

WORLD HYDROGRAPHIC DAY CEREMONY IN BRAZIL

DHN, June 30th

Subject: World Hydrographic Day

"OUR SEAS AND WATERWAYS - YET TO BE FULLY CHARTED AND EXPLORED"

The 21st of June marks the World Hydrographic Day, established by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/60/30 of 29 November 2005. On this occasion, we also celebrate the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) 94th anniversary. This date aims to publicize the relevance of the IHO and its Member States Hydrographic Services work for the safety of navigation and environmental protection, as well as to raise public awareness of the vital role that Hydrography plays in all our lives.

The theme for the current year is "Our seas and waterways - yet to be fully charted and explored"

The main focus of this theme is the fact that much of the seas, oceans and inland waters remain unsurveyed, and intend to raise public awareness to the fact that there are higher resolution charts of the Moon and Mars than of many parts of our seas and coastal waters. Choosing this Theme is also an opportunity to encourage innovative initiatives on data collection, in order to get useful information from bathymetric surveys. This includes the use of ships and equipment which does not have the bathymetry as core activity, as well as the developing of satellite imagery analysis in areas where waters are calm and transparent. These methods are not supposed to replace the highly accurate and complete hydrographic surveys, using specialized vessels and equipment; however, they may provide satisfactory data, which otherwise wouldn't be available.

The hydrographic data have many applications related to: aquaculture; biomedicine; shipbuilding; submarine cables and pipelines; coastal zone management; defense and security; desalinization and seawater treatment; recreation; ocean energy and minerals; ocean science; port operations; robotics and submarines; coastal

development; tourism; telecommunications; big rigs; and science of climate and atmosphere as well as many others. However, the most widely known use for the hydrographic data is the Nautical Chart, which is essential for sailors' safety (Safety of Navigation), used by the ships to avoid all known dangers along their intended route. The rapid growth and development of the so called “Blue Economy” creates, more than ever, the need of knowing the depth of the seas and oceans. However, less than 10% of the world's oceans have been systematically surveyed; the measurements of depth that we have are spaced tens or hundreds of kilometers from each other. It is not acceptable to try to establish sustainable maritime activities in areas where the water depths are unknown. Traditionally, the charts used to be printed on paper, but they are increasingly being produced and delivered as digital electronic charts, anyway either in paper or in digital form, they meet the IHO standards and are surely understood by all mariners, anywhere in the world. Thus to ensure the best use of hydrographic information, it is important to make it more easily available through interconnected and georeferenced databases accessed through the Web.

The main role of the IHO, as a technical intergovernmental organization for hydrography, nautical cartography and related topics, through the collective efforts of its 85 Member States is ensure that all the world's seas, oceans and inland waters are properly surveyed and mapped. Under this approach the IHO duty is to maintain international standards and to ensure to the mariners and other users the availability of reliable and easily understandable data.

Our maritime limits agreed under the United Nations (UN), with a jurisdictional area of over 4.5 million square kilometers, and our inland waterways that are more than 40,000 km long, poses challenges that are perfectly and consistently related to the theme chosen by the IHO for the celebration of World Hydrography Day this year.

To address these challenges studies and proposals were elaborated in the government framework that enabled three projects to obtain the means for the Brazilian Hydrography, designed for multipurpose role and the with the participation of multiple institutions, as below.

A Hidroceanographic Research Vessel, named "Vital de Oliveira", the patron of the Brazilian Hydrography, was purchased for the ocean hydrographic, oceanographic and geological surveys.

Five ships were purchased to work in the Amazon Basin, the first, a 47 meter Hidroceanographic River Survey Ship, named "Rio Branco", to honor the Baron of Rio Branco, the Brazilian diplomat who consolidated the Brazilian borders. The other four Hidroceanographic River Survey Launches, with the names of iconic rivers in the region, "Solimões", "Negro", "Xingu" and "Tocantins". Those Motor Launchers are meant to work in areas where the "Mother Ship" Rio Branco is not able to Survey.

Finally to work on the Pantanal Hydrographic Basin the Hidroceanographic River Survey Launch named "Caravelas", to honor the City in the vicinity of where one of the Naval Battle between the Brazilian and Portuguese forces took place, during the "Brazilian Independence War", in 1823.

Today, when we pay our honor to all surveyors and cartographers, it is my duty as Director of Navigation, to extend my sincere greetings to those who quietly, anonymously and with dedication, contributed to the effective application of our Naval Power and the Safety of Navigation in Brazilian Territorial Waters.

"HYDROGRAPHY – IT WILL REMAIN ALWAYS MUCH TO BE DONE."

On behalf of: ELIS Treidler Oberg
Admiral
Director
CLAUDIO PORTUGAL
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