



IHO File N° S1/1900/A

CIRCULAR LETTER 62/2017
13 November 2017

WORLD HYDROGRAPHY DAY – PROPOSED THEME FOR 2018

References:

- A. IHO CL 61/2016 dated 4 November - *Theme for World Hydrography Day 2017*
- B. IHO CL 55/2017 dated 31 October - *Outcome of the 1st meeting of the IHO Council*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in Reference A, the theme of World Hydrography Day (WHD) 2017 was “*Mapping our seas, oceans and waterways - more important than ever*”. This theme was intended to raise awareness of the current lack of comprehensive data to underpin many maps and charts of the seas and oceans.

2. The following IHO Member States have reported hosting events in connection with World Hydrography Day 2017: Chile, Guatemala, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mauritius, Mexico and Norway. Reports are available at:

www.iho.int > Home > About IHO > World Hydrography Day > WHD 2017 Celebrations around the world.

Proposed theme for World Hydrography Day 2018

3. Taking into account the world’s increasing focus on the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcome of the UN Ocean Conference in support of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 concerning the ocean, as well as the declaration of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO to commit to an International Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, under which the IHO and other intergovernmental organizations such as the World Meteorological Organization will participate, the Secretary-General, in consultation with the IHO Directors, proposes a theme for WHD 2018 which focuses on hydrography in relation to the UN 2030 Agenda:

“Bathymetry – the foundation for sustainable seas, oceans and waterways”

4. The theme provides the opportunity to raise awareness for a better understanding of the depth and shape of the seafloor which is key to a broader understanding of natural processes and the success of all human activities in, on or under the sea - including safety of navigation, protection of the marine environment, development of the blue economy and the sustainable use and governance of the marine domain. In particular, many of the SDG14 targets may be compromised due to insufficient bathymetric data coverage.

5. The theme also reflects the aims of IHO Resolution 1/2017 - *Improving the Availability of Bathymetric Data Worldwide* that was adopted by the first session of the Assembly of the IHO. The theme may also be used to support the promotion and encouragement of innovative supplementary data gathering therefore maximizing initiatives such as crowd-sourced bathymetry (volunteered geographic data) and satellite-derived bathymetry as well as promoting the related activities of the IHO-IOC GEBCO Programme (including the Nippon Foundation - *GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project*) and national hydrographic surveying programmes.

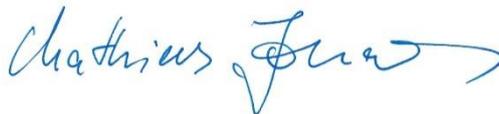
Mapping our Seas, Oceans and Waterways – more important than ever

6. The theme will also help to promote the role of hydrographic data in national and regional spatial data infrastructures and advertise for the benefits of making hydrographic data accessible to the widest possible audience for use that goes well beyond safety of navigation. It will also acknowledge the increasing interest being shown by the UN-Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) in marine geospatial data, as shown by its consideration of establishing a dedicated UN-GGIM working group on marine geospatial information.

7. Noting the role of the Council, set out in Article VI of the Convention and the Rules of Procedure of the Council, the proposed theme was submitted by the Secretary-General to the Council for its consideration at its first meeting in October in Monaco. The Council agreed that the Secretary-General should continue with the current practise for the adoption of a theme for World Hydrography Day (issue an IHO CL inviting to comment on a proposed theme, followed by IHO CL announcing the theme). The Council endorsed the proposed theme for WHD 2018 “*Bathymetry - the foundation for sustainable seas, oceans and waterways*” and invited the IHO Secretariat to issue the corresponding IHO CL. (Decision and Action C1/45).

8. Member States are requested to take into account the endorsement of the IHO Council and to consider the proposed theme for WHD 2018 “*Bathymetry – the foundation for sustainable seas, oceans and waterways*” - and to provide their comments, if any, to the IHO Secretariat **no later than 20 December 2017**. The IHO Secretariat would also welcome any comments and suggestions aimed at improving the impact and the organization of annual WHD celebrations.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Mathias JONAS
Secretary-General