IHO File No. S1/1900

CIRCULAR LETTER N° 58/2026
23 October 2026

CALL FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE NEW IHO RESOLUTION ON COMMUNICATION POLICY

References:

A) Council paper 7.2.8 submitted the Secretary-General
B) IHO 10th Council meeting decisions C10/069 & C10/070.

Dear Hydrographer,

1. In reference A, the IHO Secretary-General submitted a proposal to seek the adoption of a harmonized IHO Communication Policy, paired with an IHO Communication Strategy to ensure coherent, accurate, timely and more abundant external communication by the IHO Secretariat and IHO bodies.

2. As set out in reference B, the 10th Council endorsed the principles of the proposed IHO Communication Policy and tasked the Secretariat to submit the proposed new IHO Resolution on Communication Policy.

3. Member States are invited – in accordance with reference B – to consider the adoption of this new IHO Resolution on a Communication Policy by providing their reply at their earliest convenience and no later than **15 December 2026** by email (cl-lc@iho.int when using the Voting Form in Annex B), but preferably using the IHO Online Form System by accessing the following link: https://IHO.formstack.com/forms/cl_58_2026.

Yours sincerely,

Rear Admiral Luigi Sinapi
Secretary-General

Annex A. Proposed IHO Resolution on the IHO Communication Policy

B. Voting Form

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DRAFT IHO RESOLUTION ON COMMUNICATION POLICY

IHO Programme 1 "Corporate Affairs"
1.1 - IHO Administration

IHO COMMUNICATION POLICY	x/2026	New	

1. Considering that:

a) the IHO Strategic Plan calls for the IHO to be the authoritative worldwide hydrographic body and to raise global awareness of hydrography, maritime safety, ocean science and the sustainable use of the marine environment;
b) consistent, accurate and timely external communication is essential to the credibility and recognition of the IHO and to the implementation of the IHO Work Programme;
c) IHO activities are conducted through the Secretariat, Assembly, Council, Committees, Working Groups, Project Teams, Regional Hydrographic Commissions and other bodies, whose work is increasingly visible through websites, social media, press, conferences and partner channels;
d) the IHO Secretariat has established internal procedures for external communication and public relations, which should be supported by a policy applicable to the wider IHO structure;
e) the IHO Portal is the working platform for IHO business documents, while the IHO website and official communication channels are outward-facing tools for public information and strategic outreach;
f) communication by Member States, Regional Hydrographic Commissions, host States and partners about hydrography and the work of the IHO is an asset to the Organization, to be supported and amplified.

2. It is resolved that:

a) official external communications issued in the name of the IHO or published on official IHO channels shall be coherent, accurate, timely, accessible and aligned with approved IHO decisions, policies and strategic priorities;
b) the Secretary-General has overall authority for official IHO external communication. The Public Relations and Communication Officer (PRCO) coordinates communication processes, channel selection and publication on official IHO channels;
c) IHO staff, Chairs, Secretaries, Working Group or Project Team leads, RHC representatives and other persons contributing to IHO communications should consult the PRCO at an early stage when public messages, outreach products, press engagement, videos or social media material are to be issued in the name of the IHO or published on official IHO channels;
d) subject matter experts shall support the PRCO by verifying the technical accuracy of proposed messages, and the PRCO shall ensure that the final wording is clear, concise and suitable for the intended external audience;
e) matters involving political, historical, legal, financial, security or reputational sensitivity, or diverging views among Member States, shall be submitted to the Secretary-General, or the responsible Director, for approval before publication on official IHO channels;
f) the Secretariat shall maintain publicly available branding guidance for the IHO name, logo and visual identity, to which material produced by the Secretariat shall conform, and which Member States, host States, partners and IHO bodies are invited to follow;

g) official IHO communication shall not pre-judge decisions of IHO organs, imply Member State agreement where none exists, disclose non-public information, contradict official IHO messages, or present personal views as official IHO positions. This Resolution applies to official IHO communication only; it does not extend to personal or professional expression by officials or staff acting in their individual capacity, which remains governed by the IHO Staff Regulations, and it does not direct the external communications of Member States;

h) the Secretary-General shall develop and maintain an IHO Communication Strategy with measurable outputs aligned with the IHO Work Programme, shall maintain and update Secretariat procedures, templates, branding guidance and practical instructions necessary to implement this Resolution, and shall report implementation to the Council annually.

3. It is recommended that:

a) Member States, RHCs and hosts of IHO meetings or events coordinate with the IHO Secretariat when communicating externally on IHO outcomes or when using IHO identity;

b) IHO bodies provide short, non-technical summaries of relevant outcomes for possible publication through official IHO channels, while maintaining working documents on the IHO Portal;

c) external audiences be directed, as appropriate, to the official IHO website for public information and to the IHO Portal for IHO working documentation.

4. This Resolution has no additional budgetary impact and shall be implemented through existing Secretariat communication functions and the cooperation of IHO bodies and Member States.

IHO RESOLUTION XX/2026 – IHO COMMUNICATION POLICY

VOTING FORM

*(to be returned to the IHO Secretariat **by 15 December 2026)***

E-mail: cl-lc@iho.int *- Fax: +377 93 10 81 40)*

Note: The boxes will expand as you type your answers.

Member State:	
Contact:	
E-mail:	

Do you approve the adoption of the IHO Resolution on the COMMUNICATION POLICY?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If you answer 'NO', please explain your reasons in the comment section below.

Comments:	

Signature:	
Date:	