

## **Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure in the Baltic**

### **Introduction**

The presentation of status and initiatives related to MSDI in the Baltic, should create the background for a discussion on how the Baltic member states see the future development of MSDI in the region and the relation between MSDI and e-navigation, especially with focus on how BSHC in the future can contribute with a regional approach.

### **Some remarks on the current situation**

The IHO's Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure Working Group recently published 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 to coordinated access to and management of geographic information has become a standard. However, as the C-17 publication identifies, the integration of maritime data in SDIs has been limited at best, though there can be as many benefits to be gained by coordinated access to maritime information as to terrestrial data.

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 Denmark as to the degree to which the maritime-oriented elements of the INSPIRE Directive can be implemented at an accelerated rate. Similar initiatives are expected to be underway across the Baltic Sea region.

In order to solve the requirements for the future the already is an in the will be a increasing need for better coordination of individual authorities' management of maritime information. While a national single window will aid in the reporting process among maritime stakeholders, the flow of information among the authorities is also a critical factor in ensuring the effective and efficient coordination of their work.

The geographic infrastructure will ensure that relevant maritime authorities can contribute their spatial information and the necessary updates, and that this

information can easily be collated with other information to a current overall picture. The spatial infrastructure is expected to support such. 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 future maritime spatial planning.

In Denmark, the usefulness of geographic infrastructure has been illustrated by the GIS crisis portal which relevant authorities currently use to build a current picture of the situation in the resolution of their emergency duties on land and at sea.

### **Proposals:**

In this context, and in order to promote an increased awareness of maritime spatial data infrastructure both within the Baltic Sea region and at the larger European scale, it is proposed that BSHC initiate a study of MSDI in the Baltic.

The BSHC MSDI study should be a study of national coordination of maritime information, and an in-depth survey of the individual participating countries' approaches to coordinated access to maritime information in order to identify areas where maritime SDI implementation is underway and where problems can be foreseen. The study should end up with a final report to the BSHC. This report should include recommendations on how to proceed with the MSDI implementation and deemed necessary an action plan with specified time schedule for future MSDI actions should be included.

#### **Benefits**

BSHC can achieve joint learning and a general increase in the awareness of maritime SDI would result from the study, in order to place the Baltic states in a role of leadership at the global scale, at a time when awareness of maritime SDI appears to be ongoing.

In order to facilitate and manage the study the BSHC 15<sup>th</sup> Conference should consider establishing a MSDI WG in the Baltic Sea.

### **Actions required from the BSHC 15th Conference:**

The BSHC 15<sup>th</sup> Conference is requested to consider this proposal and to take appropriate actions.