



IHO File No. S1/1900/A

**CIRCULAR LETTER 01/2024**  
**08 January 2024**

## THEME FOR WORLD HYDROGRAPHY DAY 2024 AND MEDIA OUTREACH

### References:

- A: IHO CL 35/2023 dated 23 October - *World Hydrography Day – Report on Member States activities in 2023 and the proposed theme for 2024*
- B: Summary Report of the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IHO Council dated 17-19 October 2023

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in the Reference A, the proposed theme for the celebration of World Hydrography Day in 2024 (WHD 2024) was "**Hydrographic Information - Enhancing safety and efficiency in marine activities**". The IHO Secretariat thanks the Philippines, Spain and the United States of America for their responses. Their comments are provided in the Annex to this letter.

2. The Member States who replied supported the proposal whilst the USA suggested an extension of the purposes of hydrographic information in view of marine activities. The Secretariat carefully considered this proposal and ultimately decided to expand the proposed theme.

3. The theme for World Hydrography Day 2024 reads:

***“Hydrographic Information - Enhancing safety, efficiency and sustainability in marine activities”***

4. This theme is selected to highlight that - as per Decision 8 of the third IHO Assembly in May 2023 - Goal Number 1 of the Strategic Plan and its targets shall have the highest priority in the implementation of the 2024–2026 Work Programme, which means priority in:

- Application of material and human resources.
- Liaison with public sector and industry partners.
- Promotion of concerted regional approaches including increased collaboration with the RENCs; and
- Support of test beds delivering best practice examples for the production, maintenance, and distribution of all prioritized S-100 derivatives.

5. In consideration of the on-going transformation in navigation, such as e-navigation, autonomous shipping, reduction of emissions, which lead to a profound evolution of hydrographic services, and in a context of high demands for digital data, the IHO is committed to,

- Deliver standards for hydrographic data and specifications of hydrographic products; support their regular production; and coordinate regional and global services for their provision.
- Develop standards, specifications, and guidelines in the areas of data assurance, including cyber security and data quality assessment.
- Use capacity building and training to develop and increase the ability of Member States to support safety, efficiency and sustainability of maritime navigation.
- Motivate the maritime community including international organizations, academia, and industry to contribute actively to the development and use of new standardized maritime data products and services.
- Become more responsive to the current world-wide interest for a sustainable ocean.
- Invite broader outreach to non-navigation users of hydrographic data to global policy drivers including conservation, climate, hazard mitigation, and others.

6. The IHO Secretariat would like to create new videos highlighting these different aspects. Member States who are interested and able to assist with the technical production of videos are invited to contact the Secretariat.

7. In support of WHD 2024, the IHO Secretariat will feed the IHO Facebook page, Twitter account, LinkedIn account and YouTube channel. The IHO Secretariat will also organize a dedicated page on the IHO website, where papers and other materials relevant to the celebration will be posted. Member States are invited to forward to the Secretariat any materials that they may create in support of their national WHD 2024 celebrations for posting on any of these platforms.

8. The Secretariat takes this opportunity to thank all of those Member States who have already contributed through ideas, advice and materials to this important process.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mathias Jonas', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Mathias JONAS  
Secretary-General

## **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM MEMBER STATES**

### **PHILIPPINES**

This pertains to IHO CL 35/2023 dated 23 October 2023 regarding the World Hydrography Day Report on Member States Activities in 2023 and the Proposed Theme for 2024. The Philippines endorses the World Hydrographic Day (WHD) 2024 theme:

“Hydrographic Information – Enhancing Safety and Efficiency in Marine Activities”.

The use of “marine activities” truly reflects the ever-growing role of hydrographic information. Hydrographic information is no longer confined to navigation. It is useful to almost any, if not all, activities conducted in the seas and oceans. The Philippines commits to conduct its own activities and events to commemorate the WHD 2024

### **SPAIN**

Answering to IHO CL 35/2023, this Instituto Hidrográfico de la Marina (IHM) agrees with the proposed theme for the World Hydrography Day 2024. Also, please be informed that the WHD 2024 will be recognized during the Third Portuguese-Spanish Workshop on Hydrography, which will take place in Cádiz.

### **USA**

The US proposes amending the proposed 2024 WHD theme to "Hydrographic Information - Enhancing Safety, Efficiency, and Sustainability in Marine Activities". We believe that linking “sustainability” to “hydrography” would make the theme bolder and more responsive to the current world-wide interest in decarbonization of marine shipping. It would also invite broader outreach to non-navigation users of hydrographic data, supporting the application of S-100 products and services to global policy drivers including conservation, climate, hazard mitigation, and others. Domestically in the US, we are making the case for the relevance of hydrography to these issues. A WHD theme including “sustainability” would help emphasize and underscore this point.