

47th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM47) Milan, Italy 24 June to 4 July 2025

Contribution to the 2025 IHO Work Programme

Task 1.1.2 Maintain relationship with the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM).

High level summary

- The Sub-Committee on Antarctic Research (**SCAR**) emphasized climate change as a top priority for the ATS and launched an online tool on sea level rise and sea ice monitoring, supported by Australia, France, and the UK.
- IHO advocated for collaborative hydrographic data sharing to support safe navigation and science, receiving strong support from six Parties.
- ATCM endorsed IHO's proposed revision to Strategic Priority #9, expanding focus from hydrographic surveying to data collection and sharing.

Details

The 47th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting was held at the Milano Conference Centre (MiCo) of Milan, Italy, from 24 June to 04 July 2025, under the umbrella of the Antarctic treaty Secretariat (ATS). However, the IHO Secretariat limited its attendance to the opening Plenary session as well as to the sessions of ATCM Working Group #2 in charge of Sciences, Operations, Tourism. These sessions addressed topics that were particularly relevant to the IHO and HCA's area of interest:

Plenary

- 4) Operation of the Antarctic Treaty System: Reports by Parties, Observers and Experts

Working Group 2: Science, Operations, Tourism

- 13) Safety and Operations in Antarctica
16) Implications of Climate Change for Management of the Antarctic Treaty Area

All of the 27 Full Members of the Hydrographic Commission for Antarctica (HCA) were represented at that meeting, either as Consultative Parties (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, Ecuador, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Korea (Rep. of), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Uruguay, United Kingdom, USA) or as Observers (Colombia, Türkiye, Venezuela).

The following organizations (i.e. HCA Observers) were also represented: Antarctic Treaty Secretariat ([ATS](#)), Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programmes ([COMNAP](#)), International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators ([IAATO](#)), Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research ([SCAR](#)),

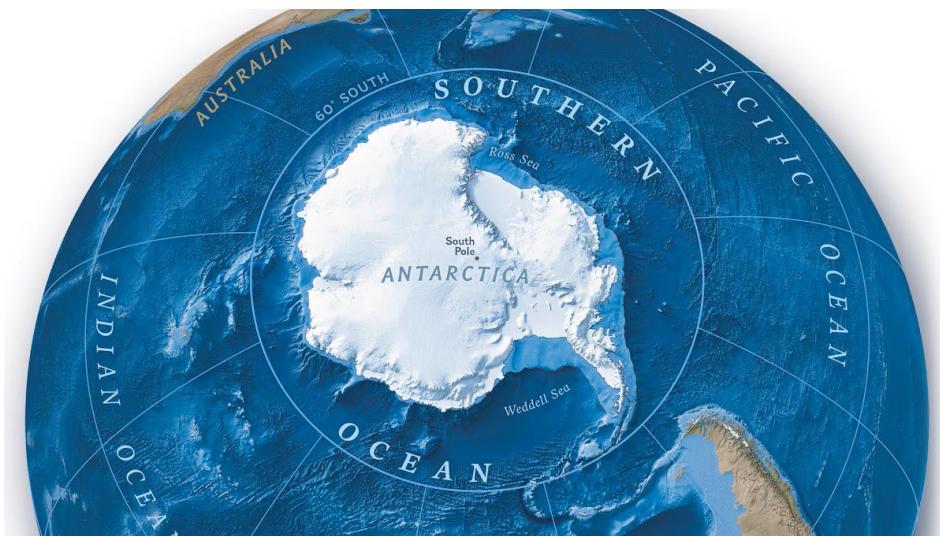
The IHO attended the meeting as invited expert organization and submitted a report accordingly. A presentation was provided under agenda item 13, focusing on the impact of climate change and the need for a collaborative approach to collect and share hydrographic data for navigation safety and scientific research for the region in the spirit of the applying Antarctic Treaty open exchange data policy.

Key Outputs

1. Under agenda item #4 (*Operation of the Antarctic Treaty System*), The Sub-Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) gave a lecture pointing out multiple Climate Change consequences over the Antarctica Continent and Waters, hence advocating for it to be set as a high-level priority. SCAR also called for more science in the Climate Change debate, supported by Australia, France and United Kingdom. SCAR also presented its Sea Level Rise and Sea Ice Coverage online tool to enhance awareness and monitoring by Parties.
2. The IHO attended the meeting as invited expert organization and submitted a report accordingly. A presentation was provided under agenda item #13 (*Safety and Operations in Antarctica*), focusing on the impact of climate change and advocating for a collaborative approach to collect and share hydrographic data for the benefit of navigation safety and scientific research. Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the Russian Federation made vocal statement in support. The extract of the ATCM47 Proceedings related to the IHO intervention is annexed to the bulletin report.
3. Being informed by the ATS on a forthcoming reduction of ATCM resolutions that would very likely concerns the ones in place on hydrography, the ATS suggested that IHO concerns on hydrography could be better captured in the ATCM Multi-Year Strategic Plan with the current Priority #9. IHO provided an alternative wording for Priority #9 to the ATS and liaised with concerned Parties for support. For the time being, The ATCM47 draft report (RP 008 - Measures, Decisions and Resolutions for adoption) endorsed the revised wording proposed by IHO, as follows:
 - Priority #9 (original wording): *Promote enhancement of hydrographic surveying in Antarctica.*
 - IHO proposed alternative wording: *Promote enhancement of hydrographic data collection and sharing to support navigation and science.*
4. The Conference elected Mr Francisco Berguno, Chile succeeding Mr Albert Lluberas, Uruguay as Executive Secretary of the ATCM for a term of four years commencing September 2025.

Photo

(credits: IHO Secretariat, NOAA)



Upcoming meeting

The next 48th ATCM meeting 2026 is expected to take place in Hiroshima, Japan (dates to be confirmed).

ATCM47 – Working Group #2 (Tranche 1) Report on Agenda Item 13 (Operations in Antarctica)

IHO presented IP 43 Report by the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO). The IHO reported that, 176 printed and 178 digital charts had been made available to members of its Hydrographic Commission to Antarctica (HCA) covering around 81% of the navigable Antarctic region. It noted ongoing development of new hydrographic data services using a universal hydrographic data model, which would include themes such as surface currents, water levels, ice coverage, and Marine Protected Areas, among others. IHO also mentioned the possibility of proposing amendments to the Polar Code once these services are operational. IHO welcomed further suggestions from the Parties on current and new geographical priorities for surveying, recognised sea ice data acquired from Germany and the United Kingdom, and emphasised the importance of hydrographic projections despite uncertainties in sea level rise suggestions. The Meeting thanked IHO for the report and for its work on developing hydrographic services. Many Parties emphasised the importance of precise and updated nautical charts for safe navigation in Antarctic waters. Some Parties also noted relevant work on maritime safety carried out at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). The Meeting agreed to retain the improvement of navigation as a priority in the Multi-year Strategic Work Plan and agreed to assess progress at ATCM 48.

ATCM47 – Measures, Decisions and Resolutions for adoption (Priority #9 on hydrographic data)

	Priority	ATCM 47 (2025)	Intersessional	ATCM 48 (2026)	Intersessional	ATCM 49 (2027)	Intersessional	ATCM 50 (2028)
	context of climate change	infrastructure modernisation and potential risks in the context of climate change	information on building resilient infrastructures at the COMNAP Symposium 21 "Our Antarctic Future"	Antarctica, the impact of those changes on their built infrastructure, and on any environmental consequences of that impact.				
8.	Contribute to strengthening the consistent implementation of the Polar Code	Parties to continue sharing documents on national experiences and best practices on implementing the IMO Polar Code in the Antarctic Treaty area Parties to submit papers on how they promote the harmonized implementation of the Polar Code to stakeholders in their national maritime clusters		Parties to assess the progress of this priority				
9.	Promote enhancement of hydrographic data collection and sharing to support navigation and science	Parties to consider IHO advice Parties to assess the progress on this priority	Parties to encourage participation in the IHO Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica Meeting nr. 20 (Punta Arenas, Chile-	IHO to inform Parties on the outputs of HCA 20 Parties to assess the progress of this priority				