

Taiwan aims to become a resilient maritime state

The Ocean Affairs Council yesterday unveiled its latest National Ocean Policy White Paper, with the goal of building Taiwan into a resilient maritime state that upholds safety, sustainability and coprosperity.

Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim (蕭美琴), in her address, said the applications of space and satellite technology in vessel monitoring, maritime security and ocean resource management are aligned with the vision to develop the space and oceanic industries, which was proposed by President William Lai (賴清德) in his inaugural address last year.

“The ocean and the space are not two isolated worlds, but should be regarded as critical partners that jointly safeguard the Carth,” she said, adding that “resilience” is considered the core idea to build Taiwan into a maritime state with safety, sustainability and coprosperity.



Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim, fifth left, Minister of Sports Lee Yang, fourth left, and Ocean Affairs Council Minister Kuan Bi-ling, sixth left, attend an event unveiling the updated National Ocean Policy White Paper in Taipei yesterday.

Oceanic safety reflects defense resilience, Hsiao said.

More advanced technology, such as drones and artificial intelligence, as well as modern vessels, would be adopted to support frontline personnel in maritime law enforcement and rights protection, she said.

Taiwan will also continue to cooperate with international partners to defend maritime order, protect people and conserve ocean resources, she said.

Oceanic sustainability reflects ecological resilience, she said, adding that the Marine Conservation Act (海洋保育法) enacted last year was a commitment made by the government to sustainability.

More than 6,000 fishing boats and more than 5,000 divers have volunteered to help collect marine debris from the ocean over the past few years, Hsiao said.

Oceanic coprosperity demonstrates marine governance by all people and industrial applications of ocean resources, she said.

The government continues to promote maritime spatial planning and information openness to make ocean resources more accessible to all people, she said.

The implementation of ocean policies requires interagency efforts, and collaborations among the government, research institutions and the private sector, she said.

Hsiao said she expects the ruling and opposition parties to cooperate in the legislature to support a special budget bill proposed by the Cabinet in accordance with the Special Act for Strengthening Economic, Social and National Security Resilience in Response to International Circumstances (因應國際情勢強化經濟社會及民生國安韌性特別條例).

Ocean Affairs Council Minister Kuan Bi-ling (管碧玲) said the oceanic challenges facing Taiwan include the disparity between the vision and resources available, obstacles to interagency collaborations, the dilemma between economic development and environmental protection, and geopolitical pressure — particularly “gray zone” harassment by China.

“We must realize that this [Chinese ‘gray zone’ warfare] is not a short-term problem, but a structural challenge,” she said.

To resolve these challenges, continued support from the legislature, sufficient government funding and academic research, and broad public involvement are all required, she added.

Kuan said the first version of the white paper was published five years ago based on the Ocean Basic Act (海洋基本法).

The government has invested NT\$100 billion (US\$3.29 billion) in related schemes and construction projects, and completed 177 undertakings over the past five years, including building 95 patrol vessels and eradicating illegal sand dredging, she said.

The output value of the ocean industry increased to NT\$1.2 trillion over the period, accounting for 5.4 percent of the nation’s GDP and is estimated to have created more than 1 million job opportunities, she added.