

2025 World Hydrography Day (WHD) celebrations & Meeting with General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information (GEOSA) President Dammam, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) – 30 June - 1 July 2025

Contribution to regional cooperation & 2025 World Hydrography Day celebrations.

Task 1.3.3

Celebrate World Hydrography Day including the preparation of information to support the themes.

High level summary

- WHD2025 was celebrated in the presence of the highest national and regional political, military, civil and press authorities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the IHO Secretariat and representatives of Industry.
- Commitment of GEOSA and Saudi Arabia to act as regional leader in the field of Hydrography to the digital transformation towards the full implementation of S-100 standard.
- GEOSA Directorate of Hydrography confirmed the MSDI ambassador role for the ROPME Sea Area Hydrographic Commission – RSAHC.
- Interest to cooperate with the IHO to support the IHO Capacity Building programme through an IHO-GEOSA Technical Agreement.
- High interest of GEOSA in submitting a new Hydrography Cat. A course to IBSC.

Details:

At the invitation of GEOSA Directorate of Hydrography, the IHO Secretariat represented by Director Luigi Sinapi participated at 2025 World Hydrography Day (WHD) celebration, held on 30 June 2025 at the Prince Sultan Science and Technology Center of the Sharqia Development Authority.



Interventions at the WHD 2025

The 2025WHD celebration event was structured into a series of speeches delivered by the President of GEOSA, the Governor of Sharqia Development Authority representing the Eastern Region of KSA as the largest region in the Kingdom, the IHO Director, the Director of GEOSA Directorate of Hydrography and representatives from Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture of Saudi Arabia. The role of GEOSA and importance of geospatial data to boost the Kingdom's Vision 2030 and the full alignment to the IHO standards, especially the S-100 and its roadmap for the full implementation, were highlighted. IHO Director emphasized the outstanding leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia within the hydrographic community, both nationally and regionally as Chair of the

RSAHC, and the designation of Saudi Arabia as MSDI Ambassador for the RSA region, as further evidence of the Kingdom's leadership in marine geospatial data management. Together, through seabed mapping and data sharing, it is possible to empower policymakers, protect marine ecosystems, and pave the way for a sustainable ocean future, as hydrography is no longer a silent science, but a global voice for change, anchored in data, guided by standards, and driven by shared values. Finally, during the round table with other local and international stakeholders, the potential global role of Saudi Arabia in the fields of hydrography, capacity building, education and ocean mapping was discussed.



World Hydrography Day (WHD) 2025 celebration

On 30 June 2025, IHO Director held a meeting with the GEOSA President and the Director of GEOSA Directorate of Hydrography on how to enhance Capacity Building and Education in Saudi Arabia in view of the full implementation of the S-100 standard. On Capacity Building, the final version of an *IHO-GEOSA Capacity Building Technical Agreement* prepared by the IHO Secretariat and the GEOSA Directorate of Hydrography will be discussed internally to GEOSA to achieve an agreement about the amount to assign and the timing to sign the Agreement. Considering the duration of the Agreement (5 years starting from 2026) and the need to establish the priorities to the potential activities to be funded and already available in the approved 2026 IHO Capacity Building Programme (available at the link: <https://iho.int/en/capacity-building-and-technical-cooperation>), a decision would be very appreciated by the end of 2025. On Education, the intention of GEOSA to establish an Academy for boosting projects towards a smart digitalization of the marine environment was discussed, highlighting that the request to implement a new Category "A" Hydrography Course at GEOSA will need of a submission of the course to IBSC, preferably in 2026 for 2027.



Meeting with FUGRO planning team

Finally, on 1 July 2025, IHO Director accompanied by the manager of Marine Operations and Services of the GEOSA Directorate of Hydrography visited the FUGRO planning team headquarters in Dammam, established for planning and executing a survey commissioned by GEOSA in the area from Dammam to Al Khafji on the eastern coast of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The area of 11,000 square kilometers under the responsibility of the Sharquia Development Authority, will be surveyed for one year using the Airborne Lidar and multibeam technologies and will bring to the production of 20 ENC's at different usage bands.