

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE
for the
MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEAS (REGION F) INTERNATIONAL CHARTING
COORDINATION WORKING GROUP (REGION F ICCWG)

Adopted on July 4th 2024 (MBSHC24)

1. Background

1.1 The Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission recognizes the need to actively develop and maintain official nautical charts, in both paper and digital formats that support ships engaged on international voyages in its region. Accordingly, it appoints and directs a working group to undertake this task. The working group shall be named the Region F International Charting Coordination Working Group (Region F ICCWG).

1.2 The Region F ICCWG is a subsidiary body of the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission. It shall conduct its work in accordance with these Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure. The Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission may clarify or amend these generic Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for the ICCWG in order for these to be made specifically relevant and applicable to its region. Its work is subject to the Hydrographic Commission's approval.

2. Terms of Reference

2.1 To study issues related to nautical charting of the region, in particular to coordinate the allocation of production responsibilities for paper and electronic charts (INT charts and ENC), that support ships engaged on international voyages.

2.2 To propose development and maintain an integrated international chart and ENC scheme for the region.

2.3 To reach decisions on the maintenance and updating of the documents for which it is responsible.

2.4 To provide advice on chart schemes to individual Member States, in order to encourage adherence to IHO charting regulations, specifications and standards, and to promote and coordinate the production of international (INT) charts and ENC.

2.5 To develop proposals for new or amended INT chart schemes to meet evolving user needs (for example, the introduction of new or amended routing measures, the confirmed developments of international ports).

2.6 To coordinate the development and maintenance of ENC schemes, by regional agreement, and to ensure consistent parameters are used in the compilation of ENC.

2.7 To act as the custodian and maintainer of official, version-controlled catalogues, depicting the status of published and planned charts, subject to formal review and approval by Member States of the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission. However, the ENC catalogues may be maintained by RENCs subject to Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission's approval.

2.8 To provide advice to the IHO Secretariat on any amendments required to maintain S-11 Part B: International Charts-Web Catalogue (for example, scale, limits, numbering) and, as appropriate, any corresponding ENC catalogue.

2.9 To provide advice to Chair NCWG and IHO Secretariat on any amendments required to maintain IHO Publication S-11.

2.10 To undertake professional consideration of new information of interest to the Region F ICCWG that may impact its business and responsibilities.

2.11 To manage the review of new editions or publications of INT charts, to check their compliance with IHO standards and to report at every forthcoming Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission Conference.

3. Rules of Procedure

3.1 Membership is open to all members and associate members (Member States) of the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission wishing to be represented. Each Member State shall be represented through a single point of contact. Noting the technical nature of the Group's work, participation should be limited to representatives of Hydrographic Offices concerned with nautical charting.

3.2 The Coordinator will monitor membership to encourage active participation by all chart-producing Member States within the Region.

3.3 Non-Governmental International Organizations recognized by the IHO may participate as observers in Region F ICCWG activities, where matters of special interest to the NGIO concerned are being considered (IHO Resolution 5/1957 as amended, rule 6.c refers).

3.4 The Coordinator role shall be held by a Member State participating in the Region F ICCWG. The election of the Coordinator, or the reconfirmation of the existing Coordinator, shall be decided by the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission at an ordinary meeting or, where a meeting is not convened, by correspondence. Election shall be determined by a simple majority of Member States present and voting (or responding, where determined by correspondence).

3.5 Normally, a Vice-Coordinator is not required to be appointed. However, if a Vice-Coordinator is appointed by the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission:

- Election to the post will be by the same method as for the Coordinator;
- The Vice-Coordinator shall act as the Coordinator, with the same powers and duties, in the event that the Coordinator is unable to carry out the duties;
- The Coordinator and Vice-Coordinator will decide between them the organization of the work entailed in these posts, or these may be defined by the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission.

3.6 Conduct of business will be primarily by correspondence. If meetings are required, these should be planned with due regard to efficiency and obtaining the fullest membership support (for example, by holding meetings in association with meetings of the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission). In the case of a virtual format, the draft agenda should be limited to topics within the remit of the Region F ICCWG (chart schemes iaw Art 2.2) and avoid chart proposals that fall within the schemes of more than one producer or coastal state. All members shall inform the Coordinator in advance of their intention to attend meetings of the Region F ICCWG. A draft agenda and meeting documents will be issued prior to Region F ICCWG meeting (correspondence by e-mail only). The working language shall be English.

3.7 New INT chart and ENC proposals subject to Region F ICCWG approval shall be submitted to Region F ICCWG. Proposals shall be circulated for review and comment to:

- All Members of the Region F ICCWG and, when appropriate, all members of the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission through the Chair of the MBSHC,

- Charting coordinators of neighboring Regional Hydrographic Commissions, if the proposals impact several regions INT schemes,
- Hydrographic Offices producing or printing charts of the Region affected by the proposal,
- The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat, if subject matter expert advice is required.

A chart proposal encompassing the coasts of other coastal States than the submitting State or impacting the existing scheme of other coastal States shall not be submitted unless it has beforehand been endorsed by the concerned coastal States.

Proposals shall be approved under silence procedure as follows:

- Proposals shall be circulated through a dedicated letter for review and comment All proposals submitted are independent from each other,
- The circular letter initiates the silence procedure, with a reasonable stated deadline to reply,
- Comments, if any, must be provided before the deadline specified in the circular letter (date of reception by the coordinator, electronic copy accepted),
- If one Member State wishes to reject a particular proposal, it needs to provide the Coordinator with a comment on the corresponding proposal before the stated deadline. Comments on one or several proposals can be provided under the same silence procedure,
- Proposals with no comment are deemed to be accepted,
- To be considered valuable, a comment shall be based on solely accurate technical arguments on the proposal(s) it addresses, in accordance with relevant publications (see section 3.14).

The outcome of each silence procedure will be circulated by the Regional Charting Coordinator, summarizing the status of each draft proposals with related comments.

3.8 Full Consensus is required for approval of any decision, prior its implementation. Besides, any decision can be reconsidered, provided valid technical arguments are presented. All decisions made at Region F ICCWG meetings or through silence procedure will be reported to MBSHC Member States afterwards.

3.9 Where required, a Work Plan should be developed and maintained. This should include task priorities and the expected time frames for progressing tasks. The Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission may delegate tasks to the Region F ICCWG as it sees fit; it is also available to provide guidance on request (for example, in respect of priorities).

3.10 The Coordinator will report progress to meetings of the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission and at other reasonable times, on request. Reports shall include but are not limited to:

- An updated Regional INT Chart Catalogue,
- An update of the ENC Catalogue relevant to the Region (if not undertaken by RENCs),
- Changes made to the scheme of INT Charts for the Region, approved by the ICCWG since the last report, together with a summary of reasons,
- Changes made to the ENC scheme for the Region, approved by the ICCWG since the last report, together with a summary of reasons,
- An updated Work Plan (if used).

3.11 All participants, including Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission Members and Associate Members where not directly represented in the Region F ICCWG, shall keep the Coordinator informed of any information relevant to the Region F ICCWG. This may include:

- Submitting proposals for new INT Charts, or amendments (for example, to limits, scale of portrayal) to existing INT Charts, in the Region,
- Requesting new INT Chart numbers for new charts that are planned,

- Reporting the status of production of international charts (INT Charts and ENC);
- Hard copy or online access to their national catalogue,
- Provision of new editions or publications of INT charts to the Regional Charting Coordinator three months prior to every Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission Conference.

3.12 Region F ICCWG members shall respond in a timely manner to all reasonable requests for advice from the Coordinator (for example, requests for updating the Catalogue of the INT Charts of the Region, change in points of contact, Region F ICCWG circular letters), abiding by all reasonable stated deadlines.

3.13 The Region F ICCWG may establish sub groups for specific targeted tasks as deemed necessary.

3.14 The work shall be done in accordance with:

- IHO Resolution 1/1997 as amended: 'Principles of the Worldwide Electronic Navigational, Chart Database (WEND)', to ensure a world-wide consistent level of high-quality, updated ENCs,
- IHO Publication S-57: 'IHO Transfer Standard for Digital Hydrographic Data',
- IHO Publication S-11 Part A: 'Guidance for the Preparation and Maintenance of International (INT) Charts and ENC Schemes',
- IHO Publication S-4: 'Chart Specifications of the IHO and Regulations for International (INT) Charts', which provides the internationally-agreed product specification for both national and international (INT) charts,
- IHO Publication S-65: 'Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs) "Production, Maintenance and Distribution Guidance"'.
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- IHO Publication S-101: 'ENC Product Specification'.
- IHO Resolution 1/2021 - Principles of the WEND for S-1XX Products (WEND-100 Principles)

Reference: HSSC1 Meeting (Singapore, 22-24 October 2009)
MBSHC16 Conference (Odessa, 22-24 September 2009)
IRCC7 Conference (Mexico, June 2015)
IHO Publication S-11 Part A Edition 3.1.0 (February 2018)
MBSHC20 Conference (4-6 July 2017)
MBSHC24 Conference (2-4 July 2024)