

# DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARITIME COASTAL POLICY: REGIONAL INTERESTS

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the implementation of cabotage in Southern Africa, with a specific focus on the development of cabotage policies in South Africa and Mozambique in the context of these countries' SADC membership. Cabotage exists when a coastal state exercises its prerogative to solely exploit its coastal resources and to especially trade vessels of choice between ports within its own jurisdiction. Cabotage is therefore a coastal shipping legal regime that excludes operators from maritime commercial activities falling outside the regulating jurisdiction's set parameters. Its stricture and application vary according to the requirements of each jurisdiction.

South Africa and Mozambique have taken steps to develop their cabotage policies, aiming to boost regional trade and economic growth. The Comprehensive Maritime Transport Policy states cabotage as the official coastal shipping policy in South Africa. Implementation of the policy is sought through the proposed provisions of the Merchant Shipping Bill. In Mozambique, Decree No 30/2007 regulates the performance of all maritime commercial activities (passengers and cargo) operated by vessels in the waters under the Mozambican jurisdiction. Such activities are reserved to the national registered fleet. Decree No 35/2016 creates a special mechanism for the engagement of foreign registered vessels in the Mozambican coastal trade.

The paper assesses the potential impact of the proposed policies in South Africa and Mozambique considering their potential effects on regional trade and on the shipping industries. The findings of this research contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between cabotage, regional development, and maritime governance in Southern Africa, informing policy debates and shedding light on the prospects of a sustainable regional coastal transportation regime.