

Comment on Draft Proposal to A-2 submitted by the Secretary-General to C-3

Consideration of the definition of *Hydrographic Interests*

Submitted by:	Uruguay supported by Argentina and Brazil
Executive Summary:	The Secretary-General proposed to the Council amendments to the IHO General Regulations about the definition of <i>Hydrographic Interests</i> that have direct effect on the composition of the Council. Uruguay presents an alternative proposal for the definition of <i>Hydrographic Interests</i> to be appreciated by the Council.
Related Documents:	1/ Convention on the IHO, Article V 2/ General Regulations of the IHO, Article 16 (c) 3/ 3 rd EIHC Report of Proceedings 4/ Report of the IHO Strategic Planning Working Group (ISPWG) 2005-2006 (CONF.17/DOC.1) 5/ XVII IHC Report of Proceedings Vol 1 6/ Decisions of the 1 st Session of the IHO Assembly 7/ Consideration of the definition of <i>Hydrographic Interests</i> (Doc. C1-6.3) 8/ Summary Report of C-1 9/ Action C1/47 and Decision C1/48 10/ Summary Report of C-2 11/ Decision C2/08 (former C1/47) 12/ Submission of Proposals to the Assembly (ACL N° 3, of 06 May 2019) 13/ Draft Proposal to A-2 submitted by the Secretary-General to C-3 (Doc. C3-03.4A)
Attached Document:	Draft proposal on the measurement of the definition of <i>Hydrographic Interests</i>

Background

1. There were long discussions during the 3rd Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference about the definition of *Hydrographic Interests* and many Member States stressed out the fact that using national flag tonnage as the only criterion for this definition has only observed the aspect of the demand for hydrography or the benefits derived from hydrographic surveying activities, but not the activities themselves and, therefore, it does not define properly *hydrographic interests* or *interest in hydrographic matters*. For this reason, the IHO General Regulations in its Article 16 (c) considers the possibility to review the definition of *Hydrographic Interests* “at the latest at the second Assembly meeting”.

2. The IHO Assembly at its 1st Session did not discuss the definition of *Hydrographic Interests* nor tasked the Council or the Secretary-General about it, leaving the discussion of this issue to A-2.

3. According to the IHO Convention, “The Assembly shall be composed of all Member States” and the Assembly shall be to “Decide on any proposals put to it by any Member State”. The Assembly Circular Letter N° 3/2019 was issued for the submission of proposals by Member State to A-2 until 15 December 2019.

4. Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay have been discussing a proposal for the definition of *Hydrographic Interests* to be submitted to A-2, since April 2019. The proposal, which draft is attached to this document, considers national flag tonnage and national seaborne trade to define the “DEMAND” for hydrography from the maritime community and includes parameters related to the “OFFER” of hydrography by Hydrographic Offices, using nautical chart production, safety information and surveying capabilities.

Analysis and Discussion

5. The tonnage criterion has been used as a starting point.

6. The idea of tonnage being used as the only criterion was not capable of reflecting the technical capacity of the Hydrographic Offices’ activities.

7. The criterion of tonnage does not properly reflect the objectives, the principal aim, the mission and the vision of the Organization.

8. The IHO Strategic Plan Working Group (ISPWG) recognized that when the new structure is implemented, experience would be gained and the subject could be revisited. And that “Each Assembly after the creation of the first Council could review all the possible definitions to see if a better one emerged”. The ISPWG listed some parameters and the issues that were discussed over two plenary meetings, besides other tasks.

9. A fair criterion should consider the “DEMAND” for hydrography from the maritime community but also the “OFFER” of hydrography by the Hydrographic Offices.

10. The attached Draft Proposal from Uruguay, prepared by Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, presents a new criterion for the definition of *Hydrographic Interests* that can be easily and regularly measured with information obtained from the United Nations, IMO and IHO.

11. Uruguay is open to discuss its proposal for the definition of *Hydrographic Interests* with other Member States leading to a better solution.

12. Other Member States that compose or do not make part of the Council may propose to A-2 other possibilities for the definition of *Hydrographic Interests* and help to improve the actual definition.

13. The Council agreed that it was not in a position to propose any formal or cohesive view to the 2nd Session of the Assembly on this matter.

14. This issue matters to all Member States, the ones that compose the Council on the basis of *Hydrographic Interests* or a regional basis and the ones that do not compose the Council.

Action required of the Council

15. The Council is invited to:

a. **Consider** the Proposal of Uruguay as an alternative to the one presented by the Secretary-General.

b. **Instruct** the Secretary-General to submit both proposals to A-2.