

## NORTH INDIAN OCEAN HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION

11-13 FEBRUARY 2025, BANGKOK, THAILAND

### Report of the IHO Secretariat

**Submitted by:** IHO Secretariat

**Executive Summary:** This paper reports on activities of the IHO Secretariat that may impact the work of the North Indian Ocean Hydrographic Commission.

#### *Commission Specific Information, Opportunities, Events, and Recommendations*

##### Technical Program and S-100 Implementation

1. As presented in IHO CL 2/2025, operational editions of Phase 1 Product Specifications (PSs), S-101, S-102, S-104, S-111, and S-129 were approved by Member State vote. The HSSC expects to seek Member State approval for the remaining PSs in Phase 1 in 2025, including S-98, S-124 and S-128.
2. The NIOHC is kindly requested to monitor IHO Circular Letter distribution and vote accordingly at their earliest convenience. (<https://iho.int/en/circular-letters>)
3. As 2025 is the first year to see the availability of operational versions of S-100 based PSs, it is important for hydrographic offices to begin producing S-100 data. It is additionally important for hydrographic offices to work closely with their regulatory agencies to help ensure a smooth transition to S-100 in the IMO system. In 2025 the NCSR 12 agenda will include a new output on the “Development of guidance to establish a framework for data distribution and global IP-based connectivity between shore-based facilities and ships for ECDS S-100 products” which will be very important for the future of S-100 product distribution. This guidance should be completed within one session and would benefit from the technical input of hydrographic offices. In conjunction with NCSR 12, the IHO intends to run a half-day pre-meeting workshop with stakeholders and hydrographic offices in London at the IMO headquarters.
4. The approval process for the operational version of Phase 1 product specification under the S-100 Roadmap is progressing as planned. In Accordance with the timeline presented in IMO MSC (MSC.530(106), Hydrographic Offices (HOs) are expected to produce and distribute Phase 1 products, including S-101 ENCs, as early as 2026. Therefore, each HO should establish the coverage areas and schedule for Phase 1 products through RHCs and provide this information to the IHO via INToGIS III, which is scheduled to open in Feb. 2025.

##### Opportunities for Training and Capacity Building

5. Empowering Women in Hydrography - A webpage (<https://iho.int/en/basic-cbssc-ewh>) has been set up for this project. Please monitor the website, in addition to upcoming Circular Letters for EWH opportunities. Examples include:
  - NOAA (USA) has made 3 opportunities for selected candidates to spend on a cruise (approximately two to three weeks underway) aboard a NOAA hydrographic ship gaining hands-on experience. Ideally candidates have been early to mid-level hydrographers with a strong background and continued interest in hydrography. **Applications are typically due mid-March.**
  - Shom (France) offered two opportunities (French proficiency required) in 2024 associated with the EWH project to participate in the hydrographic training programme at Shom in partnership

with the French speaking Hydrographic Association (AFHy) to obtain the Hydro3 certification and offered three opportunities to participate in hydrographic and oceanographic survey activities aboard two Shom (France) research vessels. **Applications are typically due in late January.**

- Two opportunities for the Master of Science Programme in Hydrographic Science at the University of Southern Mississippi (USA), sponsored by the Republic of Korea 2025/2026, was announced in IHO CL 34/2024. **Application closed on 31 December 2024.**
- 10 opportunities for the IHO - Republic of Korea Category “B” Nautical Cartography Programme, Republic of Korea, Busan, was announced in IHO CL 45/2024. **Application closes on 14 February 2025.**
- Seven opportunities for the IHO - Nippon Foundation Geospatial Marine Analysis and Cartography (GEOMAC) Project, UKHO, Taunton, UK. **Applications are usually due in March.**
- The IHO-IOC-Nippon Foundation/GEBCO Training Program leading to a Graduate Certificate in Ocean Bathymetry at the University of New Hampshire (UNH), USA **Applications are usually due on in April.**

### Upcoming Events

6. United Nations Ocean Conference 2025 – The UN Ocean Conference will be held in Nice, France between 9 and 13 June. The IRCC will be held during the adjacent week in order to help encourage Member State participation from hydrographic offices.

### IHO Portal

7. The IHO Portal was made operational on January 6, 2025 as announced in CL 44/2024. This new working platform will centralize meeting registration and the management of working documents supporting and resulting from the activities of the various IHO organs and subordinate bodies through individual accounts. A dual use period has been agreed, allowing both the current system and the new IHO Portal to be used for the registration on IHO events from October 2024 to the end of March 2025. After 31 March 2025, all event preparations should exclusively use the new IHO Portal.

8. The new IHO Portal can be accessed through a link under the “Document Archive” and a “Quick links” on the IHO homepage. All users must have an individual IHO Portal account to access this platform. A guidance document on creating an account and registering for meetings is provided via [this link](https://portal.iho.int). IHO Portal Access - [https:// portal.iho.int](https://portal.iho.int)

### Status of IHO Membership in the NIOHC

9. IHO membership now stands at 100 with two suspended. Current United Nations Member States are not required to seek IHO Member State approval in order to join the IHO. The IHO Secretariat, in cooperation with the Department of External Relations of the Government of Monaco, stands ready to assist non-IHO Member States with the IHO application process for membership and is willing to pay High Level Visits to those States in the region which are not yet IHO Member States. The IHO respectfully invites non-IHO Member States to accede to the IHO Convention. The Commission is invited to review its information in P-5 and C-55 through the IHO Online Form system. The status of the data in the IHO Country Information Database concerning the Commission’s Member States is as follows:

## NIOHC

country/area name	P-5	C-55
Bangladesh	May 2023	March 2019
Egypt	April 2023	July 2021
India	February 2024	July 2024
Indonesia	March 2024	March 2019
Myanmar	September 2019	March 2019
Pakistan	January 2025	June 2024
Saudi Arabia	June 2022	June 2019
Sri Lanka	June 2024	June 2023
Thailand	August 2024	January 2025
United Kingdom	August 2024	August 2022

### Recommendations and Invitations for the Commission's Consideration

- a. Committees are requested to respond to IHO CLs in a timely manner;
- b. Consider participation in IMO S-100 implementation decisions either in person or through coordination with national regulatory authorities;
- c. Become familiar with, and begin using, the IHO Portal;
- d. Support the continuation of the EWH project through financial and / or in-kind support and to provide proposals via the specific webpage (<https://iho.int/en/basic-cbasc-ewh>);
- e. Provide the IRCC Chair with an update regarding the measurement of those SPI of regional interest allocated to IRCC;
- f. Provide contributions to the IHO e-Learning Center at KHOA;
- g. Ensure the timely provision of MSI through NAV and MET Area Coordinators;
- h. Make data freely available for inclusion in the DCDB and the widest possible use, in accordance with IHO Resolution 1/2017;
- i. Review entries in the IHO Yearbook and C-55 to provide the IHO Secretariat with the appropriate updates or to report no change (CL 20/2019);
- j. *in accordance with WENDWG 14/23, acknowledge that the S-100 strategic approach to support and attract end-users for the IHO is not to complete the full S-101 coverage first, then consider the other products... but to engage the IHO into the development of a new distribution model, including cybersecurity and integrity measures and ensuring that end-users can easily access and get all S-100 Phase I products and ENDS in confidence along a given route;*
- k. *Based on the above, that S-1xx Coordinators take appropriate actions (Work Plans for individual Phase I Products ENDS), by anticipation of the availability of Ed.2.0.0 Product Specs and consider testing*
- l. *Establish the coverage areas and schedule for Phase 1 products through RHCs and provide this information to the IHO via INTGIS III, which is scheduled to open in Feb. 2025.*
- m. *Support the S-100 communication strategy towards end-users, manufacturers, IMO, addressing readiness and expected geographic coverage of S-100 based products and data services in the following years, from 2026 onwards (still to be developed) (WENDWG 13/08 and WENDWG 14/20 refer);*
- n. *Consider increased active participation of some IHO Members (see inclusivity) in the activities of the IHO in general; and*
- o. *Please note this report.*

**\*\* See Annex A for additional information and subsequent recommendations from around the IHO. The recommendations presented above are for the primary consideration of the NIOHC.**

## **IHO Information**

### **Decisions of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the IHO Assembly**

10. Decision 8: The Assembly agreed on the continuation of conduct of the annual Work Programmes on the basis of the Strategic Plan in place for 2021 – 2026 and directed the Council accordingly. Approved that Goal 1 of the IHO Strategic Plan and its targets shall have the highest priority in the implementation of the 2024–2026 Work Programme; directed IRCC to provide guidance to the MSDI Working Group on the implementation of Goal 2/Target 2.1 through supporting national and regional MSDIWG efforts via RHCs and the continued provision of global thematic layers by means of the existing IHO GIS infrastructure (trusted source, standardized, interoperable); tasked the Secretariat, assisted by the HSSC and IRCC chairs, to continue to measure the effectiveness and the efficiency of the three Work Programmes implementation by means of the Strategic Performance Indicators (SPI) as endorsed by the Council; and tasked the Council with the development of the revised Strategic Plan to be put in place for 2027 – 2032 in compliance with the Planning Cycle and to submit the result for adoption by A-4 in 2026.
11. Decision 9: The Assembly directed the IHO Secretariat to implement the gender-inclusive language in M-1 as a first step and invited all IHO Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups, Project Teams and Regional Hydrographic Commissions to review their TORs and ROPs in application of the new IHO Resolution.
12. Decision 13: The Assembly took note and approved the fundamental strategic change introduced by the S-100 framework and approved the Dual Fuel Concept for S-100 ECDIS.
13. Decision 14: The Assembly recognized the need to establish the S-100 Infra Center and approved the foundation of a new Project Team under HSSC with a three-year work plan including the establishment of the S-100 Infra Center and to prepare for the actual implementation period with consideration of the possible location of the Center; and tasked Council to report to the 4th IHO Assembly the progress of its three year operation including the establishment of the S-100 Infra Center.
14. Decision 19: The Assembly approved the proposed IHO Resolution on the recognition of the Southern Ocean; took note of the consequences on the limits of some global sea areas as a result of recognition of the Southern Ocean; and endorsed the fact that this new Resolution is without prejudice to or limitation of the views of the IHO, any other international body or any IHO.
15. Decision 20: The Assembly recognized the important global maritime issues facing the hydrographic community worldwide and that addressing these issues will require expanded global hydrographic capacity; approved the proposal to establish an ad hoc Project Team under IRCC to explore the possible establishment of reliable alternative funding for activities including capacity building and GEBCO; and authorized Council via IRCC to review progress reports from the Project Team at least annually and provide guidance to the Project Team in preparation to report out to 4<sup>th</sup> Assembly (A4).
16. Decision 27: The Assembly approved the increase of the value of the Member States contribution share by 3% to 4,145.05 Euro (~120 Euro per share) in one step taking effect in 2024.

### **Outcomes of the 8th Meeting of the IHO Council**

17. The Council considered the approved IHO Work Programme and Budget for 2025 and took the following decisions/implemented the following actions of interest of the RHC:
18. Decision C8/11: The Council endorsed the principle of creating IHO S-100 Sea Trial Areas around the world (Canada on St Lawrence River).
19. Action C8/12: Council tasked the IHO ISO Cell through HSSC to consider the possibility of

developing some Guidelines for IHO S-100 Sea Trials Areas.

20. Decision C8/17: The Council noted the achievements of the Joint IHO-Singapore Lab (conversion S-57 to S-101, S-131 Database, Interoperability S-101 and S-102 on a prototype S-100 ECDIS, availability of ENCs S-57 and S-101 on a dual-fuel ECDIS onboard the Italian Tall Ship Amerigo Vespucci for her circumnavigation, etc.).

21. Decision C8/21: The Council noted that many RHCs reported on the importance of CB activities and the need for additional funds especially to support S-1xx service developments in their regions.

22. Decision C8/22: The Council supported by IRCC to develop a proposal on the future framework for an IHO Programme (incl. Gender Balance in Hydrography) as part of the revised IHO Strategic Plan to be submitted to A-4.

23. Action C8/25: The Council noted the request from UN-GGIM to reinforce the relation between the MSDIWG and the Marine Geospatial Working Group of UN-GGIM, for efficiency reasons, and invited MSDIWG through the IRCC to propose a way forward.

24. Action C8/26: The Council tasked the MSDIWG through the IRCC, in liaison with the NIPWG, Protected Seas, ECDIS OEMs, GIS software manufacturers, the UN, IUCN, and IHO Member States, to coordinate a pilot project aiming to demonstrate the operational implementation of S-122.

25. Decision/Action C8/27a&b: The Council noted the update on the activities of the IHO Fund Generation PT, other initiatives regarding additional funding (RENCs, IENWG and the Joint IHO/IMO/IALA/IOC/WMO/FIG/AIEA/IMPA CB initiative in particular) and invited the IRCC to expand the scope of the Fund Generation Team to consider options for charging the IHO digital standards services.

26. Decision C8/33: The Council approved the proposed amendments to Annex 4 of the S-100 Roadmap (Dual Fuel Concept for S-100 ECDIS).

27. Decision C8/37 – Action C8/38: The Council agreed on the interim establishment of the IHO Infrastructure Centre in the Republic of Korea (ROK) starting in 2025 under the supervision of the IHO Secretariat and HSSC (supported by the S-100 ICE PT), and that the permanent establishment of the IHO Infrastructure Centre in the ROK should be finally decided by the Assembly (A-4).

28. Decision C8/45: The Council noted the proposed theme for the 2025 World Hydrography Day by the Secretary-General which is: “Seabed Mapping: Enabling Ocean Action”.

29. Action C8/48: The Council welcomed the proposal from the IHO Secretariat and agreed with the proposed engagement in the Blue Economy and Finance Forum June 2025 in Monaco and UNOC 2025 in Nice, encouraged Member States to take advantage of the alignment of IRCC-17 to the Blue Economy and Finance Forum and the UNOC 2025, and to engage early with national delegations to participate accordingly.

30. Decision C8/52: The Council invited the Capacity Building Sub-Committee (CBSC) through the IRCC to consider priorities of additional CB activities for 2025 covered by the 2024 savings with a focus on S-100 related CB activities.

31. Decision C8/57: The Council established the Strategic Plan Review Working Group (SPRWG), agreed to nominate US (Benjamin Evans), NZ (Adam Greenland), and DK (Hendrik Justus Stang) as Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary of the SPRWG, respectively, and endorsed the proposed TORs and ROPs of the SPRWG. With the IHO CLs 38/2024 and 41/2024 the SPRWG was established and the ToRs approved.

32. Action C8/62: The Council endorsed the principles of the proposed IHO Resolution on “Inclusive participation in IHO meetings” submitted by the ad hoc drafting group and invited the group to add an Annex with (minimum) practical Guidelines derived from the outcome of the survey to assist Member States to host and facilitate online meetings. IHO Resolution and associated Guidelines will be sent to the IHO Member States via CL for their approval.

33. Decision C8/72 – 73 – 74: The Council commended the Head Operational Safety, Maritime Safety Division, for his very enlightening presentation on S100 Implementation from an IMO

perspective. Compliance with the S-100 standards would be required not only for ECDIS systems, but for many other types of equipment used on board ship. In the immediate future, the IMO Maritime Safety Committee would consider proposals for a new output to develop guidance for a framework for data distribution and global internet protocol (IP) based connectivity, to standardize the exchange of dynamic data between ship and shore over the internet. Compliance with the IEC standard 63173-2 on secure communication between ship and shore (SECOM) was recommended. Future events that are in the interest of IHO Member States: a. MSC 109 (2-6 Dec 2024) – b. NCSR 12 (13-22 May 2025) – c. HTW 11 (10-14 Feb 2025) – d. MSC 110 (18-27 June 2025).

### **Technical Program**

34. As presented in CL 2/2025, operational editions of Phase 1 standards, S-101, S-102, S-104, S-111, and S-129 were approved by Member State vote. The HSSC expects to seek Member State approval for additional standards in 2025, including S-98 and S-128.
35. As 2025 is the first year to see the availability of operational versions of S-100 standards, it is important for hydrographic offices to begin producing S-100 data. Hydrographic Offices should consider producing national implementation plans for S-100 in conjunction with their RHC S-100 Coordinators.
36. It is additionally important for hydrographic offices to work closely with their regulatory agencies to help ensure a smooth transition to S-100 in the IMO system. In 2025 the NCSR 12 agenda will include a new output on the “Development of guidance to establish a framework for data distribution and global IP-based connectivity between shore-based facilities and ships for ECDS S-100 products” which will be very important for the future of S-100 product distribution. This guidance should be completed within one session and would benefit from the technical input of hydrographic offices. In conjunction with NCSR 12, the IHO intends to run a half-day pre-meeting workshop with stakeholders and hydrographic offices in London at the IMO headquarters.
37. Member States, in particular those not directly involved in the activities of Working Groups and Committees, are kindly reminded that, unless Member State Circular Letter votes are issued in accordance with the timeline presented, the goals outlined in the Roadmap for the S-100 Implementation Decade will not be met. We must follow the deadlines presented in this schedule in order to meet the IMO requirements with regard to the implementation of S-100 ECDIS (Decisions A3/07, A3/13 and IHO Resolution 1/2023 – S-100 Implementation refer)

### **Capacity Building Programme**

38. In 2024 the CBWP has returned to the pre-COVID practice of not carrying over incomplete activities from year-to-year. Significant increment of the funds for non-earmarked activities was received from Republic of Korea for 2025 (50% more than in 2024 and equal to 60,000 €). to support several projects including the IHO CB WP IC-ENC created an “Opt-in fund”. With this fund IC-ENC decided to support 3 activities of the 2025 CBWP related to the S-100 Implementation, for a total of 84,000 €.
39. Accounting with the estimated savings of the non-earmarked 2024 CBWP activities of about 122,000 €, the 2025 CBWP has 395,000 euros for non-earmarked projects and 790,000 € for earmarked projects. The total of funds available for 2025 is 1,185,000€. NIOHC has three funded CB activities in the 2025CBWP:
  - P-06 - Seminar on Raising Awareness of Hydrography
  - P-10 - ENC Quality and conversion course (S-57 to S-101 Conversion). Shared activity between NIOHC and RSAHC
  - P-14 - Marine Spatial Planning Workshop. Shared activity between NIOHC and RSAHC

40. The gap between the CB requested non-earmarked activities and those ones funded amounts to 335,000 € (188,000 € related to the S-100 Implementation), will be partially covered by the non-earmarked savings from the 2024 CBWP (estimated to be about 122,000 €).
41. On helping to fill the 2025 gap, several initiatives external to the IHO are in place at international level. The most important are as follows:
  - IRCC Fund Generation Project Team (see point 10): The PT is researching for options for charging the IHO digital standards services to increment the IHO CB Fund.
  - Join Capacity Building Coordination Meetings: The 13th Joint IHO/IMO/WMO/IOC/IALA/IAEA/FIG/IMPA Capacity Building Coordination Meeting was held at IHO, Monaco, 13-14 May 2024 to “Deliver as one”. The S-100 Implementation roadmap was proposed as Priority 1 deliverable.
  - IMO: IHO and IMO are discussing the possibility of having several activities – not yet funded by the 2025 CBWP – to be funded by IMO with a focus on the activities related to the S-100 implementation.
  - PRIMAR: A PRIMAR S-100 Capacity Building Fund with the purpose of supporting IHO S-100 related capacity building activities was established. Priority is given to the S-100 CB projects related to PRIMAR Members States, secondarily to official IHO S-100 CB projects/activities.
42. In 2024 were selected two candidates for 2024/2025 Master of Science Programme in Hydrographic Science at the University of Southern Mississippi (USA) (CL05/2024) and 10 candidates for the 2024 Cat B Hydrographic Survey Programme (CL 15/2024), both sponsored by the Republic of Korea. Seven candidates were also selected to participate in the 16th GEOMAC course in Cartography Cat B (see IHO CL 17/2024) sponsored by Nippon Foundation.

### **Empowering Women in Hydrography (EWH)**

43. The Empowering Women in Hydrography (EWH) project aims to contribute to more women participating equitably in the field of hydrography and assuming leadership roles within the hydrographic community. Due to additional and continued support from Member States (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Norway, UK and USA) the project continues as supported by the decisions of the IHO Council. 2024 and 2025 activities include:
  - 2 opportunities from SHOM (France) training in hydrography (HYDRO-3 / AFHy)
  - 3 opportunities to participate in hydrographic and oceanographic survey activities aboard two SHOM research vessels
  - Thanks to the Letter of Intent signed between the IHO and the WMU (World Maritime University of IMO), numerous activities on Gender Equality (workshop, webinars, etc.) and the participation at the UN Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona in April 2024 with a joint WMU-IHO Satellite Event “177. The People We Need for the Ocean We Want: Achieving Gender Equality for the Ocean Decade” were secured.
  - NOAA’s (USA) three opportunities for an at-sea experience/advanced training on NOAA hydrographic survey vessels (see IHO CL 22/2024)
  - Secondment to IC-ENC on e-Learning Creation (see IHO CL 23/2024)
  - 4 internships at the 2024 IBSC intersessional meeting (see IHO CL 36/2024)
  - Hiring an EWH assistant at the IHO Secretariat
  - Continuation of the Mentoring Programme
  - Funding support via UK Gender Balance Fund (see IHO CL 25/2024)
  - Establishment of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Project Team (see call issued with the IHO CL 42/2024).

### **IHO e-learning Center**

44. The IHO e-learning center, established by KHOA, is accessible at <https://elearning.iho.int>, or via the IHO website. With IHO CL 24/2023 the e-Learning Centre Steering Committee was established. In the absence of a General Manager a General Manager Group has formed from the SC who in collaboration with the System Manager will assess any submitted material (for suitability and technical compatibility), share it with the appropriate IHO WG, facilitate its uploading and make the SC aware of the material. A System Manager is provided by the Republic of Korea to maintain the system. Their continued support is greatly appreciated and will ensure that IHO Members and Non-Members will be able to access important learning opportunities. The SC continue to seek e-Learning material from Member States and partner organizations to be added to the e-Learning Centre platform.

45.

<b>Number of Participants Selected from NIOHC</b>	
EWB – NOAA Ship Experience (2024)	<b>0</b>
Shom Hydrographic Training and hydrographic and oceanographic surveys	<b>0</b>
ROK Master of Science USM	<b>0</b>
IHO-IOC-Nippon Foundation/GEBCO Graduate Cert UNH	<b>0</b>
ROK Category “B” Hydrographic Survey	<b>1</b>
NF 16 <sup>th</sup> GEOMAC course in Cartography Cat B	<b>1</b>

### **Maritime Safety Information Services**

46. The Worldwide Navigational Warning Service Sub Committee (WWNWS-SC) held their 16<sup>th</sup> meeting in Valparaiso, Chile between the 2 – 6 September 2024. IHO SPI 3.1.1 (target 90%) assessed Coastal States MSI capacity to be 89.6%. The SPI is measured yearly, based on the navigational warnings issued and on the MSI support provided by NAVAREAs. WWNWS has been working in cooperation with CBSC on a C-55 GIS project, considering the status of MSI among Member States to meet the MSI SPI. The C-55 GIS project has been completed and is now ready for incorporation into the INTToGIS III. On Iridium SafetyCast Implementation, three NAVAREAs (XIII, XX, XXI) are at ‘on trial’ status and one NAVAREA (V) remains at ‘planned’ status. Two courses on MSI were conducted in 2024.

47. S-124, Edition 2.0.0 has been submitted for approval and the WWNWS-SC has been investigating the use of IP based transfer methods for S-124 Products. The result of this work was the submission of a paper by Aus and New Zealand et al. to MSC 109 proposing a dedicated new NCSR output. The output “Development of guidance to establish a framework for data distribution and global IP-based connectivity between shore-based facilities and ships for ECDS S-100 products” has been added to the NCSR biennial work plan.

### **Crowd-Sourced Bathymetry**

48. The 15th meeting of the Crowdsourced Bathymetry Working Group was held from 23 – 25 April 2024, hosted by the IHO Secretariat in Monaco and attended by ~80 participants (20 in person). Following the publication of B-12 Ed. 3.0.0 (which had been the major focus of the CSBWG for several years), the January 2023 CSBWG13 meeting focused on a critical review of the group's operating mandate, as set out in the ToRs. In doing so, the CSBWG identified ten high level priority work areas and developed a multifaceted work plan. Much of the work in 2024 has been focused on implementing this work plan, including the addition of a new work item which specifically focuses on



the outward facing IHO CSB Initiative. This work item included the development of a structure and associated governance regime for the CSB Initiative, which hitherto had only been loosely defined. Interest in CSB continues to increase with the number of nations responding positively to IHO CL 21/2020 and IRCC CL 1/2020 now at 39. The key challenge to growing the 'crowd' continues to be the need for prior approval to participate in CSB enforced by some coastal states.

### **GEBCO and Seabed 2030**

49. The 41st Meeting of the GEBCO Guiding Committee took place in Nadi, Fiji, from 4 - 8 November, hosted by the Fiji Navy Hydrographic Office. 60 attendees from 14 IHO member states were present as well as representatives from the IOC-UNESCO and Industry. The primary focus of the meeting was the implementation of the newly endorsed GEBCO Strategy and Governance Review.

50. The meeting was held alongside the 6th Pacific Region Seabed 2030 Mapping Meeting. A broad range of topics were discussed, including Pacific maritime boundaries, the extended continental shelf, integrating ocean mapping for sustainable marine tourism and the specific needs of the Pacific Island Countries. Particular reference was made to the Republic of Kiribati becoming the 100th IHO Member State, and its internal hydrographic capacities development. The use of new technologies, such as satellite derived bathymetry and autonomous and uncrewed vehicles, together with successful exploration campaigns in the Pacific area to fill bathymetric data gaps were discussed. In terms of solutions, open data sharing and accessible marine digital products were identified as enablers to raise the awareness of seabed mapping and reduce the barriers between the states of the South West Pacific region.

### **IHO Portal**

51. The IHO Portal was made operational on January 6, 2025 as announced in CL 44/2024. This new working platform will centralize meeting registration and the management of working documents supporting and resulting from the activities of the various IHO organs and subordinate bodies through individual accounts.

52. To facilitate a smooth transition from the existing arrangements covering the same functionality, a dual use period has been agreed, allowing both the current system and the new IHO Portal to be used for the registration on IHO events from October 2024 to the end of March 2025. Detailed arrangements to set preferences on which one of the two to be used during the transition phase, will be coordinated with the Chairs of the IHO Working Groups and Project teams as well as the Regional Hydrographic Commissions. After 31 March 2025, all event preparations should exclusively use the new IHO Portal.

53. The new IHO Portal can be accessed through a link under the "Document Archive" and a "Quick links" on the IHO homepage. All users must have an individual IHO Portal account to access this platform. A guidance document on creating an account and registering for meetings is provided via this link. IHO Portal Access - [https:// portal.iho.int](https://portal.iho.int)

54. The existing IHO webpages presenting working documents for Committees, Working Groups and Project Teams for download will remain as-is during the dual use period, with the exception of meeting pages, which will display basic meeting information and a link to the IHO Portal. Any further changes will be communicated to each group in consultation with the Chair of the respective body.

55. To ensure efficient document management within the new IHO Portal, particularly for Working Groups and Project teams as well as the Regional Hydrographic Commissions secretaries, a training session will be held on 10 December 2024 as a remote event. Registration for this session will be available through the IHO Portal at the following link: <https://portal.iho.int/page/meetings/783>.

