

**8<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE IHO-INTER REGIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE  
IHO IRCC8**

**ABU DHABI, 29-31 MAY 2016**

**Report of the IHO Secretariat**

<b><i>Submitted by:</i></b>	IHB
<b><i>Executive Summary:</i></b>	This paper provides a summary report of matters of interest related to the work of the IHB.

**Status of Approval of Amendments to the Convention on the IHO**

1. As of 14 May 2016, 47 of the minimum number of 48 Member States have formally approved the Protocol of Amendments to the Convention on the IHO.
2. In the event that the required majority of Approvals of the Protocol of Amendments to the Convention on the IHO are received by the Government of Monaco before 23 January 2017, the XIX<sup>th</sup> International Hydrographic Conference will, instead, take place as the First Session of the Assembly of the IHO (see Conference Circular Letter (CCL) No. 1 dated 21 April 2016).

**Status of Approval of New Member States of the IHO**

3. Bulgaria, Haiti, Mauritania and Sierra Leone have all received the required number of votes to be accepted as a Member State of the IHO. However, the Government of Monaco has yet to receive the required instruments of accession from these countries which will formalise their membership. The Directing Committee has continued to be in communication with the authorities of these States to encourage them to complete this final formality.
4. Malta, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Republic of Congo have applied for membership of the IHO. As of 14 May 2016, the status of approvals was as follows:

<b>State</b>	<b>Voting Status</b>
Malta	31 of 53 required
Vanuatu	31 of 54 required
Solomon Islands	32 of 55 required
Republic of Congo	32 of 55 required

**Suspended Member States**

5. Serbia, Congo and the Dominican Republic remain suspended. The Directing Committee is taking every opportunity to work with these States to expedite their return to full membership as soon as possible. The Directing Committee is also monitoring the situation for some other Member States that have fallen behind on payments of their annual subscription.
6. In May 2016, IHO membership stands at 85. With Serbia, Congo and the Dominican Republic remaining suspended, the current thresholds for IHO decisions are 42 when a simple majority is required and 55 when a two-third majority is needed. The Directing Committee reminds Member States that not responding to a Circular Letter which requires a vote is equivalent to voting NO.

**Diplomatic Engagement**

7. The Directing Committee is continuing its programme of visits to brief high officials of non-Member States on the global status of hydrography and the relevance of the IHO to non-Member States. This is being done through targeted in-country visits and briefings and through visits to diplomatic legations in Paris, London and New York when convenient.

8. The Directing Committee, in consultation with individual Member State representatives, briefs relevant diplomatic missions in order to raise the profile of the respective national hydrographic service and the importance of hydrography.
9. The Directing Committee provides briefings to the Department of External Relations and Cooperation of the Government of Monaco to enable Monaco's diplomatic service to better assist the IHO in maximising levels of awareness of hydrography and the IHO at the highest diplomatic levels, particularly in the UN and through the diplomatic services.
10. The Directing Committee, with the assistance of the representatives of the Government of Monaco, stands ready to assist, through diplomatic or other channels, any States' representatives that may be encountering difficulties in progressing outstanding approvals of the Amendments to the IHO Convention or the consideration of outstanding applications for Membership of the IHO.

#### **IHO GIS Data Base - Progress Report**

See document IRCC8-10.

#### **Preparation of the next International Hydrographic Conference / IHO Assembly**

11. The next International Hydrographic Conference or first IHO Assembly is scheduled from 24 to 28 April 2017. It is likely that the meeting will be the first session of the Assembly, subject to the ratification of the Protocol of Amendments to the IHO Convention by the required two-thirds majority not later than three months before the opening day of the meeting (23 January 2017). In accordance with the General Regulations of the IHO that will enter into force once the Protocol of Amendments is ratified, the first Assembly will have to approve the list of the members of the IHO Council.
12. If the first Assembly meets in April 2017, the selection process for the establishment of the Council should be initiated by the Secretary-General not later than October 2016. Therefore it is expected that all RHCs will have agreed before that date on the process by which they will select, and possibly instruct, their representatives in the Council.
13. The agenda of the Conference/Assembly will include a review of the IHO Strategic Plan and consideration of the IHO Work Programme for the next 3-year or 5-year cycle (CCL 01 dated 21 April refers). In accordance with IHO Resolution 12/2002 as amended, the relevant documents will be prepared by the IHB in consultation with the HSSC, the IRCC and the Member States. The IHB has invited Member States, HSSC and IRCC to submit proposals to update the Strategic Plan (CL 17/2016 dated 31 March refers). These proposals are expected to be circulated to all Member States in August 2016. The contribution of the IRCC to this process will be further discussed under agenda item 13.

#### **IHO Outreach**

14. World Hydrography Day. The theme for World Hydrography Day 2016 is ***"Hydrography – the key to well-managed seas and waterways"*** (CL 81/2015 dated 26 November refers). This theme will enable all stakeholders involved in hydrography to highlight the significance and importance of their particular activities which could include, but is not limited to, the support of safety of navigation, protection of the marine environment, coastal zone management, marine spatial data infrastructures, defence, resource exploration, and all other components of the blue economy. A brief is available on the IHO website.
15. Member States have been invited to forward as soon as possible to the IHB any material that is created in support of national WHD-2016 celebrations for posting on the IHO website. This will enable the widest possible dissemination of publicity and support material for the event.
16. International Hydrographic Review (IHR). The IHR provides an ideal opportunity for Regional Hydrographic Commissions and Member States to publicise technical and other achievements in the region. An editorial board comprising a representative from each region has been established. Papers for consideration for publication in the IHR should be forwarded directly to the editor ([ihreview@iho.int](mailto:ihreview@iho.int), copy to [ian.halls1@defence.au.gov](mailto:ian.halls1@defence.au.gov)). The deadlines are:
  - End of January for the May Edition;
  - End of July for the November Edition.

## **Capacity Building Programme**

17. The level of activity of the IHO Capacity Building (CB) Programme continued to increase. Expenditure in the IHO 2015 CB Work Programme (930,907 Euros) was 118% greater than the budget for the previous year. This was a result of the ongoing financial support provided by the Nippon Foundation of Japan and the Republic of Korea, supplemented by a contribution from the IHO budget and in-kind support from Member States and from industry. The Directing Committee is continuing its campaign to find additional donor States and funding organizations. In 2015, 86% of the budgeted work program was executed and paid for. Some planned CB activities could not take place because of administrative and other issues in host nations, the unavailability of nominated personnel, or other late changes to the planned events. Most of the activities that could not take place were postponed and transferred to the 2016 CB Work Programme for execution.

## **Report on the Overall Status of the IHO Work Programme**

18. As a result of the EIHC-5 discussion on Proposal 5 concerning the assessment of the IHO Work Programme, Conference Decision No. 3 reinforced the reporting requirements by introducing a six-monthly reporting regime for all IHO bodies. The outcome of the first three bi-annual assessments was submitted to Member States through IHO CL 17/2015, 66/2015 and 14/2016. Only six Regional Hydrographic Commissions (EAtHC, MACHC, NHC, NIOHC, NSHC, and SAIHC) did submit a status report.

## **Schedule for IHO Meetings**

19. The IHB, in liaison with the Chairs of IHO Committees and subordinate bodies, is seeking to establish a three-year rolling schedule of meetings (CL 96/2012 dated 15 November refers). The objective is to assist resource planning by the IHB and States, to encourage the diversification of venues, and decongest the late spring and autumn periods. The initiative has not been particularly successful so far. Relatively few dates or venues have been declared for IHO and RHC meetings in 2016. Those IRCC bodies that have provided information have held to their traditional dates.

## **Action Requested of IRCC**

20. IRCC is invited to:

- **Note** this report,
- **Take any actions** as considered appropriate.