

Avoiding Sea Blindness in the Context of Maritime Supremacy

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Abstract. Since seas play an important role in the development and progress of countries, nations with access to the seas have engaged in global trade and enjoyed a better position for economic development. However, seas are being used more intensively than ever before, which also increases the pressure on the marine environment. The globalization of trade and the challenges faced in the worldwide transportation of goods have broadened the scope of strategies pursued at sea.

Along with these, the importance of the seas has not been sufficiently understood and researched by some states, a situation referred to in the literature as “Sea Blindness.” The concept of sea blindness can be defined as the public, policymakers, administrators, academics, and scientists not knowing or appreciating the importance of the marine environment. Considering that most of the products we buy today reach us through maritime trade, it is essential that we address sea blindness for such a massive industry. In this context, maritime supremacy of states is important as long as it is used in accordance with national interests.

Maritime supremacy includes three elements: maritime economics, sea power, and scientific marine research. Sea blindness, on the other hand, is relevant for states that view the advantages afforded by their geopolitical positions and military interests as maritime supremacy. This situation constitutes only the sea power of maritime supremacy. The other two elements, maritime economics and scientific marine, encompass activities in areas such as the marine insurance, fishing activities, marine environmental protection, and seafarers, etc.

A strong military navy, a commercial navy that enriches the state, and scientific research significantly increase the power of states. In this context, there is a need to establish a maritime supremacy strategy to avoid sea blindness in foreign policy.

Keywords: Maritime security, maritime economics, sea power, scientific marine research.