

World Hydrography Day 2026

Theme “Transforming how ocean data is shared”

Introduction

1. In commemoration of *World Hydrography Day 2026*, the Mauritius Hydrographic Service under the aegis of Ministry of Housing and Lands organised a series of awareness and outreach activities under the International Hydrographic Organization’s (IHO) theme, *"Transforming How Ocean Data is Shared."* The events were designed to promote awareness of hydrography and the emerging S-100 framework among national stakeholders, academia and future professionals.

National Stakeholder Seminar

2. The principal event was a national seminar attended by representatives from Ministries, parastatal bodies, statutory organisations and other maritime stakeholders whose activities involve the collection, management or use of marine geospatial information.

The seminar aimed at: -

- (a) Promoting awareness of World Hydrography Day 2026 and its global significance.
- (b) Introducing stakeholders to the IHO S-100 Universal Hydrographic Data Model.
- (c) Demonstrating how interoperable marine geospatial information can enhance maritime governance and national decision-making; and
- (d) Fostering collaboration among national agencies contributing to marine datasets.

3. The seminar commenced with an inaugural address by the *Senior Chief Executive, Ministry of Housing and Lands*, who highlighted the importance of hydrography in supporting national development, maritime safety, coastal management and the Blue Economy. In his keynote address, he emphasised that successful implementation of the S-100 framework requires strong collaboration and coordinated sharing of marine geospatial information. He encouraged all stakeholders to work together in developing an integrated national marine data ecosystem that would benefit the Republic of Mauritius.

4. Officers from Mauritius Hydrographic Service, delivered the principal technical presentation on the *S-100 Universal Hydrographic Data Model*. The presentation introduced participants to the evolution of hydrographic standards from S57 to S100 framework. It highlighted the architecture of S-100, its product specifications, interoperability, and its role in supporting future e-Navigation services and digital maritime operations. Participants

were also introduced to the wider applications of S-100 beyond navigation, including coastal zone management, marine spatial planning, environmental monitoring, disaster response, offshore infrastructure development and sustainable management of ocean resources.

5. The seminar generated significant interest among participants and reinforced the importance of establishing effective mechanisms for sharing authoritative marine geospatial information across Government institutions.

University Outreach Programme

6. As part of its capacity development and outreach initiatives, the Mauritius Hydrographic Service organised a dedicated educational programme for students from the *University of Mauritius*. The objective of the programme was to introduce university students to hydrography as a profession, create awareness of career opportunities within the hydrographic sector and demonstrate the practical application of marine geospatial technologies.

7. The programme commenced with an onboard visit to *Multi Support Vessel "Investigator"*, where students received practical demonstrations of hydrographic survey operations. Mauritius Hydrographic Service personnel explained survey planning, positioning techniques, multibeam bathymetric surveys, hydrographic instrumentation and data acquisition procedures.

8. Students were provided with first hand exposure to modern hydrographic survey practices and gained an appreciation of the critical role hydrography plays in ensuring maritime safety, supporting marine infrastructure, protecting the marine environment and enabling sustainable development of ocean resources. The ship visits also provided an opportunity to explain how hydrographic data collected at sea ultimately contributes to the integrated marine information environment envisioned under the S-100 framework.

Hydrography Exhibition and Cartography Demonstration

9. The outreach programme continued the following day with a technical exhibition hosted by the Mauritius Hydrographic Service. Students were introduced to the complete hydrographic workflow, from field data acquisition to the production of official nautical products. Demonstrations included:

- (a) Hydrographic data processing and quality assurance;
- (b) Bathymetric surface generation;
- (c) Data validation techniques;
- (d) Nautical chart compilation;

- (e) Introduction to specialised hydrographic processing software; and
- (f) Overview of digital chart production under international standards.

10. Students also visited the *Cartography Section of the Ministry of Housing and Lands*, where they were introduced to cartographic production processes and the integration of marine geospatial information into national mapping products. The visit highlighted the close relationship between hydrography and cartography in producing accurate, reliable and authoritative spatial information. The exhibition successfully illustrated the complete cycle of hydrographic information from acquisition at sea to the production and dissemination of marine geospatial products.

Conclusion

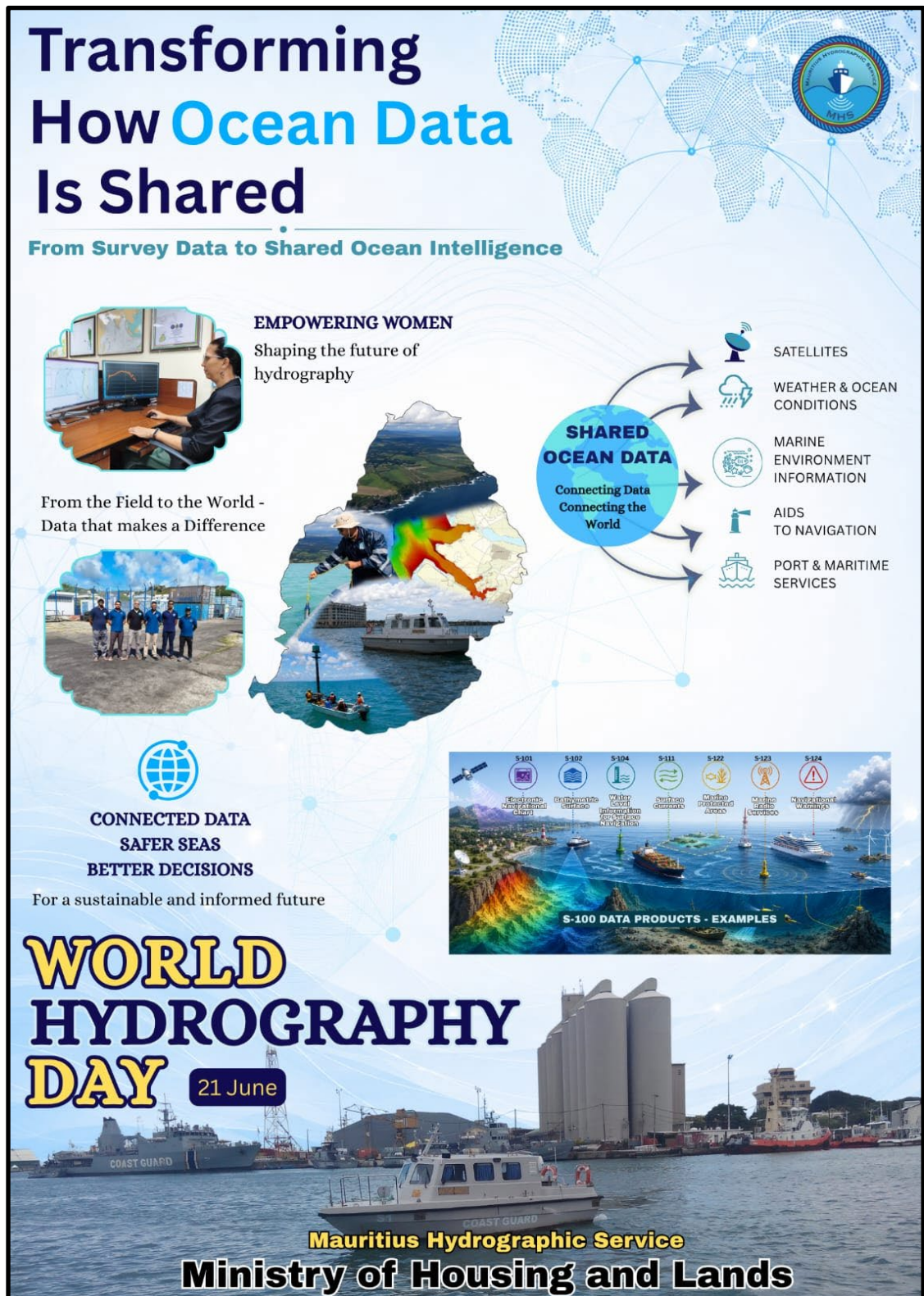
11. The World Hydrography Day 2026 celebrations provided an excellent platform for the Mauritius Hydrographic Service to engage with Government stakeholders, academia and future professionals. Through technical presentations, practical demonstrations and educational outreach activities, MHS successfully promoted greater understanding of hydrography and the transformative potential of the IHO S-100 framework.

12. The events reaffirmed the importance of collaboration, interoperability and shared marine geospatial information in supporting safer navigation, sustainable development of the Blue Economy and informed maritime decision-making. Mauritius remains committed to working closely with regional and international partners in advancing hydrography and implementing modern hydrographic standards.

13. Photographs highlighting activities during the month are at **Annexure**.

Annexure

(Refers to Para 13)



World Hydrography Day 2026 Poster

PHOTOGRAPHS



Chief Guest Delivering Key Note



Group Photograph with National Stakeholders

Discussions on S-100 Implementation



Visit Onboard Multi-Support Vessel “Investigator”



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News

Workshop focuses on strengthening National Hydrography Capacity



The Ministry of Housing and Lands organised a workshop yesterday in Ebene to mark World Hydrography Day 2026, bringing together relevant stakeholders involved in the maritime domain, surveying and related technical fields. It provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss ways to strengthen the national hydrography capacity and improve coordination among institutions engaged in marine data collection and management.

Every year, on 21 June, the International Hydrographic Organization and its Member States celebrate World Hydrography Day, showcasing the vital role hydrography plays in improving our understanding of the ocean and supporting its safe, sustainable and productive use. The theme for World Hydrography Day 2026 is Transforming How Ocean Data Is Shared.

Participants reviewed ongoing efforts to further structure and modernise hydrographic functions in Mauritius in line with international best practices. A key focus of the discussions was the ongoing initiative to establish a full-fledged national hydrographic office. The proposed framework aims to consolidate existing expertise, enhance inter-institutional coordination and reinforce the country's technical capabilities in hydrographic surveying and data management. A draft proposal has already been circulated to relevant stakeholders for consultation, with input being sought to refine and finalise the institutional arrangements.

The key role of hydrography in ensuring safe navigation, supporting sustainable ocean management and enabling informed decision-making in maritime development was also on the agenda.

Speaking during the opening ceremony, the Senior Chief Executive of the Ministry of Housing and Lands, Mr Muhammad Shamad Ayooob Saab highlighted the need for enhanced collaboration among all stakeholders and departments involved in hydrographic work. He pointed out that sustained cooperation is essential to ensure coherence in policy decisions and their implementation, as well as to support the successful development of the national hydrographic capacity.

Mr Ayooob Saab further underlined that Mauritius is well positioned to strengthen its role in the southern Indian Ocean region through better technical capacity and improved institutional coordination. He also recalled previous regional engagements and the importance of continued collective effort in advancing shared maritime objectives.

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WORLD HYDROGRAPHY DAY 2026

“TRANSFORMING HOW OCEAN DATA IS SHARED”

1. Every year on 21 June, the global hydrographic community celebrates World Hydrography Day (WHD), an initiative of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) that highlights the importance of hydrography in supporting safe navigation, sustainable ocean management, environmental protection, maritime trade, and the blue economy.
2. Hydrography is the science of measuring and describing the physical features of oceans, seas, coastal waters, lakes, and rivers. Hydrographic data reinforce nautical charts and maritime safety information that are essential for the safety of life at sea, efficient maritime transport, coastal development, marine spatial planning, scientific research, disaster preparedness, and the sustainable use of marine resources.
3. The theme for World Hydrography Day 2026 is **“Transforming how ocean data is shared”**. The theme emphasizes the ongoing transition towards the IHO S-100 Universal Hydrographic Data Model, a new generation framework for digital marine data. S-100 enables the integration and seamless exchange of hydrographic, oceanographic, meteorological, and navigational information, enhancing maritime safety, operational efficiency, and informed decision-making across the maritime sector.

4. As the national hydrographic authority of Mauritius, the **Mauritius Hydrographic Service (MHS)**, operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Housing and Lands, plays a vital role in conducting hydrographic surveys, maintaining national bathymetric datasets, supporting nautical chart production and providing hydrographic information for the waters under the jurisdiction of Republic of Mauritius. Through these activities, MHS contributes immensely to the development of the nation's ocean economy.

5. Mauritius also plays a significant leadership role within the **South African and Islands Hydrographic Commission (SAIHC)**, one of the fifteen (15) Regional Hydrographic Commissions established under the framework of the International Hydrographic Organization. Mauritius currently serves as:

5.1 *Vice-Chair of SAIHC;*

5.2 *SAIHC S-100 Coordinator*, supporting regional implementation of the IHO S-100 framework and associated digital products; and

5.3. *SAIHC Representative to the International Hydrographic Review (IHR)*, contributing to the dissemination of hydrographic knowledge, innovation and best practices across the international hydrographic community.

6. These responsibilities reflect the confidence placed in Mauritius by regional partners and demonstrate the country's commitment to advancing hydrography, capacity building and maritime cooperation in the Western Indian Ocean and beyond. In line with the International Hydrographic Organization's commitment to diversity, inclusion and capacity building, the MHS actively supports the global initiative to **Empowering Women in Hydrography (EWH)**.

7. Through its hydrographic, marine data and regional cooperation activities, the MHS contributes to the achievement of *SDG 5 (Gender Equality)*, *SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)*, *SDG 13 (Climate Action)*, *SDG 14 (Life Below Water)* and *SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)*, supporting the blue economy.

8. On World Hydrography Day 2026, the MHS and the Ministry of Housing and Lands reaffirms its commitment to supporting the modernization of hydrographic services, promoting the implementation of S-100 standards for safer navigation and the prosperity of present and future generations.

"Transforming how ocean data is shared" is not only a global objective but also a national commitment for Mauritius as we continue to contribute actively to regional and international hydrographic development.

Happy World Hydrography Day

Page 2 of 2

write-up Disseminated to all Government e-mail users of Mauritius