



## **15th NORTH INDIAN OCEAN HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION CONFERENCE**

**Muscat, Oman  
16 – 18 March 2015**



### **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 March 2015, 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 NIOHC have not yet indicated positive support for the Protocol of Amendments: Egypt, India, Myanmar and Thailand.

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 is 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. Bulgaria, Haiti, 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.

6. There are two new applications from Malta and Vanuatu to be announced soon to request the approval of the Member States for the required number of votes to be accepted as a Member State of the IHO. The Member States of the NIOHC are kindly requested to contact the appropriate officials in their Governments with the responsibility for considering the approval of requests for membership of the IHO and to urge them to take action as soon as possible. Also, a number of coastal States have indicated their intention to apply for membership in the near future.

#### **Regional Applications for Membership of the IHO**

7. Seychelles that is the Associate member of the NIOHC and also not already Member State of the IHO is encouraged to become member. Also, Jordan, Maldives and Sudan are considered as potential member states of the IHO in the future. 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, for those states' application for membership of the IHO through their respective governments.

### **Suspended Member States**

8. Serbia, Congo and the Dominican Republic remain suspended. IHB is working with these states to expedite their return to full membership as soon as possible, as is the case for a number of other Member States who have fallen behind on payments of their annual subscription.

### **INT Chart and ENC Production Coordination – Region J**

9. India, as Chair of the International Charting Committee Working Group (ICCWG) for Region J, has continued to provide regular updates to S-11 Part B - Catalogue of INT Charts. Since NIOHC14, it appears that 5 new INT charts have been published and 5 new editions have been made. According to records held by the IHB, in total, 122 INT charts have been published to date, out of 166 charts in the scheme (73.49 %). The NIOHC, through the Chair of its International Charting Coordination Committee is requested to provide up to date information in order that S-11 Part B for Region L can be kept up to date.

10. The need to improve the current maintenance process for S-11 Part B has been raised on many occasions in several Regional Hydrographic Commissions. Following the development of the regional database for Antarctica, the IHB, with support provided by the Republic of Korea, is commencing specifying an “*INToGIS*” project that will move S-11 part B into an interactive GIS/S-100 compliant environment. The objective of the project is to provide the Regional International Charting Coordination WGs with relevant on-line updated information and the necessary tools to review and maintain INT chart schemes and monitor the implementation of the INT chart schemes. Extending the capability to include ENC schemes/coverage/production is also envisaged in due course. An experimentation of the “*INToGIS*” project involving some of the Regional International Charting Coordinators for comment and feedback is likely to start in April and should involve initially the BSHC, the MBSHC, the HCA, and the USCHC

### **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 two pending Member States and 21 representatives from non-Member States. The Member States from the NIOHC region attending the Conference were Bangladesh, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and United Kingdom. Bangladesh provided a presentation at EIHC5 during the thematic sessions on a view of capacity building from the recipients.

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 have been published and are available on the IHO website.

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. IHO CB Work Programme for 2014 was successfully completed more than 80% execution of the original plan. The NIOHC benefited from various activities under the IHO CB Work Programme for 2014, including one MSI Course held in Oman together with RSAHC members, also Advanced ENC Production trainings in Bangladesh and Myanmar. IHB Director Iptes paid a high level visit to Jordan in November 2014 to invite and encourage the application of Jordan to become a Member State of the IHO.

16. One student from Bangladesh was selected for Category A Hydrography Master Programme held at the USM and one student from Sri Lanka was selected for Category B CHART Project training held at the UKHO in 2014. The call for nominations for the 2015/2016 course Category A Hydrography Programme at The University of Southern Mississippi (USM), sponsored by the Republic of Korea was announced in Circular Letter 65/2014 and the call for nominations for the 2015 course of the CHART Project (Category B Cartography Course at UKHO), sponsored by the Nippon Foundation was announced in Circular Letter 10/2015.

17. 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.

18. The success in identifying and obtaining IHO CB opportunities is largely due to the dedication of the NIOHC CB Coordinator – Mr Jeff Bryant from the UK. Even greater success is likely if NIOHC 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 Sub Committee for consideration.

### **Crowd Sourced Bathymetry Programme**

19. EIHC5 through Decision 8 directed the IRCC to establish a working group to provide guidelines on the collection and use of crowd-sourced bathymetry. This WG will be established after the IRCC next meets in June in Mexico.

20. Meanwhile, the web-based interface portal to the IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry, hosted by the USA in Boulder, Colorado, as part of its commitment to the system of World Data Centres, is being upgraded to be compatible with the crowd-sourced bathymetry concept. The upgrade is expected to be completed by mid- year. This will enable an IHO-led CSB infrastructure to be established and promoted in the IMO and across the wider maritime community.

### **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 representative for the NIOHC region is RAdm. K.R. Srinivasan (India).

23. Papers for consideration for publication in the IHR should be forwarded directly to the IHB ([ihreview@iho.int](mailto:ihreview@iho.int)) with a copy to the Editor ([ian.halls1@defence.au.gov](mailto:ian.halls1@defence.au.gov)).

### **IHO Publicity**

24. World Hydrography Day. The theme for World hydrography Day 2015 is “*Our seas and waterways - yet to be fully charted and explored*” will concentrate on the fact that much of the world’s seas, oceans and navigable waters remain unsurveyed. The purpose of this theme is to provide Member States with the opportunity to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of hydrography. The theme also provides the opportunity to promote and encourage innovative supplementary data gathering initiatives to address the current shortfall in useful bathymetric data, including crowd-sourcing and satellite derived bathymetry that were discussed at the 5<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference in October 2014. The theme also offers the opportunity to highlight both the missed opportunities and the potential risks involved in the continuing development of the *blue economy* and all other human-related activities taking place at sea, at a time when mankind still has a relatively limited knowledge of the nature and the shape of much of the seafloor and the hazards that lie upon it.

25. Member States are invited to forward as soon as possible to the IHB any material that is created in support of national WHD-2015 celebrations for posting on the IHO website. This will enable the widest possible dissemination of publicity and support material for the event. The IHB will be providing some supporting material on the IHO website.

### **Action Requested of NIOHC Member States**

26. NIOHC Member States are invited to:

- a. **Note** this report.
- b. Where appropriate, **seek the assistance of the IHB or other Member States** to encourage the relevant government authorities to consider the approval of the pending Amendments to the IHO Convention.
- c. **Continue to provide** updates to S-11, through India as Chair of the International Charting Coordination Committee for Region J.
- d. **Invest** in the preparation of candidates for Capacity Building training.
- e. **Take any other actions** as considered appropriate.