

28th BUSINESS MEETING OF IHO-IAG ADVISORY BOARD ON THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF LAW OF THE SEA (ABLOS BM28)

Remote meeting, 5th to 6th October 2021

1. Opening Remarks by the Chair

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all participants, especially those for whom it was their first meeting. She expressed her regret that yet again this meeting was to be conducted virtually but hoped that the next meeting and associated conference could go ahead in person as normal. She also took the opportunity to thank those who had worked intersessionally to organise the Webinar that would follow this meeting.

2. Administrative Arrangements

The Secretary provided some brief comments on the conduct of the GoToMeeting, the use of the chat facility was encouraged, noting that a copy would be saved as a word file and included as an annex to the final meeting report, it was requested that microphones were off at all times, except when speaking. The use of a ‘silence procedure’ was suggested and adopted, meaning decisions would be passed unless challenge or questions were forthcoming.

3. Introduction of Participants and Apologies

All participants introduced themselves and provided brief details of their background, see Annex A. Sam Harper (SH) introduced himself as David Wyatt’s successor as IHO Assistant Director Survey and Operations and as such the new ABLOS Secretary. The Chair invited the new members to introduce themselves, namely:

- Prof Lorenzo Schiano Di Pepe – Italy
- Mr John Ells - Canada

Absences/Apologies were noted from:

- Prof Hyunsoo Kim – Republic of Korea
- Mekoul Isreäl Jacob Baruc - Cameroon
- Vladimír Jareš – DOALOS
- Mikael Lilje - Sweden

4. Agenda

The agenda was adopted without addition, see Annex B, and list of documents, see meeting webpage (Annex C).

5. Approval of the minutes from BM27 and outcomes from HSSC13

The minutes for ABLOS BM27 were approved with the noted minor editorials.

6. Review of Actions and Decisions from BM27

The existing actions and decisions from BM27 and beyond were reviewed and their status updated. A number of actions were either deferred to the next face to face meeting or noted for discussion later in the agenda. A record of this review can be found at Annex D. Specific areas of discussion for ongoing actions included:

- BM26 Action 14 – It was noted that in order to have an ABLOS email address, this would need to be paid for. It was suggested and agreed that this could be included in the maintenance of the website.
- BM26 Action 3 – Niels Anderson (**NA**) provided an update on the work he had undertaken to develop a ‘history of ABLOS’ article for the website. He asked whether he would be able to visit the IHO in Monaco to go through the Archive and discuss IHO/ABLOS website integration with the new IHO Sec. This was agreed. **BM28 Action 1.**
- BM27 Action 1 – It was agreed that permission should be sought from individuals before group photos or videos of presentations be uploaded to the website. A number of approaches for doing this were discussed.

7. ABLOS Webinar Final Preparations

A discussion was led by the chair covering outstanding issues and plans ahead of the ABLOS Webinar later in the week. The IHO Sec ran through the logistical arrangements, explaining the key elements/limitations of the GoToMeeting platform and the protocol for participation that would be put in place. He further explained the schedule for testing connections. It was agreed that the intention was for webinar presentations to be recorded, but in order to preserve the Chatham House Rules nature of the discussion sessions, these would not. IHO Sec agreed to investigate recording capabilities. It was noted that permission should be sought for both the recording and publishing of presentations and recordings on the website. Chair agreed to circulate final joining instructions as well as testing arrangements amongst speakers.

Clive Schofield (**CS**) ran through a review of the agenda. It was noted that the speakers from IOC/DOALOS were not confirmed. The Chair agreed to reach out to them to check availability. CS requested that all speakers check their affiliations on the webinar programme ahead of the final version being circulated. Finally, it was agreed that the names and affiliations should be published on the ABLOS website, where presentations and recordings would follow (**BM 28 Action 2**).

8. ABLOS the way forward

.1 Terms of Reference

The Chair introduced the ToRs and highlighted the changes that had been proposed with regards to making the periods of tenure for office holders co-terminus with the meetings. She sought approval from the participants for these changes which was granted by silence procedure. IHO Sec. noted this decision and indicated that the new ToRs would be uploaded to the website (**BM 28 Action 3**).

.2 Membership including review of terms

The Chair noted there were no current vacant positions, however the current terms of both Hyunsoo Kim (**HK**) and **CS** would finish at the next meeting (**BM29**).

.3 Capacity Building

Fiona Bloor (**FB**) informed the participants that the UKHO were not willing to provide the historic training course material to the group to be updated, on the basis of it containing UKHO IPR. She noted however, that in reviewing the material it was very UKHO ‘centric’ and did not closely follow TALOS. She offered to work up a TALOS based course on an IHO template, however the IHO Sec. advised that before any more effort was expended, consideration should be given to the target audience and purpose, given that the IHO Capacity Building Programme would be very unlikely to fund anything that was not focused on Phase 0 or Phase 1 activity. A course designed to cover the content of TALOS would clearly not be suitable for such an audience. A discussion

followed and it was agreed that before taking any further action, a Training Needs Analysis needed to be undertaken (BM27 Action 3 and BM 28 **Action 4**).

.4 The future of ABLOS

It was agreed that the Future of ABLOS discussions should be addressed at the next physical meeting.

9. 11th ABLOS Conference 2022 (initial thoughts and planning)

.1 Dates and Venues

All agreed that planning for the 11th ABLOS Conference should be undertaken on the basis it would be a face to face event. Consideration was given to whether it should be a hybrid event, but it was decided to reconsider this once the abstracts had been received. Given this, it was decided that the IHO in Monaco would provide the venue with the greatest flexibility and minimum financial exposure given the enduring uncertainty caused by the COVID 19 pandemic. It was decided that the dates would be 4 – 5 October 2022, to be held in the middle of BM29. It was agreed that the Abstract deadline would be the 1 June 2022, but it was noted that this could be extended if needed. It was agreed that the Abstract template would be developed (BM26 Action 11 and BM 28 **Action 5**) and the uploaded to the ABLOS website ahead of being actively promoted (BM 28 **Action 6**).

.2 Organising Committee

The Organising committee for the 11th Conference would be comprised of BRA, CHL, FRA, DNK, USA and WMU. John Ells was also co-opted onto the committee.

.3 Conference fund status report

The IHO presented the current state of the Conference fund, noting that there were sufficient funds to continue supporting the development of the ABLOS Website as well and supporting the initial expenditure for the Conference in 2022. It was agreed that fund would pay for a further year's website hosting fees at a rate of EUR2000, payable in January 2022.

The rate of the registration fee was discussed and it was noted that there were many variables that would need to be considered (e.g. Changes in cost of Travel and Subsistence due to COVID and support to student delegates) before a final decision could be made. In the meantime the fee of EUR300 would be maintained as the starting point whilst the organising committee worked up a final proposal (BM 28 **Action 7**).

.4 Title and session themes

At BM27 it had been agreed that title/theme of the 11th conference would highlight IHO100 and the UN Decade, however there was concern that this may not be so relevant in 2022. Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the conference theme should be forward looking and build upon the IHO100 celebrations and the start of the UN Decade and discuss issues that would emerge over the next century. To this end, it was agreed the working title would be '*Ocean Geosciences and Law of the Sea: Setting the Course for the Next Century*'.

Potential themes and sessions were discussed. The general consensus was that for a two day conference with a Keynote address, six to seven sessions would be the limit. Session suggestions were:

- Advances in the definition and management of maritime space
- Divisions between land and sea
- Developments in the division of the Oceans (maritime delimitation issues)
- UNCLOS in a digital age: evolving technologies, fresh challenges, digital charting, new surveying techniques, VMS?
- Going Deep or Mining the Deep or Plumbing the Depths
- BBNJ and innovations in protecting marine resources and preserving the marine environment
- Defining and regulating the outer continental shelf
- Setting future agendas in oceans governance: scientific and technical considerations
- Empowering women in Ocean Geosciences and Law of the Sea
- Considering the green agenda

Opportunities to align the conference and/or specific sessions to other ongoing activities were discussed. It was noted that the IHO and Canada had just launched a project focused on empowering women in hydrography, and that there may be an opportunity to collaborate (BM 28 **Action 8**). The Chair reminded the participants that the intention was that the webinar would act as a precursor to the conference, so the organising committee should consider this when deciding on the structure and sessions.

.5 Publicity

A number of different options for publicity and communications were discussed, including the use of various social media platforms. It was noted that the ABLOS Website should be the central point for information, and all other communication activities should direct interest towards this. IHO Sec suggested that the Organising Committee seek the support/advice of the IHO Communications Officer in developing a way ahead so (BM 28 **Action 9**).

.6 Keynote speaker

Professor Larry Mayer (**LM**) had previously agreed to provide the Keynote address at the 11th Conference, but due to it being postponed, was due to provide his presentation to the Webinar. Other options for potential speakers were discussed, including whether a female Keynote speaker should be sought. It was agreed that **LM** should be offered the opportunity to elaborate on his presentation to the Webinar, whilst other options were explored.

10. TALOS Manual (C-51)

.1 Editorial Board chair report

The Chair provided brief details of recent activities and updated the participants that she had been unable to make contact the Chair of the Editorial Board Grant Boyes (**GB**). **Post Meeting Note. GB** has advised the Chair that due to ill health he will not be able to continue as the Chair of the Editorial Board. The Chair, on behalf of members, the IHO and IAG has conveyed her thanks to the hard work and support provided by GB over the years and wished him well in his recovery.

John Ells accepted the invitation to be the Chair of the Editorial Board. As already defined in 27BM the current listed Editorial group for C-51 is:

- coordinating editor and chapter one – **John Ells**
- chapter 2 - Niels Andersen with **Juan Carlos Báez and Mikael Lilje to assist**
- chapter 4 - **Marie-Françoise Lequentrec-Lalancette**
- chapter 3 - Izabel King Jeck with **Juan Carlos Báez and Peush Pawsey to assist**
- chapters 5 and 6 - Clive Schofield and Hyunsoo Kim

- supporting figures and animations - Clive Schofield; **graphics, diagrams and images to be initially selected by the chapter editors for subsequent manipulation into more dynamic digital format later.**

.2 Edition 7.0.0 status and progress of format and content

The Chair reported that initial plans and ideas had been discussed for Edition 7.0.0 but these were still at an early stage. Key items that had been considered were the conversion of the current .pdf hardcopy document into an e-publication (together with all the opportunities that this would bring), as well as the creation of an executive summary or simplified sections that aided understanding for non-specialists. She indicated that this work would have to be progressed intersessionally with an update provided at the BM29 (BM 27 Action 7).

.3 Status of French and Spanish versions of Edition 6.0.0

IHO Sec. reported that the French version had been received with requested amendments made. This version would now undergo final formatting and be uploaded to the IHO Website (BM 28 **Actions 10 and 11**). It was reported that the Spanish translation was almost complete and expected to be delivered to the IHO by the end of November (BM 28 **Action 12**). A question was posed as to whether the images and animations should be translated. The Chair advised that this had been the case for the French translation so the expectation was that this should also be done for the Spanish version, even if this took extra time.

.4 Arabic and Chinese translation of Edition 6.0.0

Yanfen Gong (**YG**) of the Chinese National Marine Data and Information Service reported that the Chinese translation had been completed and delivered to the Chair and IHO. The Chair thanked China for their efforts. Qatar reported that the Arabic translation had also been completed and would be deposited with the Chair and IHO shortly. IHO Sec. reported that it was currently being discussed whether the Chinese and Arabic versions of TALOS would need to undergo external review, given this was beyond the in house capability of the IHO. The alternative option was to include a caveat on both versions that explained that the English (Official) version would take primacy in case of a discrepancy. IHO Sec. undertook to further investigate this and report back (BM 28 **Action 13**).

11. Reports on Members' attendance at LOS related conferences

ABLOS members and observers provided by email details of the key events in which they had been involved. The Chair invited all participants to send in relevant links to future events where ABLOS could or should be represented (BM 27 Action 14 and BM 28 **Action 14**).

12. Review of requests to ABLOS, including IHO Capacity Building training/courses/seminars:

The IHO Sec. provided a summary of CBSC activity over the past few years as relates to ABLOS. He noted that there had been a request for training from the Mediterranean and Black Sea Hydrographic Commission (MBSC), but that this had been judged to be a low priority and therefore would not be funded. He drew reference to the previous conversation regarding a training needs assessment and the requirement to be completely sure of the target audience. It was agreed that the MBSHC should be engaged as part of this work to understand their requirements (BM 28 **Action 15**).

13. Report to IHO Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC), including review of Work Programme and representation/attendance

The draft Work Plan 2022-2023 was circulated and adopted after the BM (Annex F)

14. Any Other Business

- .1 **NA** introduced the topic of how to raise the profile of our work post COVID and asked the group whether we should be actively be doing anything else other than adding content to the website? **Steven Keating (SK)** suggested an interview with the Chair of ABLOS for publication in relevant industry literature in order to raise awareness of ABLOS as well as personal consideration given her leadership role. Further, it was suggested that this could be the first of a series of interviews with ABLOS stakeholders which showed how the work of the group linked to the wider IHO and IAG communities. Chair agreed in principle subject to the identification of appropriate industry literature (BM 28 **Action 16**).
- .2 **SK** asked whether the website was able to collect metrics on visits, downloads etc. **NA** clarified that currently metrics were not collected but this functionality could easily be turned on. It was agreed that this would be useful in guiding further analysis of the impact of outreach activities (BM 28 **Action 17**)

15. Date of the 29th Business Meeting and 11th ABLOS Conference

The provisional dates for the 29th Business meeting were agreed as the 3rd and 6th October 2022, with the 11th ABLOS Conference to be held on the 4th and 5th October. Both meetings would take place at the IHO Secretariat, Monaco. Qatar offered to promote the 30th BM together with a LOS seminar but the dates have not yet been set.

16. Review of List of Actions for BM28 and draft agenda for 29th Business Meeting.

It was agreed that the list of actions and decisions should be circulated with the draft meeting report for comment and input (Annex D).

17. Closure of the Meeting

The Chair closed the meeting and thanked all for their participation. She reiterated her hope that the next time we met it would be in person as there are remaining issues that can only be tackled face to face.

Annexes:

- A. List of Participants
- B. Agenda BM27
- C. List of Documents
- D. List of Actions
- E. Terms of Reference
- F. Work Plan 2021-2022 - draft
- G. Draft agenda BM28
- H. Members LOS Related Activities