



IHO File N° S1/6200/C-2

**CIRCULAR LETTER 51/2018**  
**29 October 2018**

## **OUTCOME OF THE 2<sup>nd</sup> MEETING OF THE IHO COUNCIL**

### References:

- A. Council Circular Letter 01/2018 dated 26 March 2018 - *Announcement of the second meeting of the IHO Council (C-2) and provisional Agenda;*
- B. Council Circular Letter 04/2018 dated 10 August - *Revised provisional Agenda of 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the IHO Council;*
- C. Circular Letter 55/2017 dated 31 October 2017 - Outcome 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the IHO Council (C-1);
- D. 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the IHO Council - Summary Report (Version dated 19 October 2018).

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in Reference A, the second meeting of the IHO Council (C-2) took place from 9 to 11 October 2018 at the Double Tree Hilton Hotel in London, United Kingdom. The meeting was chaired by Rear Admiral Shepard M. SMITH (United States of America). Admiral (Retired) Luiz Fernando PALMER Fonseca (Brazil) served as Vice-Chair. The meeting was attended by representatives from 28 Council Members and representatives of 10 observing Member States.
2. The summary report of C-2, together with the list of decisions and actions arising from the meeting as well as any other working documents associated with the meeting, are available from the Council page of the IHO website ([www.iho.int](http://www.iho.int) > Committees & WG > Council), at section C-2.
3. The most relevant items considered by the meeting which require consideration and final approval from Member States are reviewed in the following paragraphs. For details of the full discussions at C-2, Member States are invited to review the C-2 Summary Report (Reference D).

### **Items requested from the Council by the 1<sup>st</sup> IHO Assembly (A-1)**

4. Decision 3 of the first session of the 1<sup>st</sup> Assembly tasked the Council to conduct a comprehensive review of the Strategic Plan and to provide a draft revised Plan, as appropriate, in time for the consideration of the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the Assembly (A-2). The Council was empowered by the Assembly to establish a working group for this specific purpose.
5. The Chair of the Strategic Plan Review Working Group (SPRWG) introduced the WG report. In the ensuing discussion, members called for a more concise strategic plan, perhaps along the lines of the one adopted by IALA, with a small number of overarching strategic goals. It was deemed important to increase the visibility of IHO and align the revised strategic plan with global policy frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals related to the blue economy and climate change mitigation measures.
6. The Council endorsed a revised management plan for the SPRWG, including a two-day drafting meeting in early 2019 and feedback on the working group's proposals from HSSC and IRCC, a second meeting of SPRWG in June 2019 and the submission of its final proposals to C-3. The Secretary-General will become a member of SPRWG.

7. The Council stated that the proposed changes constitute a complete rewrite of the Strategic Plan rather than a revision and authorized the SPRWG to proceed on that basis. Noting the importance of the international context (United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, Biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction negotiations, etc.) and the objectives of the IHO, the Council tasked the SPRWG to develop the Strategic Plan on the basis of the 3 smart goals endorsed at C-2.

8. The Revision of Resolution 2/2007 - *Principles and Procedures for making changes to IHO Technical Standards and Specifications* - had been proposed as a two-stage process:

- The development of a “Guidance on conduction of an Impact Study” as a first step;
- The development of the endorsement/approval procedure of the relevant standards as a second step, taking into account the role of the Council, which resulted in the proposal to divide Appendix 1 of the Resolution into two parts: Standards and Publications (including Guidance) to follow the full process of IHO Resolution 2/2007; and Standards and Publications (including Guidance) to be developed and maintained without following the full process. The purpose of the revised review cycle had been to provide more flexibility in the approval process for developing new Product Specifications.

9. The Council endorsed the guidance on the conduction of an impact study in support of the approval process for new Standards / Publications / Product Specifications as well as the new revision cycle for the development phase of Product Specifications as part of the revision process of the IHO Resolution 2/2007 and tasked the HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat to prepare amendments to IHO Resolution 2/2007 accordingly and seek endorsement of the Council prior to submission at A-2.

10. In respect of the proposals to amend Resolution 2/1997 – *Establishment of regional hydrographic commissions (RHCs)* - the Council endorsed the proposed amendments to the IHO Resolution 2/1997, to bring the wording into line with the General Regulations and proposed in addition that the wording was changed in paragraph 1 to read in the last sentence. “Recognized by the Assembly, the RHCs ... the work of the IHO Secretariat”. The Council also noted that a further, more comprehensive revision of the Resolution has now been submitted to the Regional Hydrographic Commissions for their comments. The IHO Secretariat is going to issue an IHO CL seeking the approval of Member States on these amendments.

### **Items requested by the 1<sup>st</sup> IHO Council**

11. The Council reviewed the status of decisions and actions from C-1. The Council noted that all actions related to amendments of IHO Resolutions have been communicated to Member States by Circular Letter for approval and an updated Publication M-3 is now available, including in Spanish. A number of pending actions and decisions await action by A-2.

### **Items related to the subsidiary organs**

12. The Chair of the HSSC informed Council that the HSSC Terms of Reference (ToRs) and Rules of Procedure (RoPs) had been amended to reflect the presence and role of the Council; and the possibility for the HSSC to decide on the need to go through the Council for recommendations on Standards and Publications before submitting them to Member States for approval. The main changes proposed to the ToRs and RoPs were as follows:

- “1.8 Consider and decide upon proposals for new work items under the Committee Work Programme, taking into account the financial, administrative and wider stakeholder consequences and the IHO Strategic Plan and Work Programme and report to each meeting of the Council”; and
- “2.9 Recommendations of possible strategic importance made by the Committee shall be submitted to IHO Member States for adoption through the Council to the Assembly. The Committee should appreciate and determine the need to go through the Council for recommendations. If prior endorsement of the Council is not deemed necessary by the Committee, the recommendations on standards and publications can be submitted directly to the IHO Member States for approval, once endorsed by the Committee.”

Prior to subsequent approval of the Member States by Circular Letter, C-2 endorsed the proposed amendments to the HSSC TORs and ROPs.

13. The Chair of the HSSC presented the key priorities of the IHO Work Plan for 2019, beginning with the notional S-100 timeline for Product Specifications and continued to outline the top three work items of the proposed work plans for 2019-2020 which had been identified for each Working Group/Project Team. The Council approved the key priorities of the HSSC/IHO Work Programme 2 for 2019 and the key priority work items. The Council also noted the top priority work items proposed by the HSSC WGs/PTs for 2019-2020.

14. Prior to subsequent approval of the Member States by Circular Letter, C-2 endorsed the proposed amendments to IRCC TORs and ROPs after a benchmarking with the HSSC TORs and ROPs.

15. The Council further considered and endorsed the proposal to amend the TORs and ROPs of the Capacity Building Sub-Committee for subsequent approval of the Member States by Circular Letter.

16. In respect of the proposal for the approval of IHO publication B-12 - *IHO Guidelines on Crowdsourced Bathymetry* -, the Council agreed on the inclusion of a caveat on page 3 of Edition 1.0.0 of the publication: "*This document provides technical guidelines only that in no way supersede or override national or international laws and regulations*". This statement clarifies that in a technical publication like B-12, the issue is the potential of obstacles to data flows, rather than legal liability in general. The caveat will be included in the first edition of B-12, to allow that this eagerly awaited guidance can be made public on the IHO website. Further discussion resulted in an action to instruct CSBWG to work out more details of the data flow processes. A future Edition 2.0.0 will be submitted to Member States for their approval in due course, containing details with further guidance on data flow processes as agreed by the CSBWG and endorsed by IRCC.

17. In respect of the proposal to amend Resolution 6/2009, relating to the International Hydrographic Review, the Council expressed its appreciation to the University of New Brunswick, Canada, which has undertaken the digitalization of the archives of the Review, currently available online back to 1923 and endorsed the proposed amendments to the IHO Resolution 6/2009 prior to subsequent approval of the Member States by Circular Letter.

18. In the course of the discussion about the implementation of IHO Resolution 1/2018 – *Elimination of overlapping ENC Data in areas of demonstrable risk to the safety of navigation* -, the Council agreed that the IRCC instructs the WENDWG to conduct an initial assessment of the lessons learned from the implementation process of the new IHO Resolution 1/2018 since its entry into force. Following this initial evaluation, it was considered that IRCC would then be in a position to instruct and provide guidance to the WENDWG on how such an evaluation of the effectiveness of IHO Resolution 1/2018 should be conducted on a regular basis with a clear vision of the expected outcomes.

19. Based on a joint submission of the HSSC, the IRCC and the Secretary-General, the Council discussed the further development and future provision of S-100 products. Four Member States reported on their first experiences of implementing the new S-100 based standards. The following decisions were made:

- HSSC to consider the possibility to organize a demonstration showcase of S-100 based products and test beds as an embedded session of C-3.
- IRCC to instruct and provide guidance to the WENDWG in order to investigate the applicability of the WEND Principles to the production and dissemination of S-101 ENCs and the first generation of S-100 based products and to report back at C-3.
- Council, HSSC, IRCC Chairs and Secretary-General to draft an implementation strategy aiming to the regular and harmonized production and dissemination of S-100 based products for further discussion at A-2 and for the preparation of the 2021-2023 IHO Work Programme.
- Secretary-General to start engaging with the IMO Marine Safety Division, on an informal basis as appropriate, to update on the current status of the S-100 framework and potential future impact on IMO instruments.

## IHO Annual work programme and budget

20. The Secretary-General presented an overview of the IHO Work Programme for 2019, which was based on year two of the three-year work programme approved by the first session of the IHO Assembly. The Council approved the IHO Work Programme for 2019 and the key priorities identified by the IHO Secretary-General and the HSSC and IRCC Chairs, namely:

Corporate Affairs	Hydrographic Services and Standards	Inter-Regional Cooperation and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the technical and operational arrangements of the S-100 environment based on C-2 discussions.</li> <li>• Promote the joint approach of DCDB, GEBCO and SeaBed2030 in collaboration with IOC.</li> <li>• Intensify engagement within the framework of the UN Nations to foster the use of marine geo-information on the basis of the IHO Standardization framework and regional/national contributions of the IHO Member states.</li> <li>• Enhance the visibility of the IHO through digital centrality of communication including incorporation of the Secretariat's GIS-services.</li> <li>• Continue preparations of the upcoming Centenary celebrations of IHO.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an S-100 Interoperability Specification</li> <li>• Develop all the components needed to make S-101 a reality</li> <li>• Develop S-121 Product Spec for Maritime Limits and Boundaries</li> <li>• Consolidation and clarification of standards in relation to ECDIS/ENC</li> <li>• Consider data quality aspects in an appropriate and harmonized way for all S-100 based product spec.</li> <li>• Prepare Ed. 6.0.0 of S-44</li> <li>• Develop initial guidance on definition and harmonization of Maritime Service Portfolios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the provision of capacity building requests and follow up activities by existing and new IHO member states</li> <li>• Continued development and maintenance of ENC and INT Schemes</li> <li>• Implementation of Crowd Sourced Bathymetry Activities</li> <li>• Implementation of Seabed 2030 Project</li> <li>• Development of Marine Spatial Data Infrastructures activities</li> </ul>

21. C-2 also noted the information provided by the Secretary-General on the current financial status and the envisioned budget for 2019 in terms of absolute amount and percentage of the various shares allocated to earnings and debts. Subsequently, the Council approved the proposed IHO budget for 2019.

### Items proposed by a Member State or by the Secretary-General

22. Based on the established practice for the adoption of the theme of the World Hydrography Day (IHO CL inviting comment on a proposed theme, followed by IHO CL for announcing the theme), the Council noted the Secretary-General's proposal for the theme of WHD 2019 "*Hydrographic information to drive marine knowledge*" for subsequent approval by the Member States.

23. The Secretary-General outlined the preliminary plans for the celebration of the centenary of the foundation of the IHO. Activities will extend over three years, from the 100th anniversary of the 1st International Hydrographic Conference in London, in 2019, to the second session of the IHO Assembly, in 2020, to the anniversary of the foundation of the International Hydrographic Bureau in Monaco, in 2021. The "peak-of-the-peak" will be World Hydrography Day (WHD) on 21 June 2021. There will also be an opportunity to present IHO's achievements at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2021 and at the IMO Assembly in November 2021.

24. A set of video interviews have already been recorded with notable figures from IHO's recent history, who also form the editorial board for the planned prestige book publication, provisionally entitled "100 Years of International Cooperation in Hydrography". This will be an entertaining and

educational publication aimed at a non-specialist audience. Other scheduled activities include an exhibition of historical charts at the Monaco Yacht Club in April 2019, a Symposium to be held at Monaco Oceanographic Museum on 20-21 June 2019 which will coincide with the WHD and a high-level symposium/seminar is also planned for World Hydrography Day 2021. The Council welcomed and approved the proposals (incl. the management and associated budget) made by the Secretary-General for the preparation of the triennium of IHO centenary celebrations.

25. One of the priorities defined under the Work Programme 2018 had been an overhaul of the IHO website, including GIS-services. The Secretariat received assistance on social media through Member States which lead to the establishment of an IHO LinkedIn account (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/international-hydrographic-organization/>) and a YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpMKDQTKKIJSXmQCQzFqZPA>). Concepts for a new website had been developed with an external contractor. The new website will have versions in both English and French. The IHO emblem had been slightly modified and the reference to Monaco and the year 1921 had been removed with the agreement of HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco.

26. The Council welcomed and approved the proposals made by the Secretary-General for the overhaul of all IHO communications means, noting that the Member States can implement the branding changes, within their own timescale. The Council also endorsed the allocation of additional budget from the Special Projects Fund to cover the costs for the digital IHR revamp.

27. Dr Graham Allen, Acting Director, Seabed 2030 Project, introduced the Seabed 2030 project, which has been operational since February 2018. Its ambitious goal is to bring together all available bathymetric data to map 100% of the topography of the ocean floor by 2030 and make it available to all, thereby contributing to the implementation of United Nation's SDG14 (Conserve and Sustainably Use the Oceans). The project is a collaboration between IHO-IOC GEBCO and the Nippon Foundation of Japan. It will identify gaps in data coverage and prioritize and champion future survey operations to "map the gaps".

28. The Council commended Dr Graham Allen for the presentation given on the Seabed 2030 Project and noted his "call to action" to the IHO. The Council tasked the SPRWG to consider the Seabed 2030 Project during the revision process of the Strategic Plan.

29. The IHO Secretariat, presented a timeline and provisional programme for A-2, which was proposed to be held in Monaco from 21 to 24 April 2020 – effectively a day less than A-1 and previous International Hydrographic Conferences. A provisional agenda will be circulated at least six months prior to A-2, with the deadline for submission of proposals 21 December 2019 and reports and other documents to be circulated two months before the opening of the Assembly (21 February 2020). The draft programme outlined an opening ceremony, report of the Council Chair and Secretary-General, discussion of Work Programmes 1, 2 and 3, a report of the Finance Committee and a special session for IHO-100. Hydrographic industry and Member States exhibitions will open on the first day and close on the final day.

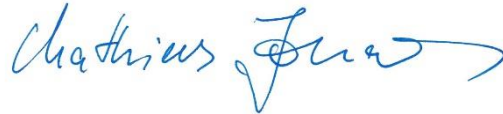
### **Next Meeting of the IHO Council and conclusive remarks**

30. The Council noted the need to conduct Council meetings immediately before and after an Assembly at the IHO Secretariat in Monaco, in order to receive the support of all Secretariat staff. Member States are therefore invited to note, for planning purposes, that the next Council meeting (C-3) will be held from 15 to 17 October 2019 at the IHO Secretariat in Monaco.

31. At the end of the C-2 meeting, the Secretary-General remarked that, during its first meeting in 2017, the Council had focused on procedural matters, including its mandate and relationship with the Assembly. During its second meeting, the Council had turned to strategy, communications, the work programmes and collaboration with external projects, subjects that were closer to the purpose of the

Council as it had been originally envisioned. Finally, the Secretary-General stressed that the Council should fulfil its potential by defining a strategy for IHO that would further the themes of technology (through standardization), globalization (through cooperation, coordination and training) and add to those strategic pillars consideration for the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the oceans and seas facing global warming and climate change.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mathias Jonas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr Mathias JONAS  
Secretary-General