

IHB File No. SPWG -2

CIRCULAR LETTER 44/2005
27 April 2005

STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP WORK

Dear Hydrographers and Members of the SPWG,

As you know the 3rd Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference with its decision No 8, has tasked the SPWG to :

- a. Finalize the basic Documents based on the decisions of the Conference;
- b. Prepare, in consultation with the IHB Directing Committee, an implementation plan to take forward the decisions, for adoption at the next ordinary IH Conference in 2007, or earlier depending upon the date of ratification; and
- c. Consider the definition of “Hydrographic interests”, and report on the work at the XVIIth IH Conference.

The SPWG Chair Group, noting the need to respond timely to the task given, developed the attached “Draft Work Plan for the SPWG for 2005-2007” and plans to meet in the near future in order to prepare the appropriate documents and finalize the Agenda for the next meeting of the SPWG in Sydney, Australia 13-15 July 2005. You are kindly requested to provide your comments on this “Draft Work Plan” in order to be considered by the Chair Group.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS
President

Annex: Draft work plan

Draft work plan SPWG 2005-2007

Background

By Decision No 8, the 3rd EIHC amended the Terms Of Reference (TOR) for the SPWG to include the following three tasks (as TOR No 11, 12 and 13 respectively):

- Finalize the Basic Documents based on the decisions of the Conference.
- Prepare, in consultation with the IHB Directing Committee, an implementation plan to take forward the decisions, for adoption at the next ordinary IH Conference in 2007, or earlier depending upon the date of ratification.
- Consider the definition of “Hydrographic interests”, and report on the work at the XVIIth IH Conference.

Furthermore, the existing TOR No 1 and 2 concerning the Strategic Plan (SP) and Work Programme (WP) are ongoing tasks which the SPWG must consider before the next ordinary Conference in 2007.

Although the above mentioned tasks may be considered easier than those leading up to decisions by the 3rd EIHC, they nevertheless are essential to the overall success of the restructuring process of IHO. Also, they will require a substantial amount of effort and considerations by SPWG. A continued strong focus on the tasks ahead, prioritised and with clearly defined target dates will thus be required for SPWG to succeed in its work.

Broad outline of tasks and priorities

It is assumed that the Implementation Strategy for the new IHO structure, following the ratification of the amendments to the Convention, should be the **highest priority task** for SPWG. This strategy will have to be adopted by the Member States well in advance of an eventual ratification date for the amended Convention, which in theory could happen **before** the next Conference (i.e. approved through CL if necessary). It must include the transition arrangements for both those changes which are part of the amendments and those which are independent of the latter (e.g. the establishment of a new Committee structure).

Second highest priority should probably be attached to the finalization of the Basic Documents (General Regulations, Financial Regulations, ROP Assembly, ROP Council, ROP Financial Committee). SPWG should hopefully not encounter any substantial difficulties with this task. On the other hand it will be quite time consuming, as every article must be (re)visited and agreed upon. Also it will be required for the Legal Experts to make a final consistency check after SPWG has completed its work on these documents. The final proposal from SPWG must be forwarded to Member States, via IHB, in time for them to be adopted at the XVIIth IHC.

With regard to TOR N^os 1 and 2, sufficient time must be set aside for SPWG to consider these and agree upon a “status” report which can be presented to the next Conference. Realistically, one to two days should be sufficient for this task, provided thorough preparations are made in advance.

The definition of Hydrographic Interest is of course a very important task with a high degree of complexity. Although SPWG is not required to finalize this before the next ordinary Conference, initial analyses and basic research should be well underway by that time. A significant challenge will be to develop the basic constituents of the definition (of Hydrographic Interest) itself, which in itself requires an agreed analytic approach to the issue.

As a starting point, the following tasks and priorities are thus recommended as a basis for the SPWG work:

1. Develop the strategy for the implementation of the Decisions made by the 3rd EIHC (TOR 12);
2. Finalize the Basic Documents based on the Decisions of the 3rd EIHC (TOR 11);
3. Consider and report on the status and progress of the SP and WP (TORs 1&2), and
4. Consider the definition of Hydrographic Interest and report (TOR 13)

Tentative work plan

The model with the main SPWG supported by the in-between Chair Group meetings to ensure the necessary momentum in the process, has proven to be a success and should be continued. Having SPWG meetings in different regions, enabling as many Member States as possible, should be continued, although fewer meetings are anticipated in this phase of the work.

The following tentative schedule is proposed:

- a) RHCs to reconfirm present or nominate new participants in SPWG as soon as possible.
- b) Initial meeting of SPWG CG in May 2005 to develop a more detailed draft workplan for SPWG. This will be held in Monaco or London.
- c) First SPWG meeting in Sydney, Australia, from 13 to 15 July 2005.
 - Agenda tbd
 - Decide overall work program
 - Main focus on Implementation strategy and/or Basic Documents
 - Consider communication/cooperation with Committee/WG Chairmen
- d) Chair Group meeting(s) as necessary between ultimo July and next SPWG meeting
- e) Second SPWG meeting Brazil Oct/Nov 2005?
 - Main focus on Implementation strategy and/or Basic Documents
- f) Follow up Chair Group meeting(s) as required until 3rd SPWG meeting
- g) Legal Expert Group meeting to finalize text of Basic Documents? (if enough progress has been made at this stage)
- h) Third SPWG meeting (Turkey? South Africa?, Monaco?) March/April 2006?
 - Finalize Implementation Strategy and Basic Documents?
 - Prepare report on IHO Strategic Plan and Work Programme
 - Initial considerations on Hydrographic Interest
- i) Follow up Chair Group meeting(s)

Further meetings of the SPWG may be required, but this of course depends on the progress made and the duration of the SPWG meetings (2, 3, 4 days?) and is difficult to assess at present.

Appendix I

Some further considerations on the Implementation Strategy

As a minimum, the following issues must be addressed under this task:

- Detailed implementation schedule with target dates, referred to the date of ratification by 2/3 Member States.
- Procedures for formal establishment of the different structural elements, i.e. Assembly, Council, Secretariat, Finance Committee, (LAG), main committees (subsidiary organs)
 - Transition from Conference to Assembly (combined?)
 - Council establishment; SPWG as a transition organ?
- Procedures for establishment of the main committees, **Hydrographic Services & Standards Committee** and **Inter-Regional Coordination Committee**
 - Establish before ratification? (since these are not dependent on ratification)
 - Main procedure
 - Establish general guidelines/principles to be followed
 - Input from and discussions/meeting with chairmen of all technical committees/working groups to consider transition to **Hydrographic Services & Standards Committee**
 - Input from and discussions/meeting with all RHC Chairmen and CBC on transition to **Inter-Regional Coordination Committee**
- Secretariat
 - Transition procedure President/Directors to Secretary General (SG)/Directors
 - President/Directors at time of ratification becomes first SG/Directors in new Secretariat? Until first/second Assembly? Other models?
- Other subjects (Maintenance of the present IHO Resolutions, maintenance of the Circular Letters system, etc.)
- Minor changes to make to the Host Agreement (SG and Directors versus Directing Committee)

Appendix II
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PROPOSAL 8/WORKING PAPER 1

AMENDED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SPWG

Decided by the Third Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference

- Give advice, when needed, to the IHB Directing Committee, regarding the content of the Strategic Plan and related Work Programme.
- Oversee and monitor the content of the Strategic Plan and related Work Programme.
- The SPWG will include representatives designated by the IHO Regional Hydrographic Commissions. Individual Member States may be represented if they consider it necessary.
- The SPWG shall request the assistance of legal experts when it is deemed necessary.
- The Chairman of the SPWG will be elected by the Conference. **(finalized at the XVIth Conference).**
- Consider unresolved IHO matters referred by the XVIth Conference and provide a report and recommendations by December 2003. **(finalized at the 3rd EIHC).**
- Carry out a study on the need to revise the IHO Convention, providing the IHB Directing Committee with recommendations on any changes by December 2003. **(finalized at the 3rd EIHC).**
- Consider the harmonization of the texts of the IHO Basic Documents and supply recommendations to the IHB Directing Committee by December 2003. **(finalized at the 3rd EIHC).**
- Present the results of these studies to the IHB Directing Committee who will circulate a report to Member States by December 2003. **(finalized at the 3rd EIHC).**
- Co-ordinate comments on the interim report and produce a final version by April 2004 in time to be considered by an Extraordinary Conference. **(finalized at the 3rd EIHC).**
- Finalize the Basic Documents based on the decisions of the Conference.
- Prepare, in consultation with the IHB Directing Committee, an implementation plan to take forward the decisions, for adoption at the next ordinary IH Conference in 2007, or earlier depending upon the date of ratification.
- Consider the definition of “Hydrographic interests”, and report on the work at the XVIIth IH Conference.