International Hydrographic Organization | IHO | Organisation Hydrographique Internationale

IHO File N° S3/8151/S130PT

CIRCULAR LETTER N° 59/2026
23 October 2026

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE S-130 PROJECT TEAM AND CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

References:

A. List of Assembly decision – Decision A4/23 (a/ to f/)
B. Summary report of the 10th meeting of the IHO Council dated 13–15 October 2026 (Decision C10/10)

Dear Hydrographer,

1. With regard to the decisions of the 4th Assembly (A-4) and the 10th meeting of the IHO Council (C-10) (respectively References A and B), the IHO informs Member States that the S-130 Project Team (S-130PT) has been re-established under revised Terms of Reference in Annex A.

2. The 10th meeting of the IHO Council (C-10) endorsed the revised Terms of Reference of the S-130PT as a subsidiary body of the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC) (Decision C10/010). Council confirmed the coordinating role of the Secretary-General in direct collaboration with the S-130PT, with the Project Team reporting to HSSC (Decision C10/009), and confirmed that HSSC will provide technical oversight for future editions of the S-130 Global IHO Dataset (Decision C10/013).

3. In accordance with IHO procedures, participation in the Project Team is open to representatives of all IHO Member States, representatives of recognized IHO Observer organizations, and Expert Contributors. Expert Contributor membership is open to entities and organizations able to make relevant, technical and constructive contributions to the work of the Project Team. Applications for Expert Contributor membership are subject to approval by the Chair of the Project Team.

4. In response to the request made by C-10 (Reference B), the IHO Secretariat invites Member States to nominate representatives to participate in the S-130PT. Nominations should be submitted through the IHO portal by completing the membership application for the S-130PT. Existing membership of the S-130PT will be carried over to the re-established Project Team; therefore, members whose names are already listed on the current S-130PT membership list are not required to submit a new membership application.

5. New nominations and any changes to existing membership should be submitted through the IHO portal **no later than 10 December 2026**.

Yours sincerely,

Rear Admiral Luigi Sinapi
Secretary-General

Annex : Realignment Project Team - Terms of Reference

HSSC S-130 PROJECT TEAM

POLYGONAL DEMARCATIONS OF GLOBAL SEA AREAS PRODUCT SPECIFICATION

Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure

Ref: a/ Decision A4/23 – Status quo and pursuance of the S-130 process

1. Explanatory

Following the Assembly's notification of the release of the S-130 Product Specification (Decision A4/23/a)) and the approval of Edition 1.0.0 of the S-130 Global IHO Dataset as the principal reference maintained by the IHO Secretariat as the independent source of information on demarcations of global sea areas, Edition 1.0.0 is released and published for initial implementation, testing and evaluation and further stakeholder review (Decision A4/23 b)). The revived S-130 Project Team aims to support the Secretary- General in pursuing the further evolution of the S-130 Product Specification and of subsequent Editions of the S-130 Global IHO Dataset on a technical level (Decision A4/23/c and A4/23/ e). The Project Team is instructed to continue its work during the inter-sessional period until A-5 under the technical oversight of HSSC. The S-130 Project Team activities shall be reported to Council and the Assembly through the IHO Secretary-General.

2. Objectives

To evolve the S-130 Product Specification, including the S-158:130 validation check,

2.1 The work of the Project Team shall include:

2.1 The work of the Project Team shall include:

i. maintaining and evolving the S-130 Product Specification, including alignment with successive editions of the S-100 Universal Hydrographic Data Model and refinement of the application schema where necessary;
ii. maintaining and evolving the validation checks associated with the S-130 Product Specification, including thorough review of the existing checks and their development in step with new Editions of the S-130 Product Specification and the S-130 Global IHO Dataset;
iii. supporting the preparation of subsequent Editions of the S-130 Global IHO Dataset, including technical input on the encoding and the inclusion of metadata - in particular ensuring that the disclaimer reaffirmed under Decision A4/23 c) - on the recommending nature of the demarcations is consistently carried in dataset metadata - and, where requested, technical assistance in the creation and validation of updated datasets and associated user/information material;
iv. monitoring and, where appropriate, taking up technical opportunities arising from related developments, such as the evolution of geometry support within S-100 and improvements in the reference data and descriptive content underpinning the dataset;

2.2 Where requested by Council, providing technical input to the development of the update process on the demarcations included in the S-130 Global IHO Dataset and providing technical review of proposed updates to the demarcations submitted by Member States or over entitled entities;

2.3 The scope of the Project Team is strictly limited to technical issues. Matters of a non-technical nature - in particular those concerning the political or legal significance of demarcations or the naming of any specific areas - fall outside the remit of the S-130 Project Team.

3. Authority

This Project Team is a subsidiary of the HSSC. Its work will be guided by the work plan established by the HSSC and subject to its approval. The Project Team supports the Secretary-General in the conduct of their task as expressed under Decision A4/23.

4. Composition and Chair

4.1 The Project Team shall comprise representatives of IHO Member States (MS), Expert Contributors (EC), observers from accredited NGIOs, and a representative from the IHO Secretariat. A membership list shall be maintained and posted on the IHO website.

4.2 EC membership is open to entities and organizations that can provide a relevant and constructive contribution to the work of the PT.

4.3 The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be a representative of an MS. The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be decided at the first meeting of the PT after each ordinary session of the Assembly and shall be determined by vote of the MS present and voting.

4.4 If a secretary is required, the role should normally be fulfilled by an IHO Secretariat staff member.

4.5 If the Chair is unable to carry out the duties of the office, the Vice-Chair shall act as the Chair with the same powers and duties.

4.6 ECs shall seek approval for membership from the Chair.

4.7 EC membership may be withdrawn if a majority of the MS represented in the PT agrees that an EC's continued participation is irrelevant or unconstructive to the work of the PT.

4.8 All members shall inform the Chair in advance of their intention or inability to attend meetings of the PT.

4.9 In the event that a large number of EC members seek to attend a meeting, the Chair may restrict attendance by inviting ECs to act through one or more collective representatives.

5. Procedures

5.1 The PT should work by a combination of correspondence, teleconferences, group meetings, workshops or symposia. The PT should meet at least once a year. When meetings are scheduled, and in order to allow any PT submissions and reports to be submitted to HSSC, meetings should not normally occur later than nine weeks before a meeting of HSSC.

5.2 Decisions should generally be made by consensus. If votes are required on issues or to endorse proposals presented to the PT, only Members may cast a vote. Votes at meetings shall be on the basis of one vote per Member represented at the meeting. Votes by correspondence shall be on the basis of one vote per Member represented in the PT. Issues other than technical should not be considered at the PT level.

5.3 The PT should liaise with other IHO bodies, international organizations and industry representatives to ensure the relevance of its work and timely notice of changes to the standards.

5.4 The PT should report to HSSC on its activities and submit a rolling two-year work plan, including expected time frame, and any proposed update of the S-130 Product Specification and/or the S-130 Global IHO Dataset (clarification, revision, new edition) in accordance with IHO Resolution 2/2007 as amended.

5.5 Once the objectives listed in section are met, then the project team should be dissolved.