

24th MEETING OF THE IHO
MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEAS HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION
MBSHC24
Constanta, Romania (2 - 4 July 2024)

Report of the IHO-EU network working group (IENWG)

Submitted by:	Greece
Related Documents:	MoU signed on 23 rd April 2012 between IHO and EC 10 th anniversary of the MoU between IHO and EU (6 May 2022): https://maritime-forum.ec.europa.eu/en/node/7175
Related Projects:	/

Chair:	Pierre-Yves Dupuy, France
Vice-Chair:	/
Secretary:	Adeline Souf, France
Members:	ARHC, represented by Denmark BSHC, represented by Sweden EAAtHC, represented by France MACHC, represented by France MBSHC, represented by Greece NHC, represented by Norway NSHC, represented by Germany SAIHC, represented by France
Observers:	Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Ireland, Iceland (non EU), Italy, Latvia, Lithuania (non IHO), Malta, Montenegro (non EU), Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, IHO Secretariat

Since the plenary meeting of February 2018, all EU/EEA HOs receive all documents and invitations to participate to the meetings of IENWG.

In Nov 2023 Adeline Souf (France) replaced Corine Locket (France) as Secretary of the IENWG.

In May 2024 Pierre-Yves Dupuy (France) was re-elected as chair of the IENWG.

Meetings Held During Reporting Period

10th anniversary of the MoU between the IHO and the EU, Brussels, Belgium, 6 May 2022

IENWG-13 – Brest, France, 23 May 2023

IENWG-14 – Svendborg, Denmark, 29 May 2024

Introduction / Background

In application of the **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** signed on 23 April 2012, the European Commission (EC) and the IHO have agreed to provide a framework ensuring a continuing liaison between the two sides in the specific areas of common interest including surveillance activities, offshore renewable energy, maritime spatial planning, integrated coastal zone management, marine observation and data networks, implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, marine research, data standards (including those specified by INSPIRE Directive 2007/2/EC) and co-operation with third countries.

Analysis / Discussion

The first decade of collaboration has been fruitful with the achievement of the digital seabed map, at the heart of the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet), thanks to the concerted approach of European hydrographic offices (HOs) joined by other scientific institutes. The results have been fully incorporated in the global IHO and IOC GEBCO digital map of the seabed.

IHO can provide answers to the EC expectations for best practice and standards in the seabed, knowledge for understanding the climate change, protecting the biodiversity, cutting pollution and building the Digital Twin of the Ocean.

In addition to EMODnet, the EU Member States HOs work hand in hand on subjects of interest to the EC, such as the blue economy, maritime spatial planning, safety of navigation and e-navigation.

Work Program

The IHO-EU Network WG (IENWG) set up four (4) working tracks to tackle the challenges identified for the next phase of collaboration: Marine policies, Data Collection, e-navigation standards (IHO S100 based products) and Capacity Building.

1) EU maritime policies:

The IENWG can be a resource for the EC with its technical expertise, enhancing the actual dialogue. The IENWG closely follow the change in data policies and new policies related to marine observations and are usually actors or **relay** of those to the national representatives.

The IENWG members relay and liaise with the IHO and act as a link with the European Commission and the Sea Basins relevant to the EC.

2) Data collection:

The IENWG secretary is co-chairing the EMODnet Vision 2035 as the IENWG members are recognized as being some strategic data provider and well acknowledged with the upcoming challenges.

The IENWG members, relay and liaise with the IHO, of the exploring the use of new technologies and best practices to collect and process hydrographic data.

3) Development of the S-100 hydrographic products and services in Europe:

It is important to keep focusing on digitization of the maritime infrastructure to ensure safety and environmental issues and to present useful results to end-users and citizens. Global standardization of digital flows is necessary and continued support in the e-navigation area is important.

The IHO Member States will deliver products which are beyond the nautical charts. The upcoming IHO S100 standards are aiming not only at improving the safety and efficiency of navigation, but

also to the sustainable use of the ocean resource via its products which are related to the environment.

4) **Capacity Building:**

IHO has a long history in capacity building activities in countries that are essential in support of the blue water economy, navigation safety and the protection of biodiversity. IHO is keen to be associated with EU actions.

The IENWG members would like to convey this message within the EC and needs to be supported by our Contact Point to address the right institutions, including the European Foreign Policies institution.

Conclusions and Recommended Actions

The involvement of the IHO secretariat would definitely be an asset for the promotion activities at high level in the EC. Once the new Commission is settled, the IENWG would like to arrange a high-level meeting with the EC.

Action Required of MBSHC

The MBSHC is invited to note the report.