

Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedures

South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC) Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure Working Group (MSDIWG)

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1. References:

- IHO Resolution 5 - 2009 on MSDI policy, adopted by the 4th Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference in June 2009
- 17th SWPHC Meeting (Wollongong, Feb 2020), Action #6: Establish regional MSDIWG
- Spatial Data Infrastructures “The Marine Dimension” Guidance for Hydrographic Offices IHO Publication C-17 - Edition 2.0 (January 2017)

2. Purpose:

To promote Marine Spatial Data Infrastructures in the South-West Pacific Region for the sustainable development and use of the oceans, seas and inland waters in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The SWPHC MSDI effort is based on the 9 Strategic Pathways from the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. (UN-GGIM IGIF) - <https://ggim.un.org/UN-IGIF/overview>

The MSDIWG will focus its efforts on the development and promotion of the following activities:

- IHO MSDIWG governance, standards and policy
- Regional MSDI implementations as well as other SDIs in the region and report back to the SWPHC.
- MSDI policies within related international projects.
- An open data inventory of accessible hydrographic and marine data themes.
- MSDI use cases and support to Marine Spatial Planning (MSP).

3. Authority:

This MSDIWG is a subsidiary body of IHO’s regional South-West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC). Its work is subject to SWPHC approval.

4. Membership Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. General Members

- New Member States, New Associate Members and new Observers may indicate their willingness to participate at any time.
- All SWPHC Members are encouraged to participate in the MSDIWG and to contribute to the purpose and goals of the working group as defined by the South-West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC) Work Plan.

- Expert Contributor membership is open to entities and organisations that can provide a relevant and constructive contribution. Expert Contributors shall seek approval of membership from the Chair. Expert Contributor membership may be withdrawn if a majority of the Member States represented in the WG agrees that an Expert Contributor's continued participation is irrelevant or unconstructive to the work of the WG.
- Members should attend and prepare for meetings, including proposing agenda items and nominating a proxy when unable to attend.
- All members are encouraged to invite as yet non-participating members to the Working Group.
- All members are encouraged to promote the work of this working group in other inter-organisational meetings where appropriate (E.g. IHO working groups, conferences and other symposia where relevant opportunities arise.)
- A membership list shall be maintained and confirmed annually.

4.2. Chair

The MSDI WG Chair shall:

- Be a representative of a Member State. The election of the Chair should normally be decided at the first meeting after each ordinary session of the Assembly and, in such case, shall be determined by vote of the WG members present and voting.
- Provide leadership and ensure the effective operation of the Working Group.
- Plan meetings, workshops, and develop the agenda to achieve the aims set out by the SWPHC in their Work Plan.
- Ensure that decisions and actions identified at meetings are implemented.
- Represent the working group at SWPHC Meetings and Steering Committee. Presenting annual report to wider SWPHC members.

4.3. Vice-Chair

The MSDI WG Vice-Chair shall:

- Be a representative of a Member State. The election of the Vice-Chair should normally be decided at the first meeting after each ordinary session of the Assembly and, in such case, shall be determined by vote of the WG members present and voting.
- Stand in for the Chair if they are absent. If the Chair is unable to carry out the duties of their office, the Vice-Chair shall assume the Chair with the same powers and duties.
- Support the Chair in ensuring the working group and its activities run smoothly.
- Assist Chair in planning meetings and organisation of meeting logistics.
- Deal with specific tasks or issues as defined by the working group.

4.4. Secretariat

If a secretary is required, they shall:

- Normally be drawn from the membership of the working group.
- Maintain records and administration of the meetings.
- Undertake effective working group communication and correspondence and ensure agenda and supporting materials are delivered to members prior to the meeting.

- Ensure documents arising from meetings are distributed in a timely manner as defined in the Rules of Procedure for the WG.
- Ensure documents arising from meetings are posted on the IHO website within 3 weeks after approval by working group members.

5. Rules of Procedure:

- The WG should preferably work by correspondence and online group meetings or workshops. In-person group meetings, workshops or symposia only if required.
- When meetings are scheduled, and in order to allow any WG submissions and reports to be submitted to SWPHC on time, WG meetings should not normally occur later than nine weeks before a meeting of the SWPHC.
- Decisions should generally be made by consensus. If votes are required on issues or to endorse proposals presented to the WG, only Member States may cast a vote. Votes shall be based on one vote per Member States represented. If votes are required between meetings or in the absence of meetings, including for elections of the Chair and Vice Chair, this shall be achieved through a ballot of those Member States on the current membership list.
- The draft minutes of meetings shall normally be distributed by the Secretary within six weeks of the end of meetings and member comments should be returned within three weeks. Final minutes should be distributed and posted on the IHO website within three months after a meeting.
- All members shall inform the Chair in advance of their intention to attend any meetings of the WG. If a large number of Expert Contributor members seek to attend a meeting, the Chair may restrict attendance by inviting Expert Contributors to act through one or more collective representatives.
- The MSDIWG Chair presents an annual report / work plan to the SWPHC for direction and approval. This report should include a description on the current status, recommendations on how to proceed with the MSDI implementation and if deemed necessary an action plan with specified time schedule for future MSDIWG actions.
- Periodically the Working Group will undertake a review and reflection of its operations and progress, obtaining feedback from all members. The aim of this review and reflection is to ensure the group delivers value for all those participating.
- The working language of the WG shall be English.