

**21<sup>ST</sup> MEETING OF THE CAPACITY BUILDING SUB-COMMITTEE  
IHO-CBSC21  
TOKYO (JAPAN), 7-9 JUNE 2023**

**Report of the IHO Secretariat**

**Submitted by:** IHO Secretariat

**Executive Summary:** This paper provides a summary report of matters of interest related to the work of the IHO Secretariat.

**Status of Membership of the IHO**

1. One of the main changes resulting from the entry into force of the revised IHO Convention is that, for States wishing to join the IHO that are already Member States of the United Nations, there is no requirement to seek the approval of existing Member States of the IHO. Since the last CBSC20 meeting, the IHO Member States continue to be 98. Unfortunately, Serbia and Syria remain suspended from Member States rights.
2. The IHO Secretariat, in cooperation with the Department of External Relations of the Government of Monaco, stands ready to assist those non-IHO Member States with the application process for membership of the IHO, as currently underway towards several non-IHO Member States in several hydrographic regions, and stands ready to pay High Level Visits to those States not yet IHO Member States. The Capacity Building SubCommittee, via the Regional Coordinators, is kindly invited to propose at regional level towards the IHO Secretariat, Technical and High Level Visits also to those States not yet IHO Member States.

**Outcomes of the third session of IHO Assembly**

3. The third session of the IHO Assembly (A-3) took place in the Grimaldi Forum in Monaco from Tuesday 2 May to Friday 5 May 2023. The meeting of the Finance Committee and the meeting of the Heads of Delegations took place on Monday afternoon, 1 May 2023 at the Grimaldi Forum in Monaco, as well as an event on the Empowering Women in Hydrography (EWH) project. The Opening Ceremony for the Assembly was on Tuesday morning, 2 May 2023. During that Ceremony, seven new Member States that have joined the Organization since the Second Session of the IHO Assembly presented their flags. An Industry and a Member States exhibition occurred in the same period of the A-3 at the Grimaldi Forum, and the USNS Bruce C. Heezen was present in the Port of Monaco during the A-3.
4. The Assembly was attended by more than 450 delegates from 75 IHO Member States, Observers and Industry. The 120<sup>th</sup> GEBCO and the 100<sup>th</sup> International Hydrographic Review (IHR) anniversaries were celebrated, a Thematic Session on “*Future challenges for hydrography in the Ocean Decade*” moderated by IHO Directing Committee was held on the day 4 of A-3, the IHO Work Programme and Budget for the years 2024-2026 were discussed and approved, 15 proposals from the IHO Secretary-General, Council Chair and IHO Member States were discussed, 36 decisions were made by the Assembly, and the election of the Secretary-General and a Director was held on the last day. All the documents and Summary Reports of A-3 are available at the following webpage: <https://iho.int/en/3rd-session-of-the-assembly-2023>.
5. With particular reference to the 21th CBSC meeting, it is worth highlighting the following decisions of the A-3, which will have an impact on the work of the CBSC21 and later:
  - Decision 8: The Assembly: ... omissis ... d) agreed to task the Secretariat, assisted by the HSSC and IRCC chairs, to continue to measure the effectiveness and the

efficiency of the three Work Programmes implementation by means of the Strategic Performance Indicators as endorsed by the Council. ... omissis ...

- Decision 16: The Assembly endorsed the Report of the Work Programme 3.
- Decision 18: The Assembly approved and adopted the revised Capacity Building Strategy.
- Decision 20: The Assembly: ... omissis ... b) Approved the proposal to establish an ad hoc Project Team under IRCC to explore the possible establishment of reliable alternative funding for activities including capacity building and GEBCO. c) Authorized Council via IRCC to review progress reports from the Project Team at least annually and provide guidance to the Project Team in preparation to report out to 4<sup>th</sup> Assembly (A4).

6. With particular reference to Decision 18 and Decision 20 point b), the CBSC is called respectively to implement the revised Capacity Building strategy, undertaking the measurement of effectiveness of capacity building assistance through continued monitoring and evaluation, and to provide all the technical and specialized assistance to the IRCC, once the Project Team is established.

### **Preparation of the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IHO Council**

7. The seventh meeting of the IHO Council is scheduled to take place in Monaco, from 17 to 19 October 2023. The preparation of this meeting has already started with the Call for Nominations for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Third Council and Election Procedure (see CL 01/2023) and the Announcement of the Seventh Meeting of the IHO Council and Provisional Agenda (see CCL 02/2023). It can be noted that in accordance with the Rules of Procedures of the Council, the deadline for submission of proposals by IHO Member States is 17 July 2022.

8. During C-7, attention will be paid to the implementation and discussion of adaptations of the IHO Work programme, other affected IHO instruments resulting from the Strategic Plan 2021-2026 and Decisions A3/08 (a) to (d), and the status report on the appropriateness and applicability of the Strategic Performance Indicators. Besides, an initial discussion and way forward (C-9 countdown) for the preparation of a Revised Strategic Plan in preparation of A-4 in 2026 (Decision A3/08 (e)) will be also discussed.

### **IHO Outreach**

7. The outreach of IHO themes is more than ever based on digital provisions. Social media such as linkedIn, facebook and twitter have become relevant communication channels in parallel to the IHO website. The website of the International Hydrographic Review underwent a full re-launch providing now substantially extended functionality. The Secretariat has increased its presence on social media through articles and news about its working groups, committees and subcommittees, as well as the participation in regional and global initiatives that refer to Hydrography, especially in the framework of the UN Ocean Decade.

#### World Hydrography Day

8. As announced with IHO CL 01/2023, the theme for WHD 2023 is as follows:

***“Hydrography – underpinning the digital twin of the ocean”***

The digital twin of the ocean aims to develop a consistent, high-resolution, multidimensional

and near real-time virtual representation of the ocean that could make ocean knowledge open-access, available to citizens, scientists and policy-makers around the world, and will provide a platform for global cooperation. The theme for WHD is designed to highlight the relationship between hydrography and oceanography, and how hydrography can play a key role in developing the digital twin of the ocean. The IHO Secretariat will also organize a dedicated page on the IHO website, where papers and other materials relevant to the celebration will be posted. Member States are invited to forward to the Secretariat any materials that they may create in support of their national WHD 2023 celebrations for posting on any of these platforms.

#### International Hydrographic Review (IHR)

9. During the third session of the IHO Assembly, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the IHR was celebrated. A printed anniversary issue was provided to Assembly participants. It included a compendium of 13 reprinted articles chosen by the editorial board and showcased the new format for the review.

10. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of A-3, the IHR Editor – Dr Patrick Westfield from Germany presented on the history of the IHR and the achievements of the two latest years. He emphasized the value of the review in facilitating interdisciplinary knowledge exchange. As an applied science, hydrography encompassed fields such as geophysics, oceanography, geodesy, acoustics, cartography, remote sensing and others. The goal was that the International Hydrographic Review would become the go-to international journal for people with a hydrographic background as well as for those working in neighbouring disciplines.

11. Twice a year, the IHR provides an opportunity for Member States to publicize technical and other achievements in their region. An editorial board comprising a representative from each region has been established. Papers for consideration for publication in the IHR should be forwarded directly to the editor ([ihreview@iho.int](mailto:ihreview@iho.int), copy to [ihr.editor@iho.int.com](mailto:ihr.editor@iho.int.com)). The deadlines are:

- end of January for the May Edition
- end of July for the November Edition

#### **Capacity Building Programme**

12. 2023 CBWP continues to benefit from unused funds for activities planned but not executed in the previous 3 years (2020-2022) and from the support of funds from donors outside the IHO (ROK, Nippon Foundation and CANADA). The prospects for the IHO budget allocated to Capacity Building from 2024 onwards are not so much good, so that even the Council during the last C-6 noted the decrease of Capacity Building funds over the last few years and the not encouraging outlook for the next three years (2024-2026).

13. In this regard, following the USA (and others) proposal, the IHO Assembly in Decision 20 point b) above mentioned, approved the establishment of an ad-hoc Project Team under IRCC to explore the possible establishment of reliable alternative funding for activities including capacity building and GEBCO.

#### Empowering Women in Hydrography (EWH)

14. Two years after its launch, the time is ripe to lay the foundations to look to the future of the project, to further forms of funding and to turn the project into a multi-year programme, in the same way as similar programmes that have been in place in other international organisations for years. That will be discussed during the next IRCC15 with Canada and the

IRCC members.

15. The following two latest initiatives within the EWH project worth mentioning are:

- A Letter of Intent (LoI) between the IHO and WMU, signed in March 2023, to provide a framework for active liaison and cooperation between the Parties and with the common objective to contribute to the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. Following the LoI, the IHO Secretariat participated at *Empowering Women Forum: Meet-and-Greet*, organised on 23 May 2023 by the Empowering Women Forum, in collaboration with the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU) and the Decade Network, presenting on “*Working Towards Gender Balance in STEM Subject*” as result of the first two years of the EWH project;
- The IHO CL 19/2023, to announce the IC-ENC opportunity for a female candidate to be associated with the EWH project by leading on the continuous improvement of the IC-ENC Knowledgebase.

#### IHO e-learning Center

16. Following the latest developments regarding the Guidelines, Governance and tools to access the e-Learning Centre, the Centre is now operational and the IHO Secretariat – after the completion of the CBSC21 and IRCC15 – is ready to announce its full operability and functionality to the IHO Member States.

#### **Action Requested of IRCC**

17. IRCC is invited to:

- **Note** this report,
- **Take any actions** as considered appropriate.