

**3rd IHO-HSSC Meeting
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Paper for Consideration by HSSC

Information about MSDI future challenges and MSDI initiatives in the Baltic

Submitted by:	<i>BSHC</i>
Executive Summary:	<i>The aim of this paper is to inform about the MSDI initiatives taken in the Baltic in order to motivate a discussion about future activities of HSSC concerning MSDI</i>
Related Documents:	<i>C-17</i>
Related Projects:	<i>IHO MSDI WG and BSHC MSDI WG</i>

Introduction / Background

Through the BSHC, the Baltic countries are examining their respective status and initiatives related to MSDI implementation. These activities should create the background for a discussion on how HSSC perceives the future development of MSDI, with emphasis on the expected future MSDI challenges and how IHO can strengthen MSDI development in the MS through its existing MSDIWG.

Analysis/Discussion

The IHO's Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure Working Group issued the publication *C-17 - Spatial Data Infrastructures: The Marine Dimension - Guidance for Hydrographic Offices*, which outlines the benefits of developing spatial data infrastructures (SDIs) to reinforce coordination among maritime authorities.

At a time when the EU INSPIRE Directive is fully in its implementation phase across the European countries and SDIs are being developed worldwide at the national, regional and local levels, this approach of a coordinated access to, and management of geographic information has become a de facto standard for terrestrial data. However, as C-17 identifies, the integration of maritime data in national or regional SDIs is still limited at best, though there can be as many benefits to be gained by coordinated access to maritime information as to terrestrial data.

There are growing needs for better cross-sectoral coordination of individual authorities' management of maritime information. While a national single window can aid in the reporting process among maritime stakeholders, information flow among the authorities is also a critical factor for ensuring the effective and efficient coordination of their work.

An MSDI ensures that relevant maritime authorities can contribute their spatial information and related updates, and that this information can easily be collated with other information to generate a current, overall picture. As a result, MSDI can support such varied activities as coastal zone management planning of energy production at sea, fishing, marine environmental protection and nature conservation, planning charts, navigation, civil and military preparedness, tourism, and maritime spatial planning.

As coordinated maritime spatial planning also gains increased focus at the EU level, not least through the Integrated Maritime Strategy and the Marine Strategy Framework, the needs for better integration of

maritime data are becoming increasingly evident. Towards this end, discussion has begun in the Baltic as to the degree to which the maritime-oriented elements of the INSPIRE Directive can be implemented at an accelerated rate.

At its 15th Conference, the BSHC recognised the need to initiate a study of MSDI in the Baltic region in order to identify areas where MSDI implementation is underway, where problems can be foreseen and how the Baltic member states view the future development of MSDI in the region.

Therefore, the BSHC 15th Conference established the BSMSDIWG with the task of studying MSDI in the Baltic region.

The Working Group is tasked to:

- Identify and analyse the current status of individual MS MSDI implementation;
- Consider MSDI policies within related international projects such as e-navigation, ICZM, INSPIRE, EU Integrated Maritime Strategy, the Marine Strategy Framework and EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region;
- Analyse how maritime authorities can contribute their spatial information and related updates, so information can easily be collated with other data to generate a current overall picture for the region;
- Focus on how BSHC can benefit from a regional approach to MSDI in the future; and
- Monitor the development of SDI that could be relevant for the Baltic region.

Conclusions

As seen through a Baltic perspective, there is an increasing need to have focus on MSDI and its development. In order to fulfil this, several activities should be conducted by the organs of HSSC:

- Revising C-17 to reflect the MS approach to MSDI;
- Generating an operational approach to the implementation of MSDI, possibly as an annex to C-17;
- Creating a conceptual MSDI model with reflection on the difference between SDI and MSDI;
- Describing the basic elements of MSDI from a HO perspective;
- Analysing best practise and relevant SDI and, more specifically, MSDI projects;
- Reviewing the consequences of the INSPIRE Directive and other EU Directives and initiatives for MSDI;
- Determining how MSDI can create the framework for e-navigation ; and
- Studying the dimensions of governance in MSDI.

Recommendations

It is important that the IHO takes the lead in addressing MSDI matters through its MS for the maritime sphere. In view of IHO's definition of hydrography in place, MSDI delivers the instruments for the enhanced scope of hydrographic information users. MSDI is to create the framework for the future provision of this information beyond the classic field of surface navigation. The MSDIWG would be an appropriate WG to deal with these challenges.

Action Required of HSSC

The Conference is invited to take note of this information and, if deemed appropriate, to task the HSSC's MSDIWG with implementing relevant items in its work program.