

**18th Conference of the IHO Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica (HCA)
Berlin, Germany, hybrid event, 24 – 26 May 2022**

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2022	
Tasks	
§ 1.1.2	Maintain relationship with the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM)
§ 3.2.2	Organize, prepare for and report meetings of Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica (HCA)

The 18th Conference of the IHO Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica was held as a hybrid event, from 24 to 26 May 2022, in Berlin, Germany, in conjunction with the XLIV Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM). The meeting was held at the Dorint Hotel with a VTC platform operated by the IHO Secretariat with some contracted IT support.



The Conference was chaired by Dr Mathias Jonas, Secretary-General of the IHO, supported by Assistant Director Yves Guillam, HCA Secretary and Ms Caroline Fontanili (IHO Secretariat), as rapporteur. Forty registered delegates from 17 Member States out of 24 (Argentina¹, Australia¹, Brazil, Chile, Colombia¹, Ecuador, France, Germany, India¹, Italy, Norway, Peru¹, Republic of Korea¹, South Africa¹, Spain¹, United Kingdom, and USA), two Observers (IAATO², SCAR¹) and one subject matter expert (GEBCO IBCSO Project Representative), attended the meeting.

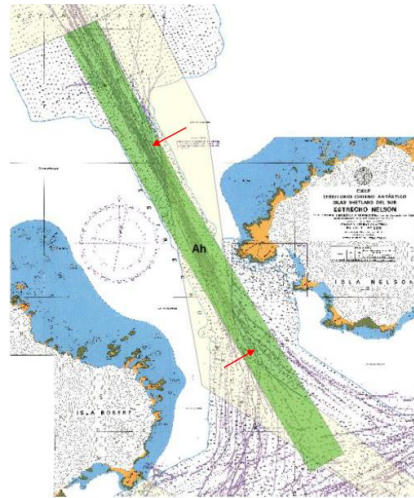
On the first day, the HCA Chair visited ATCM XLIV and took the opportunity to re-establish some traditional partnership links. Meanwhile, Mr Lee Truscott (UKHO), Chair of the Hydrographic Priorities Working Group (HPWG) and the Region M International Charting Coordination Working Group (ICCWG), ran a fruitful technical workshop that had not been arranged for some years, in particular due to the pandemic. Participants in this informal workshop had many opportunities to share their views on a significant number of technical proposals and options (amendments to Maritime Shipping Routes, charting options, etc.).

Highlighting the unique character of this Commission in the IHO, the unique situation of Antarctica in the world (governance, environment, remote situation, geography, etc.), the Chair opened the meeting announcing the entry into force of the revised HCA Statutes. Amendments approved by HCA Members by correspondence since HCA-17 make the revised HCA Statutes now fully aligned with the IHO Resolution 2/1997 - *Establishment of Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHC)* – the Antarctic Treaty System³, the last ATCM Resolutions and the IHO Strategic Plan 2021-2026. Subsequently, the HCA agreed that, with a wider scope of responsibility than INT charts and ENC production, Art. 8.e of the General Regulations of the IHO on the HCA needed to be amended. A proposal will be submitted for Council's endorsement for submission to the 3rd Session of the Assembly for approval of IHO Member States.

¹ By VTC.

² Recorded presentation.

³ Antarctic Treaty, Article III 1.(c) states that “*scientific observations and results from Antarctica shall be exchanged and made freely available*”.



BC 'Ah' – Nelson Strait (INT9151 BR/CL)
 Amended reflect AIS traffic and underlying data quality

Using traffic density analysis, the HPWG Chair provided an outstanding review of the adequacy of the Maritime Shipping Routes in the Peninsula and a compilation of the updates received from Members on INT charts and ENC production, together with production options for some areas (corridors, Deception Island, etc.).

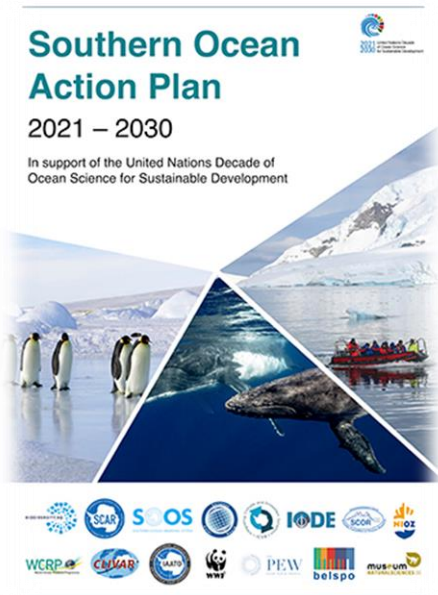
Beyond the traditional survey and charting issues, the HCA engaged in the preparation of the future. Anticipating the outcome of IRCC-14 on the recommendations from the WENDWG with regard to the S-100 Implementation Roadmap per region, HCA agreed to establish an HCA S-100 Implementation Working Group. Some actions are planned to prepare the governance and production strategies for the top priority S-100 based products (S-101, S-102, S-104, S-111, S-122, S-124, S-128, and S-411).

The national reports provided by HCA Members were very informative and well received. The investments in progress by several nations in the development of their own National Polar Strategic Plans, supported by the future commissioning of new Polar Research Vessels, were duly acknowledged. HCA Members were encouraged to share all data collected by these new assets and to provide them either to the IHO DCDB or Seabed 2030 Regional Data Centres. The HCA Secretariat proposed a new straightforward procedure to submit survey coverage metadata for being displayed in HCA GIS which was agreed by the HCA Members.

The HCA Chair re-opened the discussion on the issue raised by the publication of an article⁴ in National Geographic recognizing a 5th ocean in the world (the so-called “Southern Ocean”) while a Note on the Oceans in the foreword of IHO Publication S-23, indicates why this body of water has been omitted in S-23, Edition 3, 1953. Noting the wide usage of “IBCSO”⁵ by GEBCO for instance, HCA agreed to consider the possibility of submitting an IHO Resolution at the next Assembly by which “*The IHO recognizes the Southern Ocean as the maritime area surrounding the Antarctic, its Northern limit being...*” (wording still to be defined).

⁴ <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/theres-a-new-ocean-now-can-you-name-all-five-southern-ocean>.

⁵ Source: www.gebco.net; “*The International Bathymetric Chart of the Southern Ocean (IBCSO) is endorsed by international organizations such as the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) as an Expert Group under the GeoSciences Group.*”



Reporting on the highest-ever recorded temperature following a heatwave in March 2022 in Antarctica (+40°C above March average in Concordia), the HCA Secretariat offered to have an open brainstorming discussion on the involvement of the IHO in general, and HCA in particular, on scientific matters in relation to climate change. No precise action was identified except for the time being, the analysis of the SCAR's Recommendations for Action available in their recent report: *Antarctic Climate and the Environment: A Decadal Synopsis and Recommendations for Action*.

Noting the 3rd Session of the IHO Assembly in April 2023, the Chair proposed that the 19th Conference of the IHO Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica be held in 2024. The HCA welcomed the offer made by Italy to host it in Venice, Italy, from 27 to 29 March 2024 and noted the intention from Chile, to host HCA-20, in 2025, in Punta Arenas (*dates and venue to be confirmed*).



Some of the participants of HCA-18