

18th Meeting of the South West Atlantic Hydrographic Commission (SWAtHC18)

Buenos Aires, Argentina, hybrid event, 9-10 April

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2024	
Task 3.2.1.13	SWAtHC - South West Atlantic Hydrographic Conference

The 18th meeting of the South West Atlantic Hydrographic Commission (SWAtHC18) was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in a hybrid format from 9 to 10 April 2024, hosted by the SHN – Servicio de Hidrografía Naval of Argentina. The meeting was chaired by Vice Admiral Carlos André Coronha Macedo (Brazil) and attended by 34 registered participants, 27 in person and 7 by VTC. All members of SWAtHC (Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay) were represented (either in person or remotely), as well as the Associate Member State, Paraguay. In addition, Spain participated at the meeting as an invited State. In a letter addressed to the SWAtHC Chair, Bolivia apologized for not being able to attend the meeting, for administrative reasons. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the industry (Teledyne Geospatial, Kongsberg Maritime and Xylem Hypack). The IHO Secretariat was represented by Director Luigi Sinapi. On the evening of 9 April, Brazil hosted a reception on board the Hydro-Oceanographic Ship Faroleiro Almirante Graça Aranha moored in the port of Buenos Aires.



Participants at SWAtHC18 and reception onboard Hydro-Oceanographic Ship Almirante Graça Aranha

The SWAtHC18 meeting was preceded by a *Workshop on Hydrographic Awareness* held on 8 April and funded with the IHO CBWP2024 funds. The workshop's agenda included presentations on the capabilities and activities of the Hydrographic Offices of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, professional presentations on waterway surveys, maritime safety and beaconing, as well as presentations of hydrographic survey techniques and data collection equipment by the industry, including hydrographic surveys and nautical cartography in the rivers of South America. Particular mention should be made of the presentation on the implementation of the S-102 product in waterways, as a product that can increase the safety of inland waterways navigation.

The SWAtHC18 meeting was opened by the Chair, and followed by the Director of SHN and IHO Director, who welcomed the participants, thanked Argentina and SHN for hosting the meeting, highlighting the numerous initiatives involving the Regional Hydrographic Commissions such as the review of the IHO Strategic Plan, the S-100 Route Plan and the future of paper charts. IHO Director Sinapi mentioned the next challenges that the Secretariat and the IHO undertook with particular reference to the UN Ocean Decade and the next world events with reference to the Oceans (United Nations Ocean Conference – UNOC planned in 2025 in

Nice, France). SWAtHC Chair highlighted the need for collaboration in the implementation of the S-100 action plan, the need to increase capacity building activities at regional level, the lack of participation in RHC activities and meetings, the good progress has been made in inter-regional cooperation and successful partnerships with industry and stakeholders, and finally the importance of having a geo-coordinating role to help ensure data provision at regional level.

The Regional Capacity Building Coordinator reported on the most recent CB activities, the current status of the IHO e-learning centre and the IHO-CANADA Empowering Women in Hydrography (EWH) project within the Region, highlighting the excellent support that the HOs regularly receive from the industry in building hydrographic capacities at national and regional level. A request has been submitted to IC-ENC for the provision of funds to support CB phase 3 projects, including conversion from S-57 to S-101 and production of ENC and S-100 products. The activities will be submitted to IC-ENC to eventually be approved and financed by the IC-ENC “*opt-in funds*”. Special mention was made of the workshop on the conversion from S-57 to S-101 held at the IHO-Singapore Laboratory in November 2023, which was attended by representatives of the Hydrographic Services of Argentina and Uruguay. Following the report on the last WNWWS meeting, Argentina, as NAVAREA VI coordinator highlighted the problem of the dual system (NAVTEX and IRIDIUM SafetyCast) to be used in the dissemination of MSI. At regional level, it was decided to initiate coordination actions between Brazil and Argentina to evaluate the transmission of safety information through IRIDIUM SafetyCast. Spain, as NAVAREA III coordinator, offered technical solutions for the deployment of the new IRIDIUM SafetyCast system.

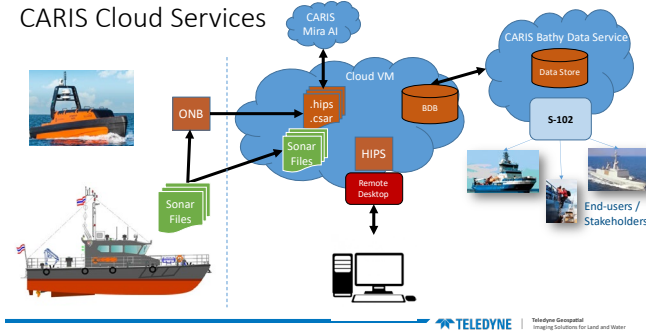


Waterways surveys in SWAtHC

Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Spain presented the respective national reports, highlighting a very high level of attention to South America's inland waters, in particular the Paraguay-Parana' waterway which connects all the countries of the Region and contribute significantly to the economic development of the area. In Argentina, for example, 80% of maritime trade passes through the South American river network, again underlining the importance for the country's economy and sustainable development of the safe navigation of the river network serving South American countries. Special attention was paid to the implementation of the S-100 Roadmap and the production of S-1xx products. Within the CB at regional level, particular interest was aroused by the Portuguese-language training offered by Brazil (courses in Hydrography Cat A and B, in Meteorology and Oceanography, and on Tides in cooperation with COI/IMO/IHO). The latest updates on the IEHG (Inland ENC Harmonization Group), were presented, with specific reference to S-401 (Inland ENC) Ed. 2.0.0, which will be ready by the end of 2024, and the way to read Inland ENC (IENC) that requires a dedicated computer navigation program, and not the same ECDIS or ECS device software used for ENC/ECS. Finally, the strong interest shown by the State of Paraguay in becoming a member of the IHO and thus of SWAtHC should be highlighted. Paraguay's representatives pointed out that the accession

process has been initiated within the country and that the IHO Letter sent in February 2024 has been received and the necessary actions are underway to arrive at the approval of an internal regulatory instrument necessary for the accession to the IHO.

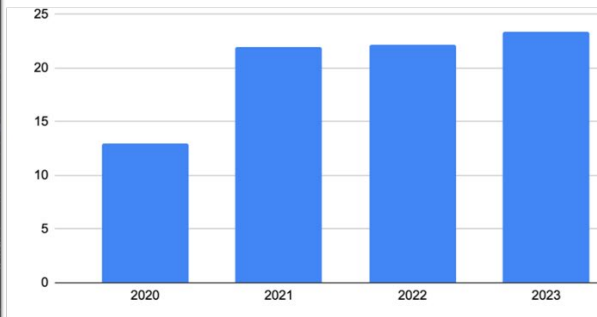
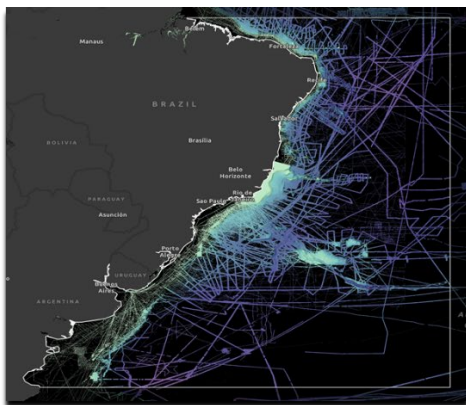
CARIS Cloud Services



CARIS Cloud service and S-102 production

Industry presented the latest updates in the S-100 area, with particular reference to the latest software developments for the migration from S-57 format to S-101 format, in the dual-fuel period preparatory to the complete transition to the S-100 products, and for the production of the

various S-1xx products, as well as the complete automation of the production of paper charts using CARIS Cloud as the generator of paper charts in pdf format. The latest technologies in the fields of hydrographic and oceanographic investigation and discovery developed in waterways, with particular reference to the Paraguay-Parana' waterway, were also presented.



2020-2023 SWAtHC's contribution to GEBCO

The CSB/GEBCO/Seabed2030 Regional coordinator provided an update on the activities of GEBCO, Crowd Source Bathymetry (CSB) and Seabed2030, highlighting that the coastal States of the Region actively contribute to the GEBCO programme and Seabed2030 project, through the regular submission of existing bathymetric data in national databases and new data from hydrographic campaigns, which achieved a SWAtHC contribution rate of over 23% of the region's marine area of interest. That was possible thanks to the excellent collaboration with Seabed2030's Atlantic and Indian Ocean Regional Centre.

SWAtHC Planning Committee presented the situation regarding the production of S-1xx products, pointing out that none of the SWAtHC's Hydrographic Offices (HOs) have an agency-wide S-100 product implementation plan, 66% of the HOs plan in the short term to start working with S-102, 100% of the HOs have already performed tests on the transformation of S-57 products to S-101 prototypes, 100% of the HOs estimate the probable year of implementation of S-101 as from the end of 2026 or beginning of 2027, and 100% of the HOs consider that one of the main obstacles is not having specialized personnel. Finally, the detailed deployment plan (2023-2027) of the S-100 products was approved by the Commission, envisaging the start of S-101 production from late 2026 / early 2027.

The next SWAtHC19 meeting will take place in Brazil in March/April 2025 (dates TBD), whilst Uruguay will host SWAtHC20 in March 2026.