

## High Level Visit to Côte d'Ivoire Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire 15-17 January 2025

### Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2025

Task 1.3.2.1

Encourage new membership of the IHO

#### High level summary (can be used for posting on social media. Please provide concise lists in bullet point format):

- Adhesion to the IHO Convention by Côte d'Ivoire, Implementation of a dedicated regional educational program in hydrography and marine cartography, and hosting the 2026 Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission.
- High level ministers, the Secretary General of MOWCA, the General Director of the Port of Abidjan, international organizations, and the Académie Régionale Des Sciences et Techniques de la Mer were consulted on each of these issues.
- The IHO and MOWCA signed a letter reaffirming their commitments to hydrographic education in the region.
- The Côte d'Ivoire was receptive toward the idea of hosting the EAHC in 2026.
- The Côte d'Ivoire received detailed information regarding the process for adhesion to the IHO Convention and the benefits of IHO membership.
- The visit strengthened regional relationships and moved the region much closer toward hosting a full-time hydrographic centre of excellence. It also reaffirmed the process and importance of IHO membership for Côte d'Ivoire.

#### Details:

The visit was managed by Mr Gabin Sogorb and Mr Henri Dolou of Shom, France. Dr John Nyberg represented the IHO for half of the High-Level Visit.

During the period when Dr Nyberg was in attendance, the three held meetings with the Permanent Secretariat of the Interministerial Committee for State Action at Sea of Côte d'Ivoire (SEPCIM), the Maritime Organization for West and Central Africa (MOWCA), the Ministère des Transports of Côte d'Ivoire, the Académie Régionale des Sciences et Techniques de la Mer (ARSTM), and the Port Autonome Abidjan (PAA).

The meetings with SEPCIM, The Ministère des Transports of Côte d'Ivoire, and the Port Autonome Abidjan focused on the importance of Côte d'Ivoire's adhesion to the IHO convention. It was well recognized by all that the Port of Abidjan is and would continue to be the representative to the IHO for Côte d'Ivoire. The IHO presented a letter that outlined the process for Côte d'Ivoire to become an IHO member, presented to the Ministère des Transports and the Port Autonome Abidjan. Generally speaking, all parties consulted agreed on the importance of IHO membership.

Visits with MOWCA and ARSTM focused on the implicit need for sustained hydrographic education in the region for both francophone and anglophone speakers. Hydrographic training is currently not available in sub-Saharan Africa. MOWCA manages facilities for training mariners in the region, including

one in Abidjan and one in Accra. The visit to the ARTSM campus in Abidjan, included detailed discussions with professors and a tour of their campus, all of which seemed exceptionally qualified to host a dedicated hydrographic training program. The discussions with MOWCA centred around how to implement a new Centre of Excellence, who would be responsible for management, funding possibilities, and eventual certification of the programme. It was decided that MOWCA will take the lead in initiating the process with IHO providing advice when necessary.

The final day started with a meeting at the Port Autonome Abidjan. An in depth discussion was held with the Port's Director General regarding IHO membership and hosting the next EAtHC. The Director was well informed in advance of our meeting and clarified the Port's leadership role with regard to the IHO. He was also receptive to the idea of membership and hosting the EAtHC.

The visit concluded with a large meeting which included all of the parties visited during the week. A presentation was delivered by the IHO team which outlined agreements, accomplishments, challenges and strengths with regard to the project to implement the Centre of Excellence. The Secretary General of MOWCA and Dr Nyberg signed a letter which reaffirmed their commitment to the existing MOWCA/IHO MoU and working toward a dedicated regional Hydrographic Centre of Excellence.

## Photo





**Upcoming meetings:**

The EAtHC is scheduled for September 2025 VTC.