

30th Conference of the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission (BSHC)
Riga, Latvia
23 – 24 September 2025

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2025

Task 3.2.1.2 Prepare for and report meetings of the Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHC) / BSHC

High level summary:

- The Commission welcomed Lithuania as a full member based on the recent accession to the IHO as 103rd IHO Member State.
- Commission members informed each other about their recent hydrographic activities in the Baltic Region.
- Baltic States are working to implement the S-100 Roadmap. Eight out of nine Baltic States will start the regionally coordinated provision of S-101 ENC's and S-102 high resolution bathymetry datasets with significant coverage on the main shipping routes and important harbours from 2026 onwards.
- Some committee members are successful in national coordination for the uptake of amending services such as S-104 and S-111 for current and water level information, S-124 for Navigational Warnings and the S-41x range to provide sea weather information in the second half of the running decade.

Details:

Twenty-six participants representing eight BSHC Members (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden), three observers (New Zealand, United Kingdom and USA) and two industry representatives participated in the Conference.

The BSHC Conference was chaired by Mr Janis Krastins, Director Maritime CEO Maritime Administration of Latvia. The IHO Secretariat was represented by Secretary-General Dr Mathias Jonas.

The Chair extended words of welcome and highlighted the importance of the collaboration between the Baltic states in the field of hydrography. He gave special emphasis to the challenges which lay ahead of the Commission to agree about a concerted implementation of the S-100 concept. Mr Krastins wholeheartedly welcomed Lithuania as a full BSHC member based on the recent accession to the IHO as 103rd IHO Member State and invited Mr Tomas Kolendo, Director of Lithuanian Transport Safety Administration later to sign the Statutes of the Commission.

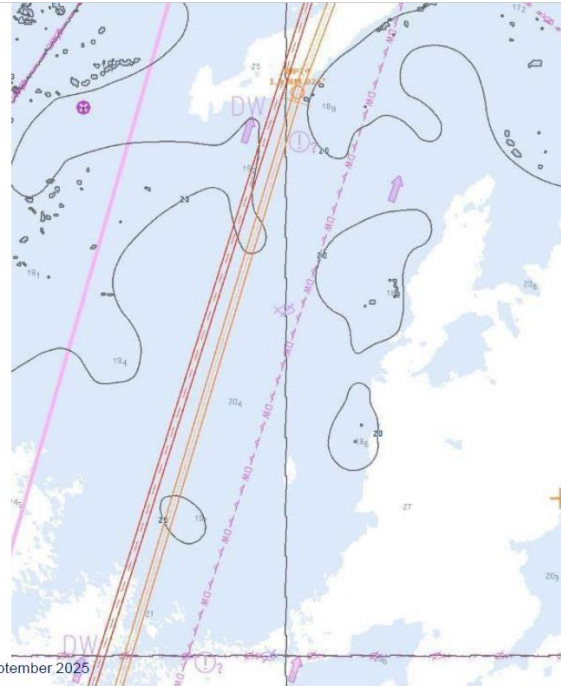
The Meeting itself commenced with the IHO Secretariat's Report. BSHC Members were informed by the IHO Secretary-General of the strategic issues which will be on the agenda of the upcoming 9th meeting of the Council. Commission members noted the progress on the installation of the envisioned IHO Infrastructure Centre to facilitate the roll out and future maintenance of the S-100 technical ecosystem and the first considerations about the establishment of a permanent GEBCO Secretariat.

All participants reported on their national activities in the Baltic region since the last Conference. The Conference took note of items such as uncrewed survey technology, national survey programs, harmonisation of vertical datum, ENC gridding schemes, marine spatial planning in waters under national jurisdiction and other themes of relevance for all Hydrographic Offices of the region.

All Commission members present confirmed their principal readiness to start the regular provision of S-101 and S-102 products according to IHO's agreed S-100 roadmap implementation timelines. The regional coordination to achieve compatibility of the respective national contributions will be undertaken under an EU funded project named Baltic Sea E-Nav Partnership. Some of the relevant findings of the projects speak evidently in favour of the S-100 approach:

Summary: Added value

- In terms of **safety** – more margins e.g. for course deviation
- In terms of **efficiency** – Ability to plan shorter / more optimal routes. More potential benefits with additional products.
- In terms of **usability** – More room for user adaptation, reduction of nuisance alerts.



The Commission endorsed the first edition of BSHC Guidelines for the regionally harmonized production of S-104 and S-111 data sets and data services being the first regional agreement of this kind.

The Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission undertook a revision of the HELCOM Recommendation 34E/2 and was asking for assistance by the BSHC chair. Latvia called for an ad hoc Working Group which was created on very short notice and was composed by Finland (Chair), Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Poland and Sweden. The resulting input from BSHC was very well received, the document was updated accordingly and is now to be submitted as revised recommendation 34E/2 to IC MARITIME 4-2025 for approval. The full text is forming Annex 1 of Document BSHC30_E1_V1.1.

Group Photo



Photo of the official signature procedure of Lithuania to join BSNC as a full member



Upcoming meetings:

At the end of the meeting, Tomas Kolendo from Lithuania took over the BSHC chairmanship, with Thomas Dehling, Germany as Vice-Chair. It was agreed that the next meeting of the 31st BSHC meeting will be hosted by Lithuania in Klaipeda or Vilnius from 23rd-24th September 2026.