Status Report from the IHO-EU Network WG (IENWG)

Background

At the XVIIIth IHO Conference 2012 the IHO and the European Commission (EC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Establishing a Cooperation on Maritime Affairs between the European Commission and the International Hydrographic Organization. The purpose is to provide a framework ensuring a continuing liaison between these organisations in the specific areas of common interest. The Commission's Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) acts as the contact point on the EC side. From the IHO side the NSHC working group EU2MWG first acted as the contact point, but from July 2014 the IHO-EU Network WG (IENWG) has been establish as a working group under IRCC and superseded the NSHC working group. The IENWG is chaired by France and consists of representatives from all Regional Hydrographic Commissions concerned. Sweden represents the BSHC.

IHO-EU Network meetings and representatives

Since the 19th BSHC meeting in June 2014 one EU2MWG meeting and three IENWG meetings have been arranged. Sweden (Magnus Wallhagen) has participated as the BSHC representative at these meetings. The following member states represent the RHCs concerned:

- Arctic HC (ARHC) – Denmark
- Baltic Sea HC (BSHC) – Sweden
- Eastern Atlantic HC (EAtHC) – France
- Mediterranean and Black Seas HC – Greece
- Nordic HC (NHC) – Norway
- North Sea HC (NSHC) – Germany
- The IHB is represented by Director Gilles Bessero

The meetings are always open for any IHO member state to participate in. UKHO usually have participated in the IENWG meetings, apart from the above mentioned member states.

Ongoing in the IHO-EU Network

Joint European Coastal Mapping Program (JECMaP) and Coastal Mapping

DG Mare (EU) issued a Call for Tender for a Coastal Mapping project in August 2014. The deadline for responding to the Call was 24 November 2014. The IENWG (and EU2MPWG) had over some time communicated with DG Mare and contributed with written input for the specification process under a concept called Joint European Coastal Mapping Program (JECMaP).

France (SHOM) volunteered to coordinate the response to the tender. After an intensive work period, the application was delivered in time. A consortium has been created with 19 partners from 15 countries. A detailed project proposal was prepared with the following main Work Packages:

- **WP1. Digital Mapping**. Responsible: France (SHOM)
  Specify, develop and maintain a portal were coastal data can be available. The portal must be compatible with the existing EMODnet portal.
- **WP2. Share experience, standards and practices**. Responsible: Italy (ISPRA)
  Assess and implement a suitable vertical datum, list existing survey methods for coastal areas and summarize experience and develop and test an algorithm for choosing the most appropriate survey method.
- **WP3. Future programme** (JECMaP). Responsible: France
  Study and propose the most appropriate economic models. Organize and plan the coastal surveys within the existing data producer's community, propose policies and mechanisms to encourage joint efforts.
- **WP4. Management and communication**. Responsible: France
  Administrative and technical coordination of the project with the stakeholders of the consortium.

The respective package has several sub work packages. From the BSHC member states BSH from Germany, MAL from Latvia and SMA from Sweden will be partners in the consortium. Other Hydrographic Offices involved which are partners are from Belgium, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain. The total budget for the program is 1.330 MEUR.

In June 2015 the DG MARE announced that this consortium was selected for the Coastal Mapping project and the service contract was signed 26 June 2015. The operative work will be ongoing the first 18 months and the portal must be up and running another 18 months. A first project meeting was arranged by SHOM in the end of June. The SMA will keep the BSHC updated regarding the progress of the project through the coming BSHC IENWG Reports.

EMODnet phase 3

The DG MARE has launched the EMODnet in order to be able to give easy access to marine data, of the EU member states waters, to the society as a whole. A previous phase 1 and an ongoing phase 2 of the EMODnet project should be seen as tests on how a portal on marine data could be achieved. However the third phase of EMODnet, phase 3, is aimed to achieve a more permanent solution of a portal with high resolution marine data including the appointed themes in EMODnet (see also http://www.emodnet.eu/):

- Bathymetry
- Geology (including sedimentology data)
- Seabed Habitats
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Physics
- Human Activities

A call for tender regarding high resolution digital terrain model (EMODnet phase 3) was expected to be issued by January 2015. However during the second IENWG meeting in January, when representatives from DG MARE participated part of the meeting, the DG MARE informed that the EMODnet call will come later in 2015. The motive was that they want to evaluate the first results

from the Coastal Mapping project. It has also become obvious that a model for a more permanent EMODnet solution is dependent on a more sustainable long term financial model than within the multiannual financial framework (2014 – 2020) of the European Commission.

To be able to somehow meet the DG MARE expectations and to present a sustainable long term solution for bathymetry the IENWG proposed after its second meeting in January that the IHO RHCs concerned should take initiative to develop and maintain similar bathymetry portals as has been developed and is maintained within the BSHC (the Baltic Sea Bathymetry Database). In the North Sea Hydrographic Commission (NSHC) Germany has volunteered to take the lead for a North Sea Bathymetry Database.

The situation regarding a future EMODnet III solution is still very unclear. Nevertheless it is important that the European HOs are involved in this EU initiative. Regardless of all unanswered questions every EU member states HO should evaluate its involvement in EMODnet. The IENWG will continue to try to influence the DG MARE requirements on the coming call.

Relations with stakeholders of the EU Marine Equipment Directive (MarED) to address the maintenance of software-based shipborne equipment (such as ECDIS)

In order to promote the use of "adequate" and "up-to-date" charts in the context of the implementation of ECDIS and considering the leading role of the European Union in setting type approval procedures for marine equipment, IHB has recommended that the IENWG initiates consideration of the maintenance of software-based shipborne equipment in relation with type approval through DG MOVE and MarED, in liaison with national maritime Administrations as appropriate. Therefore respective HO is requested to inform the national administration responsible for maritime safety issues regarding the above. See following link to the IHO IENWG site is useful:

http://iho.int/mtg_docs/com_wg/IRCC/EC_IHO/IENWG3/IENWG%203%20file%208%20EU%20directive%20MARED%20IHB%20paper.pdf

Recommendations

It is recommended that the BSHC continues to monitor the ongoing work within the EC through participation in the future IHO-EU Network. Sweden (Magnus Wallhagen) is willing to continue to represent the BSHC. It is also recommended that each and every EU member state consider their involvement in possible future applications when call for tenders are published through DG MARE.

The Commission is invited to

- Note the report
- Confirm Sweden as the BSHC representative in IENWG
- Recommend each and every member state to decide upon their involvement in the future EMODnet phase III
- Recommend the BSHC MS, which also are EU member states, to inform their appropriate national administration in order to influence the work with the EU Marine Equipment Directive (MarED) to also address the maintenance of software-based shipborne equipment.