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**CIRCULAR LETTER 47/2019**  
**25 September 2019**

**ACCEPTANCE OF CROWDSOURCED BATHYMETRY ACTIVITIES  
IN NATIONAL WATERS OF JURISDICTION**

References:

- A. CL 11/2019 dated 25 January – *Call for approval of Edition 2.0.0 of IHO Publication B-12*
- B. CL 28/2019 dated 13 June – *Adoption of Edition 2.0.0 of IHO Publication B-12;*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The call for approval of the Edition 2.0.0 of IHO Publication B-12 – *IHO Guidance on Crowdsourced Bathymetry* (Reference A) included a template form seeking Member States acceptance of crowdsourced bathymetry activities in their respective national waters of jurisdiction including any caveats they wish to apply. (Annex B of Reference A).
2. Reference B announced the adoption of Edition 2.0.0 of IHO Publication B-12 – *IHO Guidance on Crowdsourced Bathymetry*. This Circular Letter provides details of the analysis of the comments received from Member States whether they support the activity within their waters of national jurisdiction. This input forms the basis for the subject of this Circular Letter.
3. The Secretariat of the IHO thanks the 34 Member States that replied to Annex B of Reference A. Most of the Member States confirmed that systematic bathymetric survey for the exploration of the marine environment are regulated by their national laws in accordance with United Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). However, this should not be confused with the occasional recordings made by carriage-required depth sounding equipment by ships en route to maintain their safety of navigation. Member States' responses indicated a general understanding that these recorded datasets have a value and are worth to notify to the affected Hydrographic Office - in particular if there is any significant variance from the published charted information. Altogether 14 Member States indicated their positive support of Crowdsourced Bathymetry (CSB) activities in their waters of national jurisdiction with the caveats shown in the table in Annex A. The Secretariat will publish and maintain the content of this table as the Positive List on the IHO website in relation to the presentation of the Crowdsourced Bathymetry theme.
4. As indicated in Reference B, expressions of support and subsequent adoption to the Positive List can be submitted to the Secretary-General at any time in the future. In this respect, it is planned that the Secretary-General will call for updates of the position of Member States regarding CSB activities in national waters of jurisdiction at intervals via Circular Letter.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Mathias JONAS  
Secretary-General

Annex A: Summary analysis of positive responses to Annex-B of IHO CL 11/2019 for publication on the IHO website.

Copy: Chair, Crowd Sourced Bathymetry Working Group

### Summary analysis of positive responses

1. Based on the comments received to the questionnaire in Annex B to IHO CL 11/2019, the following table will be published as the Positive List to guide potential data gathering activities undertaken by the wider maritime community in waters of national jurisdiction:

<b>Member State</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Specific actions required</b>
Argentina	EEZ only	Provide copy of dataset to Hydrographic Office
Brazil	EEZ only	Provide copy of dataset to Hydrographic Office
Cyprus	All waters	Provide copy of dataset to Hydrographic Office
Denmark	All waters	Inform Hydrographic Office of any variance with published chart
Georgia	All waters	Provide copy of dataset to Hydrographic Office
Germany	All waters	Inform Hydrographic Office of new dataset
Monaco	All waters	Provide copy of dataset to Hydrographic Office
Netherlands	All waters	Inform Hydrographic Office of new dataset
New Zealand	All waters	Inform Hydrographic Office of new dataset
Norway	All waters – no multibeam activity without prior permission	Inform Hydrographic Office of new dataset
Philippines	Shipping routes and transit passages only	None
South Africa	EEZ only	Provide copy of dataset to Hydrographic Office
Sweden	EEZ only	Inform Hydrographic Office of new dataset
USA	All waters	None

2. Under normal circumstances, whether there is a requirement to inform the relevant Hydrographic Office of new data or to provide a copy of the dataset, this will be undertaken by the Trusted Node to which the dataset has been submitted. The IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry (DCDB) will store the dataset until such time as the appropriate authorizations have been received for placing it into the public domain.

3. Under all circumstances, and in line with current practices, any variations, errors or additions to the information published on official charts or in the associated nautical publications should be brought to the attention of the relevant Hydrographic Office by the quickest means available. The continued use of the known

Hydrographic Notes procedure as the method of forwarding information is encouraged.

4. Mariners are requested to provide comments and feedback, for consideration for inclusion in the next edition, on their operational experiences of using IHO publication B-12 – *IHO Guidance on Crowdsourced Bathymetry* – to the IHO Secretariat ([info@iho.int](mailto:info@iho.int)).