

**15th MEETING OF THE IHO INTER-REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
IHO-IRCC15
Tokyo, Japan, 12 – 14 June 2023**

NORDIC HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION

NHC report to IRCC15

1. Chair

Chair: Magnus Wallhagen, Sweden from March 2023
Pia Dahl Højgaard, Denmark from April 2022

Vice-Chair: Annika Axne, Sweden from March 2023
Elizabeth Hagemann, Denmark from September 2022
Jens Peter Weiss Hartmann, Denmark from April 2022

2. Membership:

Members: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden
IHO: Mathias Jonas
Associate member(s): None
Observers: None

3. Meetings:

Following NHC meetings have taken place since IRCC14:
NHC 66, 21 – 22 March 2023 in Aalborg, Denmark

Next meeting:
NHC 67, will take place 11 – 12 April 2024 in Malmö, Sweden

4. Current NHC Working Groups:

- a) Nordic Chart Production Expert Group (NCPEG)
- b) Nordic Survey Expert Group (NSEG)

5. Status of IRCC actions and recommendations to RHCs

a) Status of Actions, relevant for the NHC:

#	Action	Status
13/6	<i>RHCs and WGs to include the measurement of the SPI attributed by IRCC in their annual Work Plans.</i>	Closed

b) Status of Recommendations, relevant for the NHC:

#	Recommendation	Status
14/2	<i>RHC to discuss how HO's can assume a geo-coordinating role to help ensure provision of data on a regional level.</i>	Closed. Provision of data on a regional level is coordinated through national and EU-related initiatives.
14/4	<i>RHC to start or proceed with the debate on how the climate change related activities can be further investigated and what can be the role of the IHO.</i>	Closed. Climate change related activities are coordinated through national and EU-related initiatives.
14/6	<i>RHCs to establish an S-100 Coordinator role</i>	NHC 66 decided to task the NCPEG to focus more on a S-100 implementation. The actual S-100 Coordination are handled by the BSHC and the NSHC, whose areas are overlapping the NHC region.

14/11	<i>RHC Chairs to bring the IRCC CL 1/2020 to the attention of all coastal states within their respective RHC, encouraging them to offer a positive response, even if qualified, to enable provision of CSB data into the public domain collected from ships within waters subject to their national jurisdiction.</i>	Completed by NHC MS.
14/13	<i>RHC to encourage Member States to support the CSB initiative with positive actions, such as requiring all research vessels to collect bathymetric data for late uploading, when on passage or when it does not interfere with other research activities.</i>	Discussed at NHC 66 and is ongoing where applicable.
14/15	<i>Encourage RHCs to discuss how nations can share existing data.</i>	Discussed at NHC 66 and is considered to be well functioning in the region. Bathymetry data is shared through the EU EMODNet Bathymetry portal, which subsequently is reused by GEBCO. Closed.
14/16	<i>RHCs to encourage Member State and stakeholder bathymetric data contributions to the DCDB, regardless of origin.</i>	No action needed, see status for 14/15 above.

6. Agenda Items:

B. IHO Work Program 1 – Corporate Affairs

- B1, Report from the IHO Secretariat (IHO Sec)
- B1.2, Outcome of IHO Council 6 (Finland)
- B2 – B6, National reports of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

C. IHO work program 2 – Hydrographic Services and Standards

- C1, Use of VDES in Crowd-Sourced Bathymetry (Denmark)
- C2, National coordination of the S-100 implementation (Finland)
- C3, S-100 Implementation; challenges, impact on production process and organization and national coordination (Denmark)

Denmark had, as the NHC Chair, prepared a questionnaire in front of NHC66 where NHC MS were invited to report on challenges with S-100 implementation. At NHC66 specific questions were discussed on management level allowing for the exchange of experiences among National Hydrographers. Resources and national coordination between sometimes several different authorities was considered to be the main challenges, but we learn best practices from each other when discussing the issue.

- C4, Nordic Chart Production Expert Group (NCPEG)
As the chair of the NHC Denmark had arranged a series of workshops to analyze if the two NHC expert group were fit for purpose or if any change in direction were needed. The outcome of these workshops were presented by Denmark and resulted in that NHC 66 decided to task the NCPEG to focus more on a S-100 implementation and less on paper chart production. As a result of the workshops amended ToRs were suggested and agreed upon by NHC66.
- C5, Nordic Survey Expert Group (NSEG)
Following the series of workshops mentioned under C4 above, the NSEG was considered to be fit for purpose with only minor changes needed in the ToRs. The amended ToRs were agreed upon at NHC66.
- C6, Implementing FAIR principles in Marine Data (Norway)

C. IHO work program 3 – "Inter Regional Coordination and Support"

- D1, WENDWG (Sweden)
- D2, Status Seabed 2030 / CSB / GEBCO (Norway)
- D3, Interreg Baltic Sea e-Nav Project and Horizon Europe SINCERE Project (Sweden)

Sweden presented two project proposals which they are involved in as EU-applications to Interreg Baltic Sea Region for the Baltic e-Nav Project and Horizon Europe for SINCERE. The scope of Baltic Sea e-Nav is to establish S-101 ENC and S-102 Bathymetry, where applicable, in the Baltic Sea. The Swedish Maritime Administration is lead partner and the HOs from Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Latvia and Finland are also partners in the proposed project. Poland and Lithuania are associated MS. The scope of the SINCERE project is to test the application of UKC-management S-129. The Swedish Research Institute RICE is lead partner and the HOs from France and Sweden are involved.

- D4, NHC Reports to Assembly-3 and IRCC15 (Sweden)
- D5, NHC Seat on the IHR Editorial Board (NHC Chair)

Denmark nominated a candidate to become the NHC representative in the IHR Editorial Board. The nomination was agreed upon by NHC 66.

- D6, Revised Statutes of NHC

A drafting group was established during NHC66 and finalized a draft version of the NHC Statutes which were subsequently approved by NHC66. The revised NHC 66 Statutes were formally signed by the national hydrographers of the NHC MS at IHO Assembly-3 in Monaco in May 2023.



1) The NHC National Hydrographers signing the revised NHC Statutes at IHO Assembly-3 in May 2023. From left: Rainer Mustaniemi (FI), Pia Dahl Højgaard (DK), Birte Noer Borrevik (NO), Magnus Wallhagen (SE) and Georg Kr. Lárusson (IS).

7. NHC cooperation with stakeholders (organizations, industry, etc.):

NHC is continuously considering the possibility arranging back-to-back meetings with relevant stakeholders

8. Difficulties encountered and challenges yet to be addressed:

It is a challenge to allocate resources for S-100 implementation at the same time as the ongoing production must continue. National coordination for S-100 is also a challenge since the responsibilities are scattered between sometimes several different national bodies.

9. Achievements and lessons learned:

All NHC MS is involved and share bathymetry data through the EU EMODNet Bathymetry portal, which subsequently is reused by IHO- IOC GEBCO global grid.

S-100 discussions from a NHC perspective and changing direction, including one of the experts group, to address the S-100 implementation.

10. Conclusions:

The cooperation within the NHC is very productive. The NHC MS participate actively in NHC and its expert groups. Member states have continued to contribute extensively to the work of the IHO and have been active participants in IHO working groups and Committees.

11. Actions required of IRCC:

The IRCC is invited to:

- a. note the NHC report, and
- b. take any further action as it may consider appropriate.

Magnus Wallhagen

NHC Chair