

**4th HSSC MEETING
Taunton, 25-28 September 2012**

Paper for Consideration by HSSC

**Comments on the Report to HSSC 4 by the Correspondence Group on
Definition and Length of Coastline**

Submitted by:	United Kingdom
Executive Summary:	This paper comments on proposals in the Report to HSSC 4 by the Correspondence Group on Definition and Length of Coastline.
Related Documents:	HSSC 4-03C
Related Projects:	None

Introduction

1. This paper provides comments on the proposals in the Report to HSSC-4 by the Correspondence Group on Definition and Length of Coastline.

Discussion

2. From a technical perspective the method proposed has many merits, in that it provides a simple process to follow, with few issues to be resolved that may require manual intervention.

3. It is agreed, as stated in paragraph 2.1 of the report that the length of coastline can be defined by different methods, leading to different results. The use of small-scale sources will obviously lead to a very much lower linear value compared to many other methods and the degree of reduction in value will depend on the nature of the coastline(s) being defined and compared. The question remains, therefore, regarding its intended end use. Accordingly, this method may only be relevant for comparison purposes and should not be regarded as definitive nor suitable for all purposes.

4. Before adopting the method of calculation proposed by the Correspondence Group, Member States may wish to refer to an appropriate Government Department in their country to establish whether there is an existing official national position on this subject. Other methods are routinely used by International Courts and Tribunals. For example, these may use generalised coastal fronts (ie straight lines) which result in even smaller measurements compared to the method proposed by the Correspondence Group.

5. UK also wishes to point out that the calculation for the UK shown in Annex 2 of the report of the Correspondence group was carried out as a test of the proposed system and it is not an 'official' result, contrary to the statement in the table at Annex 2. In particular, an assumption was made as to which parts of the territories of the UK were to be included or excluded (e.g. Isle of Man, Channel Islands).

Conclusion

6. As there may be implications for existing international agreements, the UK is unable to endorse the draft IHO resolution in the report as the proposals have not yet been considered by the relevant UK authorities.

Action Required of HSSC

7. The HSSC is requested to:
 - a. **note** the comments in this submission, and
 - b. **take any action** as appropriate.