Fisheries in the Parliament argues that with this new budget, the fisheries will get less funding than before (Interviewee 4, 2012). Here is the position of the Parliament's rapporteur on the EMFF, who is also the vice-chair of the Committee for Fisheries: "While stressing that the IMP needs a budget that is sufficient for its needs, the rapporteur does not agree with this funding being to the detriment of fisheries and aquaculture. A detailed analysis of the Commission's budget proposals is needed therefore, with the possible introduction of a ceiling on the percentage of the EMFF allocated to the IMP" (Cadec 2012 p. 6). As a consequence, the budget is a challenge which is all the more crucial that the budget is the first tool that enables a policy to be part of the legal landscape (Interviewee 6, 2012).

This is in this precarious situation that the debate about the formalization of the IMP takes place. On 12 March 2013, the Commission published a "proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management" (European Commission 2013d). This document was published after all interviews were conducted, but the interviewees already knew that DG Mare had a project of a directive on MSP. The topic of MSP has always generated reluctance. For example, already in 2007, in its answer to the Green Book, France was skeptical about the effects of MSP: France argued that MSP is not an adequate answer to the situation of the French coastal areas and would parcel out the territory (Autorités françaises 2007 p. 2). At the time of the interviews, this directive project was said to generate a lot of resistance among Member States: France, Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands, and Malta oppose (Interviewee 8,

2012). They argue that maritime spatial planning is a national competence, and draw the attention of the Commission on the subsidiarity principle (Interviewee 8, 2012). Two interviewees explained the position of DG Mare in relation with law (Interviewee 8, 2012, Interviewee 9, 2013): A directive is the instrument par excellence to guarantee the survival of a DG. Since DG Mare has not produced any directive for the moment, it would like to have a binding legislative instrument with co-decision (Interviewee 8, 2012) in order to justify and guarantee its existence (Interviewee 8, 2012, Interviewee 9, 2013). But taking into account the opposition of several Member States, the risk of failure exists. An interviewee said that a directive project on MSP could turn into an internal institutional challenge (Interviewee 9, 2013).

In this context, a shift in the IMP is to be observed. The last step in the evolution of the IMP is the Blue Growth about which a Communication was published in September 2012. It is a proposition for increasing the growth in the maritime field in the coming years (Interviewee 7, 2012). Some interviewees explained that the spirit of the IMP has changed. The IMP is now considered from an economic point of view: it is now used to create growth and jobs (Interviewee 8, 2012). Indeed the Communication on the Blue Growth "has identified five areas where additional effort at EU level could stimulate long-term growth and jobs in the blue economy, in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy" (European Commission 2012c p. 12), which are blue energy, aquaculture, maritime, coastal and cruise tourism, marine mineral resources, and blue biotechnology (Ibid. p. 6-11). This new orientation focused on the economy is confirmed in the Limassol Declaration (Interviewee 8, 2012). The full title already shows the prevalence of the economy: "Declaration of the European Ministers responsible for the IMP and the European Commission, on a Marine and Maritime Agenda for growth and jobs" (Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2012a p. 1). This proves that the new orientation of the IMP is moving away from the spirit of the Blue Book (Interviewee 8, 2012): By playing the card of the Blue Growth, DG Mare puts aside one important initial element of the IMP: governance (Interviewee 9, 2013). This does not satisfy all actors, and especially the CPMR which is disappointed by this evolution on the EU level. It regrets that DG Mare does not bring together the concerned DGs to discuss about the IMP topics (Interviewee 9, 2013). In its General Assembly in 2012, the CPMR repeats that the IMP should not be restricted to the economic aspect: "The CPMR once more expresses its belief that the European maritime vision has to strike the right balance between the economic (including industry), environment (especially regarding risks related to climate change) and social dimensions" (CRPM 2012 p. 7). As a result, the shift to the Blue Growth can be considered an attempt by the Commission to justify the existence of the IMP.

To conclude about this research question, the original nature of the IMP has obvious impacts on its policy-making process. This process has particularities: It relies a lot on individuals and on the regions. But the originality of the IMP makes its formalization particularly difficult. Attempts are made to anchor the IMP in the political landscape: through the demonstration of its economic added value and the draft legislative proposed by DG Mare on MSP.

6.2. Summary of main findings

This thesis explored the policy-making process of the IMP. The first step of the research identified the key Member States in this process: Portugal, France and Spain. With France as case-study Member State, the thesis identified the strategies used by France to influence each stage of the policy-making process. During the agenda-setting phase, France formed an alliance with the two other key Member States, Portugal and Spain, and wrote with them a common contribution to the Green Paper in order to put forward its ideas and concepts. To make sure those ideas would be taken into account during the drafting phase, France seconded a national expert. This expert was part of the Task Force and took part in the elaboration of the first concepts of the IMP and in the writing of the Blue Book. In addition to this, France made use of the usual ways to be present in this phase: taking part in meetings, writing papers, taking positions. Until this point in the policy-making process, the strategies of France are similar to the ones identified by the theory. But this is not the case concerning the decision-making stage: No strategy for influencing was necessary since the IMP was adopted as a Communication of the Commission. Therefore, no vote took place in the Council; only a conclusion of the Council welcomed the adoption of the Commission.

To present the main findings in an analytical way and answer the main research question, the conceptual framework has been adapted to the specific case of France and the policy-making process of the IMP. Figure 6 shows the strategies used by France to impact each stage of the elaboration of the IMP.
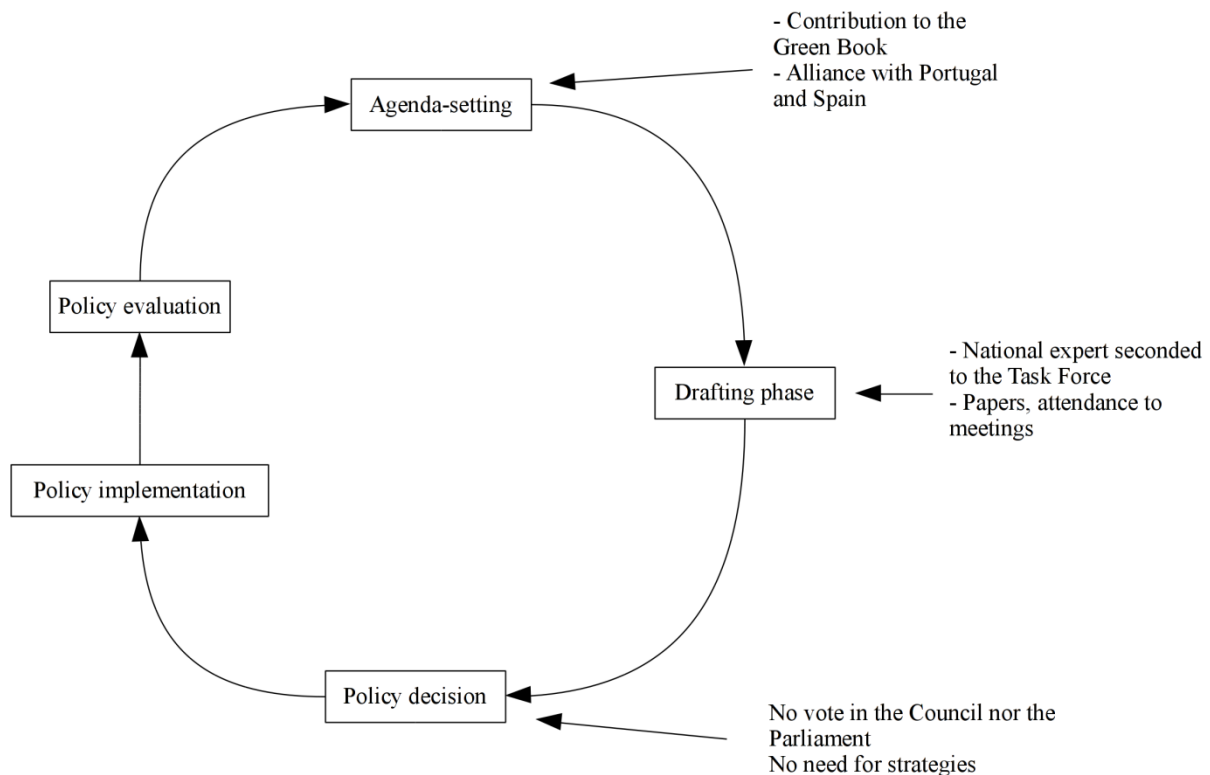

Figure 7: Strategies of France to influence the policy-making process of the EU IMP

Concerning the extent with which French initial ideas were taken up on the EU level, the interviews showed that the French interests have been maintained over the process. Many ideas France has promoted are to be found in the Blue Book. But the concept of Maritime Spatial Planning has been added during the process and is now taking a turn that does not satisfy France. The IMP, with the Blue Growth, is also moving a bit away from the concept of integration which was a cornerstone for France. To connect back to the concepts developed by Héritier (Héritier 1996 p. 158), the French involvement in the IMP process can be described as a "saddled home run". France successfully promoted its ideas, such as maritime surveillance and marine research, which were taken up in the Blue Book. But a "bandwagon effect" took place, "in the course of which the Commission and other Member States try to saddle it with additional – similar – proposals" (Ibid).

To sum up about these findings, France managed to shape the process by reacting right away to the initiative of the Commission, getting allies, providing the Commission with concepts and ideas through the common contribution, seconding an expert, and being constantly present throughout the process.

6.3. Theoretical contribution

Some theoretical contributions can be deducted from the findings of this research. First of all, the research proved that the uploading dimension of the Europeanisation is powerful. The example of France has shown that Member States can make use of a wide range of strategies to influence the policy-making process of EU policies. Their influence should not be neglected and deserves to be researched more than it is at the moment.

This thesis also brings some contributions to the theory of EU policy-making. The first contribution concerns the drafting phase. The theory was divided about its technical or political character. This research proves right the authors arguing that this is also a political phase: A French expert was seconded to the Task Force; and the SG Mer attended the Task Force meetings. This way, France could refer to the common contribution during the draft of the Blue Book. As a result, France could make its voice heard during the drafting phase and go on shaping the IMP development. In addition to this, it appears that the policy cycle has limits. The policy-making process does not always take place in the frame of the three stages defined by the theory. Stages are sometimes interlinked. In the case of the IMP, the decision-making phase was bypassed, as the Blue Book was not adopted by the usual decision-making part. The last contribution this thesis can bring to the policy-making theory is to increase the awareness on the role of individuals. All along the IMP process, things have been moving thanks to the action of individuals. On the opposite of what one may think, the policy-making process does not only take place through the interaction of entities such as the Commission, the Member States, but also through individuals who use their leadership to influence it strongly.

6.4. Recommendations

On the basis of the findings, some recommendations can be made to the actors concerned. A recommendation to France would be to work more together with its nationals working at the Commission. One of them said that France does not 'use' them (Interviewee 5, 2012). Developing more contact with them could be a means to keep them informed about the French position on current issues. This can be of importance for the Commission to know if a project would have the support of France or not. Concerning the specific case of the IMP, the research revealed that the IMP is the weak link of France. A solution would be to increase the political support for the IMP. Since France uses the EU process to maintain the pressure on the national level and the sectoral administrations, the initiative should come from the top. But higher political levels have a limited knowledge of the IMP. If the top would be more aware about the IMP and provide it with a more visible and solid support, the weight of France on the EU process would be increased.

Some recommendations to Member States can be drawn from the French experience in the IMP process. Both the theory and the empirical results showed that the role Member States can play in the policy-making process is significant. As an interviewee said, Member States have to keep the IMP alive; the Commission cannot do everything (Interviewee 6, 2012). In order to impact the EU process, the strategies that seem to bear fruits are the following: Forming alliances to have more weight, and providing expertise through documents or seconded experts to provide the Commission with concepts. Another element which is key to a successful influence is continuity. The regular presence in meetings and a continuous political interest count.

Concerning the EU, recommendations focus on the specific nature of the IMP. To anchor the IMP in the political landscape and put an end to the subsidiarity discussion, the IMP should be given the elements that every other regular EU policy has. The EU is already on this track since the financial situation has been improved with the creation of the EMFF. But what the IMP really needs is a legal basis in the Treaties. This would help decreasing the criticism leveled against it and guaranteeing its survival. But taking into account the current eurosceptical climate, this is not an easy task. Furthermore, the IMP was said to lack something concrete and to be too technical (Interviewee 4, 2012). A solution would be to increase its visibility and focus on the realization of some concrete projects in order to show what the IMP can achieve and convince political actors. But once more, the current economic context makes the carrying out of these recommendations difficult.

6.5. Critical reflection and further research

Because of the specificity of the IMP, an insight into the theory on multi-level governance would have been useful. Indeed, the theory of Europeanisation does not help to understand the coordination question. The focus of this thesis was on the influence of France on the IMP policy-making process but issues related to multi-level governance came up in the analysis of the interviews, such as the role of the regions.

Concerning the methodology, the focus on a single Member State could be considered a limitation of this research. For time reasons, only the case of France has been explored although the interviews showed that two other Member States have also been pushing the IMP since the beginning: Portugal and Spain; and that the involvement of France at the very beginning happened in cooperation with them. But still, the interviews brought enough evidence that the influence of France can be isolated and analysed apart from the one of Spain and Portugal.

Furthermore, this research encountered a problem that is inherent in the analysis of a process in progress: the difficulty of taking a step back to better analyse it. Indeed the IMP is a very recent policy which is entering its phase of formalization. The draft directive on MSP has been published a few days before this thesis was completed. As a result it could be argued that one does not have enough hindsight to assess the influence of France and its satisfaction about the EU outcome. However, the IMP has reached a sufficient level of development at this point of time (awareness of the necessity of an IMP, setting up of its tools, progress concerning its budget, draft directive on MSP) to be able to evaluate the role of France.

It will be interesting to follow up the discussions about the draft directive on MSP and see if and how the reluctant Member States will oppose it. An interview suggested that France could take part in a coalition of votes to make its voice heard (Interviewee 8, 2012).

Concerning further research in the field of EU policy-making, the role of regional entrepreneurs would be a topic worth of investigation. This thesis has highlighted the important role of the regional lobby CPMR in the IMP policy-making process. It would be interesting to explore how regions shape the EU agenda and achieve their goals in the multi-level governance system.

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Appendix A: Interviewees

<u>Stage 1</u>

Interviewee 1: Official in DG Mare, Unit C.1: Maritime Policy Atlantic, outermost regions and Arctic. Brussels, 07.08.2012

Interviewee 2: Official in DG Mare, Unit E.1: Maritime Policy Baltic and North Sea. Brussels, 07.08.2012

Interviewee 3: Official in DG Mare, Unit C.1: Maritime Policy Atlantic, outermost regions and Arctic. Brussels, 07.08.2012

<u>Stage 2</u>

Interviewee 4: Parliamentary Assistant of a MEP member of the Seas and Coastal Areas Intergroup. Brussels, 27.11.2012

Interviewee 5: Official in DG Mare, Unit E.1: Maritime Policy Baltic and North Sea. Brussels, 27.11.2012

Interviewee 6: Official in DG Mare, Unit D.1: Maritime Policy in Mediterranean and Black Sea. Interviewee 6 is seconded as French national expert. Brussels, 27.11.2012

Interviewee 7: Member of Cabinet (responsible for the Integrated Maritime Policy) of Maria Damanaki, EU Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. Interviewee 7 was a seconded French national expert during the elaboration of the EU IMP. Brussels, 28.11.2012

Interviewee 8: Official in SG Mer, in charge of the EU IMP. Interviewee 8 attended the meetings of the Task Force in the name of the SG Mer. Paris, 19.12.2012

Interviewee 9: Official in charge of Maritime Affairs, innovation and competitiveness at the CPMR. Rennes, 09.01.2013

Appendix B: Questionnaire for the first stage of research

1. Which Member States were/are the main players, the first movers in the field of the EU IMP? At which stages of the process? (Agenda-setting, policy preparation, adoption)

2. Why are these Member States particularly active in pushing forward this policy on the EU level? What are their motives?

3. In how far were/are the experience and initiative of these Member States important for the EU Commission?

4. How do Member States try to make their voices heard? What strategy do they use at what stage of the policy-making process?

5. Did you perceive an evolution or a change in the strategy of the key Member States?

6. In the end of the policy process, which original national ideas can still be identified? How did the EU Commission seek to develop a policy that is in the EU interest and could be adopted by the Council and the Parliament?

7. Were there any notable reactions from these two institutions? Or from any of the Member States?

8. Were/Are some non-EU Member States key players in the maritime policy field?

9. About the forecast: How do you see the EU IMP developing?

Appendix C: Questionnaire for the second stage of research

1) Phase 1: Agenda-setting

   a. Why was it in the interest of France to get the IMP on the EU agenda? What are the reasons why France acted as a first mover?
   b. What are the key ideas France wanted to see reflected in the EU IMP?
   c. What were the strategies of France as a first mover? Which means did France make use of to make its voice heard?
   d. Where other Member States or non-EU Member States also first movers? For what reasons?

2) Phase 2: Drafting phase

   a. Was this phase a technical and substantive discussion in order to elaborate the best policy possible, or a political discussion? Could France make its voice heard? If yes, what were its strategies to propagate its ideas? Did France help during the drafting process?
   b. Did other Member States play a role during this phase? Was there a 'clash' between different problem-solving approaches?

3) Phase 3: Policy formulation

   a. What role did other Member States play in this phase? Did some Member States oppose the draft?
   b. What were the strategies of France to have the draft adopted in the Parliament and in the Council? How did France make sure it had the majority in the Council when it came to voting?
   c. Were concessions or compromises made?

4) Did the strategy as first mover change during the process? Could the French interests be maintained over the whole process? Could France maintain the initial structural advantage of the first mover until the end of the process?

5) About the outcome:

   a. What initial French ideas are included in the EU IMP?
   b. What ideas are lost?
   c. Why? What are the reasons for this? What are the reasons of the success/failure?
   d. Was France in a particular position that enabled it to influence the IMP process? Was France able to do something other Member States could not? Does France have a special "power"?
   e. Generally speaking, is France satisfied with the EU outcome?

    f.   In how far is this outcome important for the domestic policy?

6) About the forecast: How do you see the EU IMP developing? Are you optimistic?

Appendix D: Categorisation of the data

Research stage	Categories	Research question answered
Stage 1	Genesis of the IMP Background knowledge	Research question 3
Stage 2	Reconstruction of the IMP policy-making process Assessment of the French involvement Specificities of the IMP process	Research question 4 Research question 5 Research question 6