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CIRCULAR LETTER 11/2023
08 March 2023

**PARTICIPATION IN THE ONLINE SURVEY OF
NIPPON FOUNDATION-GEBCO SEABED 2030 PROJECT**

References: IHO Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Dear Hydrographer,

1. I am writing to seek your support in participating in an online survey, developed as part of the Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project (Seabed 2030) and designed to gain insight into global hydrographic survey priorities.
2. The Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project is a collaborative project between The Nippon Foundation and GEBCO to inspire the complete mapping of the world's ocean by 2030 and to compile all bathymetric data into the freely available GEBCO Ocean Map.
3. The General Bathymetric Chart of the Ocean (GEBCO) operates under the joint auspices of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO. The Seabed 2030 Project builds on more than 100 years of GEBCO's history in global seafloor mapping and has a vision that by 2030, the world's oceans are fully mapped and the freely available GEBCO Ocean Map is a complete map of the global ocean bathymetry. Additionally, the IHO's Strategic Plan Goal 2, *Increasing the use of hydrographic data for the benefit of society*, and Goal 3 *Participating actively in international initiatives related to the knowledge and the sustainable use of the Ocean*, are directly related to the aims and objectives of GEBCO and Seabed 2030..
4. Completing a modern map of the seafloor will be a turning point in our understanding of oceanic processes and resources, contributing to sustainably manage oceans and marine hazards. By providing the definitive map of ocean bathymetry, Seabed 2030 is making a major contribution to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goal 14 (Life Below Water).
5. The survey is intended to reflect the views across both hydrographic and oceanographic communities that discharge responsibilities for seabed mapping in EEZs and ocean basins beyond national jurisdiction. In addition, it seeks the views from the wider global community of national government agencies involved in seabed mapping data acquisition, production and use. Finally, the results of the survey could help guide efforts to review and adapt IHO Publication C-55 *Status of Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Worldwide*. This publication has been due a refresh for some time and this initiative provides an opportunity to reinvigorate this work.

6. To access the survey, please click [here](#). The survey will close on Saturday 15 April 2023.

On behalf of the Secretary-General

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luigi Sinapi', written in a cursive style.

Luigi SINAPI
Director

Annex (*in English only*):

A. SEABED2030 Survey

SEABED 2030 Survey

In 2021-2022 NLA International working on behalf of Seabed 2030 launched an online survey to find out more about the status and potential of mapping the ocean floor. The survey collected views from across all interested sectors to help us better understand issues such as:

- Why stakeholders feel it is important to map the seabed.
- How interested parties are estimating the environmental, social and economic value of seabed mapping.
- Where are the most urgent priorities for seabed mapping.

All of this will help us to corroborate – or challenge – existing thinking, and hopefully identify any areas of the seabed that may benefit from a more joined-up / collaborative approach.

We were delighted with the responses – In total we received 796 detailed responses across 90 countries. We have analysed the findings of this first survey and from these results identified needs and priorities for seabed mapping in those waters which currently remain uncharted.

In this second survey, we now seek the views of those bodies and agencies who discharge national or agency responsibilities for seabed mapping and whether they align / differ with Seabed 2030's view on benefits analysis and prioritisation modelling development. Equally we seek your views on regional prioritisation for seabed mapping as identified in the first online survey.

To access the survey, please click [here](#).