
FINAL MINUTES
OF THE 57th NORDIC HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION CONFERENCE
APRIL 15th – 17th 2013, ARKÖ, NORRKÖPING, SWEDEN

A. Opening Formalities

A1 Opening of Conference

The chairman, Mr. Patrik Wiberg, welcomed all participants to the 57th conference of the Nordic Hydrographic Commission and hoped for a fruitful and successful meeting and emphasized the benefit of sharing experiences between the Nordic hydrographic offices. The new director of the IHB, Mr. Gilles Bessero, was especially welcomed to his first meeting of the Nordic Hydrographic Commission.

A2 Administrative arrangements

Ms. Annika Kindeberg, Sweden, briefly reviewed the programme of the conference and informed about practical details regarding the stay at the Arkö Maritime Training Centre.

A3 Agenda approval

At the 56th NHC conference Sweden was tasked with the action NHC56/1 “*To evaluate the NHC standard agenda prior to the next NHC meeting*”. In response to this action Sweden had prepared an alternative agenda aligned with the IHO Work Programmes and this type of agenda was also used at the last North Sea Hydrographic Commission conference.

Sweden commented that all annotations regarding related meeting documents were aligned with the standing NHC agenda and asked to be excused for any confusion that might arise from this fact.

The meeting decided to use the alternative agenda and to evaluate this at the end of the meeting. The agenda was approved.

A4 Status of action items from the 56th NHC conference

There were no comments to the minutes of NHC56 from May 2012.

The chairman reviewed the list of actions from the 56th conference. All actions were considered done with some comments.

NHC56/2 Gilles Bessero, IHB, suggested that a report describing the ENC harmonization efforts and status could be put forward to the WEND-WG.

NHC56/3 Norway briefly commented on the development of an app for ENC data supported by a full updating regime. Denmark will present a paper under agenda item D3.

NHC56/4 Denmark will present a paper under agenda item D4.

NHC56/5 Sweden will present a paper under agenda item D2.

NHC56/6 Sweden suggests that the Nordic Paper Chart Experts Group may be a forum to continue the exchange of experiences regarding Improved Data Exchange.

B. IHO Work Programme 1 - "Corporate affairs"

Note: The minutes are not intended as a description of the complete content of the reports under agenda item B. Most of the comments, questions and answers triggered by each respective report are noted in the minutes.

B1 Report from the IHB

The director, Mr. Gilles Bessero, presented the report from IHB.

All the NHC members commented on the difficulties keeping track of the activities in their respective ministries to formally approve applications of new members to IHO. [\[Action #1\]](#) The IHB will copy the initial diplomatic requests for the approval of candidates to IHO membership and distribute to all member states.

There was a discussion regarding the IHO ENC Catalogue and IHB noted that response to CL51/2012 varied among NHC members. Norway commented that handling ENCs at the bureau will be expensive and IHB responded that the important issue is access to the ENCs. Sweden and Finland have not responded to the CL but see no problem letting IHB having access ie through a RENC service. [\[Action #2\]](#). Member states (that have not already responded) will respond to the CL51/2012.

Regarding C-55 Finland asked about the time schedule for a new version of C-55 presentation. IHB responded that a pilot version hopefully will be available during 2013. The decision 17 of the 18th IHC on improving survey coverage was discussed and Finland commented that the Helcom resurvey scheme has a good political support within the Baltic Sea region.

Capacity building was discussed and Norway remarked that they are working actively in some areas. Denmark agreed that CB activities are relevant but noted that even basic participation in the IHO work is somewhat questioned in the new Danish organization and economic situation. IHB commented that the publication M2 contains information about the required obligations as a coastal nation. Norway noted that their participation in SAIHC also is capacity building and is in favor of the new IHB direction supporting activities in other areas than navigation to motivate and fund HO work.

B2 National Report of Denmark

The HO belongs to the newly formed Danish Geodata Agency and organized together with the land mapping and cadastral parts. Around 50 persons are dealing with the hydrographic activities. There is also a new national act that makes most of the basic geodata available free of charge for commercial and non-commercial purposes. For the moment nautical charts and basic hydrographic data are not included in the act.

B3 National Report of Finland

A new organization at the Finnish Transport Agency will be implemented from July 1st 2013. All the details concerning where the IHO activities will be handled were not decided at the time of the NHC meeting.

Finland highlighted the large volume of surveys performed within the Helcom programme and with substantial EU funding (MonaLisa project).

B4 National Report of Iceland

The Icelandic HO currently employs 7 persons and there is a need to recruit more staff during 2013. Denmark asked about the policies for distribution of data. The land mapping data for Iceland is basically distributed as free data but that does not apply for HO data yet.

B5 National Report of Norway

The Norwegian Hydrographic Service is a part of the national mapping authority and a move to centralize IT resources to the head office was effected in January 2013. The NHS has recently entered into a long term contract to support the Norwegian Coastal Administration and is acquiring an extra survey launch to meet these demands.

Norway has some experience using Olex data in the Mareano project and raised the question regarding a policy for using crowd sourced data in areas less critical for navigation. [[Action #3](#)]. NHC invites the IHB to consider the impact of the use of crowd sourcing techniques on the implementation of decision 17 of the 18th IHC regarding survey coverage.

Norway informed that their Bathymetry Data Base project Føniks has been restarted due to issues with the initial contractor. Finland asked about the time schedule and the answer was that procurement of a first module will take place in autumn 2013.

B6 National Report of Sweden

Sweden reported on the record high volume of hydrographic surveys achieved during 2012 and an estimated new all-time high during 2013. The main reason for these records is the contribution from the EU TEN-T project MonaLisa. There were some questions and comments regarding the coordination of contracted survey efforts.

C. IHO Work Programme 2 – "Hydrographic Services and Standards"

C1 NHC Workshop on Validation of Multibeam Data

Finland reported from the latest workshop arranged in Helsinki 13-14 February 2013. The impression is that all participants were very satisfied with the workshop and that a continuation is highly desired. IHB asked if information from the workshop could be shared in a wider community. The meeting discussed the possibility and how to publish the outcome of the workshop. [[Action #4](#)]. Denmark will investigate the possibility to arrange the next workshop on validation of multibeam data.

C2 NHC Nautical Publications Working Group (NNPWG)

Denmark as chair of the NNPWG reported the activities from the last period. A planned workshop during 2012 was postponed. The chair also noted that IHO SNPWG was asked by the last HSSC to review and clarify its work plan which will be important to this WG. The NNPWG sees a need to arrange a workshop during 2013 or 2014. The NHC58 will then hopefully have the necessary information to decide on the continuation of NNPWG.

Sweden commented that this is an area where the actual requirements must be based on the real needs of the user. Norway also supported a solution that starts with a minimum level of requirements. Finland expressed the opinion that revised terms of reference for the working group and a work plan is needed for the future work. [[Action #5](#)] Denmark will arrange a workshop on nautical publications also inviting Arctic Region HC and Baltic Sea HC. [[Action #6](#)] Members are invited to provide input to the agenda for the nautical publications workshop.

C3 Nordic Chart Production Experts Group (NCPEG)

Iceland declared that they are willing to invite to the next meeting/workshop of the NCPEG. Sweden repeated the suggestion that monitoring the outcome and experiences from improved data exchange for chart production should be a task for NCPEG. [[Action #7](#)]. Iceland will send out an invitation to a NCPEG meeting and will ask for input to the agenda.

C4 Development in New Surveying Technology

Sweden reported that this agenda item should be a standing item resulting from the action NHC56/9. Sweden reminded about the seminar on experiences with hydrographic surveys using LIDAR technology arranged in Norrköping back-to-back to the NHC conference.

Denmark presented some experiences with LIDAR surveys from the BLAST (EU Interreg) project. There are still a lot of open questions with interpretation and trust of the result. Norway agreed and commented that several quality issues using LIDAR are to a large extent unknown.

C5 A possible Coastal Mareano Project

Norway gave a short background to the Mareano project started already in 2005. The project is a part of the information collection for the Management Plans for the Barents Sea and the Norwegian Sea. The Mareano project until now has mainly dealt with waters outside the territorial waters. Now there is an increased interest for the coastal zone and a drive to expand the Mareano project in order to “close the gap”. Moving into territorial waters also means that issues regarding military classified information will have to be handled. Norway pointed to the Irish “Infomar” report where a 4-6 times return on investments from hydrographic surveys in the coastal zone was stated.

C6 Orientation about New Production System in Denmark

Denmark presented some experiences from and future plans for implementation of a chart production system based on ESRI Nautical Solution. It is currently mainly used for production of new charts covering Greenland waters and there is a goal to substantially reduce production time per chart. Finland asked about the number of users which will increase from 2 to 6 during 2013. Norway asked about Print-on-Demand functionality and Denmark replied that this may be added later on. Finland also asked about experiences from updating and the reply was that this will be more evident during 2014.

D. IHO Working Programme 3 - "Inter Regional Coordination and Support"

D1 Report on PRIMAR operations

Norway presented the report briefly and highlighted the fact that three new HO members have joined the RENC since last reported to NHC. Denmark has terminated the agreement and will leave PRIMAR at the end of 2013. IHB asked about the trend for sales figures and Norway replied that the last year has seen a 12 percent increase in sales.

D2 Experiences regarding contracting of survey operations

Sweden presented the most important findings from the paper and underlined that it is somewhat sensitive to comment on details regarding prize and performance. The procurements in the last years, where a large part has been for the MonaLisa project, have been based on a specification produced together between Finland and Sweden. Finland and Sweden have also defined a common realization of S-44 named FSIS-44.

Norway asked if the specifications could be distributed and Sweden answered positively. There was a question if internal costs for administrating the procurements are included in the comparison of costs and Sweden answered that these costs are included. Finland commented that it would be interesting to make calculations and comparisons over a longer period. Norway saw a risk that there are too few commercial actors in the market for hydrographic surveys. The IHB suggested that there is material here for an article in the International Hydrographic Review.

D3 ENC to the leisure market

Denmark presented their pilot project ("Sikker kurs") for distribution of ENC to leisure crafts which is run in cooperation with the Swedish company Sea Pilot AB. It has been noted that the official charts and cells sometimes lack detailed information regarding yacht harbors and marinas. The user interface has a portrayal based on S-52 and during the pilot project all orders for data packages are supplemented with the deliveries of corresponding paper charts. During the pilot project Danish and some Swedish ENC data is being used.

Finland commented on the importance of the HOs responsibility for the product and Sweden added that a mechanism is needed to ensure that data is not manipulated

through the delivery chain. The IHB stated the need to clarify the terms of usage in relation to HO's liability etc.

[Action #8] Denmark will inform NHC members about the outcome of this pilot project.

D4 Maritime Spatial Data Infrastructures (MSDI)

Denmark (Jens Peter Hartmann as chairman of IHO MSDIWG) presented the activities of the MSDIWG. This is an area where proactivity is needed and to expand national effort also to a regional and international approach. There is a new possible EU directive coming up on a framework for maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management. Parts of the presentation had been prepared by Ellen Vos, the Netherlands, and used at the IHO-EU meeting in Brussels.

(This topic generated a lengthy discussion and a lot of comments, maybe not all of them are recorded properly in these minutes.)

Sweden supported the view that SDI is important and pointed to the Baltic Sea Bathymetry initiative as an example. Norway commented that multibeam surveys collect, apart from bathymetry, information from both the bottom (backscatter) and the water column. Finland remarked that backscatter information is collected but seldom processed at the moment. Denmark had the opinion that general information and meta data is a good start and that NHC may be a platform for principal discussions on MSDI and sharing experience. Denmark also stressed that it is important to be able to match the time schedules of the new proposed EU directive.

IHB asked if it is possible to improve the interface between IHO and the EU. How do national HO's interact with their national representatives in the EU? Should we look into a more active involvement in initiatives like EMODNET? Denmark answered that awareness is vital and that the IHO has an important role towards the EU. More focus is needed. IHB replied that maybe there is a need for an EU forum of Hydrographic Offices. Sweden supported the idea of such a forum. Norway concluded that there is a train leaving and we should be on it. Keeping track of all related EU initiatives is a difficult task. A European level forum of HO's is needed. [Action #9] Sweden will draft a proposal to the upcoming IRCC5 meeting suggesting the formation of a European level forum of HO's to interact with the EU regarding MSDI issues and other "blue policy" topics.

D5 IRCC issues and actions

Gilles Bessero, IHB, reviewed most of the actions from IRCC4 and reminded that NHC may react especially to those actions concerning regional hydrographic commissions (RHC). The possibility to contribute from NHC concerning RHC best practices (action IRCC4/10) was briefly discussed without any conclusion. There was also a discussion regarding IRCC4/30 on inviting stakeholders to the conferences of RHCs. Denmark remarked that this was done successfully at the last ARHC conference. Finland suggested that an open session could be arranged at the conferences and that an event for stakeholders should be considered for future conferences. [Action #10] The NHC chair and conference host evaluates the option to arrange a stakeholder event in connection with future NHC conferences.

The chair of NHC asked about the conferences opinion on updating the NHC report to IRCC5 as the first version was delivered before the NHC57 conference. [[Action #11](#)] Chair of NHC will deliver an updated report to IRCC5.

D6 Report from the WEND-WG

Denmark, currently representing the NHC in WEND-WG, reported on issues dealt with in the WEND-WG and the preparations for WENDWG 3 in May. The issues concerning ENC gaps and overlaps were discussed and the confusion regarding the presentation of gaps and overlaps from various sources.

E. Any other business

E1 Proposal to hold NHC conferences biennially

Sweden presented the proposal to change NHC conference interval to be arranged every second year. All NHC members are full or observing members of at least 2 other RHCs which could motivate a longer period between meetings for NHC.

IHB asked if the possible new situation from 2014 with an annual IHO council needs to be considered. Several members commented also that the EIHC 2014 may produce items for NHC to consider. There was no consensus to change the interval for the conference at this time.

E2 Nomination of NHC representative to IHR Editorial Board

The chair presented the request from IHB that each RHC if possible should be represented in the editorial board of the International Hydrographic Review.

Decision: The NHC chair will represent the commission in the IHR editorial board.

E3 Possible revision of NHC statutes

Sweden regrettably referenced the wrong version of statutes when proposing that there is a need for revision of NHC statutes. The current version from 2001 is titled "Nordic Cooperation Agreement on Nautical Charting and Hydrographic Surveying". The conference agreed that also in this version there are obvious needs for a revision. [[Action #12](#)] The chair will start drafting of proposed revision of the statutes and prepare for a decision at NHC58. First iteration communicating the draft will be delivered in September 2013.

F. Election of new Chairman

The NHC 57th conference appointed Mr. Jukka Varonen, Finland, to be chairman for the next period. The appointment was made by acclamation.

G. Place and date of the next conference

It was decided that the next conference will take place in Finland. Tentative dates are 19-20 August 2014.

H. Review of the list of actions from NHC57

The chair and secretary presented the recorded list of actions for comments and amendments.

The chair reminded the meeting on the evaluation of the use of the alternative agenda. Finland commented with the opinion that the alternative agenda was preferred. There were no objections to continue using the alternative agenda.

I. Closing remarks

The chairman thanked all delegates for their constructive contributions to a successful meeting and hoped that the stay on Arkö Island had been enjoyable. He looked forward for NHC to meet again in Finland August 2014.

The 57th conference of the Nordic Hydrographic Commission was closed.

List of Actions, 57th NHC Meeting

Arkö, Sweden April 15-17 2013

Action	Agenda	Action	Action by	Remarks
NHC57/1	B1	IHB to copy the initial diplomatic requests for the approval of candidates to IHO membership to all MS	IHB	
NHC57/2	B1	All MS respond to the CL 51/2012	SE, FI	
NHC57/3	B5	IHB to consider the impact of the use of crowd sourcing techniques on the implementation of decision 17 of the 18 th IHC	IHB	
NHC57/4	C1	To investigate the possibility to arrange the next workshop on validation of multi beam data	DK	November 2013
NHC57/5	C2	To arrange a workshop on nautical publications	DK	Invitation during 2013
NHC57/6	C2	All MS (also in ARHC, BSHC) to provide input for the nautical publications workshop agenda	All	May 2013
NHC57/7	C3	Send out an invitation for the next Nordic Chart Production Experts group and ask for agenda items	IS	Meeting in September 2013
NHC57/8	D3	To inform NHC MS about the outcome from the project "Sikker kurs"	DK	NHC58
NHC57/9	D4	Present a proposal to IRCC5 for a EEA (EU) group to interact with the EU regarding "blue" policy issues	SE	April 2013
NHC57/10	D5	NHC chair to evaluate the option to arrange a stake holders event at the NHC conference	Chair	
NHC57/11	D5	Chair to deliver an updated NHC report to IRCC5	Chair	April 2013
NHC57/12	E3	Chair to revise the statutes and iterate by correspondence to NHC members and prepare for decision at NHC58. First iteration in September 2013.	Chair	NHC58