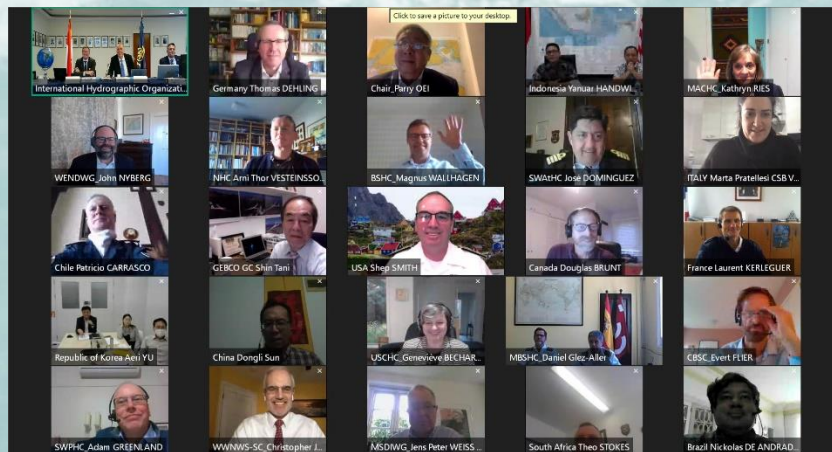


## 12<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE IHO INTER-REGIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE (IRCC12) VTC meeting, 6-7 October

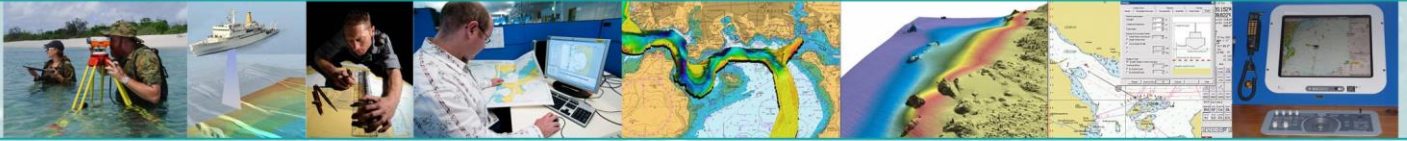
Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2020	
Task 3.1.1	Organize, prepare and report annual meetings of the Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC)

The 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IHO Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC12) was held in a virtual format on 6 and 7 October 2020. The meeting was chaired by Dr Parry Oei (Singapore) and attended by 94 participants from 32 Member States and two Observing Organizations. All the Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHCs) and all subordinate bodies of IRCC were represented. The IHO Secretariat was represented by Secretary-General, Dr Mathias Jonas (HCA Chair), Director Luigi Sinapi (IRCC Secretary) and Assistant Director Leonel Manteigas (IRCC Assistant Secretary).



*Participants at IRCC12 VTC event*

The meeting was opened by the Chair Dr Parry Oei, expressing the need to concentrate on decisions. The IHO Secretary-General, Dr Mathias Jonas, mentioned the importance of this meeting during these difficult times, to continue strengthening the collaboration amongst the Member States at regional and global level. The IHO Director Luigi Sinapi highlighted that the months of October and November will be very challenging for the IHO and the Hydrographic community, with all the four IHO major events occurring in the next two months.



HSSC reported on the developments that affect the IRCC and the need to progress by correspondence due to the HSSC12 postponement. The new editions of the standards recently adopted were mentioned, namely S-44 Edition 6.0.0 - IHO Standards for Hydrographic Surveys, S-49 Edition 2.1 - Standardization of Mariners' Routing Guides and S-67 Edition 1.0 - Mariners' Guide to Accuracy of Depth Information in Electronic Navigational Charts (ENC). The importance of S-100 implementation, the paper on the Future of Paper Charts and the need to promote the S-67 publication to the RHCs were emphasized.

Director Sinapi summarized the most important aspects of the RHC reports, in terms of achievements, challenges faced and lessons learnt. Amongst the achievements, the importance of Capacity Building in increasing regional and IHO membership and hydrographic awareness was noted.

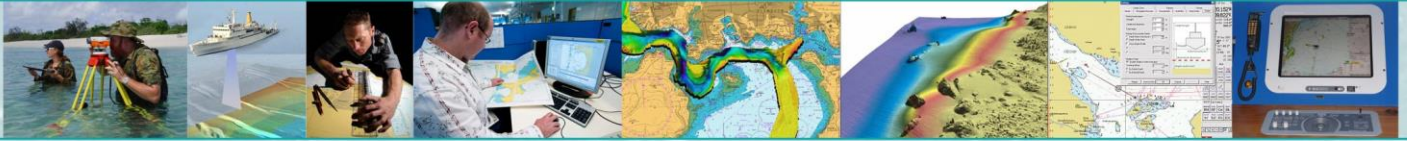
In relation with the challenges faced, it was mentioned that there were a lack of involvement of Member States in the regional conferences and working group meetings, the availability of CSB, tide and current information in some cases were conditioned by national legislations and concerns on the impact of the COVID pandemic on training opportunities were expressed.

In relation to the lessons learned, the enhanced value in the increased collaboration across RHC (especially adjacent RHC) and regional partnerships for Capacity Building training, Seabed2030, MSDIWG and others was noted.

Following the IHO summary, highlighting the consequences of the pandemic on RHC activities and business continuity of the IRCC Subordinate Bodies, the committee concluded that the RHCs need to consider in future, in addition to the regular face-to-face participation, the possibility of VTC participation to allow more delegates to participate.

The Chair of CBSC presented the CB Work Program (WP) mentioning the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the CB activities. The generous financial contributions from Republic of Korea (RoK) and Japan were recognized. The substantial surplus estimated for the end of 2020 will be utilized to execute the 2021 WP. CBSC18 recognized the importance and very high potential of the offer from RoK to establish and support an IHO e-Learning Center. It was proposed that, in some CB training activities, in addition to the face-to-face participation, it should be incorporated an e-learning option in order to optimize the limited funds available. The need and importance of the Performance Indicators (PI) for CB was recognised and it was proposed that the CBSC review the CB Strategy.

The Chair of IBSC presented the role of the Board and the working program for 2019-2020. In 2020, a new edition of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Standards of Competence for Hydrographic Surveyors and Nautical Cartographers and the Frequently Asked Questions document were issued. At the IBSC43 meeting fifteen submissions were reviewed. In October-November 2019 the Board also held a workshop meeting in Singapore



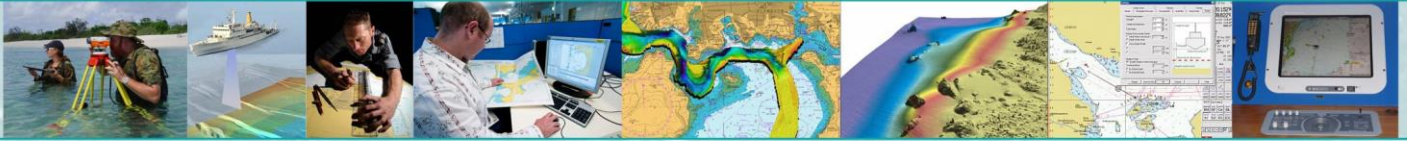
to review some inter-sessional submissions, the annual reports and work on the standards companion documents. The main problem encountered remains with the quality of submissions which implies an increased work not only for the institutions, but also for the Board.

Mr Peter Hak (RoK) presented on Proposal 3.3. – Establishment of an IHO E-learning Center submitted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the IHO Assembly. The presentation started with a video on the E-learning Center project and highlighted the importance of this project, especially noting the COVID pandemic situation. At CBSC18 it was decided to establish an e-Learning Project Team (PT) to work together with IBSC and KHOA “in the development of the structure and framework of an IHO e-Learning Center and report to IRCC12”. The PT will continue to work with RoK to establish the Center by A-3. Meanwhile, Member States who have experience in developing and providing e-Learning contents were invited to actively share the resources and experience. While the majority of the interventions recognized the importance of the project as a great opportunity, the IBSC Chair expressed his concerns with the assurance that the expected e-learning outcomes will be achieved without analogue education and training components.

Ms Annie Biron from the Canadian Hydrographic Office presented the proposed Empowering Women in Hydrography – EWH project, stating the need to enhance the large imbalance in the participation of women in maritime related domains such as Hydrography. Under the UN decade of Ocean Science Canada will provide a special grant and contribution fund that could go up to 68000 euros/year during three years, to which IHO could apply. The fund will finance up to 75% of the project costs. It will be important to have also the collaboration of other Member States, not only to reach the necessary 25%, but to increase the dimension of the project. Some examples of what this work item could include were provided.

The Chair of MSDIWG expressed the advantages of having the MSDIWG meetings connected with the meetings of the OGC Marine DWG and the UN-GGIM Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information. One of the issues is how MSDI could contribute to UN Sustainable Development Goals and what kind of data should be available at national and regional levels. The importance of data security and integrity was mentioned and a presentation on the joint OGC/IHO Federated Marine SDI Demonstration Pilot: FMSDI Land/Sea Interface was provided with the objective to show how MSDI can provide data to other than traditional users and also the impact in the OGC and relevant S-100 IHO Standards. The intention is to start it in the second quarter of 2021.

The IHO Secretary General presented on the activity of The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UNGGIM) and the objective of trying to force any kind of activity related with Geo information and contribute to improve the use of Geo information. Reference was also made to the last UNGGIM remote session. IHO made a substantial contribution through the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information and the meeting took note of the ongoing efforts of the Working Group to implement the



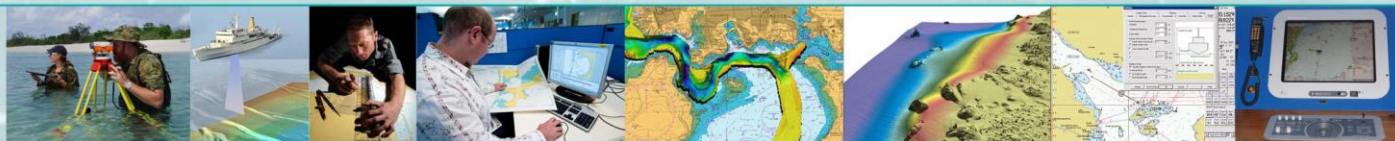
Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) within the marine domain. The notice that IHO is about to establish an Innovation and Technology Laboratory in Singapore was very well received.

The Chair of CSBWG reported on the last meetings, the enhancements on the IHO Data Center for Digital Bathymetry and the systems to collect data. The meeting was informed on the current CSB efforts and projects along with the Seabed 2030 funded CSB pilot programs and the CSB Guidance and outreach was resumed. It was hoped that the publication of the IHO e-publication of B-12 Guidance on Crowdsourced Bathymetry could be an example for other IHO publications to follow. CSBWG presented a paper on raising the awareness of CSB within RHCs, proposing actions within RHCs to support the IHO CSB initiative and to consider best ways to engage with HOs during the RHC meetings. The need of having Regional coordinators for Seabed 2030 and CSB was also strongly encouraged.

Mr Jamie McMichael-Phillips, Director of the Seabed 2030 project stated that Seabed 2030 is a collaborative project between the Nippon Foundation and GEBCO to inspire the complete mapping of the world's ocean by 2030 and to compile all bathymetric data into the freely available GEBCO Ocean Map. The complex network of this project was explained along with the data ingestion in the system and it was mentioned that the Ocean mapping coverage now stands at 19%. Now the project is focused on mapping the gaps with three different initiatives: the Ocean Frontier Mapping, Crowd Sourced Bathymetry and Technology Innovation. He also explained the alumni engagement and concluded requesting for the promotion of the need to map the entire seabed and to encourage organizations to make their data available.

Director Sinapi presented the relations and the common aspects between the UN Ocean Science Decade global initiatives and the IHO competencies and initiatives supportive to. He synthesized the UN Ocean Science Decade general motivation as the bridge of the scientific objectives between the Ocean we have and the Ocean that we want. The phases of this initiative were introduced mentioning the plan that was presented and approved by the UN Assembly with the kick-off planned for 2021. A synthesis of the relations between the UN Ocean Science Decade four objectives and the IHO Work Programme items was showed, indicating that the link between the UN Ocean Science Decade actions and the IHO is based on the proposed IHO strategic plan - Goal 3 - "Participating actively in international initiatives related to the knowledge and the sustainable use of the Ocean".

The Chair of WENDWG presented on the WEND-100 principles background. The draft version of the WEND-100 Principles was submitted for the IRCC review during the meeting. The Principles will be followed by an implementation guide with some specifications. The principles encourage data availability anywhere in the world, distribution with data protection included and also addresses the avoidance of service duplication, coordinated data management, quality management, and assistance and training.



At the end of the meeting, Mr Thomas Dehling (Germany) was elected as Chair and Mr John Nyberg (USA) was elected as Vice Chair of the IHO Inter-Regional Coordination Committee.

The next meeting of the IRCC is planned to be held in Monaco, from 22 to 24 June 2021, hosted by the IHO. Following meetings will be held in Ecuador or Japan (2022, to be confirmed), and Japan or Indonesia (2023, to be confirmed). The IRCC meeting in 2021 will follow the CBSC19, a two-day CB Stakeholders' Seminar and the Celebrations of the IHO's Centenary.