**IHO EUROPEAN NETWORK WORKING GROUP (IENWG) - PLENARY SESSION 14 (29/05/2024)
KEY MESSAGES**

1. **IENWG action for 2021 - 2024 wrap-up**

1.1: IHO and the European Commission (EC) have celebrated their Memorandum of Understanding 10th anniversary in 2022. This first decade of collaboration has been fruitful with the achievement of the digital seabed map, at the heart of the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet), thanks to the concerted approach of European hydrographic offices (HOs) joined by other scientific institutes. The results have been fully incorporated in the global IHO and IOC GEBCO digital map of the seabed.

1.2: IHO, representing 100 countries, can provide answers to the EC expectations for best practices and standards in the seabed, knowledge for understanding the climate change, protecting the biodiversity, cutting pollution and building the Digital Twin of the Ocean. Indeed, hydrographic offices deals with extensive ocean observation parameters which are more various than just bathymetry.

1.3: In addition to EMODnet, the EU Member States HOs work hand in hand on subjects of interest to the EC, such as the blue economy, maritime spatial planning, safety of navigation and e-navigation....

1.4: The IHO-EU Network WG (IENWG) set up four (4) working tracks to tackle the challenges identified for the next phase of collaboration: Marine policies, Data Collection, e-navigation standards (IHO S100 based products) and Capacity Building.

1. **EU maritime policies**

2.1: The IENWG can be a resource for the EC with its technical expertise, enhancing the actual dialogue. Some HOs participate in the elaboration of EU directives, initiatives and structuring programmes. For example, the IENWG collaborate altogether to draw up and implement the EU Directive on open data and the re-use of public sector information.

2.2: The IENWG closely follow the change in data policies and new policies related to marine observations and are usually actors or **relay** of those to the national representatives.

2.3: The IENWG members relay and liaise with the IHO and act as a link with the European Commission and the Sea Basins relevant to the EC.

1. **Data Collection**

3.1: The IENWG secretary is co-chairing the EMODnet Vision 2035 as the IENWG members are recognized as being some strategic data providers and well acknowledged with the upcoming challenges. The whole group will be regularly consulted for feedbacks.

3.2: The IENWG members, relay and liaise with the IHO, of the exploring the use of new technologies and best practices to collect, process and disseminate marine geospatial data.

1. **S100**

4.1: Two (2) first projects on e-navigation (S-100 products) have been funded by Interreg (EU).

4.2: It is important to keep focusing on digitization of the maritime infrastructure to ensure safety and environmental issues and to present useful results to end-users and citizens. Global standardization of digital flows is necessary and continued support from the EC, e.g. as for the Interreg in the e-navigation area is important.

4.3 The IHO Member States will deliver products that are beyond the nautical charts. The upcoming IHO S100 standards are aim at improving the safety and efficiency of navigation, the sustainable use of the ocean resource via its products which are related to the environment. E.g. S122 is focused on the Marine Protected Areas and could support the needs of the EC to better access to the description of those and national context.

1. **Capacity Building**

5.1:The IHO has a long history in capacity building activities in countries that are essential in support of the blue water economy, navigation safety and the protection of biodiversity. It conducts high-level visits to understand the issues at stake and technical visits. The IHO is keen to be associated with EU actions.

5.2: The IENWG members would like to convey this message within the EC and needs to be supported by our Focal Contact Point to address the right institutions, including the European Foreign Policies institution.

1. **Next steps**

6.1: Once the new Commission is settled, the IENWG would like to arrange a high-level meeting with the EC. The date needs to be agreed with the Focal Contact Point and is probably to be made in Q4 2024/Q1 2025.