



IHB File S1/5069

CIRCULAR LETTER 33/2016  
20 July 2016

**APPLICATION FROM THE WORLD OCEAN COUNCIL  
TO BE GRANTED OBSERVER STATUS  
AS A NON-GOVERNMENTAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION**

Reference:

- A. IHO Resolution 5/1957 as amended - *IHO Relations with other Organizations*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The Directing Committee has received an application from The World Ocean Council (WOC) to be granted observer status as a Non-Governmental International Organization (NGIO) under the terms of Reference A.

2. The WOC is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization registered in the USA and the UK. It has been established as an international multi-industry business leadership alliance on ocean sustainability, science and stewardship.

*The WOC Vision is: A healthy and productive global ocean and its sustainable use, development and stewardship by a responsible ocean business community.*

*The WOC Mission is: The WOC brings together the multi-sectoral ocean business community to catalyze global private sector leadership and collaboration in ocean sustainability and "Corporate Ocean Responsibility".*

3. The WOC is growing steadily, currently with 80+ Member companies and industry associations and a global network that includes 35,000+ ocean industry stakeholders from around the world and across the sectors. Members include companies from a wide range of ocean industries, including: oil and gas, mining, marine technology and data, shipping, classification societies, shipbuilding, offshore renewable energy, fisheries, maritime legal and other companies from a range of sectors.

4. The WOC has a history of successful ongoing collaboration with international organizations/agencies, including the United Nations (UN) Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (UN DOALOS), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the World Bank.

5. The WOC is formally accredited as an observer to the International Seabed Authority (ISA) and the Group on Earth Observations (GEO). The key UN agencies concerned with ocean, weather and climate observations have encouraged the WOC to develop and implement its Smart Ocean-Smart Industries (SO-SI) program. This includes IOC and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The WOC is regularly requested by the WMO-IOC Joint Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) to provide updates on the SO-SI program progress.

6. The WOC is creating international multi-sectoral/multi-stakeholder “communities” to tackle cross-cutting priorities for ocean sustainable development, including ocean governance/policy, marine spatial planning, marine sound, pollution, the Arctic, marine invasive species, marine debris, marine mammal impacts, port reception facilities, the adaptation of ports and coastal infrastructure to sea level rise/extreme weather events, data collection by ocean industries (ships/platforms of opportunity).

7. More information about the WOC can be found at: [www.oceancouncil.org](http://www.oceancouncil.org) .

8. The application from the WOC has been duly examined by the Directing Committee which is satisfied that the WOC meets the requirements for accreditation as an NGO as described in IHO Resolution 5/1957 as amended, in that:

- it has the character of a non-governmental international organization, representing individuals and organizations with an interest in nautical charting, high-technology navigation and the use hydrographic information;
- the objectives and functions of the WOC are in harmony with the objectives of the IHO, as defined in Article II of the Convention on the IHO;
- it has a governing body, an executive officer and a secretariat authorized under its constitution to speak for its members; and
- the aims of the WOC are entirely consistent and complementary to the aims of the IHO. The WOC will support the activities of the IHO by promoting and disseminating its principles and work. Accordingly, it will make a positive contribution to the work of the IHO.

9. Member States are invited to consider the application from the World Ocean Council for accreditation and to submit any objections or comments that they might have by **30 September2016**. Subsequently, the Directing Committee will notify the WOC of the outcome of its consultation with IHO Member States.

On behalf of the Directing Committee,  
Yours sincerely,



Robert WARD  
President