

THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE CBSC (CBSC13)

27-29 May 2015, Mexico

Paper for information of the CBSC

Summary report of the Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission (EAtHC)

Submitted by:	FR as CB Coordinator for the EAtHC
Executive Summary:	This paper provides a summary report of CB activities to CBSC13
Reference:	<p>EatHC8-7A «<i>Developing hydrographic capabilities in West/Central Africa - an IHO capacity building project</i>» (2004)</p> <p>Action CBSC12/11 («<i>To provide summary reports for their respective Region</i>»)</p> <p>IHO Capacity Building Strategy v2.0</p>

Introduction - Background

1. This summary report is the response of the EAtHC coordinator for capacity building to CBSC12/11 action.
2. The EAtHC region comprises 23 coastal States, including two island States. Six are IHO and EAtHC members, nine are EAtHC associated members and eight are observers. The African part of the region is especially concerned by capacity building. This report deals only with this sub-region.
3. Hydrographic challenges in this part of the EAtHC area are:
 - rapid development of shipping and exploitation of marine resources;
 - scarcity of adequate hydrographic knowledge: for half of the coastal States, the hydrographic knowledge is assessed as satisfactory for half of their maritime domain; for a third of the coastal States, the ratio is less than 10%.
4. A few coastal States have started to develop hydrographic organizations. They mainly consist in hydrographic cells under the main port authority. They may include well trained people, although in small numbers, and, in a few cases, have recent equipment. However, they are suited for limited surveys, and may be in a near future inadequate for important development of harbours planned in several areas, and for meeting the requirements induced by economic development and the increased concern for maritime safety in the sub-region. At last, too few coastal States have managed to set up an organization for collecting and disseminating marine safety information.
5. Since 2002 (Western African Action Team – cf. EAtHC8) a specific effort in capacity building has been undertaken. It has mainly included:
 - technical visits: seventeen coastal States have been visited since 2002, some of them twice;
 - awareness or technical workshops on maritime safety information (MSI), hydrography and charting;
 - category B and A training (separately funded).

6. Awareness has increased, including at the highest political level, as reflected in the 2007 Abuja declaration, in which the African ministers responsible for maritime transport,

“Concerned by ... the lack of ... modern hydrographic surveys, up-to-date nautical charts and maritime safety information in a number of African countries ... undertake to ... promote and encourage appropriate structures and measures for the improvement of ... hydrographic survey, nautical cartography and maritime safety information”.

As a consequence, the 2050 Africa’s Integrated Maritime Strategy has included in 2012 in its framework for strategic action:

“The African Union shall make an assertive call to concerned Member States to become members of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), World Meteorology Organisation (WMO) and UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanography Commission (IOC) so as to advance maritime safety, efficiency and the protection and sustainable use of the marine environment. This will help create a global environment in which AU coastal Member States provide adequate and timely hydrographic data, products and services and ensure their widest possible use.”

However, slow progress is noted in hydrographic capacity, including nautical information.

Analysis – Discussion

7. The work of the last conference of the EatHC in (EAthC13, Casablanca, 16-18/09/2014) showed continuing challenges:

- increasing maritime co-activities in the African sub-region, making urgent to raise the awareness of high-level political decision-makers on the importance of hydrography for the governance of their maritime space;
- the need to enhance the data available in the African sub-region, for the benefit of national planning or for other applications, such as marine disasters prevention;
- concern for the setup of regional hydrographic course adapted to the needs of coastal States;
- difficulty, in some cases, to put into practice the training received, due to the lack of equipment.

Discussion resulted in several ways forward:

- interest to develop regional hydrographic courses, based on existing African maritime academies;
- need to address several uses, to take into account increasing concern of coastal States for management of resources, marine disasters prevention, protection of the environment and maritime security;
- involvement of the political level through the Maritime Organization of Western and Central Africa (MOWCA).

8. Several actions related to capacity building has since taken place since EatHC13 :

- IHO regional training course on maritime safety information in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire on December 16-18th 2014 (see report n°07 SHOM/DMI/REX/NP dated April 9th 2015);
- The launch of the definition study for a long term capacity building project with the beginning of the analysis part (SWOT) in order to design the main development axes of the regional project that will lead to concrete proposals with eventually funding perspective. The two first trimesters of 2015 have been dedicated to the address of the hydrographic status of Western and Central African coastal States through a

SWOT analysis, the development of a regional data portal demonstrator and the design of a specific Regional hydrographic course. Onsite visits to African counterparts and look-up for funding opportunities will take place the second half of the year.

- Ongoing category B training;
- The technical visit to Liberia, initially scheduled for the seconde semester of 2014 and the first semester of 2015, could not be achieved due to sanitary conditions affecting the country.

Action Required of CBSC

9. The CBSC is invited to take note of this report.
10. The CBSC is invited to maintain the technical visit to Liberia either on the seconde semester 2015 or on the 2016 CB Work Programme, depending on the future evolution of Liberia's sanitary conditions.