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Towards an Integrated Maritime Court System in Indonesia: Realizing Fair, Efficient, and Low-Cost Justice in Maritime Disputes

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Abstract: Indonesia is the world's largest archipelagic nation and has significant economic opportunities in its ocean-based industries. However, the legal framework governing maritime activities is fragmented across multiple disconnected areas. At present, maritime disputes fall under the jurisdiction of different institutions: the Maritime Court, District Court, Fisheries Court, and National Transportation Safety Commission. This divided arrangement creates problems with overlapping powers, procedural bottlenecks, and uncertainty for businesses and individuals working in the maritime sector. The situation conflicts with the efficiency goals outlined in Law No. 48 of 2009 on Judicial Authority, which requires justice to be simple, quick, and inexpensive. This research examines how the current fragmented system causes negative results and explains why Indonesia requires a more unified maritime justice framework. It also puts forward an institutional design that balances fairness with practical functionality. The study uses a normative legal approach with descriptive-analytical methods, relying on secondary materials such as national laws and international agreements like UNCLOS 1982, along with studies from domestic and international research institutions. The data underwent qualitative content analysis. Results show that scattered institutional powers and weak coordination between agencies are the main reasons maritime law enforcement performs poorly throughout Indonesia. Bringing maritime jurisdiction together under one court within the Supreme Court system would centralize legal processes, enabling faster and cheaper resolution of disputes. This structure could increase legal certainty, strengthen Indonesia's control over its territorial waters, and provide better legal safeguards for fishing communities and maritime enterprises.

Keywords: Maritime Justice System, Maritime Disputes, Legal Justice, Judicial Efficiency.

Introduction

Comprising over 17,000 islands and stretching across more than 108,000 kilometers of coastline, Indonesia occupies a geographically distinct position among the world's nations. Indonesia is the world's largest archipelagic country and sits along some of the most active shipping routes in global commerce. Its waters play a central role in international trade flows. The maritime area contains abundant natural resources and also acts as an important channel for economic transactions between countries. (Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan Republik Indonesia, 2024). The Indonesian Archipelagic Sea Lanes (ALKI) facilitate approximately 40 percent of global trade, making the maritime sector a key pillar of the national economy (Kementerian Perhubungan Republik Indonesia, 2024).

The sector's broader potential, however, is constrained by the disjointed character of Indonesia's maritime legal architecture (Agastia, 2024). Maritime disputes are currently handled by several different institutions: the Shipping Court, District Courts, Fisheries Courts, and the National Transportation Safety Commission. This divided authority slows down case processing, creates conflicts over jurisdiction, and contradicts the principle of accessible, fast, and affordable justice set out in Law Number 48 of 2009 on Judicial Power.

The Shipping Court operates under the Ministry of Transportation and handles only administrative matters. Its main tasks include investigating ship accidents and recommending penalties for crew members who are at fault (Sengadji et al., 2023). Civil and criminal cases that fall outside this limited scope are not covered by the Shipping Court. Examples include contract disputes between shipping companies, liability for collisions, and claims related to marine pollution. No single institution currently has full authority to decide on all types of legal issues that occur in the maritime sector. This gap weakens legal certainty and leaves businesses without clear guidance when maritime disputes happen. As a result, investment becomes less attractive and commercial operations face disruptions (Law No. 17 of 2008, in conjunction with Law No. 66 of 2024).

Several countries have already established integrated maritime court systems that handle all areas of maritime law, including administrative and criminal cases. The United Kingdom, Singapore, and Australia are examples of this approach (Rochefort-reynolds, 2020; White & Molloy, 2011). These court systems operate directly under their respective supreme courts. These Indonesia, the numbers reveal a troubling pattern: 87 accidents occurred in 2020, 100 in 2021, and 108 in 2022 (Darilaut.id, 2023), However, 78 percent of these cases still lack final legal decisions. This inefficiency harms the investment climate in the maritime sector, despite the fact that the maritime industry has potential economic value of USD 1,334 billion, equal to IDR 19,371 trillion (Badan Riset dan Sumber Daya Manusia Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan, 2021).

Research studies repeatedly identify institutional fragmentation as the main barrier to effective maritime law enforcement in Indonesia. Budiman (2018) points out that poor coordination among relevant authorities results in weak maritime law enforcement (Budiman, 2018). Hashim and Abdullah (2022) published research in the Journal of Maritime Logistics showing that Malaysia improved its maritime justice system substantially by integrating institutions under one jurisdiction (Hashim & Wan Abdullah, 2022). UNCTAD (2023) data also reveals that countries with specialized maritime courts resolve cases up to 1.7 times faster than those using conventional systems (UNCTAD, 2023).

Establishing a Maritime Court in Indonesia has a strong theoretical basis and promises significant benefits. According to Lawrence M. Friedman's theory of legal systems, the effectiveness of law depends on three main elements: legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture (Friedman, 1975). Indonesian maritime law shows problems in all three areas. The current legal framework has limitations, institutional structures overlap, and legal culture in the maritime sector remains affected by complicated sectoral bureaucracy. Establishing a Maritime Court under the Supreme Court would help balance these three elements and provide more reliable legal certainty.

John Rawls' concept of justice as fairness adds another perspective. Rawls argues that justice depends on both outcomes and processes (Rawls, 1999). A specialized maritime court would deliver fairer justice to business operators, fishermen, and coastal communities—groups that currently suffer the most from inadequate access to quick and efficient legal services. This institution would also improve Indonesia's standing as a modern legal state and member of the global maritime community, with an efficient judicial system that aligns with international conventions such as UNCLOS 1982 and COLREG 1972.

The socioeconomic factors matter greatly. More than 60 percent of Indonesia's population lives in coastal areas and depends on maritime activities for income (Brotosusilo et al., 2016). When maritime dispute resolution moves slowly, groups like fishermen suffer the most. If Indonesia keeps its current sectoral system, law enforcement will remain slow and legal protection for coastal communities and the national maritime ecosystem will stay weak.

Creating a Maritime Court represents an important part of Indonesia's legal and institutional reform. This measure would ensure that all maritime cases are resolved under one integrated jurisdiction, making Indonesia a nation governed by law and focused on substantive justice and efficiency. Using Friedman's legal system framework and Rawls' justice theory, a Maritime Court can demonstrate Indonesia's commitment to upholding maritime law while strengthening maritime sovereignty in an increasingly complex global environment.

Methods

This research uses a normative legal study method with a descriptive-analytical approach. It examines why Indonesia needs to establish a Maritime Court that can provide a fast, simple, and low-cost judicial system, as required by Law Number 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Authority. The study applies two main approaches: a statute approach to review regulations related to shipping law and maritime dispute resolution, and a conceptual approach to explore the concept of creating a specialized maritime court based on Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory and John Rawls' theory of justice.

The research draws on secondary data sources, including legislation (Noor, 2023). international conventions such as UNCLOS 1982, academic literature, journals, and reports from institutions like the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, along with other relevant materials. The data analysis used a qualitative legal approach with content analysis. This method allowed the researcher to find normative and structural gaps in Indonesia's maritime legal system and develop a model for an effective and fair maritime court.

Results And Discussion

The Urgency of Establishing an Integrated Maritime Justice System in Indonesia

Indonesia is an archipelagic country with 16,056 recorded islands and a coastline of 99,093 km2. The land area covers about 2.012 million km2, while the sea area covers roughly 5.8 million km2 (75.7%). Of this maritime territory, 2.7 million square kilometers are part of the Exclusive Economic Zone (Badan Informasi Geospasial, 2019). The government has expressed its goal to become a global maritime center and has stated its commitment to making the sea central to the nation's future. Yet despite this potential, the current legal system and maritime dispute resolution mechanisms do not function adequately. Indonesia's maritime legal system remains divided across different sectors and institutions, with no single specialized court that handles all maritime legal cases.

Different institutions handle maritime-related cases in Indonesia: The Police, the Maritime Court, the District Court, the Fisheries Court, the Administrative Court, and the National Transportation Safety Commission (KNKT). The MV Soul of Luck case illustrates this problem. On July 14, 2019, the vessel collided with a container crane at the Semarang Container Terminal. The Maritime Court could only rule on the captain's ethical violation in this incident. The court could not determine material losses from crane damage, port operational losses, or potential compensation claims from related parties because these issues fell outside its authority. This arrangement slows down legal processes and creates legal uncertainty for maritime businesses.

The Maritime Court can impose administrative sanctions on captains, such as warnings or suspension of sailing permits, when negligence violates standard sailing operational provisions. This process examines the captain's professionalism and compliance with maritime ethics. However, the Maritime Court's decision does not cover broader criminal or civil matters.

When a ship accident causes loss of life or occurs because of the captain's negligence, resulting in physical injury or death, criminal proceedings may follow. The sinking of the Tunu Pratama Jaya in 2024 provides an example. In such cases, the prosecutor's office files criminal charges against the captain if evidence shows their negligence violated criminal law. At this point, investigators assess whether the captain's actions involved negligence or deliberate intent that led to loss of life or serious injury to crew members or passengers. If found guilty, the captain may face criminal penalties under applicable regulations, including imprisonment or fines.

When ship accidents cause material or financial losses, such as damage to the ship, cargo, or the environment, the captain may face civil proceedings. These cases aim to determine compensation for losses suffered by relevant parties, including the ship owner, cargo owner, or third parties affected by the accident. In civil proceedings, the plaintiff must prove that the captain's actions or negligence caused significant financial loss. If guilt is established, the captain or the shipping company may need to compensate the injured party.

The sectoral structure of maritime law enforcement creates several problems in practice. When different judicial institutions handle maritime cases—the Maritime Court, criminal courts, and civil courts—jurisdictions can overlap and legal decisions may conflict. This situation leads to lengthy court proceedings because each judicial channel has its own procedures and standards of proof. Poor coordination between law enforcement agencies in the maritime sector presents the biggest problem, delaying case resolution and preventing timely justice for affected parties.

The Maritime Security Coordination Agency report shows clear examples of authority disputes between agencies. A smuggling vessel seized by Customs might also violate fisheries regulations (under the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries jurisdiction) and use false documents (under Indonesian National Police jurisdiction) (Bakorkamla RI, 2019). This complicated coordination process slows down case handling and increases costs (Sitepu et al., 2025). The problem becomes worse when examining actual enforcement outcomes. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries recorded hundreds of illegal vessels sunk between 2015 and 2023, but Supreme Court data (2023) show that only a small portion of fisheries criminal cases reached court (Mahkamah Agung RI, 2023). This gap creates impunity because investigations and case file preparation lack proper integration. The threats to sovereignty and sustainability appear clearly in the data. Global Fishing Watch ranks Indonesia as one of the countries with the highest rates of IUU fishing globally, with estimated economic losses of USD 4-5 billion per year (Leonardo & Deeb, 2022). Transnational

crimes such as drug and human trafficking via sea routes continue to expose significant security gaps.

Establishing this integrated system requires a solid theoretical foundation from three perspectives. First, Ludwig von Bertalanffy's Systems Theory views law enforcement at sea as a large system where subsystems (agencies) working independently create friction and fail to achieve overall system objectives (Zięcina et al., 2022). An integrated system would produce emergence—strong law enforcement results that no single subsystem could achieve alone. Second, Integrated Maritime Governance calls for a holistic approach where all stakeholders coordinate in a structured way to overcome sectoralism. This aligns with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which requires coastal states to manage their maritime areas effectively. Third, Theory of Change (ToC) provides clear intervention logic (UNDG, 2015): establishing an integrated maritime justice system with a command center, integrated database, and standard procedures will improve coordination and efficiency of law enforcement operations. This leads to higher detection rates and more legal proceedings against maritime criminals, creating a deterrent effect, reducing crime, restoring marine resources, and strengthening sovereignty.

Indonesia needs to establish an integrated maritime justice system. The current fragmentation of authority has become a vulnerability that criminals exploit to undermine Indonesia's sovereignty and maritime resources. The data show inefficiency, low conviction rates, and substantial economic losses. Creating a Special Maritime Court is necessary. Judges with expertise in maritime law, maritime affairs, and marine science will handle technical complexities such as Automatic Identification System (AIS) evidence, fish stock analysis, and shipping safety standards. This expertise will address longstanding problems in the judicial process and provide legal certainty and protection in the maritime sector.

Findings on the fragmentation of authority indicate that the design of maritime courts is not merely a matter of institutional efficiency, but also a prerequisite for sustainable development. Swift and certain resolution of cases can prevent prolonged marine environmental damage, accelerate resource recovery, and safeguard the livelihoods of coastal communities. Thus, the contribution of an integrated maritime court lies in its ability to connect legal certainty, social protection, maritime economic growth, and ecological preservation within a single, consistent accountability mechanism.

At the same time, jurisdictional integration does not by itself guarantee sustainability if it merely centralizes authority without improving the quality of coordination, data, judicial capacity, coastal community access, and enforcement of decisions. The contradiction between the need for centralization and the risk of forming new bureaucracy must be resolved through a clear division of functions: courts should hold the power of adjudication, while technical agencies continue to conduct examinations and provide scientific evidence in a connected data system. Such a model preserves technical specialization without sustaining legal fragmentation.

Principles of Fairness, Efficiency, and Low Cost in Maritime Justice

Maritime courts are important instruments in the legal system that should provide certainty, fairness, and efficiency in resolving disputes in the maritime and shipping sectors (Abouata, 2026; Fu, 2022). However, Indonesia's maritime industry faces several legal problems, including ship collisions, marine pollution, cargo disputes, and cross-border fisheries violations (Diantara et al., 2025). Different institutions have handled these issues separately: the Maritime Court, District Courts, Fisheries Courts, and various law enforcement agencies such as the Indonesian Navy, the Maritime Security Agency, and the Maritime and Shipping Monitoring Agency. This fragmented approach causes inefficiency, inconsistent verdicts, and legal uncertainty, which means minimal protection for those seeking justice in the maritime sector.

These problems show the need for an integrated maritime court—a court that handles all maritime cases within a single judicial system (single-door maritime justice). This court would have its own procedural law and operate directly under the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia. The objective is to create a legal resolution system that is straightforward, efficient, and cost-effective. An integrated maritime court as a specialized court requires several prerequisites, including:

1. The maritime court must apply the simplicity principle and uphold the fairness principle. The court must be able to resolve cases with concrete, consistent results and provide legal certainty to all parties. The case resolution process must be efficient, affordable, and free from overlapping jurisdictions between institutions. Maritime courts must also apply the justice principle that provides equal access to the law for seafarers, ship owners, cargo owners, and other affected parties, regardless of social status, nationality, or company size. This court must handle all aspects of maritime law, administrative, civil, criminal, and environmental matters, within a single system, without requiring cases to move between different forums. For example, disputes over ship collisions would no longer

need to wait for administrative proceedings in the Shipping Court to be separated from civil lawsuits or criminal proceedings in the District Court.

2. To have full authority and independence, the maritime court must operate under the Supreme Court as part of the national judicial system, similar to religious, military, and administrative courts. This follows the principle of judicial independence mandated in Law Number 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Authority. With this structure, the maritime court will have specialized judges with technical competence in shipping and maritime affairs. The maritime court also has its own maritime legal procedures based on the characteristics of the shipping world and international practices such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO), UNCLOS, and COLREG 1972.
3. The maritime court has its own maritime judicial procedures and does not use ordinary civil and criminal procedures. Maritime procedural law includes procedures such as accepting the results of investigations by the Shipping Court or technical agencies as valid evidence, assessing responsibility in ship collisions (whether based on negligence, force majeure, or joint fault), handling claims for compensation covering damage to ships, loss of cargo, impact on seafarers, and damage to the marine ecosystem, and provisions for cross-border enforcement against foreign-flagged ships that violate national laws. For example, in a ship collision case, the maritime court would handle the entire process from investigation to compensation, without requiring separate proceedings in different courts. The prerequisites for maritime courts are shown in the following table.

Table 1

Prerequisites for the Maritime Court Concept

No.	Aspects/Prerequisites	Description
1	Ideal Characteristics of a Maritime Court	a. Simple: Can resolve cases with tangible, consistent results and provide legal certainty. b. Fast: Fast process, affordable costs, without overlapping authority. c. Comprehensive: Handles all aspects of maritime law (administrative, civil, criminal, and environmental) in one forum.
2	Institutional Position	1. It is under the Supreme Court as part of the national judicial system. 2. It applies to the principle of judicial independence. 3. Specialized judges in maritime and shipping matters strengthen it. 4. It applies international standards and practices such as the IMO, UNCLOS, and COLREG 1972.
	Special Maritime Procedure Law	a) Does not use conventional civil and criminal procedural law. b) Contains typical maritime procedures: - Submission of the Maritime Court's investigation results as valid evidence. - Assessment of legal responsibility (negligence, force majeure, joint fault). - Compensation claims cover damage to the vessel, loss of cargo, impact on sailors, and damage to the marine ecosystem. - Cross-border execution for foreign-flagged vessels that violate national laws.

Source: Processed Data, 2026

Based on this concept, the main principle of maritime courts is their ability to prevent overlapping decisions between the Maritime Court and general courts, as seen in the case of Norgas Cathinka versus Bahuga Jaya Passenger Motor Ship. Maritime courts also offer several advantages by applying the principles of fairness, efficiency, and low cost. These three principles are connected and can be achieved through establishing a specialized judicial institution, simplifying legal procedures, applying digital technology, and implementing legal aid policies that favor disadvantaged groups. A fair and efficient maritime court strengthens the rule of law and contributes to Indonesia's

inclusive, competitive, and sustainable maritime economic growth.

The significance of these findings for sustainable development is that the principles of simplicity, speed, and low cost must be understood substantively, not merely as reducing litigation time and expenses. Judicial efficiency should be assessed by its ability to reduce economic losses, guarantee fair compensation, restore damaged environments, and protect groups that are directly dependent on marine resources. Therefore, indicators of maritime court success should include access for vulnerable groups, compliance with decisions, the speed of ecosystem recovery, and the prevention of repeated violations.

Institutionalization and the Ideal Model of Maritime Courts in Indonesia

In principle, establishing a maritime court can only be implemented realistically, systematically, and operationally if supported by substantial and structural changes to the legal framework under Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 66 of 2024 concerning the Third Amendment to Law Number 17 of 2008 concerning Shipping. These necessary legal framework changes can be achieved by amending Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 66 of 2024 concerning the Third Amendment to Law Number 17 of 2008 concerning Shipping.

Legal changes that accommodate a maritime court require philosophical, juridical, and sociological foundations. From a philosophical perspective, establishing a maritime court represents Indonesia's legal ideals, which place justice as the foundation of law enforcement (Larsen, 2024). In the context of the world's largest archipelagic nation, a maritime court fulfills both the technical needs of dispute resolution and reflects the philosophy of Pancasila and the constitutional mandate to achieve social justice for all Indonesians. Resolving maritime disputes is part of the state's responsibility to safeguard the nation's dignity, sovereignty, and prosperity through legal certainty in its maritime territory (Peni Susetyorini, 2025).

The institutionalization of maritime courts is also supported by a legal foundation based on the principle of the rule of law, as stated in Article 1 paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution, which affirms that Indonesia is a state based on the rule of law. Currently, the Maritime Court's existence is solely administrative and fails to fulfill the principles of simple, expeditious, and low-cost justice stated in Law Number 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Power. Legal reconstruction is necessary by revising the Shipping Law to include explicit provisions regarding maritime courts as specialized judicial institutions under the Supreme Court. This legal foundation is also supported by Indonesia's obligation to align national law with international conventions, such as UNCLOS 1982, which regulates the jurisdiction of coastal states in resolving maritime disputes, ensuring Indonesia's adherence to global standards.

From a sociological perspective, the need for a maritime court stems from the social reality of Indonesian society, where most people depend on the maritime sector for their livelihoods (Touwe, 2020). The high number of ship accidents, marine pollution, maritime conflicts, and maritime trade disputes requires a fast, simple, and low-cost dispute resolution forum. Furthermore, the development of international trade and the increasing volume of shipping traffic in Indonesia demand a court capable of providing legal certainty and protecting the rights of seafarers, shipping companies, and coastal communities. Establishing a maritime court will also strengthen public trust in the national justice system and enhance Indonesia's global competitiveness as a maritime nation.

These changes to accommodate maritime courts in the Shipping Law could include additional definitions, strengthening institutional structures, expanding the scope of norms, and establishing an integrated maritime legal resolution mechanism within a single court system. Article 1 of the Shipping Law, which currently does not include a term or definition for a maritime court, needs to be supplemented with a new provision: Article 1, number 62: "The Maritime Court is a specialized judicial institution that handles the resolution of cases arising from shipping and maritime activities, including but not limited to ship accidents, marine pollution, violations of the right of passage, maritime compensation claims, and maritime administrative violations, which are subject to maritime procedural law and are under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia." This addition provides a conceptual basis for clarifying the existence and character of the maritime court as an integral part of the national justice system.

In addition to the improvements to Article 1, a new article concerning law enforcement through the maritime court needs to be added. This is necessary to provide a comprehensive legal framework for enforcing maritime laws and regulations, ensuring that all aspects of maritime activities are effectively regulated and adjudicated.

1) Specifically relating to cases arising from maritime activities, such as ship accidents, violations of shipping lanes, damage to the marine environment, compensation claims, and violations of maritime administration.

2) The maritime court system should implement a hierarchical court process, starting from the first instance, through the appeals level, and up to the cassation level. This structure mirrors the national justice system and ensures that all cases are heard and adjudicated appropriately.

3) Matters relating to procedural law, trial mechanisms, the acceptance of technical evidence such as reports from the Maritime Court, and cross-jurisdictional execution procedures are further regulated in Supreme Court Regulations. These regulations provide detailed guidelines for the conduct of trials and the enforcement of court decisions.

These normative changes are necessary to ensure that the existence of a maritime court becomes a concrete reality rather than remaining an abstract ideal. Establishing this institution strengthens the state's position in addressing domestic maritime issues and provides a legal framework consistent with international maritime law, such as UNCLOS 1982, SOLAS, and MARPOL.

The institutionalization of maritime courts also faces transitional challenges, including budgetary requirements, the availability of judges and experts, harmonization of procedural law, data interoperability, as well as potential resistance from agencies that have so far held sectoral authority. These challenges need to be addressed gradually through pilot projects in regions with a high intensity of disputes, interdisciplinary training, scientific standards of evidence, digital judicial services, and periodic evaluation mechanisms that measure social, economic, and ecological impacts.

The provisions of Law Number 66 of 2024 must function as both normative changes and a formal basis for establishing institutions and special procedural law. The Maritime Court needs to implement regulations, such as the Supreme Court Regulation on Maritime Court Procedural Law and the Presidential Regulation on the Institutional Structure of Maritime Courts. Synergy between institutions such as the Ministry of Transportation, the Shipping Court, the Maritime Security Agency, the Indonesian Navy, the Sea and Coast Guard, and the Prosecutor's Office is also necessary.

This transformation will shift the paradigm in maritime dispute resolution from a sectoral and fragmented system to an integrated system that is streamlined, efficient, and cost-effective. This principle aligns with Richard A. Posner's theory of legal efficiency, which states that the legal system should minimize the social costs of dispute resolution without sacrificing substantive justice. A maritime court designed with this principle will accelerate case resolution, reduce the burden on general courts, and improve legal certainty in the maritime sector.

The institutionalization of maritime courts, initiated by amendments to the Shipping Law and supported by adequate human resources, demonstrates Indonesia's commitment to maritime law. Judges and judicial officials need maritime technical competence and understanding of international maritime law (UNCLOS, 1982), shipping law, maritime insurance, and the technical aspects of maritime accidents. This institution will speed up dispute resolution and strengthen Indonesia's position as a modern maritime nation that upholds justice, efficiency, and legal sovereignty at sea.

If such institutionalization is truly to support sustainable development, the jurisdiction of the court must not be limited to commercial losses. Case assessment should include cumulative impacts on ecosystems, the vulnerability of coastal communities, and the need for long-term restoration. Judges also require independent expert support so that the value of environmental damage is not reduced to short-term financial compensation.

Conclusions

Law Number 66 of 2024 needs to serve as the normative and formal basis for the establishment of institutions and special procedural law for maritime courts. Its implementation requires a Supreme Court Regulation concerning Maritime Court Procedures and a Presidential Regulation regarding institutional structure, accompanied by synergy among the Ministry of Transportation, the Maritime Court, the Maritime Security Agency, the Indonesian Navy, the Sea and Coast Guard, and the Prosecutor’s Office. The transformation from a sectoral system to an integrated maritime judiciary could simplify processes, increase efficiency, and reduce the social costs of dispute settlement without sacrificing substantive justice. A specialized court can also reduce the burden on general courts, expedite case resolution, and enhance legal certainty in the maritime sector.

The institutionalization of maritime courts must be accompanied by human resource strengthening. Judges and judicial officers require competencies in international maritime law, shipping law, marine insurance, and technical aspects of ship accidents. With such support, Indonesia can strengthen maritime legal supremacy and its position as a modern

maritime nation. The establishment of an integrated maritime court is expected to make a tangible contribution to sustainable development through three avenues. First, the institution enhances the legal certainty and efficiency required by responsible maritime economic activities. Second, a one-stop mechanism expands access to justice for fishers, seafarers, and coastal communities. Third, comprehensive jurisdiction enables environmental damage and the need for its restoration to be considered alongside criminal, civil, and administrative liability.

The main challenges lie in the risk of forming new bureaucracies, the limited number of judges with multidisciplinary competencies, the integration of inter-agency data, and the possibility of authority conflicts during the transition period. Therefore, changes in the law must be accompanied by clear division of functions, a shared information system, technical standards of proof, and periodic evaluation mechanisms. Institutional integration must result in tangible coordination, not merely a formal transfer of authority.

The significance of this research's findings is that the sustainability of the maritime sector depends on the quality of legal institutions that connect economic growth, social justice, and ecological protection. The maritime court is not a final goal. It is a means to ensure that the use of the sea yields prosperity without increasing the vulnerability of coastal communities or accelerating ecosystem degradation.

Future research needs to assess institutional models through empirical data on case duration, litigation costs, decision compliance rates, environmental restoration, and the experience of vulnerable groups. More targeted comparative studies are also needed to determine whether Indonesia should establish an independent court, a special maritime chamber, or a phased regional model. These empirical findings will strengthen the policy foundation and prevent reforms from becoming merely normative.

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