

**10th EAtHC-CHATO MEETING  
LOME, TOGO 3-5 December 2008**

**IHB REPORT ON STATUS OF THE IHO WORK PROGRAM  
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Since December 2006, date of the last EAtHC Conference, the main event that has taken place is the XVIIth International Hydrographic Conference, in May 2007.

The Conference noted the Report submitted by the SPWG and agreed with the implementation plan for the new IHO structure. Some decisions require the approval of the Protocol of Amendment of the IHO Convention by two thirds of Member States before entering in force, such as the amended texts of the General Regulations, Finance Regulations, Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, Council and Finance Committee. So far, 20 Member States have already ratified the Protocol.

Other decisions, not requiring the entry in force of the amended Convention for its implementation were adopted, such as the restructuring of Committees and other groups. The date fixed for this to take place is January 01, 2009. That is to say that starting next year the IHO will have a different structure based on two main Committees, the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC) and the Inter Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC). Later in this presentation I will provide details of each Committee components and first meeting.

The Conference established two working groups, one to revise the IHO's Strategic Plan and the second one to study and propose a new edition of the IHB Staff Regulations. Also the Conference approved to ask CHRIS to establish two Working Groups, the first one on Hydrography and Cartography of Inland Waters and the second one on the Marine Spatial Data Infrastructures (MSDI). Moreover it was decided to have an Extraordinary Conference in June 2009 to consider the reports of these Working Groups, except the one dealing with IHB Staff Regulations.

In a different area the Conference decided to achieve adequate coverage, availability, consistency and quality of ENC's by 2010 and to strongly support the efforts by IMO to introduce mandatory carriage requirements for ECDIS.

With regard to Capacity Building, the Conference agreed to ask the CBC, in consultation with RHCs, to consider the part-time allocation of personnel to act as Regional Staff Officers to assist those chairmen of Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHCs) who have limited human resources in order to sustain the capacity building effort in their regions. 5 RHCs were suggested, including the EatHC. I will refer to this matter under Agenda Item 8. Capacity Building.

Another important decision by the Conference was the approval of the IHO Work Program and Budget for the period 2008-2012.

We are almost closing year 2008 and therefore it seems appropriate that I refer particularly to the status of this year work program with special emphasis on the matters relevant to this RHC.

## **Program 1**

### **Cooperation between States Member and with International Organizations**

#### **Element 1.1 Co-operation with Member States**

11 RHCs plus the Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica have met during this year. Out of the planned meetings, only one RHC could not meet but shall do it in the first quarter of 2009.

One of the subjects of common interest to all RHCs is the commitment to achieve ENC coverage of their regions by 2010, covering the main shipping lanes and ports.

#### **Element 1.2 Co-operation with International Organizations**

##### **IMO**

The relationship with IMO over the past years has been very active and productive.

SOLAS issue, especially new Regulation 9 of chapter V, which refers to Hydrographic Services, has motivated an active and fruitful relationship between IHO and IMO to the effects of promoting joint initiatives that tend to facilitate the fulfilment of this Regulation by Contracting Governments. It is considered of value that at a national level, maritime and hydrographic authorities seek to work together this challenging matter.

The offer of hydrographic services stopped from being a voluntary activity, to constitute an obligation for the Governments as Part of SOLAS. It is for that reason that the IMO has considered and endorsed IHO recommendations.

In the debates that took place at the 54th session of the IMO Sub Committee on Safety of Navigation (June/July 2008), a phased implementation of a mandatory carriage requirement for ECDIS was agreed. The proposed dates for implementation are 2012 – 2018 depending on class of ship and tonnage.

IMO Technical Cooperation Committee WP for the period 2008/2009 included two activities with hydrographic component, fully funded, that benefited the Caribbean and the South West Pacific regions. The TC is working on the development of the 2010/2011 WP and IMO regional representative could well try to introduce an activity of direct benefit to this region if such an activity is requested. To avoid duplication and strengthen our CB initiatives, IHO invited IMO and IOC to have an annual coordination meeting in September/October. This year took place the second version of this meeting to which the Marine component of the WMO was also invited, and attended.

## IOC

### a) COAST-MAP-IO (Coastal Mapping in the Indian Ocean)

Is an IOC project aiming at building national databases containing accurate bathymetry to 200 m depth and topography to 50 m height. This database will be used to generate inundation maps, through modelling, to identify vulnerable coastal areas and prevent the disastrous effects of extreme events like tsunamis. The IHB cooperate as expert in bathymetry with the IOC on this project, which involves 12 countries in the Indian Ocean.

### b) GEBCO

The IHO has a joint program with IOC known as GEBCO and another ocean mapping body constituted by the regional bathymetric projects known as IBC projects, mainly forming part of IOC structure. The IHB in a joint work with the IOC Secretariat fostered the modernization of the GEBCO ToR and RoP. This shall optimise the ocean mapping global program.

FIG and ICA, together with IHO continue to cooperate in developing Hydrographic Survey and Nautical Cartographers Standards of Competence and the recognition process of training programmes. In this line, the IHB initiated a very good relation with the Maritime Academy in Accra, Ghana, in order to develop a hydrographic program, but communications have not progressed and it seems that the idea is on a stand-by situation.

## Port Management West Central Africa Council.

Since 2006 the IHO has an MOU signed with PMAWCA. An IHB Director participates in the Councils of PMAWCA, being the last one held in Cote d'Ivoire in April this year. In brief, the IHO representative had the opportunity to brief the Board of Directors. The presentation lasted 30 minutes and covered a brief description of the IHO; SOLAS Convention, mainly Regulation 9 "Hydrographic Services"; status of hydrography in the region; the IHO Capacity Building effort in the region and some Conclusions and Recommendations. This presentation was followed by an hour of comments and discussions. A report of this mission was submitted to the EatHC Chairman.

### **Element 1.3 Co-operation with non-Member States**

Under this element there is a direct task identified for the EAHC that reads:

#### **Task 1.3.1 Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission.**

Members of the RHC with the support of the IHB, to develop (2008/2009) and execute (2009/2012) a strategy to increase participation of Non-Member States in IHO business; to continue giving advice on how to comply with international regulations such as SOLAS V and to encourage them to attend and participate in the RHC meetings and to join the Organization.

Probably this is an issue that can be discussed in the frame of this conference in order to identify how this task could be achieved.

In general terms the RHC as well as the IHB have been open and ready to provide advise and guidance to non IHO Member States willing to built or improve their hydrographic capabilities. The IHO has decided to intensify its efforts to build capacity for developing countries, in particular for the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as coastal African States, to improve hydrographic services and the production of nautical charts, including the mobilization of resources and building of capacity, as requested by different United Nations General Assembly resolutions.

The situation referring to IHO Membership is as follow:

Mauritania has not deposit its Instrument of Accession.

Cameroon has reached 47 votes and should become IHO Member very soon.

Sierra Leone has reached so far 42 votes, requiring 49. The IHB will make MSs aware of this situation again in early January, 2009.

In total, today IHO membership is 80 States.

## **Program 2**

### **Capacity Building**

#### **Element 2.1 Capacity Building Management**

The IHO CBC has continued to meet once a year. At each meeting the on going CBWP is examined and updates are introduced based on information received from RHCs. Also based on the IHO 5 year WP and Budget, and considering inputs received from RHCs, the CBC prepared the following year WP, that is included in the general IHO annual WP for approval by MSs.

The CBFund has provided the IHO a good tool to support capacity building initiatives. With an average of about 140.000 euros a year, several activities have been supported.

All requests from RHCs after analysis by the CBC, are included in the CB management Plan, for consideration when deciding on annual programming.

To improve management, the CBC has developed some procedures and still working on others that should facilitate the implementation of the IHO CB effort.

One important aspect is the recommendation as indicated in Adm Resolution T 1.3

*2 bis.- Where Capacity Building is required in a region, RHCs are recommended to establish an internal body to deal with CB matters and to designate a focal point to ensure continuity in the CB process. This part-time allocation to assist RHCs should come primarily and ideally from an HO within the region. If that is not possible then the RHC might agree to request support from another RHC or an HO that might wish to take that responsibility.*

*These regional contact points, the responsibilities of which should be given directly and in detail by the RHC concerned, shall have the support of the RHCs; shall be nominated having in mind the importance of continuity; shall be in permanent contact with the corresponding RHC Chairman as well as with the CBC Chairman. Ideally he/she should be a CBC member with access to RHC meetings.*

*In the absence of any other viable alternative and despite its limited human resources availability a request of support could be requested to the IHB.*

## **Element 2.2 Capacity Building Assessment**

The IHO has continued to pay technical visits to those countries that have requested them. The CBC identified Guinea Bissau as needing some support and Portugal agreed to work this matter on a bilateral basis. We shall learn about this at the proper CB agenda item. Also, a permanent activity is under this element, I refer to keeping update the S-55. I take this opportunity to request all countries to update their entries to this publication.

## **Element 2.3 Capacity Building Provision**

Raising awareness on the importance of hydrography is a permanent activity of all IHO bodies. It is felt that CB can be provided but without concrete follow-up actions and the support of national authorities its effects tend to be diminish or non-existent at all.

The IHO has been supporting workshops, training courses, developing training programs, seminars and other activities.

As indicated the details of this important program with respect to the EatHC will be reported at the appropriate agenda item.

### **Program 3** **Support of Techniques and Standards**

#### **Element 3.1 Meetings of Committees and Working Groups**

The different IHO Committees and Working Groups have met according to the IHO 2008 WP. MSs have hosted these meetings providing excellent facilities.

#### **Element 3.2 Hydrographic Surveying**

In February 2008 the STANDARDS FOR HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEYS – S-44 5th Edition were finalized, and are available for download from the IHO webpage.

A couple of Basic Practical Hydrographic Surveys courses have been organized in other RHCs. In the case of the EAtHC, this is a pending activity. This matter shall be considered under CB agenda item.

#### **Element 3.3 Nautical Cartography and Marine Data Management**

ENC production has been a permanent concern of IHO.

In this matter the IHO submitted two documents under this agenda item to IMO NAV 54

NAV 54/14/5 Evaluation of Electronic Navigation Chart (ENC) Availability

NAV 53/14/6 Development of a comprehensive online catalogue of available official charts

It is important to keep in mind IHO's Resolution to provide an adequate coverage of ENCs by 2010. With regard to the online catalogue, its information must be kept updated to really offer a clear picture of the availability of ENCs at all times.

Training courses and workshops on ENC production have taken place and RHCs might wish to organize some events in this line with the support of the CBFund.

### **Element 3.4 Marine Safety Information (MSI)**

The CPRNW has been very active in offering MSI courses in RHCs according to a schedule agreed. These are 3 days intensive courses for operators of warning systems and till now MACHC, SAIHC and MBSHC have benefited from it. Next year it is considered that this course will benefit the EAHC. Details will be discussed under CB.

### **Element 3.5 Data for Geomatics Application**

The development of standards is one of the objectives of the IHO, and great activity is on going in coordination with different expert bodies. The concept of Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure goes far beyond the exclusive use of data as a source information for nautical charting purpose, and therefore HOs have the opportunity to work closely with other national institutions, justifying the existence of national hydrographic committees or other national coordination structures. With the secondment of an expert from the Japan HO, we expect that the IHB will be in a better position to tackle this activity.

### **Element 3.6 Technical Aspects of the Law of the Sea**

ABLOS organized a new conference with the title "*Difficulties in Implementing the Provisions of UNCLOS*", that took place in Monaco, October 2008. The Conference was very successful attracting a capacity audience of 90 delegates from 30 countries with 23 papers being presented during 9 sessions.

### **Element 3.7 Ocean Mapping Program**

GEBCO program has been very successful in training of new group of bathymetric experts at the University of New Hampshire, USA, with funds provided by Nippon Foundation. During 5 years and with an average of 6 students each year, it is expected that the program will improve its contribution to the communities requiring gridded bathymetric data for scientific as well as for operational purposes.

It has been anticipated that in January 2009 Google will launch Google Ocean that will be based on GEBCO, giving GEBCO, as well as its parent organizations – IHO and IOC - an opportunity to be better known and recognized as leading institutions in its field, worldwide.

**Program 4**  
**Public Relations and Information Management**  
**Element 4.1 Information Management**

The IHB is moving towards a digital communication with IHO MSs and the world.

Great effort and time has been and is still being allocated to modernize the IHO website. RoK HO provided a secondment for the IHB and this expert has been employed mainly in the implementation of a new and more modern version of the IHO web.

We are still far from finalizing this task, and for solving different problems that pop-up at any time.

I take this opportunity to invite all countries to visit the IHO website and provide us with your comments and proposals for improvement. Also, please review the information related to your countries and to your RHC and offer us any information to keep the web as updated as possible.

**Element 4.2 Public Relations**

The relationship with the Principality of Monaco is excellent, and very helpful with the organization to achieve its objectives. At each major event organized by the IHB, the Principality offer its contribution as the Host Country of the IHO.

A very important component of Public Relations is the celebration of the WHD. In 2007 the theme was “Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs), an essential element of Safety at Sea and Efficient Maritime Operations”.

In 2008 the theme was “*CAPACITY BUILDING, A VITAL TOOL TO ASSIST THE IHO IN ACHIEVING ITS MISSION AND OBJECTIVES*”.

And the theme agreed for 2009 is ““HYDROGRAPHY - PROTECTING THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT””.

For each of these events the IHB has prepared and offered to MSs and RHCs material that could be used to organize events associated to the celebrations that takes place on the 21 of June each year.

We know that some MSs of the EAtHC have organized excellent events and their experience specially on the result of this effort could well be shared at a regional level.

Another element contributing to Public Relations is the IHR. Starting 2009, the IHR will be a digital publication published twice a year, including articles peer-reviewed. A CL has been recently issued on the subject; providing details to help authors to provide contributions to the IHR. The IHR Editor and the IHB are ready to receive contributions either in the form of articles or notes. This

new challenge for the IHO will achieve its objective ONLY if articles are provided. I take this opportunity to invite Hydrographers to motivate authors to contribute with articles for the Digital Version of the IHR.

## **Program 5**

### **General Development of the Organization**

#### **Element 5.1 IHO**

The IHO is getting ready to adopt a new structure starting 01 January 2009.

Two will be the main committees, as it can be seen in the screen.

The HSSC is planning its first meeting for September 2009 and the IRCC for June 2009, immediately after the 4EIHC.

The ISPWG is updating the Strategic Plan of the Organization and will submit its proposal to the Extraordinary Conference. The implementation of the proposals shall also have an effect in the way the IHO works. We all aim at improving IHO's effectiveness and efficiency.

#### **Element 5.2 IHB**

The 19 people, including Directors that work at the IHB constitute a team that not only acts as the Secretariat of the IHO, but also offers support to all the bodies of the IHO.

The preparation of the Annual Work Program and Budget and later on, the Annual Report providing evidences on what was achieved and how the Finances worked out, constitute a systematic working procedure that should keep MSs well informed.

Sometimes we feel that communication between MSs and the IHB can further be improved by making a more extensive use of the digital world, and we are exploring other means to provide a better service to MSs and RHCs. We will appreciate that this approach be also practiced at all levels. Many times countries have lost opportunities just because of a weak communication system.

#### **Element 5.3 International Hydrographic Conferences**

The IHB started already to prepare the 4th EIHC that will take place in Monaco from the 02 to 04 June 2009.

On this occasion several reports will be presented to the Conference for decision. Also time will be allocated for analysing ENC status and for an anticipated celebration of the WHD.

A special section in the IHO website hosts the documentation relevant to this event.

## **Final Words.**

In this brief report I have tried to highlight matters of general interest that give a synopsis of what IHO has been doing. Certainly I have not mentioned all but gives a flavour of the diversity of matters under permanent consideration.

The new IHO structure is seen with optimism as a tool that shall improve the response of the IHO to the changing world. Of course there are still several technical and administrative issues that require strong and close attention. The provision of Hydrographic Services as stipulated by SOLAS regulation 9 constitutes one of those mayor issues for many countries specially in the EAtHC and therefore Capacity Building shall be assigned a high priority. In this line the recognition of the importance of hydrography and the proper assignation of resources at national governmental level is vital.

I take this opportunity to invite all Members of the EAtHC to generate the proper environment at a national and regional level that could facilitate cooperation and collaboration to progress in that direction. We need a team work spirit, patience and persistence.

Thank you.