**STATUTES OF THE**

**EASTERN ATLANTIC HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION**

**(EAtHC)**



**STATUTS DE LA**

**COMMISSION HYDROGRAPHIQUE DE L’ATLANTIQUE ORIENTAL**

**(CHAtO)**

**~~REVISION ADOPTED AT EAtHC 16 Plenary~~**

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**STATUTES OF THE EASTERN ATLANTIC HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION**

**(EAtHC)**

ARTICLE 1

**About the Commission**

1. The Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission (EATHC) has been constituted in conformity with IHO Resolution 2/1997 “ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSIONS (RHC)” as amended. The Commission should provide, in pursuance of the resolutions and recommendations of the IHO, regional coordination with regard to nautical information, hydrographic surveys, production of nautical charts and documents, technical cooperation, capacity building (CB) projects and marine spatial data infrastructure (MSDI) projects, related to the work of the IHO, and shall be governed according to these Statutes.

ARTICLE 2

#### GEOGRAPHIC LIMITS AND MEMBERSHIP

1. Members of the Commission, hereafter cited as “Members”, shall be the national hydrographic authorities, or the designated representative, of those countries who are Members of the IHO, bordering the Atlantic Ocean included in NAVAREA – II (from 48°27’ North to 6° South), within IHO Charting Area G (Hereinafter referred to as "The Region").
2. The countries within the Region, who are not Members of the IHO and whose representatives are signatories to the present Statutes, become Associate Members. They are represented by their national authorities responsible for hydrography and navigation. Associate Members have the same rights and obligations as the Members of the Commission except the right to vote or to be elected Chair or Vice Chair.
3. Other Member States of the IHO outside the region may become Associate Members as signatories to the Statutes of the EATHC, if they contribute to the safety of navigation by their activities in the fields of hydrography including training, nautical charting, and nautical information in the region of the EATHC. Their applications shall be considered by the plenary Conference mentioned in Article 4. The admission of these applications requires a simple majority of the Members.
4. International Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Industry and Academia stakeholders active in the region concerned may be invited by the RHC to participate as Observer or Subject Matter Expert. The observers may take part in the discussions but shall not have voting rights.

ARTICLE 3

#### AIMS

1. The Commission, which is an integral element in achieving the objectives of the IHO and which promotes the aims of the Organization at the regional level, shall have an advisory, scientific and technological character; it shall not exert any authority over the Hydrographic Offices or other institutions responsible for hydrography and navigation of the Member countries and activities shall not extend to matters concerning international political issues such as territorial claims and boundaries.
2. The Commission has a limited but important role in regional disaster preparedness and response (in support of the IHO Resolution 1/2005). The Commission through the Chair aims to act as a broker of hydrographic demand (from the affected countries) and supply (by countries offering assets). For this purpose, an EAtHC Disaster Response Framework has been established to prepare the EAtHC to coordinate response efforts internally and with regional partners, as resources allow. The Chair cannot assume Members’ or Observers’ responsibilities for Diplomatic clearance needed to deploy those hydrographic assets.
3. Particular aims of the Commission are:
   1. To promote technical co-operation in the domain of hydrographic surveying, marine cartography, and nautical information within the Region.
   2. To examine in its area of interest, matters with which the IHO is concerned, avoiding any interference with the prerogatives of the IHO Secretariat and of any other bodies set up by the IHO. Wherever possible, Regional activities should align with and support the intent and objectives of the approved IHO Work Programme.
   3. To stimulate all countries within the Region 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 in order to promote safe navigation and create an environment within which economic development may take place.
   4. To facilitate the exchange of information related to surveys, research and/or scientific and technical development to assist in planning and organization of hydrographic activities in the widest sense of the aims, but without interference in the national responsibilities of each Hydrographic Office.
   5. To implement the agreed INT and ENC Chart Schemes for the Region and to monitor their suitability.
   6. To carry out studies and projects through committees or working groups of the Commission so as to provide input to the IHO and related international initiatives when deemed necessary.
   7. To identify the EAtHC Representative(s) to the IHO Council as outlined in the guidance provided in Annex A.
   8. To examine the role hydrography can play in disaster risk reduction, for instance by capacity building.
   9. To ensure that regional capacity building activities are aligned and coordinated in accordance with the IHO CB Strategy and with CB procedures and practices developed by the Capacity Building Sub-Committee (CBSC).
   10. To ensure a coordinated and cohesive regional approach is considered for the implementation of the S-100 Universal Hydrographic Data Model by engaging with data owners, product and service providers, and other stakeholders as appropriate.
4. To align other regional activities with the approved IHO Strategic Plan and Work Program, taking into account the actions, recommendations and outcomes of the Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC). The EAtHC will establish committees or working groups and select leadership of them through voting at plenary, to advance these regional priorities.
5. To encourage Members and Associate Members forming the Commission to participate, of their own free will, on all possible occasions - whether in the form of advice or of assistance - in those hydrographic programs requiring concerted action, but without prejudice to or interference with their national activities.
6. The Commission may appoint from among its Member States or Associate Members Representatives to IHO instances, or international or regional committees. The appointment is then made during a Conference or by correspondence following approval by a majority of the Members. The designated Representatives of the Commission shall report to the Commission on any action or subject of interest.

ARTICLE 4

#### CONFERENCES

1. The Commission shall convene annually, face-to-face or VTC (intercalated), in plenary Conference in a country of the Region.
2. At the end of each Conference the Members and Associate Members desirous of hosting the following face-to-face Conference shall put forward their candidatures. Priority shall be given to a country which has not yet hosted a Conference, or to the one which did so the longest time ago. In cases of equal priority, a secret ballot shall be held, the decisions being taken by a simple majority of Members and Associate Members present.
3. If it is in the interest of the Commission and unanimously agreed upon by the Members and Associate Members an alternative venue may be selected.
4. The State hosting a Conference, should it be a Member or an Associate Member State, shall be responsible for the organization of the Conference. Members and Associate Members shall be represented at Conferences by heads of Hydrographic Services, or, where such services do not exist, by heads of national authorities responsible for hydrography and navigation. They may also be accompanied by members of their staff, but it is most desirable that their number be kept to a minimum.
5. The host country will assist with the arrangement of authorizations and visas, so as to  
   facilitate attendance at the Conference.
6. The Commission may set up small committees of Members and Associate Members interested in particular projects with the object of examining and executing such projects.
7. An invitation to attend the Conference shall invariably be addressed to the IHOSecretariat.
8. The presence of at least one-half of the Members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum at all conferences.
9. The Chair shall invite those countries of the Region that are not Members of the Commission and the Chairs of adjacent RHCs to send Representatives to attend the Commission Conferences as Observers. Any Member may propose to the Chair the invitation of technical experts as Observers. Observers can participate in the discussions and in the working groups set up by the Commission.

ARTICLE 5

#### CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR.

1. The activities of the Commission are conducted by the Chair with the assistance of the Vice Chair.
2. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission shall be from a Member of the Commission, elected on a rotational basis. Under normal circumstances, the term for the Chair and Vice Chair will be two years. If the period between two face-to-face Conferences exceeds two years, the term will extend until the end of the next face-to-face Conference. As a rule, an in-office Vice-Chair should take over the leadership of the Commission in the next period, and so on.
3. The election of a new Chair/Vice-Chair shall take place at the first Conference to be held (or by correspondence if this is not possible) before or after a two-year term of leadership and shall take office at the end of that Conference.
4. The Chair shall provide the Secretariat for the Commission regarding all questions to be dealt with by correspondence. They will prepare a Provisional Agenda for the next Conference and will present as the first item, their report on the activities of the Commission since the last Conference.
5. The Chair shall coordinate the organization of the Conference with the Hydrographic Authority of the country hosting the conference.
6. If the Chair is unable to officiate at the Conference, he or she will be replaced by the Vice Chair. If neither is able to officiate, they shall each be replaced by his or her designated Representative.

ARTICLE 6

#### PREPARATION AND EXECUTION OF THE CONFERENCE.

1. The Chair shall prepare the Provisional Agenda in conjunction with the Members (namely the Vice-Chair) at least two months before its opening. The Provisional Agenda shall normally include the standard items suggested in relevant IHO guidance (for example, National Reports, INT Charts and ENC scheme). The first item shall be the Chair's report on the activities of the Commission since the last Conference. All Conference Documents shall be made available on the IHO/EAtHC web site at least one month prior to the meeting.
2. Members’ Proposals to be included on the Agenda of a Conference should be sent to the Chair for the next Conference at least four months in advance of the date agreed for the beginning of the Conference.
3. The Agenda shall be adopted by the Commission at the beginning of each Conference.
4. The Commission can modify the order of discussion of the different items of the Agenda during the Conference.
5. Proposals of Members or Associate Members not included in the Agenda shall be submitted to the Chair and,  
   with the agreement of the Members, shall be added to the Agenda for consideration.
6. Each Member has one vote and votes shall be indicated by a show of hands.
7. The Chair prepares a list of (extant) action items for each Conference, with a suggested way ahead. The Chair will update the list as part of the minutes of the Conference.
8. At the end of each Conference, the Chair shall present the Actions and  
   Decisions taken in the working language of the Commission. Sixty (60) days after the  
   close of the Conference, the Chair will submit to the Members and Participants a  
   report, (in the working language of the Commission) which will include those  
   Actions and Decisions, as well as any supporting information submitted.   
   Members shall report any objections to the report within 20 days. Any objections to  
   the report shall be made by electronic mail. If a takeover of chairmanship occurred during the conference, this action is realized by the new Chair with the support of the previous one.
9. A copy of the Final Report of the Conference shall be sent to the Members, Associate Members, Observers and the IHO Secretariat.
10. Between Conferences, if necessary, subjects may be discussed and decided by  
    correspondence in the EAtHC working languages.
11. In preparation for, during and between Conferences, the Chair may be assisted by  
    a Secretary appointed by him/her. The duties of the Secretary could include the  
    following:
    1. To collate, three months before the Conference, all proposals from the   
       Members, to be included in the Agenda.
    2. To forward Proposals and the Provisional Agenda to the Chair and Vice Chair at least two months prior to the Conference.
    3. To prepare and distribute a list of participants at least one month prior to the  
       Conference.
    4. To receive and to forward any requirements from the Members to the Chair and Vice Chair as appropriate.
    5. To prepare for the Chair, a report of the Conference within 45 days following its conclusion, including the discussions, Actions and Decisions taken, as  
       well as any supportive information that was submitted.
    6. To prepare the final report and forward it to the IHO Secretariat.
    7. To assure with the host country, the nominal organization of the Conference.

ARTICLE 7

#### CONFERENCE ACTIONS AND DECISIONS.

1. The Actions and Decisions of the Conference shall usually be reached by  
   consensus among Members. If consensus cannot be reached, Actions and  
   Decisions shall be adopted by a simple majority of the Members present. In case  
   of an equal number of votes (tie), a second vote shall take place after listening to the  
   comments of the Representative of the IHO Secretariat.
2. The Chair shall prepare at the end of each day a written text of the Decisions taken on each item of  
   the Agenda and shall see to its distribution to all the attendees present for the next day.
3. Each Member has only one vote.
4. At the end of the Conference, the Chair shall read the text of the Actions and  
   Decisions taken. All Decisions become operative immediately.

ARTICLE 8

#### EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

1. The Chair may call a meeting of the Members and Associate Members of the Commission when their representatives are assembled for an IHO Assembly.
2. In the case of urgent matters, which cannot be treated by correspondence and which cannot be postponed until the next Conference, the Chair, with the agreement of the Vice-Chair, having taken the opinion of the Members and Associate Members, shall convene an Extraordinary Meeting, either in face-to-face or virtually as circumstances dictate.

ARTICLE 9

#### EXPENSES

1. The Chair and the host country shall be responsible for the organization of the  
   Conferences.
2. Travelling, hotel and per diem expenses of participants at Conferences shall be the  
   responsibility of the nation or the organization of the participant.
3. All expenses related to the provision of the venue and associated facilities for  
   Conferences shall be the responsibility of the host country.

ARTICLE 10

#### STATUTES

1. The IHO Secretariat is the Custodian of these Statutes.
2. 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, which must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Members of the Commission, will be included in the Report of the Conference and passed on to the IHO Secretariat for updating of Statutes.

ARTICLE 11

#### LANGUAGES OF THE COMMISSION

The official languages of the Commission will be both English and French. During face-to-face Conferences, a translation solution allowing the use of both languages will be preferred. During virtual meetings, English will be the main language. Translations to other languages are strongly encouraged with the support of other collaborating Members.

**NATIONAL SIGNATORIES – STATUTES OF THE EASTERN ATLANTIC HYDROGRAPHIC**

**COMMISSION (EAtHC)**

**Members**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Cameroon | Name  Title / Post |  |
| France | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Ghana | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Morocco | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Nigeria | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Portugal | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Spain | Name  Title / Post |  |

**Associate Members**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Benin | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Cabo Verde | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Congo | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Côte d'Ivoire | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Guinea | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Guinea-Bissau | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Mauritania | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Senegal | Name  Title / Post |  |
| Togo | Name  Title / Post |  |

# Annex A to EAtHC Statutes

**PROCEDURE FOR THE DESIGNATION OF EAtHC REPRESENTATIVES TO THE IHO COUNCIL**

Designation of EAtHC representatives to the IHO Council shall be determined in compliance with the IHO General Regulations Articles 2 and 16.

#### Role and Authority of Representatives to the EATHC in the Council

1. IHO Member States of EATHC, shall occupy their seat on the Council for all sessions of the Council throughout the inter-sessional period between Assemblies
2. All expenses connected with the participation of representatives to the Council shall be defrayed by their respective State in accordance with the IHO General Regulation Article
3. In occupying a seat on the Council allocated to EATHC, the elected Members shall take into account the views of the Members of the Commission. A standing agenda item during the EAtHC Conferences will cover IHO Council matters.

#### Selection Procedure

1. Three months before an ordinary session of the Assembly, the IHO Secretary-General shall inform the Chair of the EAtHC of:
   1. the number of seats allocated to the EAtHC, and
   2. those Members that are eligible for selection by the EAtHC.
2. Usually, there is one seat in the Council assigned to the EAtHC. The Chair of the EAtHC should take that seat. If the Chair already occupy a seat on the Council then the Vice-Chair should take that place. If the Vice-Chair is also not available then the EAtHC representative on the Council shall be selected from among the available Members through an election procedure conducted by the Chair. The voting procedure will take place in the two-three months prior to the Assembly, preferably at a Conference of the EATHC otherwise by correspondence if no EATHC Conference is scheduled. If still no quorum has been achieved, the Chair designates the Member State that will be designated to occupy the seat on the Council allocated to the EATHC based on the votes cast.