

**14<sup>th</sup> Coordination Meeting of Programme Management Board for the IHO-ROK Programme of Technical Cooperation and visit to the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) facilities, New Orleans, USA and Gulfport, USA, 23 to 26 January**

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2024	
Task 3.3.9.1	Maintain relations with KHOA for the management of Cat A Course at University of Southern Mississippi (USM)

The 14<sup>th</sup> Coordination Meeting of the Programme Management Board (PMB14) for the IHO-Republic of Korea (ROK) Programme of Technical Cooperation was held in person, at the Le Pavillon Hotel, New Orleans, USA from 23 to 24 January 2024, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the ROK and the IHO on support for the IHO Capacity Building Programme. Delegations from KHOA (ROK), USM (USA) and the IHO participated at the meeting. The IHO Secretariat was represented by IHO Director Luigi Sinapi and Assistant Director Leonel Manteigas. The Capacity Building Sub-Committee (CBSC) Chair, Mr Evert Flier also participated in the meeting. The PMB14 meeting was chaired by the IHO Director Luigi Sinapi.



***PMB14 representatives at the Pavillon Hotel, New Orleans, USA***

The meeting started with the 2023 Financial Report and a presentation from the USM. The PMB14 examined 9 applications for the Category "A" Master of Science course in Hydrographic Science at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) recognized by the IBSC (FIG/IHO/ICA International Board on Standards of Competence for Hydrographic Surveyors and Nautical Cartographers). The Selection Panel, comprising representatives from the ROK, the IHO Secretariat, the USM and the Chair of CBSC as an observer, selected candidates from Nigeria and Greece each to enrol in the 2024-2025 program. In addition to the selected candidates, two alternates from Malaysia and Bangladesh were selected. Since 2013, the number of students who have graduated from the Category "A" Programme totals 23, including those from the 2023-2024 academic year, from 14 IHO Member States (Bahrain, Bangladesh, Estonia, Guatemala, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Nigeria, Philippines, Romania, Thailand, Tunisia and Türkiye).

PMB14 also approved the budget allocation for the programmes in 2024, already confirmed by KHOA with a Letter dated 17 January 2024. The budget includes the participation of 10 students in the a Course in Hydrography recognized with the Category "B", to be held at the Korea Hydrographic and Oceanographic Agency (KHOA) in Busan, ROK from 17 June to 1 November 2024, a new remarkable contribution (60.000 Euro) to support the IHO Capacity Building Work Programme 2024 (CBWP 2024) non-earmarked activities, and the participation at the 2023-2024 Graduation Ceremony planned for the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2024 at the USM. During the meeting, a presentation on the recent decisions taken by the IHO e-learning center Steering Committee was provided by Mr Evert Flier in his position as IHO e-Learning center Steering Committee Chair, and a discussion on how to enlarge the Category "A" Master of Science course in Hydrographic Science Alumni network was initiated.



***Visit to the USM facilities***

On 25 and 26 January 2024, visits to the USM facilities distributed between the Port of Gulfport, the USM Gulf Park Campus and the Stennis Space Center in Mississippi took place. Prof Stephan Howden, Director Hydrographic Science Research Center of the USM and Prof Leonardo Macelloni, Associate Director Hydrographic Science Research Center of the USM demonstrated the functions of the new Marine Research Center (MRC) in the Port of Gulfport, the new programme to release the certificates on Unmanned Maritime Systems (UMS) performed at USM Gulf Park Campus, and then the oceanographic support facility at the Stennis Space Center. In addition, the visit provided the opportunity to the PMB14 representatives to meet with the current students of the Category "A" Master of Science course in Hydrographic Science, and report on the new challenges of the International Hydrographic Organization and the courses sponsored by Republic of Korea.



***The PMB14 representatives and the current two sponsored students***

On request of KHOA, the next PMB Meeting (PMB15) will be held in January/February 2025 (dates TBD) at KHOA, Busan, ROK.