

**21st Conference of the Mediterranean and Black Seas
Hydrographic Commission
Cádiz, Spain, 11-13 June 2019**

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2019	
Task 3.2.1.6	Prepare for and report meetings of the Regional Hydrographic Commission: MBSHC

The 21st Conference of the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission (MBSHC) was held in Cádiz, Spain from 11 to 13 June, hosted by the Instituto Hidrográfico de la Marina (IHM), the Spanish Hydrographic Office. The Conference was chaired by Rear-Admiral Luigi Sinapi, Director of the Italian Hydrographic Service (IIM). A total of 47 representatives from 18 Member States of the MBSHC (Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and Ukraine) and two Associate Member States (United Kingdom and United States of America) participated in the Conference. Albania, the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, the Mediterranean Science Commission (CIESM), IC-ENC and PRIMAR, as the two Regional ENC Coordinating Centres (RENC), were represented as observers. Seven stakeholders from industry participated as invited expert contributors. The IHO Secretariat was represented by Director Mustafa Iptes, Assistant Director Yves Guillam and Spanish Translator Mary Paz Muro. A total of sixty-seven participants attended the Conference.



Participants of the 21st Conference of the MBSHC.

The Conference was opened by Vice-Admiral Juan Luis Sobrino Pérez-Crespo, Commander of the Maritime Action in Spain, who highlighted the importance of hydrography not only in support of safety of navigation but also as a geospatial data foundation for the planning and management of maritime affairs.

The MBSHC received about 20 national reports from Member States. Some of them, like the one from Croatia, were supported by very efficient presentations as they provided not only highlights but also conclusions, strategic priorities and high priority topics suggested for discussion at the Conference. Director Iptes reported on the IHO corporate matters and the work programme in general and on the main

outcome of the last IRCC meeting (IRCC-11). The Members were informed on the programme and the main deadlines for the preparation of the 2nd session of the Assembly, which include the selection process of the Council Members. They were also invited to use the new online formstack service as far as possible to update their entries (C-55, P-5) and respond to IHO Circular Letters. Members were also invited to provide their input to update the MBSHC Statutes in accordance with the final amendments to the IHO Resolution 2/1997 that were endorsed at IRCC-11.

All the presentations made either by observers or industry participants and stakeholders were very educative, in particular for those who participated in the Conference for the first time. The IOC representative provided a clear status report of the tsunami warning systems in the region and the current challenges and gaps faced by the coastal States of the Mediterranean Sea. The NAVAREA Coordinator was invited to participate in the NEAMWave 20 exercise.



The endorsement of the IALA Risk Management Toolbox by the IMO through the SN.1/Circ.296 was noted as well as the capacity building opportunities for the development and the maintenance of Aids to Navigation (AtoN) provided by IALA.

The MBSHC Chair, reporting also as HSSC Chair, provided a clear picture of the technical developments made under the S-100 framework as well as on the implementation strategy of S-100 based products, which is under preparation for being reviewed at the next Council meeting. It was noted that very few MBSHC Member States had actually started to get involved in S-100 based products developments. What should be done to get prepared in the near future is a general expectation implicitly raised by the MBSHC Members.

One of the remaining and core activities of the Commission is the establishment of agreed ENC and INT chart schemes. The MBSHC was firstly informed that a survey on the *Future of the Nautical Paper Chart*, prepared by the Nautical Cartography Working Group and endorsed by HSSC, was about to be launched (IHO CL 29/2019 refers). The preliminary report attached to this survey shows implicitly that from now, priority had to be given to ENC schemes. Noting this warning and notwithstanding the difficulties to reach consensus in the design of these schemes, some proposals were made by the Region F Chart Coordinator (France) to move forward. In application of the IHO Resolution 1/2018 on overlapping ENC cells, the MBSHC noted the risk assessment reports provided by interested parties and the associated political statements. At the end of the Conference, Shom (France) resigned from the role of Chart Coordinator and was commended for its commitment and achievements for more than 40 years as Region F Chart Coordinator. The Chart Coordinator role was taken over by the IIM (Italy).

A report on Maritime Safety Information (MSI) activities in NAVAREA III was presented by Spain and reviewed by the Commission. The recent activities of the Working Group for the Safety of Navigation in the Black and Azov Seas (BASWG) were also presented by the Chair of BASWG (Turkey).

At the end of the Conference, Captain (Dir) José Daniel Gonzalez-Aller Lacalle took over as Chair of the MBSHC and the Commission welcomed the offer made by Slovenia to host the 22nd Conference of the MBSHC in 2021.