

BSHC proposed approach for harmonizing the names and limits of Baltic Sea subareas.

Background

The BSHC has recognized that the draft Edition 4 of S-23 needs some updating. The BSICCWG has been working on several versions for Chapter 2 of updating S-23 (Baltic Sea).

The IHO XVIII Conference in April 2012 discussed on the status of the revision of S-23. There has not been progress on solving the disputes between Japan and Korea on the name of Japan Sea/East Sea. The Conference was not able to solve the open issue of updating S-23, did not made any decision and did not agreed on any further actions to proceed on this issue. The future of S-23 is unclear. There are no clear plans on how and when to proceed on this issue. Australia informed at the Conference that they have already their national S-23.

The German proposal on Regional Inventory on Limits and Names of the Sea (*NSHC30-D9-Germany*) seems to include similar thoughts for harmonising the subareas and names of seas as the BSHC.

BSHC Proposal

The BSICCWG Chair has proposed a draft recommendation of harmonising the limits and names of Baltic Sea subareas. This proposal is intended to be an independent document with no references to IHO S-23 and the final version is intended to be approved by the BSHC. The proposed draft recommendation includes one main level of sub-areas. These can be shown on a one page map. This may give a good and quick overview of the sub-areas and their names, and may be sufficient for most hydrographic purposes. More detailed information on the limits of sub-areas are given in the Annex of the Recommendations. This Annex includes exact coordinates and verbal descriptions of the limits of sub-areas. Also chartlets showing the subareas are included. Where needed, more detailed divisions into sub-areas may be defined.

Status of process

The first draft was distributed to BSHC and BSICCWG members on 21 May 2012. Almost all BSHC members have in principle agreed on this kind of approach. Some issues are still to be discussed, some compromises to be find, and the final recommendation to be agreed by BSHC members. The goal is that the next BSHC 17th Conference in September 2012 could agree on these recommendations.

Publishing the recommendations

When these recommendations have been approved by the BSHC then it should be decided on how to publish these. There are several options to publish, e.g.:

- on IHO BSHC Web site as a stand-alone document
- as an annex to the INT Chart Catalogue in the IHO S-11 Part B Region E Baltic Sea,
- on national web pages of Hydrographic Offices,
- others?

Actions required from the NSHC 30th Conference

The NSHC 30th Conference is invited to discuss on this issue and on the possibilities to have a harmonized approach within both RHCs.
