

30TH BUSINESS MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD ON THE LAW OF THE SEA (ABLOS) AND THE 11TH ABLOS CONFERENCE

IHO - Monaco, 10 - 13 October

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2023	
Task 2.1.2.8	Attendance of ABLOS BM meeting

The Advisory Board on the Law of the Sea (ABLOS) is a joint board of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the International Association of Geodesy (IAG) with the objective to provide information and advice on technical aspects of the Law of the Sea.

The ABLOS held its 30th Business Meeting (BM) on the 10 and 13 October 2023 at the IHO Secretariat, Monaco. The three sessions were led by the ABLOS Chair, Dr Juan Carlos BÁEZ SOTO (IAG – Chile) and Vice Chair, Fiona BLOOR (IHO – UK). The sessions were attended by all the ABLOS members and IHO and IAG appointed observers from Australia, Brazil, Chile, Denmark, France, India, the Republic of Korea, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The IHO Secretariat was represented by Assistant Director Sam Harper, ABLOS Secretary.

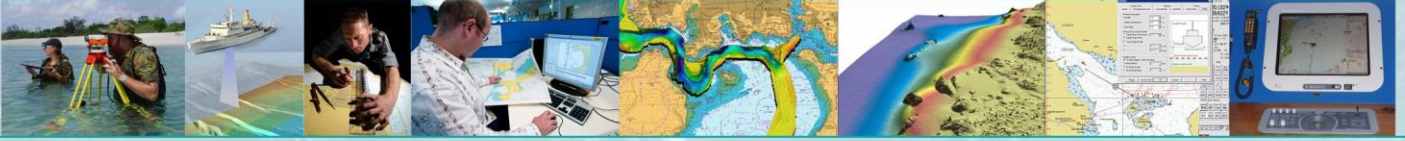
The meeting focused on several key topics; discussions were held on the progress of various working groups, technical and legal issues, and updates on the TALOS project. The meeting also featured discussions on future activities, planning for upcoming events, ongoing projects and plans for future initiatives.

A key topic for discussion was the future of the ABLOS, its role and relevance of its work; it was noted that beyond the traditional technical advice provided by the group, the changing legal environment within the Ocean Science and exploration communities meant the question over what the future role for ABLOS had never been so relevant. Notwithstanding this, it was agreed that the TALOS manual would remain core to ABLOS, but that dedicated work should be undertaken to ensure that the target audience and the nature of the guidance contained within is fit for purpose.

The participants reflected on the publication of C-51 – *A Manual on Technical Aspects the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea - 1982* – Edition 6.0.0. It was noted that whilst some progress had been made towards the draft text for Ed.7.0.0 it was agreed to would be developed in time for BM31 and onward submission to HSSC16 in 2024 under the leadership of John Ells, Chair of the Editorial Board.

11th ABLOS Conference

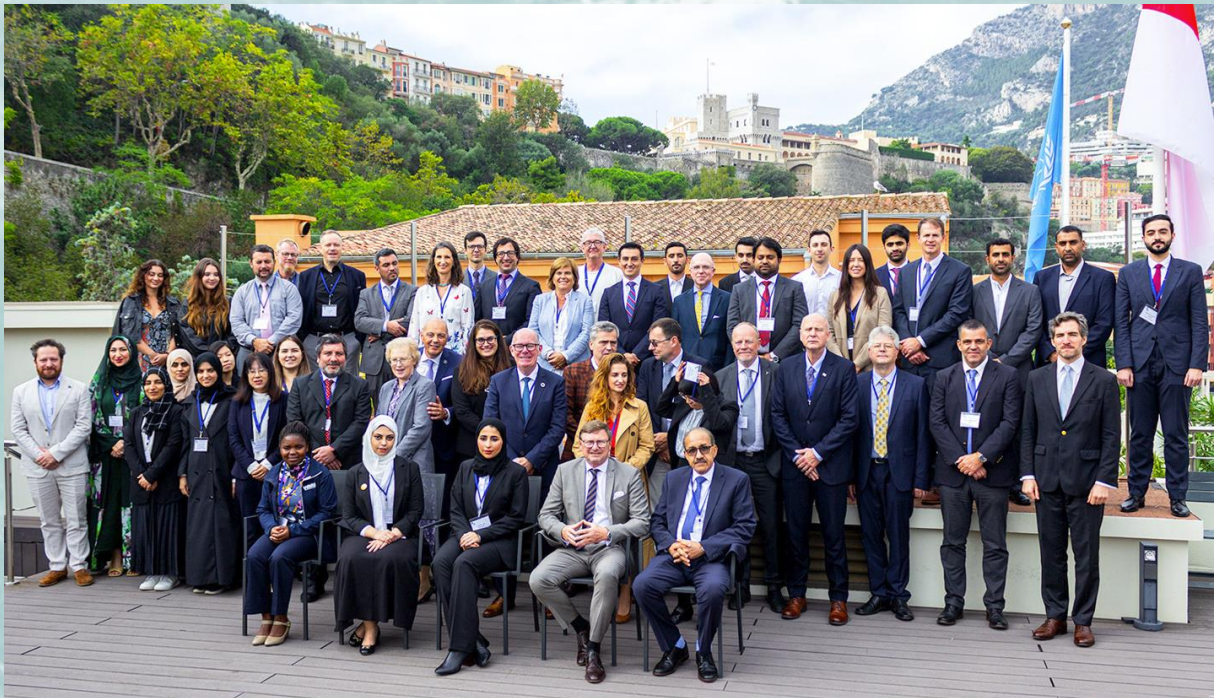
The 11th ABLOS Conference, held at the IHO Secretariat in Monaco on October 11-12, 2023, covered various themes in ocean geosciences. Keynote speakers discussed gender equality in ocean science and governance, and technical sessions addressed the delineation of continental shelf limits under Article 76. Topics included challenges in defining Arctic



continental shelf limits, satellite data in defining hotspot ridge boundaries, and the role of scientific and technological advances in maritime boundary disputes. Sessions also explored gender equality in ocean science institutions, the impact of sea level rise on maritime boundaries, and the use of publicly available datasets for reconnaissance studies. The conference concluded with a session on challenges in defining rules, standards, and guidelines in the face of environmental and technical changes, emphasizing international responsibilities and the intersection of submarine cables and marine scientific research.

Date of Next Meetings

The 31st ABLOS Business Meeting will be held in Brazil and is planned for 8 and 10 October 2024 with a one day seminar to be held on the 9 October. The 12th ABLOS Conference is scheduled to be held together with the 32nd ABLOS Meeting in Doha, Qatar. Details will be made available on the IHO website as the planning progresses.



Participants of the ABLOS BM30 and 11th ABLOS Conference