

GEBCO GUIDING COMMITTEE
38th Meeting, Hybrid/in-person/video conference, 20 - 22 April 2022

IHO UPDATE
Submitted by the IHO Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: The document contains updates of IHO activities relevant to GEBCO GUIDING COMMITTEE 38th Meeting

Action to be taken : See paragraph 19

Related documents : None

GEBCO Guiding Committee Membership

1. The IHO Secretariat would like to congratulate and welcome the new members of the Guiding Committee. It is considered that their active contribution will be of great benefit to GEBCO and ocean mapping community.
2. With the IHO CL 13/2022, Member States are requested to consider nominating suitable experts to fill the vacancy following the resignation of Captain Rodrigo de Souza Obino (Brazil) ahead of the first GGC Inter-sessional meeting of 2022 in February. Nominations are due no later than 10 June 2022.

Status of Membership of the IHO

3. Following the 2nd Session of the IHO Assembly, Lebanon, Kenya, Iraq and Angola acceded to the IHO Convention, and the IHO membership now stands at 97, reflecting the enduring importance that coastal States place in International Organizations dealing with the safe and effective use and management of the world's seas and oceans. In addition, new and potential new IHO Member States come from regions around the world that are interested in programs such as GEBCO.

IHO Strategic Priorities

4. With reference to the IHO Strategic Plan 2021-2026, at the GGC Inter-sessional meeting on 22 February 2022 the IHO Secretariat presented the following Strategic priorities, which could be taken into consideration to be part of a tailored GEBCO Strategy:
 - ✓ Participating actively in international initiatives related to the knowledge and the sustainable use of the Ocean (IHO Strategic Plan 2021-2026 – GOAL 3 “*Participating actively in international initiatives related to the knowledge and the sustainable use of the Ocean*”);
 - ✓ Improve knowledge of the world's seafloors (IHO Strategic Plan 2021-2026 – TARGET 3.2 “*Improve knowledge of the world's seafloors*”);
 - ✓ Implement a synergic GEBCO-Sebed2030 approach to the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 14 of the United-Nations and UN Decade 2021-2030 of Ocean Sciences;
 - ✓ Frame the resources devoted to the knowledge and description of the Ocean, by focusing on the HIGH SEAS' areas and engaging with any sort of Institution/Company/Research Centre/University (Agreements, MoU, etc.);

- ✓ Implement a GEBCO Communication Strategy aligned with the IHO-IOC Communication Strategies;
- ✓ Define the rules of mutually supplementing engagement of different bodies/organizations involved (SCOPE, GGC, IHO/IOC, CSB and Seabed2030).

IHO activities/initiatives

In chronological order, the following represent the main activities/initiatives undertaken during the last year by the IHO Secretariat, of potential interest to the GGC and with potential positive repercussions on GEBCO:

5. Following the Call for Decade Actions 2/2022, the IHO Secretariat submitted the “*Empowering Women in Hydrography – EWH project*” to become an Action of UN Ocean Decade, within the Project “64. *Empowering Women for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development*”. The EWH project is an opportunity for the IHO to show leadership in the hydrographic community and weave the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) #14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources with SDG #5 Gender equality, particularly as it relates to the target “*Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life*”.

6. In parallel with IOC, the IHO Secretariat issued the IHO CL 10/2022 to advise Member States that nominations are being sought for the 19th course of the IHO-IOC-Nippon Foundation/GEBCO Training Program leading to a Graduate Certificate in Ocean Bathymetry at the University of New Hampshire (UNH), USA. The 19th course will begin in late August 2022, and the applications must be received by 30 April 2022.

7. At the twelfth meeting of the Crowd Sourced Bathymetry Working Group (CSBWG12) held in Monaco in hybrid format, it was decided that in order to develop appropriate interfaces between the Trusted Nodes (TN) and DCDB for data transfer, access and dissemination, the TN agreement for data archiving and access will be signed by the TN and IHO.. It is a negotiated agreement between the parties indicating a common understanding of performance and intent. At the last SCUFN35 meeting held in Paris, the IHO Secretariat, in cooperation with KHOA, NOAA and SCUFN Secretariat, presented the last updates on the GEBCO Gazetteer as well as the development of the interoperability phase with SCUFN Operational Web services (KHOA’s Beta-Gazetteer Integration in particular).

8. The IHO Secretariat participated at the Monaco Ocean Week (MOW) 2022 organized by the Principality of Monaco with the following initiatives:

- ✓ By hosting at the Secretariat an event which provided an overview of some of the work being done to increase our knowledge of the ocean, from Prince Albert I of Monaco’s original idea of ocean mapping to the *ARGO programme*, an exciting, global multidisciplinary project. Another innovation presented during the conference was a thermally recharging Argo float equipped with an echo sounder, the first float specifically designed for bathymetry;
- ✓ By participating at the 11th Environmental Symposium hosted by the Yacht Club of Monaco (YCM), and presenting on the Crowdsourced bathymetry project. As result of that, the YCM showed high interest to aggregate the yachting world in becoming an active crowdsourced bathymetry data collector and populating DCDB.

9. In light of IHO Strategic Goal 2 and 3, the IHO intends to have a presence at the “2022 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development” co-hosted by the Governments of Kenya and Portugal in Lisbon on 27 June – 1 July 2022.

IRCC Activities

10. At IRCC13, IRCC recommended RHCs to encourage all Member States to actively contribute with new data to GEBCO and to discuss how MS can share existing data.
11. With IHO CL 12/2022, a 2nd IRCC Workshop on the definition and design of Strategic Performance Indicators (SPI) methodologies and subsequent governance and automated GIS tools to implement them, was announced to be held virtually on 28th April 2022. The workshop will present proposals and a variety of experiences from the hydrographic community (IHO Secretariat, RHCs and IRCC subordinate bodies) on methodologies and procedures to measure SPI, and an opportunity for GEBCO and the GGC Chair to present on the SPI assigned to GEBCO (see paragraph 5).
12. IRCC14 planned on 6-8 June in Bali (Indonesia) will be the occasion to report on new GEBCO Governance and the alignment of GEBCO strategy to the IHO Strategic Plan, and then to update on the procedure for measuring the Strategic Performance Indicator (SPI) allocated to IRCC.

Preparation of the 3rd Session of IHO Assembly

13. The 3rd IHO Assembly is scheduled to take place from 25 to 28 April 2023 in Monaco. The announcement and draft agenda of the A-3 will be done by the end of April 2022 via Assembly Circular Letter (ACL). A-3 will be the occasion to celebrate the 120th Anniversary of GEBCO, dive into the GEBCO history and present GEBCO in digital (data center, collaboration with SB2030, ISA, floats etc.), and then adding an element to highlight the 100th Anniversary of IHO. A-3 will represent also the opportunity to review the IHO Strategic Plan in accordance with Resolution 12/2002 – Planning cycle.

IHO Outreach

World Hydrography Day

14. IHO CL 1/2022 announced the theme for the celebration of World Hydrography Day in 2022 (WHD 2022): “*How hydrography can contribute to the United Nations Ocean Decade*”. The theme is designed to highlight the relevant contribution of hydrography as a discipline of applied sciences to the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021– 2030). The deliberations at the 5th Council meeting confirmed that several hydrographic offices have already engaged nationally to support the United Nations Ocean Decade and efforts to reverse the cycle of decline in ocean health. The suggested theme offers the opportunity to emphasize the ability of hydrographers to gather and manage marine data and their strengths in technical collaboration on a global scale. It also underlines the strategic evolution of national, inter-regional and global activities to support an expanding group of stakeholders with hydrographic information and services.

IHO Public Relations and Communication (PRC) policy

15. The IHO Secretariat continued its efforts in public relations and outreach. The IHO website had a total of 562,207 page views in 2021. The LinkedIn page passed 5,000 followers in April 2022 and saw a record 35,253 views from all its posts in June 2021, reaching total post impressions of 228,481 in 2021.

The upwards trend continued on Facebook with a post on a missing GEBCO chart sheet getting 2.7K impressions in April 2021. On Twitter, the record for the year was a total of 22.9K impressions on posts in June 2021. These numbers are reflected in the IHO Annual Report 2021 just issued in draft, as sign of the huge investment of the Secretariat on the PRC sector and a great encouragement to continue working on increasing our reach and getting these numbers up.

International Hydrographic Review

16. IHO CL 3/2022 announced the appointment of Dr Patrick Westfeld as new Editor of the IHR. The new International Hydrographic Review website is now available with a new look and new functionalities. Launched ahead of the IHO 100th anniversary celebrations, the new website is designed to make it easier to find individual articles as well as consult materials on specific topics. IHR is an international scientific journal publishing peer-reviewed papers on all aspects of hydrography and associated subjects, ranging from the latest technical developments and significant events to book reviews and historical recollections, to increase the visibility and standing of the IHR, as a suitable publication medium to present scientific work, reports from practice, news, announcements and other.

Action Requested of the GGC

17. The GGC is invited to:
 - a. Note this report;
 - b. Take any other actions as considered appropriate.