

3rd SESSION OF THE IHO ASSEMBLY

Monaco, 2-5 May 2023



REPORT OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN AND ISLANDS HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION

- 1. Chair:** Rear Admiral (Retd.) Peter Sparkes (UK)
Vice-Chair: Mr Mohummad Shamad Ayoob Saab (Mauritius)

- 2. Membership:**

Members: Angola, France, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Norway, Republic of South Africa, Seychelles, United Kingdom

Associate Members: Comoros, India, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Portugal, Tanzania

- 3. Meetings:**

SAIHC17: 3 – 4 February 2021 by VTC

SAIHC18: 9 – 13 May 2022 in Maputo and VTC

African Great Lakes & Rivers Sub Working Group (AGL&RsWG): 5 – 6 December 2022 in Lilongwe, Malawi

SAIHC 19: August 2023

- 4. Agenda Items:**

The main activities of the SAIHC align with IRCC guidance and the emerging priorities of the IHO. This includes discussions on ENC scheme options and the establishment of an active Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure Working Group (MSDIWG), led by UK. In addition, SAIHC has established a Crowd Source Bathymetry (CSB) and Seabed2030 Coordinator (South Africa) to address the significant challenge of improving data coverage in line with Seabed2030 goals.

Further to this, SAIHC has improved its focus around the Great Lakes and Rivers within this region. This has been taken forward through the formation of the African Great Lakes & Rivers Sub Working Group (AGL&RsWG).

In January 2021, a 2-day MSDI Awareness Training Course was conducted to increase and enhance the understanding of Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) and its relevance to national, regional, and global development success. The event was delivered virtually to maximise attendance.

A Hydrographic Awareness Seminar was delivered in May 2022 funded through the IHO Capacity Building Fund. The Seminar focussed on the need for Hydrographic Governance, the work of IALA and the IHO and its Strategic Plan. The Seminar raised awareness of the use of Strategic Performance Indicators and encouraged regional sharing of knowledge and resources to build capability.

5. Difficulties encountered and challenges yet to be addressed:

(Please list the significant difficulties encountered during the period, if any, and the challenges yet to be addressed)

Data collection in remote locations and the lack of data coverage to meet the Seabed 2030 goals remains a huge challenge for the SAIHC region. Many members find it challenging to unlock scarce resources to invest in hydrography.

The SAIHC community is at a varying level of technical maturity within the digital and S-100 space. The region will seek to address through collaborative initiatives and through the support of the IHO CB work.

6. Achievements/outputs/conclusions:

(Please list the significant achievements/outputs/conclusions reached during the period)

Since the last Assembly, the full membership of SAIHC has grown. New IHO members are Kenya and Angola. Working alongside the capacity building initiative of funding the Hydrographic Awareness Seminars (HAS), we have seen significantly increased engagement. This reached a milestone during SAIHC18, ably hosted by INAHINA in Maputo in May 2022, when we achieved the greatest ever SAIHC attendance. This included members attending for the first time, such as Uganda. The discussions were rich and varied, providing greater clarity on the needs and priorities of members.

There has been increased coordination activity within working groups. The MSDIWG has continued to provide online training and updates to SAIHC members on wider developments. In particular, the maturity roadmap of the IGIFs nine strategic pathways and the emerging 'quick start guide' have been a focus.

The African Great Lakes & Rivers Sub Working Group (AGL&RSWG) has achieved significant success, culminating with a hosted meeting and practical demonstration in Malawi, in December 2022. This meeting achieved representation from across the region and brought together government departments, port authorities and cross regional bodies. The working group activities continues to focus on a hydrography audit, development of a coordinated vertical datum for Lake Victoria, requirements for a data portal, and data sharing.

The ICCWG continues to coordinate the INT charting coverage and work to reduce ENC overlaps and gaps. The establishment of the CSB and Seabed 2030 coordinator provides a concentrated focus in conjunction with wider activity. This has included the presentation of the work of Seabed 2030 to the SAIHC.

Participants from the region have benefited from the support of the IHO Capacity Building Fund and the generous support of the donor organisations

- Mauritius successfully completed the Training for Trainers Programme in Basic Hydrography, sponsored by the Republic of Korea, in November 2021
- Seychelles attended the IHO – Nippon Foundation GEOMAC Project, successfully completing the course in December 2022.

The COVID pandemic has impacted the delivery of several planned face-to-face Capacity Building activities, but the improved global situation has enabled two Technical Assessment Visits to be completed in 2022 to the Comoros and the United Republic of Tanzania. These visits will support the development of hydrographic capability and have raised awareness at a policy level of the value of hydrography and its role in supporting a country's economy.

7. Actions required of the Assembly:

- a) **Note** the report of the SAIHC.
- b) **Take** any other action considered appropriate.