



IHB File N° S3/0104

**IRCC CIRCULAR LETTER 1/2013
13 November 2013**

To: IRCC Members and Observers

References A. CL 64/2013 dated 11 November 2013- *Outcome of the IRCC5*
B. Report of IRCC5, Annex-C, List of Action, IRCC5/30

Dear Colleagues,

1. The outcome of the 5th meeting of the Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC5) was circulated by Reference A. The final minutes of IRCC5, together with the list of actions arising from the meeting and their current status, are available from the IRCC Section of the IHO website (www.iho.int > Committees & WG > IRCC > IRCC5) (Reference B).

2. During the IRCC5, a document (doc. IRCC5-07B) was submitted by Sweden on behalf of the Nordic Hydrographic Commission (NHC) and supported by France as Chair of the North Sea Hydrographic Commission (NSHC), European Union Marine & Maritime WG. The document suggests developing the relationship between the IHO and the European Commission (EC) and encouraging the implementation of the MoU signed in April 2012 at the IHCXVIII between the IHO and the EC, by setting up an active network of focal points in the RHCs mainly influenced by EU policies, and invited the IRCC to consider creating a subordinate IRCC body to liaise with the EC.

3. Following discussion on the document, the Chair proposed to the Committee the creation of a steering committee or a working group to manage European Union (EU) matters and the IHO/EC MoU. In this context, the following decisions and actions have been taken by the Committee:

- a. Decision 14: to create the Working Group to deal with EC matters.
- b. Decision 15: to task the Working Group to manage EU matters and the IHO/EC MoU.
- c. Action 30: France (on behalf of NSHC) to develop ToR for the WG to manage EU matters and the IHO/EC MoU and circulate to the IRCC Members (deadline: August 2013).
- d. Action 31: IRCC to approve the ToR for the WG on IHO/EC MoU to manage EU matters and the IHO/EC MoU (deadline: October 2013).

4. With reference to IRRC-5/30 action, the draft proposal submitted by France (on behalf of NSHC) for the creation of a Working Group for “IHO-EC Network”, including its Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure is provided in Annex A.

5. You are kindly requested to review the proposal and provide your comments, if any, by **13 December 2013**. If no adverse comments or proposals for significant changes are received, the proposal will be considered as adopted by IRCC after that date.

Yours sincerely,



Mustafa IPTES
IHB Director and Secretary of IRCC

Annex A: Draft Proposal on Establishment of Working Group for IHO EU Network.

Proposal to IRCC	IRCC action	Status
proposed by FR as Chair of NSHC/EUM2PWG	2013 / agenda item 7 Action IRCC5/30	Draft

Establishment of an IHO-EU Network – *Mise en place d'un Réseau OHI-UE*

Background

The Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC), during its 5th meeting, in Wollongong, Australia, in June 2013:

Noting that significant European directives and programmes on marine and maritime matters, launched or currently under development, affect or intersect the IHO programme of work, encompassing subjects as: standardization; collection of data for marine for environmental assessment and monitoring, maritime spatial planning and sustainable economic development; policy on dissemination of data and products

Noting that North Sea Hydrographic Commission (NSHC) has established in 2006 a working group on European Union (EU) marine and maritime policies that has prepared a global arrangement between IHO and the European Commission (EC)

Considering the MoU signed in 2012 during the XVIIIth International Hydrographic Conference in Monaco by the President of the Directing Committee of IHB on behalf of IHO and the Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries on behalf of the European Commission

Noting the recent initiatives of the European Commission on Marine Knowledge and Blue Growth which give a significant *impetus* to those aspects of the maritime sector that are of primary concern for IHO member States

Noting the proposal made by Sweden on behalf of the Nordic Hydrographic Commission (NHC) and supported by NSHC to involve member states beyond the NSHC circle to other members of the EU and of the European Economic Area (EEA).

Recognizing that the EU policies and initiatives are of potential interest for all the members of the IHO and that non EU-EEA members may also make important contributions to the IHO-EU relationships

Resolved to establish a Working Group (WG) on EU marine and maritime policies to monitor its impact on HOs

Asked the chair of the European Union Maritime and Marine Policy Working Group (EUM2PWG) of the NSHC to propose to the IRCC a Terms of Reference (ToR) for this working group, who accordingly prepared the following proposal.

Proposal

It is decided to establish an IRCC WG named “IHO-EU Network”, with the following terms of reference and rules of procedures:

1. Objectives

- a. identify EU activities and processes on matters of interest to Hydrographic Offices (HOs);
- b. establish a common understanding of the issues when possible;

- c. consider and propose the ways and channels to interface with EU activities and processes (mechanisms) through Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHCs) initiatives, through the IRCC or through the IHO in general;
- d. facilitate common actions of HOs related to EU programmes;
- e. liaise with relevant Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC) WGs for technical matters (e.g. standardization);
- f. advise IRCC on the impact of EU activities in the maritime domain on the IHO programme of work.

2. Composition and Chairmanship

- a. The Network shall be composed of a representative from each RHC of which at least one EU/EEA Member State (MS) is a member. It is recommended that this representative be from an IHO MS from the EU/EEA;
- b. Other RHCs or any IHO MS may be represented in the Network as associate members;
- c. The Chair shall be a representative from an RHCs with EU/EEA member States and shall be elected by vote of the full members of the Network, for a period of three years;
- d. The Network shall include observers, as selected by the IRCC, and an observer from the IHB;
- e. Expert contributors may participate in the work of the Network at the invitation of the Chairman.

3. Procedures

- a. The Network will work mainly by correspondence and its Chair will report on its findings and recommendations at each IRCC meeting;
- b. A representative from a RHC will act as a focal point for the RHC, i.e.:
 - informing in due time other members on the RHC of IHO-EU relations that are of interest for the RHC and for its members;
 - bringing to the Network awareness of specific regional aspects and projects, of interest to the IHO-EU relationship;
 - reporting to the RHC meeting.
- c. The Network should organize meetings with the EC representatives for mutual information and discussion on matters of common interest for IHO MS and EC;
- d. Decisions of the Network shall be made by its full members' consensus;
- e. Working language will be English. Other working languages can be chosen from the working languages of the RHC with EU/EEA member States when accepted by general agreement.