

<p style="text-align:center"><b>STATUTES of the NORTH SEA HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION</b></p>
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As amended at the second (Stockholm), third (London), eighth (Härnösand), ninth (London), thirteenth (Oslo), twenty first (Stavanger), twenty ninth (Brest), thirty second (Dublin) and **thirty sixth (Norrköping)** Conferences of the Commission.

## **SECTION 1 – MEMBERSHIP**

### Article 1

1. The North Sea Hydrographic Commission (hereinafter called the Commission) is established in conformity with the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) Resolution 2/1997 as amended, regarding the Establishment of Regional Hydrographic Commissions.
2. The Commission shall be composed of the Hydrographers of the countries bordering the North Sea (hereinafter called the member), who have given notice of their willingness to participate in or co-operate with programmes or joint actions, studies and exchange of information etc., pertaining to the field of hydrography, in accordance with the procedure laid down in these Statutes. The area of the North Sea for the purposes of the Commission is defined as Area D (S4 A-204.8).

### Article 2

1. Membership of the Commission shall be open to all Hydrographers who belong to the countries described in Article 1 and who accept these Statutes and is accorded to the Hydrographers signatories to these Statutes, i.e. the Hydrographers of Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and United Kingdom, who shall also decide on the acceptance of any new members.
2. The IHO Secretariat shall be invited to attend the conferences of the Commission as permanent Observer.

## **SECTION 2 - PURPOSE**

### Article 3

1. The Commission shall promote and stimulate the furtherance of hydrographic and related knowledge and science, particularly regarding the North Sea and its entrances.
2. It shall foster and encourage the concept of close co-operation amongst its members with the object to obtain, with the available resources, maximum results beneficial to safety and international shipping.

### Article 4

The members shall co-operate whenever possible, and without influencing the internal affairs of their respective hydrographic offices or diminishing their national responsibilities, to exchange information regarding surveys, research, new developments and technical details, as well as organizational questions related to hydrography in its widest sense.

## Article 5

The members shall participate of their own free will, either actively or in an advisory or assisting capacity, in hydrographic programmes which require concerted action, whenever practicable and possible without appreciably disturbing the fulfilment of their national hydrographic requirements.

## **SECTION 3 - CONFERENCES**

### Article 6

1. Conferences of the Commission shall be held regularly, with the proviso that the interval between consecutive conferences is not to exceed three years. Generally, a physical conference will be held biannually and a virtual conference in between the physical conferences.

2. Time and place shall be decided upon by the members. Article 7

### Article 7

1. Conferences of the Commission shall be held in the countries to which the members belong.

2. Members shall preferably attend the conferences in person or otherwise send a representative. At the conferences, officers of the hydrographic department of the host country may be present.

3. Provided the members agree to do so, a conference can be conducted as a video conference and its decisions shall be as valid as the ones made during a plenary (physical) conference.

4. The Commission may create, for the examination and execution of specific working groups, committees composed of members interested in such matters.

## **SECTION 4 - CHAIR**

### Article 8

1. The conferences of the Commission are conducted by the Chair. Concluding the Conference, the acting Vice-Chair shall become the Chair and the successor of the Vice-Chair shall be elected from the members.

2. The Chair is responsible for the preparation of the agenda for the conference and for the organization of the conference.

3. Any expense necessary to organize and conduct the conference shall be met by the office of the Chair.

### Article 9

1. The Chair and the Vice-Chair shall hold office during the interval between consecutive physical conferences and shall act as the Bureau of the Commission during this interval.

2. The Chair shall open the next conference by giving a report of the activities and results

during the interval since the last conference.

#### Article 10

1. If the Chair is incapacitated during the interval between conferences, his successor or the deputy hydrographer shall take the chair for the rest of the period.
2. If the Chair is unable to act at the conference or any part thereof, the Chair shall be prepared by his successor or the deputy hydrographer.

#### Article 11

1. The Chair, as the Bureau of the Commission, shall prepare the minutes of the conference. These minutes shall contain a very general outline of the discussions that took place as well as the actions and decisions that were approved of.
2. The minutes shall be approved by the members who attended the conference.

### **SECTION 5 - AGENDA OF THE CONFERENCE**

#### Article 12

1. Proposals for putting items on the agenda for the next conference should be sent to the Chair at least two months prior to the date of the conference. Reports and submissions for the agenda items should be sent to the Chair a minimum of four weeks in advance of the conference. Papers submitted later can be considered for adoption in the agenda but may be given a lower priority, be postponed to the following conference or be handled by correspondence.
2. The Chair of the Commission shall prepare the final agenda.

#### Article 13

1. The final agenda should reach the members at least two weeks prior to the date of the conference.
2. At the beginning of each conference the Commission shall adopt the agenda for that conference.
3. The Commission may, during a conference, modify the order of items on the agenda.

### **SECTION 6 - DECISIONS**

#### Article 14

1. **Decisions** can only be arrived at by unanimous agreement, **including decisions on action items**.
2. Unanimously agreed **decisions** shall be part of the **minutes** of the conference.
3. Only the members or their representatives shall be allowed to vote.
4. Every member has one vote.

## SECTION 7 – SELECTION FOR THE IHO COUNCIL

### Article 15

1. **Annex A describes to procedure for the selection of Member States by the NSHC for the IHO council.**
2. **In order to prepare for the IHO Council, a standing agenda item during the NSHC conference will cover IHO Council matters. In years without a physical NSHC Conference, a 'video teleconference' (virtual) will be organised to especially address IHO Council matters.**

## SECTION 8 - MISCELLANEOUS

### Article 16

1. If urgent questions arise, which cannot be solved by correspondence, and the discussion of which cannot be postponed till the next conference, the Chair shall convene a special conference preferably as a video conference.
  2. A special conference shall be organized and conducted by the Chair, who shall not resign. The pertinent parts of articles 8 and 9 do not apply in case of special conference.
  3. To special conferences, experts others than the members can be invited. Article 17
1. In case unanimously agreed, common projects, such as publications etc. require the expenditure of money, expenses shall be divided equally between members.
  2. Such expenses shall, however, be kept as low as possible.
  3. Apart from that and the expenses mentioned in Article 8, sub-para. 3, subject to the provision in Article 16, sub-para. 2, every member shall meet their own expenses.

### Article 18

1. The Commission may propose to amend these Statutes. Such amendments shall be discussed during a conference and shall be considered **decisions** in the sense of Article 14, sub-paras. 1 and 2.
2. The Commission may determine - when circumstances call for such action - rules of procedure that shall be an Annex to these Statutes.

### Article 19

English shall be the working language of the Commission, as well as during the conferences.

### Article 20

1. The Commission shall not endeavour to become a separate group within the IHO and shall guard against any duplication of efforts regarding the IHO.
2. Any **decision or action** in which Member States of the IHO might have an interest shall be brought to the attention of the IHO Secretariat. The decision to do so shall be part of the **minutes of the conference**.

- 3. The Commission shall lay down its findings in the form of decisions and actions items, to be annexed to the minutes of the conference.**
- The Chair is responsible for the preparation of a list of extant decisions for each Conference, with an indication of their relevance. The Chair will update the list as part of the minutes of the Conference.**
  - The Chair is responsible for the preparation of a list of action items for each Conference, with a suggested way ahead. The Chair will update the list as part of the minutes of the Conference.**

Original: The Hague, 10th January 1963

Amended: Stockholm, 7th September 1963

London, 29th January 1965

Härnösand, 13th September 1973

London, 25th April 1975

Oslo, 2nd June 1981

Stavanger, September 1994

Brest, 29th September 2010

Dublin, 32rd June 2016

**Norrköping, 36th March  
2023**

**PROCEDURE FOR THE SELECTION OF MEMBER STATES BY THE NSHC FOR THE IHO COUNCIL**

Selection of Member States by the NSHC for the IHO Council shall be determined in compliance with IHO General Regulations Articles 2 and 16.

**Role and Authority of Member States selected by the NSHC for the Council**

1. IHO Member States selected by the NSHC, 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 Member States selected for the Council shall be defrayed by their respective State, in accordance with IHO General Regulation Article 3.
3. In carrying out their role as a Member State selected by the NSHC for the Council, the selected Member States shall take into account the views of the Commission.

**Selection Procedure (see also flowchart Appendix 1)**

4. Three months before an ordinary session of the Assembly, the Secretary-General shall inform the Chair of the NSHC of:
  - a. the number of seats allocated to the NSHC, and
  - b. those Member States that are eligible for selection by the NSHC.
5. If the number of Member States eligible for selection by the NSHC for the Council is equal to the number of seats on the Council assigned to the NSHC by the Secretary-General under the terms of clause 4 above, then the aforementioned eligible Member States will be selected by the NSHC.
6. If the number of Member States eligible for selection by the NSHC for the Council is greater than the number of seats assigned to the NSHC by the IHO Secretary-General under the terms of clause 4 above, then the Chair of the NSHC will invite those Member States that have been designated as eligible for selection to the Council to indicate if they wish to be considered as candidates for selection.
  - a. If the number of candidate Member States is equal to the number of seats on the Council assigned to the NSHC, then these candidate(s) will be selected by the NSHC.
  - b. If the number of candidate Member States is smaller than the number of seats on the council assigned to the NSHC, the candidate(s), if any, will be automatically designated and will be complemented by the eligible Member State(s) that have not been selected by the NSHC for the Council for the longest time. If this proves inconclusive, the Chair will designate eligible Members State(s) as selected by the NSHC.
  - c. If the number of candidate Member States is greater than the number of seats on the Council assigned to the NSHC, the candidate(s) to be selected by the NSHC for the Council will be designated through a voting procedure.

## **ANNEX A to the STATUTES of the NSHC**

### **Voting Procedure**

7. The voting procedure will take place in the three months prior to the Assembly, preferably at a Conference of the NSHC otherwise by correspondence if no NSHC Conference is scheduled.
- a. Each Member State may submit one voting paper marking as many candidate Member States from the list as seats have been assigned to the NSHC (see example of voting paper in Appendix 2).
  - b. The quorum for a valid voting procedure is set at 50% of Member States casting their vote. Member States of the NSHC taking a seat in the Council are then elected by simple majority. An incomplete or blank voting paper is a valid voting option and does not count against the quorum.
  - c. If no quorum is achieved, the voting window is extended for two weeks and the Chair invites the missing Member States to cast their vote. The existing votes stand.
  - d. If still no quorum has been achieved, the chair designates the Member States for the Council based on the votes cast.
  - e. In case of a draw the candidate that has not been selected by the NSHC for the Council for the longest time is selected. If this proves inconclusive the Chair will designate a candidate as the selected Member State by the NSHC.
8. In order to warrant the integrity of the selection process, the Chair presents the voting forms to the observer of the secretariat of the IHO to the NSHC Conference, and requests this observer to confirm the integrity of the selection process.

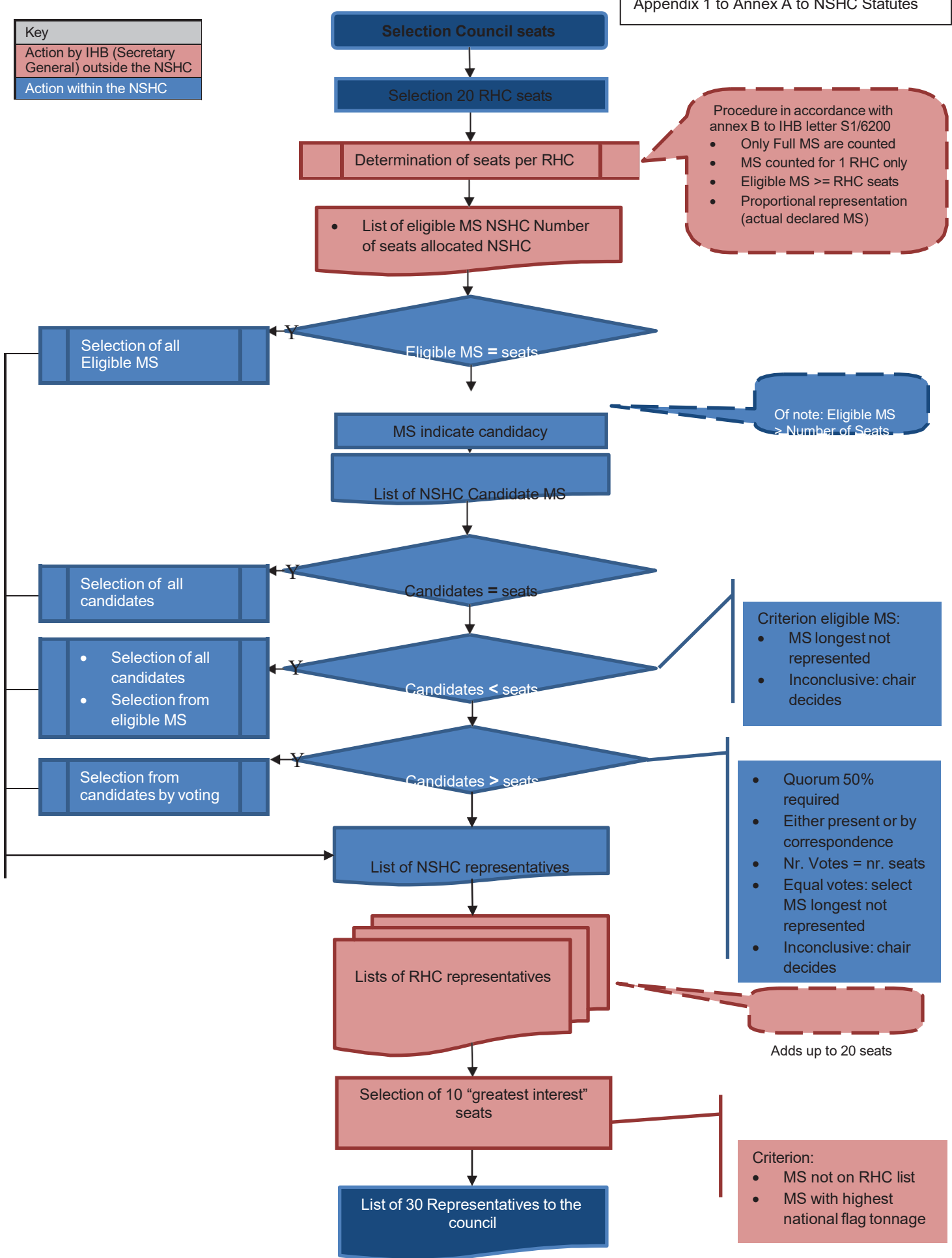
### **Representation of Member State selected by the NSHC**

9. The Member States selected by the NSHC for the Council are normally represented by the head of the Hydrographic office. Each Member State shall inform the Chair of the NSHC and the Secretary-General of the IHO of the name of its official representative. An alternate may also be designated.
10. Member States selected by the NSHC shall inform the Chair of the NSHC and the Secretary-General of any changes in representation, whether permanent or temporary, as soon as practicable.

# ANNEX A to the STATUTES of the NSHC

Appendix 1 to Annex A to NSHC Statutes

Key
Action by IHB (Secretary General) outside the NSHC
Action within the NSHC





**Appendix 2**

**SELECTION OF MEMBER STATES BY THE NSHC FOR THE IHO COUNCIL**

**Example of Voting Paper**

**Part A**

Number of Seats on Council allocated to the NSHC: *Chair inserts number in here*

(This is the number of boxes that may be marked below)

**Part B**

To vote for a candidate State put an 'X' in the adjacent box. The number of boxes that may be marked is shown in Part A above.

<i>Chair inserts candidate State A in here</i>	<i>Votes indicated with an X here</i>
<i>Chair inserts State B in here</i>	<i>Votes indicated with an X here</i>
<i>Chair inserts State C in here</i>	<i>Votes indicated with an X here</i>
<i>insert other States if appropriate</i>	<i>Votes indicated with an X here</i>

Member State: ..... Date: .....

Authorised By: ..... Position: .....

(signature)

**ANNEX B to the STATUTES of the NSHC****Draft order of NSHC Chair, Vice-Chair and organizer**

Conference	NSHC Chair	VTC/Physical Conference	NSHC Vice-Chair
36 (2023)	Sweden	VTC	United Kingdom
37 (2024)	Sweden	Physical in SE	United Kingdom
38 (2025)	United Kingdom	VTC	Germany
39 (2026)	United Kingdom	Physical in UK	Germany
40 (2027)	Germany	VTC	Denmark
41 (2028)	Germany	Physical in DE	Denmark
42 (2029)	Denmark	VTC	France
43 (2030)	Denmark	Physical in DK	France
44 (2031)	France	VTC	Norway
45 (2032)	France	Physical in FR	Norway
46 (2033)	Norway	VTC	Netherlands
47 (2034)	Norway	Physical in NO	Netherlands
48 (2035)	Netherlands	VTC	Ireland
49 (2036)	Netherlands	Physical in NL	Ireland
50 (2037)	Ireland	VTC	Belgium
51 (2038)	Ireland	Physical in IE	Belgium
52 (2039)	Belgium	VTC	Iceland
53 (2040)	Belgium	Physical in BE	Iceland
54 (2041)	Iceland	VTC	Sweden
55 (2042)	Iceland	Physical in IS	Sweden
56 (2043)	Sweden	VTC	United Kingdom
57 (2044)	Sweden	Physical in SE	United Kingdom