

24th CONFERENCE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEAS
HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION
MBSHC24
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Paper for Consideration by MBSHC24

Assigning one permanent quota from MBSHC to BASWG member states to be represented in the Council.

Submitted by:	Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Türkiye and Ukraine
Executive Summary:	This paper addresses the lack of permanent representation of the BASWG on the IHO Council. It recommends the allocation of permanent quotas from the MBSHC to a BASWG member state for representation, aiming to ensure diverse perspectives and equitable decision-making in global hydrographic initiatives.
Related Documents:	-BASWG17 List of Actions and Decisions -IHO CL 43/2022 Rev1 dated 07 November 2022 -MBSHC CL 03/2023 dated 06 February 2023 -Convention on the IHO -Statutes of MBSHC
Related Projects:	

1. Introduction / Background

The IHO, through a Strategic Planning Working Group, undertook an extensive review of the Organization from 1997 to 2007. As a result, in 2005 the 3rd Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference (EIHC-3) agreed a range of amendments to the Convention on the IHO, and in 2007 the 17th International Hydrographic Conference (IHC-17) adopted the supporting Basic Documents, and several organizational and administrative changes.

The amendments and changes included the establishment of a Council. The establishment of the Council is covered in Article VI of the Convention on the IHO. It is further described in Article 16 of the General Regulations.

In describing the composition of the Council, clause (a) of Article VI of the Convention on the IHO states:

One fourth of, but not less than thirty, Member states shall take seats on the Council, the first two thirds of whom shall take up their seats on a regional basis and the remaining one third on the basis of hydrographic interests, which shall be defined in the General Regulations.

Clause (c) of Article 16 of the General Regulations then states, among other things:

The remaining one-third of the Council seats shall be held by Member States that have the greatest interest in hydrographic matters and have not been selected under the procedure described in sub-paragraph (b) above. The definition of what constitutes an interest in hydrographic matters shall be reconsidered at the latest at the second Assembly meeting. Meanwhile, the scale by which an interest in hydrographic matters is measured shall be national flag tonnage. ...

2. Analysis/Discussion

BASWG is constituted within the framework of the Mediterranean and the Black Seas Hydrographic Commission (MBSHC). The main objective of the WG is to consider the

hydrographic, cartographic, navigational and maritime safety information needs (MSI) and requirements of the States in the region and coordinate the appropriate actions.

The members of the BASWG are Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russian Federation, Türkiye and Ukraine (6/22 in MBSHC).

According to the General Regulations of the IHO Article 16:

“Two-thirds of Council seats shall be held by Member States selected by the RHCs.”

“The remaining one-third of Council seats shall be held by Member States that have the greatest interest in hydrographic matters...”

The resultant distribution of the 20 seats on the Council allocated to the RHCs was informed with IHO CL 43/2022 Rev1. The Number of Council seats allocated to the MBSHC according to that letter is 3.

As per Rule no. 5 of the Rules for the selection of Member States from MBSHC to the IHO defined in the Annex to the Statutes of the MBSHC, the highest voted candidates were selected to the IHO Council. Therefore, the MBSHC Chair announced with the MBSHC CL 03/2023 the selection of Croatia, France and Italy to occupy seats in the IHO Council 2023-2026.

3. Conclusions

The BASWG constitutes a significant portion of the total membership within the MBSHC. Recent events unfolding in the Black Sea region have underscored its critical importance in the field of maritime transport and hydrography once more. It's important to understand that the Black Sea has its own distinctive features, arrangements, and a sense of privacy. We think that understanding and unveiling these distinctive characteristics is crucial. Therefore, we emphasize the importance of ensuring continuous representation of BASWG on the IHO Council.

4. Recommendations

We believe that the issue of BASWG representation within IHO Council is crucial for ensuring diverse perspectives and equitable decision-making in the hydrographic field. The observation that the BASWG lacks permanent representation on the IHO Council highlights a potential gap in the representation of its member countries' interests and perspectives. Therefore, we recommend assigning one permanent quota from MBSHC to BASWG member states to be represented in the Council

5. Justification and Impacts

Assigning one permanent quota from MBSHC to BASWG member states to be represented in the Council could help bridge the representation gap and ensure that the diverse perspectives and interests of BASWG member countries are adequately considered within the IHO Council. This would not only enhance the inclusivity and fairness of decision-making processes but also contribute to more comprehensive and effective global hydrographic initiatives.

6. Action Required of MBSHC

The MBSHC is invited to consider the proposal.