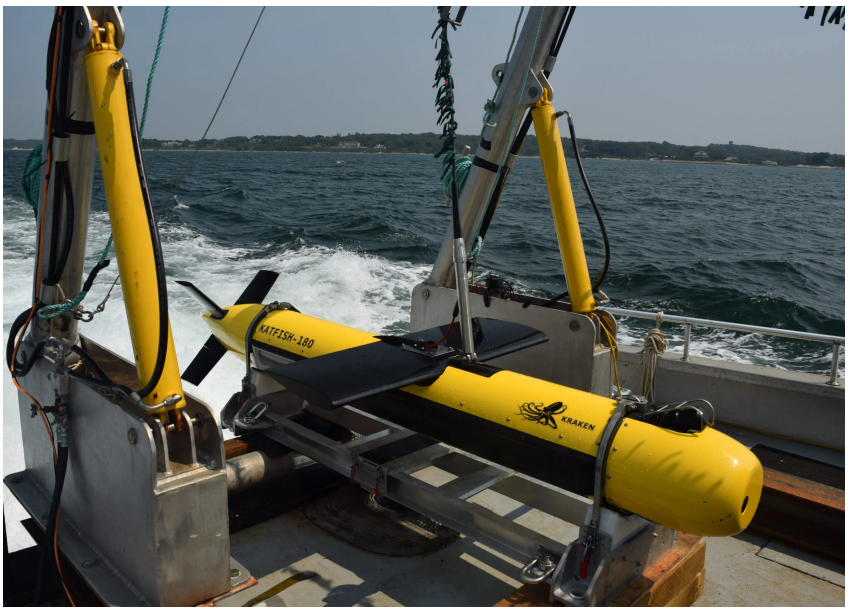


# Italian Navy: Unmanned and C-UAV Systems Testing

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From May 26 to 28, 2025, at the Naval Support and Experimentation Center (CSSN) in La Spezia and in the waters of the bay in front, the Italian Navy conducted for the first time OPEX TASK 1-25, **a large-scale operational experiment dedicated to the use of unmanned systems (aerial, naval, and underwater) and C-UAV systems**. The objective: to verify the effectiveness and operational integration of innovative technologies developed by the industry, in realistic and multi-domain contexts.

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## An integrated experiment for new operational capabilities

OPEX TASK 1-25 represents a milestone for the evaluation of ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) capabilities, anti-mine countermeasures, and solutions for defense against aerial threats posed by drones. **The initiative involved naval units of the Italian Navy –**

**the FREMM frigate *Carlo Margottini*, the minehunters *Rimini* and *Vieste* – as well as operational teams from the San Marco Marine Brigade** and numerous companies from the defense and advanced technology sector.

Among these:

- **Siralab** (with UAV VTOL RADON-X and BMS ARGO),
- **Kraken** (KATFISH Towed SAS sonar),
- **General Defence** (MULTI MD quadcopter drone),
- **Safran** (spoofing C-UAV SKYJACKER),
- **Saipem**, **Graal Tech**, **SIEL**, **GM Spazio**, **SITEP**, **IDS/Fincantieri NexTech**, with the participation of observers from NATO STO-CMRE.

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## Three testing domains: Mine Warfare, ISR, and C-UAV

### 1. Mine Warfare

The KATFISH system by Kraken was tested aboard the minehunter *Rimini*, operating in a simulated minefield scenario. The mission followed the TTP (Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures) used in the Italian Navy to verify the effectiveness of the synthetic aperture sonar in detecting naval mines.

### 2. ISR and boarding

A simulated operation saw a team from the San Marco Marine Brigade board the *Vieste*, with the support of the RADON-X drone launched from the *Margottini*. The UAV transmitted real-time images to the ARGO management system, increasing situational awareness for both the operational team and the ship's command.

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### 3. C-UAV Defense

The MULTI MD drone, equipped with a directional jammer from the French company MC2, successfully neutralized a commercial DJI UAV, while the SKYJACKER system by Safran

performed a GPS spoofing action, altering the navigation signals of drones and mobile devices. Additionally, although not observed, the demonstration of the SAND C-UAV system by IDS/Fincantieri NexTech was reported.

## The foundations of the experiment: the Single Planning Conference

The field activity was preceded by the **Single Planning Conference (SPC)**, held on April 3, 2025, at the Navy Officers' Club in La Spezia. The event brought together representatives from the Navy, participating companies, and NATO observers, with the aim of defining logistics, responsibilities, and test plans in detail. Leading the work was Captain Stefano Donno, Head of the Underwater Warfare Office of the 7th Ship Department of MARISTAT.

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The tests planned in OPEX TASK 1-25 focus on operational scenarios in coastal and port environments ("littoral waters and harbour approaches") and include SAR missions, amphibious operations, and countering aerial threats. The experimental model adopted, based on standardized plans and serial tests, aims to produce consistent and measurable results.

## Synergy between the Italian Navy and industry: a model for innovation

OPEX TASK 1-25 confirms itself as a crucial testing ground for emerging technologies, creating a bridge between operational needs and industrial solutions. Admiral Francesco Saladino, President of the Multidomain Experimentation Committee and Head of the 7th Department of the Navy General Staff, emphasized the strategic importance of the initiative, highlighting how "the virtuous combination between the Armed Forces and the civilian sector will bring benefits far beyond the interaction we are creating".

With the conclusion of the operational testing phase, the Italian Navy now has crucial data for the potential adoption of these systems and for the evolution of its CONOPS and TTP in a multidomain perspective.

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