

**Meso American and Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission (MACHC)**

15<sup>th</sup> Meeting – Manzanillo, Mexico

10 - 13 December 2014

**IHB Report**

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

1. Amendments to the Convention on the IHO were approved by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference in May 2005. By November 2014, 41 of the required 48 approvals to the Protocol of Amendments had been received by the Government of Monaco. The following IHO Member States of the MACHC have not yet indicated positive support for the Protocol of Amendments:

<b>No response as yet from:</b>
Colombia
Guatemala
Jamaica
Trinidad and Tobago
Venezuela

2. The amendments to the Convention will enter force three months after the necessary majority of approvals is received by the Government of Monaco. If the required number of approvals are received in the next two years, then the first Assembly of the IHO will be held in 2017.

3. The Directing Committee, in cooperation with the Department of External Relations of the Government of Monaco, stands ready to assist, through diplomatic or other channels, those States' representatives that may be encountering difficulties in progressing the outstanding approvals of the Amendments to the Convention.

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

4. IHO membership stands at 82. Brunei Darussalam, Georgia and Viet Nam have recently achieved the required number of approvals to become Member States of the IHO subject to the submission of instruments of accession to the Government of Monaco.

5. Haiti received the required number of approvals to become a Member State of the IHO in November 2012, but has not yet submitted its instrument of accession with the Government of Monaco to become a full Member State of the IHO.

6. Bulgaria, Mauritania and Sierra Leone have also been approved to become Members of the IHO, but have not yet deposited their instruments of accession with the government of Monaco.

7. There are no applications pending, though a number of coastal States have indicated their intention to apply for membership in the near future.

**Regional Applications for Membership of the IHO**

8. Countries in the MACHC that are not already Member States of the IHO are encouraged to become members. The Directing Committee, in cooperation with the Department of External Relations of the Government of Monaco, stands ready to assist, through diplomatic or other channels, those non-IHO Member States' representatives from the MACHC region wishing to progress an application for membership of the IHO through their respective governments.

## **Suspended Member States of the IHO**

9. The rights of The Democratic Republic of the Congo, The Dominican Republic and Serbia, as Members of the IHO remain suspended due to the non-payment of the annual contribution for more than two years. The Directing Committee is working with these States to expedite their return to full membership as soon as possible.

## **INT Chart and ENC Production Coordination - Region B**

10. USA, as Chair of the MACHC Integrated Charting Committee (MICC) for Region B, has continued to provide regular updates to S-11 Part B - Catalogue of INT Charts. Since MACHC-14, 8 new INT charts have been published. According to records held by the IHB, in total, 38 INT charts have been published to date, out of 79 charts in the scheme (48 %).

## **5th Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference (EIHC5)**

11. EIHC5 took place from 6 to 10 October in the Auditorium Rainier III in Monaco. 65 of the 82 Member States were represented, together with 2 pending Member States and 21 representatives from non-Member States, but none from the MACHC. The MACHC was represented by Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, France, Mexico, Netherlands, Suriname, UK, USA and Venezuela.

12. The Conference acknowledged the need to consider novel ways to supplement hydrographic data gathering, especially in remote and unsurveyed areas. Methods include using satellite derived bathymetry and crowd-sourcing techniques. The Conference was told that the development of national and regional spatial data infrastructures is growing and that national hydrographic services should urgently consider the potential impact on their roles and responsibilities as the world moves from a map and chart-based paradigm to one that places the management and provision of national reference geodata services ahead of map and chart production.

13. The Proceedings for the Conference will be published before the end of the year.

14. In addition to the Industry Exhibition, an IHO Capacity Building exhibition and poster celebration of ten years of Nippon Foundation IHO-IOC GEBCO scholars was arranged. A number of past scholars and alumni provided poster displays of their work since graduation throughout the period of the Conference.

## **Capacity Building Programme**

15. CB Plans for 2014 comprised one technical visit to Nicaragua, one IMO/IHO training in Hydrography for Spanish Speaking countries (with active support from Mexico, Venezuela and COCATRAM) and the Seminar on Raising Awareness of Hydrography.

16. Last August Mr. Antonio Williams graduated from the Category A Hydrography Programme at The University of Southern Mississippi (USM), sponsored by the Republic of Korea. No candidate from the region was selected for the 2014/2015 course due to a lack of proficiency in English language. The call for nominations for the 2015/2016 course was announced in Circular Letter 65/2014.

17. The current Chart Project (Category B Cartography Course at UKHO), sponsored by the Nippon Foundation, has seven students enrolled, including Ms. Li San Nancy YANG from Suriname. Previously Colombia, Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago benefited from this training. The next call for nominations will be announced in February 2015 via Circular Letter.

18. Most Cat A and Cat B training opportunities require proven proficiency in English language. As a result, many applicants are rejected due to a lack of this proficiency. Hydrographic Offices are encouraged to select and prepare suitable candidates for future training opportunities, especially for the Category A course at USM, where a TOEFL/IELTS certificate is required, together with a GRE score.

19. The success in identifying and obtaining IHO CB opportunities is largely due to the dedication of Mr. Jeff Bryant from UKHO, whose proactive work moves the MACHC forward. even greater success is likely if MACHC

participating States take an active and collaborative approach to ensuring that appropriate and timely proposals are identified, agreed and forwarded to the IHO Capacity building B Sub Committee for consideration.

### **IHB GIS and Databases**

20. The IHB is evaluating an Esri-based GIS solution. It is anticipated that the C-55, Year Book and other associated databases will be transferred to an Esri environment by Easter 2015. This will enable access to various layers of information through the IHO website and through various sophisticated cloud-based on-line GIS options.

### **Post-2015 Agendas**

21. The development of the post-2015 sustainable development goals (SDGs) and of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction under the aegis of the United Nations offer an opportunity to highlight the fundamental role of hydrography in underpinning sustainable development and the reduction of marine disaster risks. The Directing Committee is striving to make the best of this opportunity, both directly and through related initiatives and programmes such as the UN initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) and the activities of the Group on Earth Observation (GEO). As the negotiation processes are driven and controlled by Member States, the efforts of the Directing Committee need to be taken forward at the national and regional levels (IHO CL 53/2014 refers).

### **International Hydrographic Review**

22. International Hydrographic Review. The IHR provides an opportunity for Member States to publicise technical and other achievements in the region. An editorial board comprising a representative from each region has been established. The nominated representative for the MACHC is Mr Chris Thorne from UKHO.

23. Papers for consideration for publication in the IHR should be forwarded directly to the editor (ihreview@iho.int).

### **IHO Publicity**

24. World Hydrography Day. The theme for World hydrography Day 2015 will concentrate on the fact that much of the world's seas, oceans and navigable waters remain unsurveyed. The tag-line suggested for the theme is "*Our seas and oceans - still to be explored and charted*".

### **Action Requested of SAIHC Member States**

25. SAIHC Member States are invited to:

- a. **Note** this report.
- b. **Report** in-country progress on approving the Amendments to the IHO Convention, including any difficulties being encountered or IHB assistance required.
- c. **Continue to provide** updates to S-11, through USA as Chair of the MICC for Region B.
- d. **Invest** in the preparation of candidates for Capacity Building training.
- e. **Take any other actions** as considered appropriate.