NSHC 27th Conference
Rostock
September 2006

Explanatory Note
Item C3
Germany

Results of Rostock Seminar on SDI – Action for HOs?

1. Triggered by the EU INSPIRE initiative, leading to Action Item C6 of the last NSHC Conference, BSH with IHB ran a Seminar on „The Role of Hydrographic Services with regard to Geospatial data and planning infrastructure“ in Rostock, Germany on 8-9 November. The Seminar was attended by 50 participants from 20 Hydrographic Offices and international organisations (European Commission, EUROGI, GSDI Association).

   Amongst the conclusions of the Seminar were:

   - IHO members should work together to build a Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI)
   - HOs should define their role(s) and responsibilities within emerging national spatial data infrastructure
   - HOs should establish and strengthen national links to Marine Sciences, to raise awareness to the work of IHO (S-100 as part of ISO standardisation for 19100), and to ensure close collaboration of HOs and Marine Science in building the national SDI
   - HOs should cooperate for harmonisation of geodetic reference (particular vertical reference) so as to ensure a common geodetic reference in Europe
   - HO's need to consider the many existing and emergent uses for hydrographic data outside of navigation and their growing importance for Coastal Zone Management and spatial planning in the marine zone
   - HO's should develop seamless vector databases to support integration of hydrographic data into the wider sphere of national and international geospatial data infrastructures.
   - The prospect of HO's within an national/international spatial data infrastructure lies with getting moving from producers of certain products to become base data providers, responsible for data management, data quality maintenance and control, and operating a marine geodata portal, which may be the national hub for marine data.

   The Seminar recommended to CHRIS that a Steering Group be convened to move this forward to advise and support IHO members in achieving their objectives. Specific actions will include:

   - Define customer/ client needs
   - Define core data held by HO's
   - Create a framework for SDI's
   - Define strategies and mechanisms for implementation of SDI
   - Develop a communications plan for both internal and external stakeholders

2. Developing a MSDI across national boundaries is considered strategically important to HOs and offers solutions in conjunction with European objectives as described in the European Maritime Policy Green Paper. Under the headline:

“Providing the Tools to Manage our Relations with the Oceans” (chapter 4)

the following demands are established:

- *Data at the Service of Multiple Activities (4.1):*
  In relation to the European GMES and INSPIRE projects, a European Marine Observation and Data Network should be set up and a European Atlas of the Seas be developed.
- *Spatial Planning for a Growing Maritime Economy (4.2):*
  Among the management tools needed are the provision of extensive spatial data, cumulative environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and marine protected areas (MPAs)

Considering the

- Requirements of a European Maritime Policy,
- The fact that the extensive marine spatial data needed to realise this policy falls in the core competence of HOs,
- The need for close cooperation between HOs to create the marine observation and data network in Europe,

Germany proposes to establish a Working Group to promote the development of an MSDI within the region.

It is further proposed to invite BSHC to participate in the work so as to span the entire North East Atlantic, North Sea and Baltic Sea region.

The WG should consider, amongst others, the following topics:

- The range of data to be covered within the MSDI
- Participation of HOs in the marine observation system envisaged under the European Maritime Policy and as part of GMES,
- The formation of marine geospatial data portals as essential parts of the MSDI
- A common set of standards and technologies to ensure interoperability of the data network across the entire region.

The Conference is invited to consider the proposal, and to decide as appropriate.