

From: **Peter Sparkes**  
**Chief Executive UKHO**  
**and SAIHC Chair**



**SAIHC18 Letter No. 1**

27 September 2021

**To:** Members, Associate Members, and Observers of the IHO Southern African and Islands Hydrographic Commission (SAIHC)

**Subject:** **COVID-19, SAIHC18 Update & Meeting Dates, Agenda Input and National Report, SAIHC17 Minutes & Actions, African Great Lakes & Rivers Sub Working Group, New IHO Member Kenya**

Dear SAIHC Colleagues,

### **COVID-19**

Clearly, we continue to face unprecedented times, and I commend your perseverance and rigour in the way you have adapted to the virtual environment. It has enabled us to continue our important work, although I'm sure, as I do, you miss the benefit of human interactions in face to face meetings. We hope these return as it's appropriate.

### **SAIHC18 Update & Meeting Dates**

Following SAIHC17 plenary, Mozambique offered to host SAIHC18 in Maputo 13 – 16 December 2021.

In consultation with the hosts and monitoring the position regarding COVID, the plan is to defer SAIHC18 to 21 - 24 March 2022 with the preference of a physical meeting in Maputo. Please can you note these dates in your calendar and we will follow up with further information, once our hosts have confirmed details. VTC will be considered as a back-up.

### **Agenda Input**

It is vital that we maximise the benefits of an in person meeting with a rich and varied agenda. Therefore, may I request your thoughts and ideas for agenda items. I would be most grateful if you could send your agenda items by email to: [IBTE@ukho.gov.uk](mailto:IBTE@ukho.gov.uk) and to the SAIHC secretariat [Ashley.Parker@ukho.gov.uk](mailto:Ashley.Parker@ukho.gov.uk), by the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021.

### **National Report**

I would like to encourage all SAIHC members, even if they are unable to attend SAIHC18, to submit a national report. It helps us to understand better the issues within the region so that we may develop ways of resolving them. Please use the template/structure as documented on the [IHO SAIHC18 webpage](#) for both the report and the presentation.

### **SAIHC17 Minutes & Actions**

The final minutes of the 17<sup>th</sup> SAIHC Conference are available from the IHO website [HERE](#). It includes a number of actions; your comments/updates on these would be appreciated in preparation for the 18<sup>th</sup> SAIHC Conference.

### **African Great Lakes & Rivers Sub Working Group**

Following SAIHC17 decision to establish this group, we have held two successful meetings (one in May and one in September 2021). The focus thus far has been on establishing the Terms of Reference of the group and work on the status of bathymetric survey data, water level gauges, aids to navigation (AtoN), chart products, survey equipment and trained personnel. This sub working group will report its progress to plenary in March.

## **New IHO Member Kenya**

I'm sure that you all would join me in warmly welcoming Kenya as a member of the IHO. We will invite them to sign the statutes at SAIHC18 to become a full SAIHC member.

Finally, I would again like to thank you for your efforts here and hope you all stay well and look forward to meeting you at SAIHC18.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter Sparkes". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Peter Sparkes

Chair Southern African and Islands Hydrographic Commission (SAIHC)