

**13th MEETING OF THE IHO INTER-REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
IHO-IRCC13
VTC, 23-25 June 2021**

Report of the North Sea Hydrographic Commission

Submitted by:	Chair, NSHC
Related Documents:	Any relevant documents and references to the extent that they are known to the originator.
Related Projects:	Any related projects that may impact upon considerations

Chair:	Ms. Virginie Debuck (BE), from March 2018 Mr. Koen Vanstaen (BE), from October 2019 Mr. Georg Lárusson (IS), from April 2021
Vice-Chair:	Mr. Hilmar Helgason (IS), from March 2018 Mr. Árni Þór Vésteinsson (IS), from November 2019 Mr. Magnus Wallhagen (SE), from April 2021
Secretary:	[Name], [Country]
Member States:	Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom
Expert Contributors:	iXblue, Kongsberg, Sea ID, SevenCs, Teledyne Caris, Terratec, XOcean, NGA/MapLarge
<i>see Annex A for full details</i>	

1. Meetings Held During Reporting Period

For purposes of this report, the Reporting Period is considered from IRCC-12 (October 2020) to the current IRCC13 meeting (June 2021) with information as of May 2021.

[NSHC34](#): VTC 27- 28 April 2021¹ In total 53 delegates attended the on-line meeting, including 39 from Member States.

Next meeting: NSHC35 is planned 5-6 April 2022 in Reykjavik, Iceland.

2. Work Program

Current NSHC WGs: [a] North Sea International Chart Coordination Working Group (NSICCWG) [b] Baltic Sea and North Sea MSDI Working Group (BSNSMSDIWG) [c] Resurvey Working Group (RWG, chair UK) [d] Tidal Working Group (TWG, chair BE).

Highlights of important issues and activities during the reporting period:

- Following IHO SG report to NSHC34 chair was tasked to initiate the procedure aiming to have a matured proposal at the NSHC35 next year (NSHC34 Action 1, 2)².
- Following the report of Strategic Plan Review Working Group (SPRWG) NSHC34 chair was tasked to initiate a gap analysis consultation for the NSHC region, using the template that SWPHC Chair has circulated. (NSHC34 Action 2)

¹ NSHC34 was planned 26-27 March 2020, Reykjavík (IS), consequently postponed due to outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

² [NSHC34 A.4 Actions updated June 2021](#)

- NSHC34 approved minor amendments to the NSICCWG ToR and small change in limits between Areas D and E. Status of INT Chart schemes via IHO INTogIS and ENC Chart Cat. links noted.
- NSHC endorses proposed investigation of the possibilities to include the North Sea in the pilot project focusing on S-122 data as a testbed (NSHC34 Action 3). Workplan of the WG approved.
- NSHC34 endorsed the RWG workplan to limit the risk assessment to a harmonization and sharing of CATZOC and survey polygons to allow further cross boundary harmonization of resurvey plans. NSHC34 endorsed the RWG ToR and Standing Agenda.
- UK presented and raised the issue of Multiagency MSDI Governance. Big challenge to get agencies to understand how and why it is in their interest to take part and contribute to MSDI. NSHC34 noted that it would be useful to get updates as this get implemented by UKHO or others.
- CSB & Seabed 2030: Patrick Westfeld (DE) is the new NSHC coordinator. NSHC member states encouraged to make data available and invite their national stakeholders to release data.

3. Progress on IRCC Action Items (relevant to NSHC)

Progress on IRCC Actions relevant to NSHC during the reporting period.

N.	Action (Agenda item)	Responsible	Deadline	Status
1	RHC to Instruct MS in the promotion and distribution of publication of S-67 Mariners' Guide to Accuracy of Depth Information in Electronic Navigational Charts (ENC) to the Marine Institutions and Education Schools	RHC	IRCC13	Postponed to NSHC35
2	Member States to review the paper on the Future of paper Charts and provide feedback on it	RHC	IRCC13	Postponed to NSHC35 NSHC34 Action 5
3	Member States strongly encouraged to continue updating C-55	RHC	IRCC13	Ongoing NSHC34 Action 7
4	RHC to implement the IHO Resolution 2/1997 as amended by A-2	RHC	IRCC13	In progress NSHC34 Action 1
6	Invite the Member States who have experience in developing and providing eLearning contents to share their resources and experiences to the e-Learning PT	RHC	IRCC13	In progress NSHC34 Action 6
11	Promote the discussion of any item with relevance to SDI/MSDI/MSP and to take appropriate actions.	RHC	IRCC13	In progress NSHC34 Action 3
12	Consider CSB and Seabed 2030 initiatives be permanently added as an agenda item at future RHC meetings	RHC	IRCC13	Done
13	Encourage Member States to support the CSB initiative with positive actions, such as requiring all research vessels to collect bathymetric data for later uploading, when on passage or when it does not interfere with other research activities	RHC	IRCC13	In progress

N.	Action (Agenda item)	Responsible	Deadline	Status
14	Support the modification of the current “RHC Seabed 2030 Coordinator” to a joint “RHC CSB/Seabed 2030 Coordinator” and provide the identification of the Coordinators	RHC	IRCC13	In progress NSHC34 Action 9
16	Encourage MS to release datasets or subsets into the public domain via the IHO DCDB.	RHC	IRCC13	Considered continuous activity
17	Encourage Member States to promote the vital need to map the entire seabed.	RHC	Continuous	Ongoing NSHC34 Action 10
19	Encourage all Member States to make existing seabed mapping data available for use by Seabed 2030 in the GEBCO Grid.	RHC	Continuous	Ongoing
20	RHC to participate at Regional level in those actions of the UN Ocean Decade matching with IHO’s new strategic targets (IRCC12-08C)	RHC	IRCC13	Considered continuous activity

4. Problems Encountered

As with all IHO MSs the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted members of NSHC. Both in domestic hydrographic matters as in regional and international cooperation. The pandemic has though created opportunities for more frequent and informal communications. The lesson from numerous VTCs is to channel the technique to advance progress in the common field of hydrography. A productive way forward seems to be the one that intertwines the two, in person meetings and VTCs.

5. Any Other Items of Note

NSHC MS agree to change from bi-annual meeting to annual meetings. Physical meeting every other year. VTCs in between. The duration of 2-year chairmanship remains unchanged.

The accepted proposal for the organization of the upcoming NSHC meetings:

- 2022 – physical meeting – IS hosts and chairs
- 2023 – VTC – SE chairs
- 2024 – physical meeting – SE hosts and chairs

6. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

NSHC Statutes will be amended to reflect new plan of annual meetings. NSHC has no specific recommendations for IRCC13.

7. Justification and Impacts

Despite the lack of ability to meet in person, the HOs within NSHC and the WGs of NSHC have continued their work and maintained active communications through multiple VTC’s.

8. Action Required of IRCC

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The IRCC is invited to:

- a. endorse this summary report;
- b. note the efforts described to support the goals of the IHO and the IRCC within the region; and
- c. provide any feedback to the chair, vice chair and national hydrographers of the NSHC.

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Annex A

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