

Annex to the Report of the IHO IRCC to Council 7

**Empowering Women in Hydrography: From Project to Program**

The Empowering Women in Hydrography (EWH) Project is into its third year and we are very proud of our collective efforts towards exposing more women to governance, leadership, and in providing technical opportunities in the field of hydrography. We thank those of you who have contributed, both with internships and technical opportunities for women and for nominating women to participate in this project.

Building on the success of the project, we are considering migrating the EWH project to a program called Gender Balance in Hydrography (GBH). Successful implementation will depend on having infrastructure in place to support the program, sustainable funding, and sustained and demonstrated interest in the program.

The interest in gender balance is there. The Capacity Building Subcommittee at their most recent meeting agreed to make gender balance a standing agenda item going forward. They also plan to repeat the survey conducted in the fall of 2022 (CL 26/2022) asking Member States about women employees and leaders within their organizations, with a view of reporting every three years on gender balance statistics to measure progress. To support the project, the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) Secretariat has a resource dedicated to this project to coordinate the activities including the Mentoring Program, special events, the production of circular letters etc. The position is currently supported by the funds provided by Canada, to launch the project. The women supported by the project have also benefitted from offers of technical opportunities paid for by Member States (US) and IC-ENC, and other initiatives promoted by regional hydrographic commissions.

We are now looking for member states to support the conversion of the EWH project to the Gender Balance in Hydrography program in one or both of the following ways:

1. Monetary contributions via the IHO Secretariat to help keep the coordinator in place and support costs associated with events and technical internships; and/or
2. Direct contributions of time, space, or funding to provide opportunities to encourage women's participation in technical expert, governance, or leadership opportunities.

Members states who contribute will be invited to join a steering committee to help shape the Gender Balance in Hydrography program as it evolves.

Thank you for considering this request and helping us to sustain the momentum which developed under the EWH project.