

**11th MEETING OF THE IHO INTER-REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
IHO-IRCC11
Genoa, Italy, 3-5 June 2019**

EASTERN ATLANTIC HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION

EAtHC report to IRCC11

1. Chair

Chair: Agostinho Ramos da Silva (PT) to November 2012
Bruno Frachon (FR) from November 2012 to September 2014
Abdelouahed Dihaji (MA) from September 2014 to October 2016
Juan A. Aguilar Cavanillas (SP) from October 2016 to October 2018
Okafor Chukwuemeka Ebenezer (NG) from October 2018 till date

Vice-Chair: 12th meeting: Bruno Frachon (FR)
13th meeting: Abdelouahed Dihaji (MA)
14th meeting: Juan A. Aguilar Cavanillas (SP)
15th meeting: Okafor Chukwuemeka Ebenezer (NG)

2. Membership

Members: Cameroon, France, Morocco, Nigeria, Portugal, Spain

Associate member(s): Benin, Cabo Verde, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal, Togo.

Observers: Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Liberia, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, UK, USA.

3. Meetings:

Following EAtHC meetings have taken place:

12nd meeting: Lisbon (PT), 14th – 16th November 2012

13rd meeting: Casablanca (MA), 16th – 18th September 2014

14th meeting: Cádiz (SP), 18th – 20th October 2016

15th meeting: Lagos (NG), 17th – 19th October 2018

Next meeting: 16th EAtHC will take place 28 September - 2 October 2020 in Lisbon, Portugal.

4. Current [RHC] Working Groups:

- a) Capacity Building WG CBWG
- b) Region G International Charting Coordination WG (G-ICCWG)
- c) IHO-EU Network WG (IENWG)
- d) Worldwide ENC Database Working Group (WENDWG)

5. Status of IRCC actions (relevant for the EAtHC):

IRCC10/3: to submit draft IHO Resolution 2/1997 as amended (Annex C) to the RHC Members for comments and report back to IRCC (6.2)

NIL.

6. Agenda Items:

a) Capacity Building WG (CBWG)

France, the CB Coordinator for the region, reported on the execution of the CB activities in the region since the last EAthC conference and the 3-year work plan 2018-2020. Of particular note was the execution and plans of high-level and technical visits, the ongoing visits to regional training centres to find synergies in support of the CB plans, the past and future phases of the HydrOMAOC project to identify funding by linking hydrography with other larger maritime and marine related projects in the region. The meeting was also pleased to note the benefits of having an awareness seminar preceding the meeting, where coastal states were informed of their international obligations, the need for better cooperation within the region and the value of their hydrographic information. The NAVAREA II coordinator noted after the meeting an improvement in the coordination of maritime safety information in the area. Efforts must be continued in terms of awareness and training on MSI.

A joint IALA-IHO workshop for capacity-building in hydrography and marine aids to navigation, devoted to Risk Assessment, Survey Specifications and AtoN Maintenance will be organized between October 21st and 24th 2019 and hosted in Rabat by the *Direction des Ports et du Domaine Public Maritime* with the support of the *Division Hydrographie, Océanographie et Cartographie de la Marine royale marocaine*,

b) Regional G International Charting Coordination WG (G-ICCWG)

The status and implementation of the regional INT and ENC charting schemes were presented by the regional coordinator for Region G (France) and reviewed by the G-ICCWG at the 15th EAthC conference, including the process for monitoring and managing charts and the chart schemes. The meeting also considered how the IHO CB Programme can support coastal states to prepare for the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS) with respect to the provision of hydrographic services, taking as example the successful support to Cabo Verde in 2017 by means of a technical visit.

c) IHO-EU Network WG (IENWG)

France acts as point of contact from EAthC, and addressed the needs of different levels of management of coastal data for the protection of the coastal areas against climate change and evaluated the place of bathymetric data. It presented the main results of the coastal mapping project and the proposition done to the EU parliamentaries by the partnership to design a long term strategy for a recurrent way of collection of high resolution bathymetry, base of all the others acquisition of marine data and development of maritime policies, such as maritime spatial planning.

d) Worldwide ENC Database Working Group (WENDWG)

France acts as representative from EAthC. EAthC member states have been active in participating in the WENDWG since its inception. The 9th meeting of the Worldwide ENC Database Working Group (WENDWG) took place in Brest, France, hosted by the Hydrographic and Oceanographic Service of France (Shom), from 26 to 28 February 2019 in conjunction with the 4th joint meeting of the Regional ENC Coordinating Centres (RENC), IC-ENC, PRIMAR and, for the first time, the EA-RECC (Regional ENC Coordination Centre) of the East Asia Hydrographic Commission. Several actions were agreed to assess the feasibility of the

operational implementation of the IHO Resolution 1/2018 - Elimination of overlapping ENC data in areas of demonstrable risk to the safety of navigation, noting that in some Charting Regions the situation is not improving. The RENCs will try, for instance, to improve their tracking and accounting procedures, in support of ENC Producers and RHCs, while the IHO Secretariat is now preparing the commissioning of the enhanced version of the INTToGIS system (INTToGIS II), which includes an ENC overlap checker function. No ENC overlap is identified in the charting Region G.

In terms of coverage: UB1 and UB2 coverage considered as completed, but persistent gaps over Northwest coast of Africa in Band 3 and still few maritime approaches covered in band 4. Very slight improvement in the coverage of ports in the African sub-region (UB5 & UB6).

7. EAthC cooperation with stakeholders (organizations, industry, etc.)

Although invited, OMAOC-WCAMO did not attend the last conference of the EAthC

8. Difficulties encountered and Challenges yet to be addressed:

The difficulty involved in getting most Governments in the region to appropriate funds for development and sustainability of Hydrography remains one of the major challenges in the southern part of the Region. Although there is a remarkable awareness among policy makers on the importance of hydrography when compared to few years back, there is unproportionate allocation of resources for hydrographic practice. There is need for increased advocacy in this regard until improvement is achieved. Although there have been a number of successful Capacity Building (CB) initiatives in the region, there is no commensurate development in hydrographic practice within the region, especially within the West and Central Africa. With the exception of Nigeria who developed its MSI facilities and charting capabilities after attending relevant workshop/training facilitated by the IHO, other CB initiatives in the region have not translated into improved hydrographic practice in the region, as more than 85 percent of countries in the region still depend on third party to fulfill their national obligations and most of them are not yet members of the IHO, though being members of the IMO.

9. Achievements/lessons learned and Conclusions:

There has been remarkable improvement in hydrographic awareness within the region. Morocco has undertaken a significant development of its hydrographic capabilities, by establishing the DHOC of the navy as the national hydrographic service and through a training plan, the acquisition of new equipment and cooperative production of charts. This has seen also Cameroon joining the IHO with good prospect of building capacity to meet its international obligations. Ghana, Senegal and Togo have established a NHCC with plans at advanced stage for Ghana to join the IHO. Additionally, Ghana, with the assistance of Denmark, established a MSI system, while Nigeria established its MSI Portal and commenced collaboration with France for its broadcast. Nigeria has also attained Phase 3 of CB strategy by producing its first Nautical Chart early 2019. Liberia has commenced training of an MSI National Coordination and intends to promulgate its MSI via Safety Net in future. Activities in Gambia, Cote d'Ivoire, Congo, DRC and Guinea all show increased awareness in hydrography.

Morocco and Nigeria are demonstrating exemplary hydrographic capacity development, and should play an increasingly active role for the benefit of West and Central African coastal states, sharing their experience and providing training capacities and training opportunities.

May I conclude by stating the EAthC appears to have understood the importance of Hydrography, however, more encouragements and collaborative activities need to be intensified so as to maintain the tempo.

10. Actions required of IRCC:

The IRCC is invited to note

Commodore Okafor Chukwuemeka Ebenezer
EATHC Chair