



**BALTIC SEA  
HYDROGRAPHIC  
COMMISSION**



**STATUTES  
OF  
THE BALTIC SEA  
HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION  
(BSHC)  
August 1983  
(Amended in 2007)  
(Amended in 2018)  
(Amended in 2020)**

# **STATUTES OF THE BALTIC SEA HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION**

## **Article 1**

a) The Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission (hereinafter referred to as "The Commission") is established in conformity with Administrative Resolution T 1.2 of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and Decision No. 26 of the XII International Hydrographic Conference. The Commission is also established in conformity with the IHO Resolution 2/1997 as amended, regarding the Establishment of Regional Hydrographic Commissions. Members of the Commission shall be the countries bordering the Baltic Sea who are Members of the IHO and who accept these Statutes.

b) The countries bordering the Baltic Sea who are not Members of the IHO but who wish to co-operate in the work of the Commission, and who accept these Statutes, may become Associate Members.

## **Article 2**

The aims of the Commission, which is an integrant part of the IHO, shall be:

a) To promote friendly and cordial technical co-operation in the domain of hydrographic surveying, marine cartography and nautical information.

b) To examine the implications, in its area of interest, of matters of general interest with which the IHO is concerned avoiding any interference with the prerogatives of the Secretariat of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO Secretariat) and of any other commissions set up by the IHO.

c) To stimulate all bordering countries to widen hydrographic activity in the area and to encourage them to seek technical advice and assistance from the IHO Secretariat in establishing and strengthening their hydrographic capabilities.

d) To facilitate the exchange of information concerning surveys, research or scientific and technical developments, to aid in the planning and organization of hydrographic activities in the widest sense of the term, but without interference in the national responsibilities of each Hydrographic Office.

e) To carry out certain studies as an IHO Working Group when considered appropriate.

## **Article 3**

Members and Associate Members forming the Commission undertake to participate, of their own free will, on all possible occasions - whether in the form of advice or of assistance – in those hydrographic programmes requiring concerted action, but without prejudice to or interference with their national activities.

#### **Article 4**

- a) The Commission shall meet in plenary Conference in the country of one of its Members or Associate Members at least once between two successive ordinary Assemblies of the IHO.
- b) Provided the Members agree to do so, a Conference can be conducted as a video conference and its decisions shall be as valid as the ones made during a plenary Conference.

#### **Article 5**

- a) At the end of each Conference the Chair and the Vice Chair is elected in accordance with Article 6a. After the election of Chair and Vice Chair the host country of the next Conference is elected. The Members and Associate Members desirous of hosting the following Conferences shall put forward their candidatures. Priority shall be given to the country that have not yet hosted a Conference, or to the country who did so the longest time ago. To reduce coordination efforts, the Chair and Host of the Conference shall preferably be the same.
- b) Members and Associate Members shall be represented at Conferences by heads of Hydrographic Services, or, if they are unable to attend, their authorized representatives. They may also be accompanied by members of their staff, but it is most desirable that their number be kept to a minimum.
- c) The Commission may set up small committees of Members and Associate Members interested in particular projects with the objective of examining and executing such projects.
- d) An invitation to attend the Conference shall invariably be addressed to the Secretary General.
- e) The presence of two thirds (2/3) of the Members and Associate Members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum.

#### **Article 6**

- a) The Conferences of the Commission are conducted by the Chair. Concluding the Conference, the acting Vice-Chair shall become the Chair and the successor of the Vice-Chair shall be elected from the Members and Associate Members of the Commission by the Heads of Delegations. Priority shall be given to the country that have not yet chaired the Commission, or to the country who did so the longest time ago. Both Chair and Vice-Chair shall remain in office until the end of the next Conference.
- b) In the interval between two Conferences, the Chair shall provide the Secretariat for the Commission regarding any matters to be dealt with by correspondence.

c) Proposals to be included in the Agenda of a Conference must be sent to the Chair at least three months before the date fixed for the opening of the Conference. The Chair shall prepare the provisional Agenda and forward it to the participants at least two months before the opening of the Conference. The Member States and Associated Members must send reports and submissions for the agenda items to the Chair a minimum of five weeks in advance of the Conference. Reports and submissions should be published at the IHO website four weeks in advance of the meeting. Papers submitted later than the time limits above can be considered for adoption in the agenda by the Conference, but may be given a lower priority. Late submissions may be postponed to the following Conference or be handled by correspondence if time does not allow for their presentation at the current Conference. The first item shall be the Chair's report on the activities of the Commission since the last Conference.

d) The Host shall be responsible for the organization of the Conference.

#### **Article 7**

If the Chair, or the Vice-Chair, is unable to officiate, he or she shall be replaced by his or her successor or deputy in his or her office.

#### **Article 8**

a) At the end of the Conference, the Chair shall read the text of the decisions made during the Conference, to be adopted by the Members and Associate Members. Decisions must have unanimous agreement.

b) The Chair shall dispatch, within one month of the close of the Conference, a Summary Report of the discussions and decisions taken at the Conference for approval to each of the Members and Associate Members. They shall declare their approval within one month upon receipt. Any objections shall be settled by correspondence.

c) All decisions become operative after the Chair of the Conference's written information that the report has been approved.

#### **Article 9**

a) The Agenda shall be adopted by the Commission at the beginning of each Conference.

b) The Commission may modify, in the course of the Conference, the order in which Agenda items are to be discussed.

#### **Article 10**

- a) The Chair may call an extraordinary session of the Commission when its representatives are assembled for an Assembly of the International Hydrographic Organization.
- b) In the case of urgent matters which cannot be treated by correspondence and which cannot be postponed until the next Conference of the Commission, the Chair, with the agreement of the Members and Associate Members, shall convene an Extraordinary Meeting, to be held in the country of the next Conference, the place considered most appropriate or as a video conference in accordance with Article 4 b).
- c) The provisions of Article 6 are not applicable to the meetings defined in paragraphs a) and b) above, which shall be organized and presided over by the Chair, who will remain in office after the meeting has concluded.
- d) When these meetings do not include all Members and Associate Members, the decisions reached shall be reported by correspondence to those not present and at the next Conference.

#### **Article 11**

All expenses connected with the participation of the delegates in the Conference shall be defrayed by their respective countries.

#### **Article 12**

Members and Associate Members of the Commission may propose amendments to the present Statutes. These amendments shall be discussed at a Conference and the decisions will be included in the Report of the Conference.

#### **Article 13**

The official and working language of the Commission, as well as during the Conference, shall be English.

#### **Article 14**

Decisions which, in the opinion of the Commission, may be of interest to the International Hydrographic Organization as a whole shall be brought to the attention of the IHO Secretariat and other relevant bodies of the IHO. This fact shall be mentioned as part of the text of the decisions reached.

#### **Article 15**

The selection procedures for Members as representatives of the IHO Council are laid down in Annex A to these Statutes. They may be amended by decisions of the Commission in accordance with these Statutes.

**Article 16**

The IHO Secretariat shall be the repository of the Statutes signed by the Members and Associate Members.

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