

Paper for Consideration by Council

IHO Participation in the 3rd UN Oceans Conference

Submitted by:	IHO Secretariat
Executive Summary:	In representation of the Member States, the IHO Secretariat IHO has actively participated in key international forums such as the 2 nd UN Oceans Conference and the Ocean Decade Conference 2024. The Secretariat proposes to participate in the forthcoming 3 rd UN Ocean Conference in June 2025 (UNOC25).
Related Documents:	Nil
Related Projects:	

Introduction / Background

1. In support of IHO Strategic Plan Goal 3, “*Participating actively in international initiatives related to the knowledge and the sustainable use of the Ocean*”, the IHO has actively participated in key international forums such as the 2nd UN Oceans Conference and the Ocean Decade Conference 2024.
2. This paper seeks to set out the IHO Secretariat’s aims, objectives, specific activities and level of ambition for participation in the 3rd UN Ocean Conference in June 2025 (UNOC25), and to identify specific budgetary requirements.

Analysis/Discussion

3. **Aim.** The aim of the IHO engagement in UNOC25 (and associated events) is to support the delivery of the Strategic Plan by
 - a. ensuring international oceans policy is conducive, if not supportive of the broadest utilization (ergo investment in and implementation) of S-100,
 - b. advocating for investment in primary data gathering and the sharing of existing data holdings, and
 - c. protecting the domain expertise of the IHO.
4. **Objectives.** The Aim will be realized by delivering three main objectives:
 - a. Provision of a dedicated economic evidence base for investment in seabed mapping through the partnership with the OECD and the launch of their ‘Ocean Economy in 2050 Report’;
 - b. Advertising the broader utility of S-100 through a specific use case (perhaps with SHOM) to demonstrate the added value of the smart combination of versatile S-100 based thematic data sets such as electronic navigational charts (S-101), high resolution bathymetry (S-102), water levels (S-104), surface currents (S-111) and Navigational Warnings (S-124) in support of safe and resource saving ship’s operation.
 - c. Promoting and facilitating mapping activities in the Polar regions, monitoring the ice melting and contribute studying the potential consequences of that on climate change and its consequent effects for humankind and global economy.
5. **Key Events.** The main conference will be held in Nice 9-13 June 2025. The conference will be preceded by a One Ocean Science Congress and a Blue Economy and Finance Forum, both to be held on 7-8 June. To maximize the opportunity for exposure of senior representatives of IHO MS to the UNOC25 discussions, it has been proposed to hold CBSC23 and IRCC17 in Monaco at the IHO Secretariat in May-June 2025, provisionally accepted by prospective host, Nigeria. The proposed dates for IRCC17 are 4-6 June 2025.
6. **Potential Activities.** Having engaged with a range of key stakeholders, and building upon previous experience of engagement in similar fora, the following complimentary activities are proposed/planned (not in chronological order) with a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) cost indicated in brackets:

- a. **Side event at the Economic and Finance forum.** Focus on Polar regions, in collaboration with the Alfred Wegner Institute (AWI). Audience – Policy makers, National Hydrographers, Multilateral Development Finance community.
 - b. **Side event at the Economic and Finance forum in collaboration with the OECD.** Focus on launch of the Seabed mapping in 2050 report. Audience – Policy makers, National Hydrographers, Multilateral Development Finance community.
 - c. **Side event at the UNOC25 main conference in collaboration with the OECD and IOC,** bringing out S-100 based products and services in the context of the OECD Report on the Ocean Economy in 2050. Audience - National delegations, civil society, policy makers, philanthropy etc.
 - d. **IHO curated evening reception** (venue tbc.) – Focus Hydrography and the bigger picture – Audience (dependent on timing) – Timing – either after the Economic forum side events or after the UNOC main conference side event.
7. **Financial.** The major financial costs will be associated with catering, production of comms material and staff overtime. The total projected budget (including contingency) is EUR 12k.

Conclusions

8. The location of UNOC25 in Nice, together with the active participation of Monaco naturally places the IHO in a position of heightened visibility and represents a unique opportunity to raise awareness of the criticality of Hydrography, Seabed Mapping and the broader utility of S-100, to an audience comprised of world leaders and decision makers representing the policy, industry, scientific and civil society communities.
9. The proposed activity in this paper builds upon the positive momentum generated through participation at the 2nd UNOC (Lisbon 2022) and The Ocean Decade Conference (Barcelona 2024).

Recommendations

10. It is recommended that Council notes and supports the proposed engagement in UNOC25, encourages member states to take advantage of the alignment of IRCC17 to the UNOC25, and to engage early with national delegations in order to participate accordingly.

Justification and Impacts

11. In terms of justification, the proposed activity directly supports delivery of IHO Strategic Plan Goal 2 and 3, and indirectly supports delivery of Goal 1.
12. In terms of impacts, the location of UNOC25 means that there is a minimal travel burden, however the proposed budget to support the activities described at 6 will be delivered within the funding envelope of EUR 12k.

Action Required of Council

The Council is invited to:

- a. note and discuss this paper,
- b. Take any action it deems necessary.