

**INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC
ORGANIZATION**



**ORGANISATION HYDROGRAPHIQUE
INTERNATIONALE**

IHB File No. S3/7020

**CIRCULAR LETTER 78/2008
06 October 2008**

IHO SPECIAL PUBLICATION 23 "LIMITS OF OCEANS AND SEAS"

Reference: CL 86/2007 dated 26 September 2007

Dear Hydrographer,

1 CL 86/2007 reported on the results of discussions that took place during the XVII International Hydrographic Conference (IHC) concerning developments that might lead to the publication of the fourth edition of IHO Special Publication 23 (S-23), "*Limits of Oceans and Seas*" and also on the absence of agreement between the Member States involved in naming the area between the Korean Peninsula and the Japan Archipelago. The IHB has received no comments from Member States in response to this reference.

2 Meanwhile the Directing Committee continues to receive regular requests for S-23 related information to which it is unable to respond satisfactorily. This is because the current third edition dated 1953 is so out of date. It has to be noted that recent requests have come from ISO, the IOC SeadataNet and Marine XML Steering Group, the European Commission, Universities, publishing Companies and others. Furthermore the Directing Committee cannot even indicate when the fourth edition will be available. This inability to respond to question and requests is having a negative effect on the credibility of the Organization.

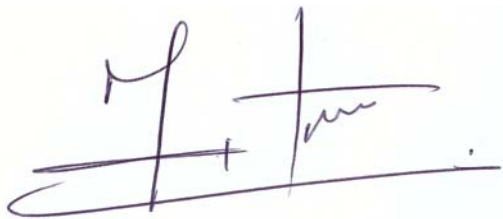
3 During the 13th meeting of the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission (BSHC) that took place in Rostock, Germany 19-21 August 2008, Germany asked the representative of the IHB, Captain Robert Ward, to inform the members on the Commission of the status of the publication S-23 and any developments regarding the possibility of publishing a fourth edition. The response provided by Captain Ward was in line with the paragraph 2 indicating that there is no progress that might lead to the publication of S-23.

4 In the discussion that followed, the members of the BSHC agreed that there was an urgent need to provide up to date information concerning the naming of sea areas, particularly for areas such as the Baltic region and elsewhere. If it was not possible to publish a fourth edition of S-23, for whatever reason, then the BSHC suggested that consideration should be given to the publication of an IHO document, organized on a regional basis, which would list those names agreed and recommended by the relevant Regional Hydrographic Commission (RHC). The development and management of this document would therefore be similar in nature to M-11 which depicts the charting schemas for International Charts as agreed and coordinated primarily through the RHCs. Meanwhile edition three of S-23 could continue to serve as the reference

document for those regions where such an agreed and more up date reference is not yet available. The BSHC concluded their discussion by tasking the Directing Committee to seek the opinion of Member States regarding their suggestion.

5 Member States are requested to indicate whether they agree or not to develop S-23 on a regional basis as suggested by the BSHC and provide any comments, by filling in the attached form and return it to the Bureau no later than **28 November 2008**. Based on the responses and comments received, the Directing Committee will inform Member States on how the matter can further progress.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. Maratos', written over a light blue background. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'A' and a long horizontal stroke.

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS
President

Annex: Response Form

RESPONSE FORM
(to be returned to the IHB by 28 November 2008
E-mail: info@ihb.mc - Fax: +377 93 10 81 40)

Member State:

Contact:..... **E-mail:**

Do you agree with the BSHC's proposal for a Regional Scheme of S-23?

YES

NO

Comments:.....
.....
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Name/Signature: **Date:**