



IHB File No S1/5069

**CIRCULAR LETTER 56/2016**  
**06 October 2016**

**GRANTING OF OBSERVER STATUS TO THE WORLD OCEAN COUNCIL  
AS A NON-GOVERNMENTAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION**

References:

- A. IHO CL 33/2016 dated 20 July - *Application from the World Ocean Council (WOC) to be granted Observer status as Non-Governmental International Organization*
- B. IHO Resolution 5/1957 as amended – *IHO Relations with other Organizations*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The Directing Committee is pleased to report that the proposal to grant observer status to the World Ocean Council (WOC) as a Non-Governmental International Organization (NGIO) contained in the above referenced Circular Letter has raised no objection from the Member States.
2. The Directing Committee thanks the following 17 Member States that expressed explicitly their support of the proposal: Algeria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, France, Italy, Monaco, Nigeria, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Suriname, USA and Uruguay. Chile and the USA provided comments that are reproduced in Annex A together with remarks by the Directing Committee as appropriate.
3. In accordance with the above referenced Resolution, the Directing Committee will include the WOC in the list of accredited observers to the IHO and will inform the President of the WOC of its status as an Observer organization to the IHO.

On behalf of the Directing Committee,  
Yours sincerely,

Robert WARD  
President

Annex A: Member States' responses to IHO CL 33/2016

**MEMBER STATES' RESPONSES TO IHO CL 33/2016**

*Application from the World Ocean Council (WOC) to be granted Observer status as a Non-Governmental International Organization*

**CHILE:**

We acknowledge reception of the CL in the reference and we support the proposal to incorporate The World Ocean Council as an Observer to the IHO. We feel that WOC's objectives are in line with those of IHO and it makes sense to join efforts from the different perspectives both organizations have.

On the same subject, Chile has noted that we have 28 international non-governmental organizations with the Observer status, which is quite an important asset in terms of number. Having said so, we take this opportunity to recall Rule 10 "Periodic Review of the List of Observer NGOs" in Resolution 5/1957, that calls for a review from time to time of such list and that a Report shall be submitted by the DC to the Conference. We feel that it would be important to assess the real contribution of the 28 NGO having an Observer Status to the IHO, in order to adopt any decision that might reinforce the existing situation.

**Comment from the Directing Committee**

*In the context of Rule 10 of IHO Resolution 5/1957, as amended, the Directing Committee reviewed the list of Observer Organizations prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference and again prior to distributing the proposed list of invited observers for the first session of the Assembly (A-1). However, given the relatively low number of organizations on the list of Observer NGO's the Directing Committee chose to follow the example of organizations such as the IMO, and not to seek to rescind the observer status of those very few organizations that may be inactive in the Organization. The Directing Committee intends to include the report required under Rule 10 in its report to A-1 on Programme 1 of the IHO Work Programme. It nevertheless remains open to any Member State to raise its concerns at any time over the continuing recognition of any particular NGO.*

**USA:**

The United States of America is pleased to express its support of the proposed observer status of WOC. We wish to underscore the importance we share with the IHO in supporting the WOC mission in promoting a healthy and productive global ocean and its sustainable use. We commend the IHO for giving the WOC opportunity to have observer status as a non-governmental Organization.

We stand ready to offer our full support to both the IHO and WOC in future collaboration.