

18th Meeting of Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission and Regional Awareness Seminar - 20 Years of Capacity Building Actions in EAthC, Assessment and Prospect Casablanca, Morocco, 29 April – 03 May

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2024	
Tasks 3.2.1.4	EAthC – Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission

Attendees included: Angola, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Ghana, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom, Benin, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Republic of the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

The meeting was generously hosted by the Royal Moroccan Navy and was chaired by Engineer General Laurent Kerleguer (France) with Captain Mostafa Tafry (Morocco) as Vice Chair.

During the first two days a Regional Awareness Seminar - 20 Years of Capacity Building Actions in EAthC, Assessment and Prospect - was held. The well attended event commenced with keynote addresses from RAdm Mohamed Tahin (Morocco), Dr. John Nyberg (IHO) and Admiral Kerleguer (France).



Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission

After an engaging set of progress reports from Morocco and Nigeria and a review of training opportunities available in the region, the workshop convened a series of breakout sessions to discuss potential needs for capacity development in the region. The groups presented the need for equipment provision and maintenance, how to apply for funding opportunities, maximizing relationships with primary charting authorities (PCA), how to prepare legislation (what should be included) for setting up a hydrographic office, regional collaboration when applying for funding and training, and the need for training in Africa in French, Portuguese, and English.

Day one of the Commission began with introductions and reports from around the IHO, highlighting IHO Secretariat activities, actions arising from the Assembly and Council, IRCC and HSSC priorities, the IHO Strategic Plan and the S-100 Transition Roadmap. Many in the Commission noted concern regarding the region's ability to meet the timelines presented for S-100 implementation. Though many services and standards will be developed in partnership with PCAs, the lack of training opportunities in the region coupled with the challenge to acquire adequate data to support new products, were expressed by Commission members.

The meeting proceeded with national reports from Member States which presented several reoccurring themes. The region includes a diverse range of dynamic port conditions that present a variety of challenges.

- S-100 Universal Data Model implementation. Many Member States indicated that they were focusing on data collection.
- The need for regional training opportunities and the need for permanent training in Africa to include French, Portuguese, and English language training.
- Many Member States have set up national hydrographic committee or have a desire to do so.

- Inland navigation, including rivers and lakes, were considered a priority for many Member States that count on inland navigation as a primary mode of transportation.
- There were not many presentations which mentioned participation in Seabed 2030 or contributions to the DCDB. The Chair and IHO Secretariat reminded the Commission that any contribution, small or large, is appreciated.
- There was strong interest from Associate Members in IHO membership. The IHO Secretariat offered to provide information regarding membership and to participate in high level visits should prospective members move closer toward IHO membership.

The national reports were presented in conjunction with presentations from industry representatives who shared progress and opportunities to implement new technologies for surveys and charting.

Secretary General of the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA), Dr. Paul Adalikwu, was in attendance and supported the need for regional training centres in West Africa and the desire to work with the IHO under the auspices of the MOWCA/IHO MOU.

Near the end of the meeting, a special signing ceremony was held where Angola officially acceded to the statutes of the EAthC.



Angola signing the EAthC statutes

Mr José Santana (Angola), Captain Mostafa Tahrhy (Morocco), Dr John Nyberg (IHO), and Admiral Laurent Kerleguer (France)

The meeting concluded with an election. Captain Mostafa Tahrhy (Morocco) was selected as Chair and Salvador Espinosa Gonzalez-Llanos (Spain) was selected as Vice Chair, both by acclamation. The next meeting will be held by VTC during the week of September 22, 2025.

The following in person meeting will be held in Cadiz, Spain, dates TBD.



Dr John Nyberg (IHO), RAdm Mohamed Tahin (Morocco), and Admiral Laurent Kerleguer (France)



M'Bimbi Jean Marc Stanislas (Congo), Dr John Nyberg (IHO), and Tchissambou Ambana Winther Grenier (Congo)

Outcomes

- The Commission agreed on several inputs to update the IHO Strategic Plan.
- The IHO Secretariat presented the importance of the current issues that will impact the future of the IHO, including the future of S-100, the need for regional training centres, IHO infrastructure, the Strategic Plan, and leaving no country behind, among others.
- The IHO Secretariat presented the importance of the S-100 agenda leading up to 2030.
- The meeting presented many opportunities to explain the benefits of IHO membership to non-IHO members.
- Angola officially joined the EAthC
- Captain Mostafa Tafrihy (Morocco) was selected as Chair and Salvador Espinosa Gonzalez-Llanos (Spain) was selected as Vice Chair.

The next meeting will be held by VTC during the week of 22 September 2025.