

SIXTH MEETING OF THE IHO INTER REGIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE

IHO-IRCC6

Saint-Mandé (France) 19-20 May 2014

REPORT OF THE EASTERN ATLANTIC HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION (EAthC)

1. **Chairman:** Ingénieur Général Bruno Frachon (FR)
Vice-Chair: according to the statutes of the EAtHC, the vice-chair is designated or elected at the opening of each conference, for the duration of the conference.

2. **Membership:**
Members: Cameroon, France, Morocco, Nigeria, Portugal, Spain
Associate Members: Benin, Cape Verde, Congo (Rep. of), Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal, Togo.

Observers: Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, United Kingdom, United States of America and IHB.

3. **Meetings :**

The Commission met on 14 -16 November 2012 in Lisbon (PT). The next meeting is scheduled in Casablanca (Morocco) on 16-18th of September 2014.

4. **Agenda Items:**

Task numbers refer to IHO WP for 2014 (see CL 61/2013)

IHO Work Programme 1 – "Corporate Affairs"

Element 1.1 Co-operation with International Organizations and participation in relevant meetings.

Task 1.1.8: In September 2013, a three days regional awareness seminar on Maritime Safety, co-organized by IMO, IALA, IHO and the Ministry of Fisheries and Maritime Economy of Mauritania was held in Nouakchott-Mauritania. MOWCA and eleven coastal states of the region attended that seminar which provided briefings on methods to improve safety of navigation and the efficiency of maritime traffic in the region. Participants adopted several recommendations, including membership of IHO, participation to IHO activities, improvement of nautical information, ratification and implementation of SOLAS, development of integrated and coordinated maritime policies.

Task 1.1.20: Following a decision adopted at the 12th EAtHC conference, a sub-regional workshop on Hydrography has been organized and hosted in Pointe Noire by the Republic of Congo. Among the participants were Mr. Bessero, IHB Director, Mr. Frachon, EAtHC chairman, Mr. Luvambano, MOWCA Secretary General and Mr. Coussoud-Mavoungou, Minister for the Merchant Navy of the host country. Furthermore, several Coastal States attended that workshop: Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, and Democratic Republic of Congo. This workshop included

presentation of hydrography and its role in support of the economic growth, and of IHO. It has been the occasion to initiate debates regarding maritime development and its related hydrographic needs, and way and means for a response adapted to regional context. Several promising ways of cooperation around hydrography between the Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission and the Maritime Organisation of Western and Central Africa has been raised and discussed. The outcome of the workshop will be used to prepare a capacity building programme for the EAthC.

Element 1.2 Information Management

Task 1.2.4.1: One of EAthC's main issues remains the contacts list management. Once a year, IHO Yearbook should be updated by EAthC and IHB should add the date of the update for every coastal State. France (September 2013) and Morocco (September 2013), have then updated their contact details to IHB since IRCC5. Furthermore, every new appointment in the hydrographic community of the region has been the opportunity to remind the concerned state to update its contact details in the IHO Yearbook.

IHO Work Programme 2 - "Services and Standards"

Element 2.3 Nautical Cartography

Task 2.3.2.6: Since the last EAthC conference, IHB and the CHATINTCHART Coordinator have pooled their efforts to make the S-11 Region G (CHATINTCHART) catalogue update process more efficient. From now, the CHATINTCHART catalogue structure is compliant with S-11 format and every inputs/updates provided by charting authorities will be only addressed to the Regional Coordinator before transmission to the IHB. A new version of the catalogue is to be released in this S-11 compliant format as well as in a GIS-compliant format (kml) on the IHO website prior to the next EAthC conference in September 2014.

IHO Work Programme 3 – " Inter Regional Coordination and Support"

Element 3.1 Co-operation with Member States and attendance at relevant meetings

Task 3.1.18: As for the last one, the next EAthC conference scheduled in Morocco next September will welcome several industry stakeholders to take part to some of the commission debates.

Element 3.2 Increase participation by non-Member States

Task 3.2.2.1: Following up their participation at the 12th EAthC conference, the Republic of Congo increased significantly their involvement in IHO regional activities first by organizing and hosting a workshop on hydrography with IHO and MOWCA representatives and also by delivering a significant amount of MSI information related to oil platform locations in their national waters to their NAVAREA co-ordinator. Lastly, Republic of Congo recently informed the IHB and the EAthC Chair about its intention to apply for IHO membership.

Task 3.2.2.2: A year ago, a reconnection with the IHB was initiated by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in order to take part again in IHO activities. Therefore, DRC has been informed of the forecoming EAthC meeting and the invitation circular letter has been transmitted to that State. A specific letter will be sent by the EAthC Chair to remind DRC to participate to this 13th EAthC meeting.

Element 3.3 Capacity Building Management

Task 3.3.1.4: One of the way of cooperation which emerged during the EAtHC-OHI-MOWCA Seminar held in Pointe Noire was the set-up of a sub-regional GIS portal in order to improve the dissemination, use and visibility of MSI and hydrographic data in the region and to address its governance (C-55 status, planification) at a sub-regional scale. A recent letter from MOWCA's Secretary General to the EAtHC Chair confirmed the validity of that proposal by suggesting to include hydrographic data dissemination GIS tools through an existing sub-regional maritime safety focused portal hosted by the republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

Task 3.3.3 : See Task 1.1.20

Task 3.3.8: Following up the request submitted by the EAtHC Chair regarding an assessment visit for the upgrade, accreditation and recognition of the NNHS as a regional centre to the IBSC Chair, EAtHC Chair has advised Nigeria to initiate the accreditation process of the NNHS Category B course towards the IBSC.

Besides, the EAtHC-OHI-MOWCA Seminar mentioned above raised the need of the Coastal States of the sub-region to dispose of a dedicated training in hydrography supported by a network of regional maritime academies. That need was actually turned into subject of cooperation in the discussion with MOWCA.

Element 3.5 Capacity Building Provision

Task 3.5.1: Following up the Pointe Noire workshop, the EAtHC has submitted to the CBSC a fund request for a definition study in order to collect the full scope of hydrographic needs in the sub-region and to build-up a sustainable Capacity Building project for the Western and Central African countries.

Task 3.5.2: The MSI workshop for French speaking countries of the region, part of the IHO's Capacity Building 2014 annual programme has been scheduled at the end of 2014 at the « Académie Régionale des Sciences et Techniques de la Mer » in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Besides, another high level meeting with MOWCA will be included to this annual programme as well.

Task 3.5.6: The EAtHC commission kept on raising awareness of coastal States on the need to clarify and fulfil their SOLAS responsibilities by establishing bilateral agreements with charting authorities.

Element 3.6 Coordination of Global Surveying and Charting

Task 3.7.1: Based on the crucial need to consolidate contact management in the region for that purpose and the decision adopted by the commission to request MSI points of contact update from every Coastal State in the region, the commission, in coordination with the NAVAREA II Coordinator, continued on many occasions to urge Coastal States to update their MSI contacts, arguing the fact that some MSI contact details were still erroneous. Today, 4 Coastal States (17%) still haven't provided valid email addresses. This statement led the commission to consider the searching of new means of MSI dissemination in the frame of its cooperation between the maritime sub-regional bodies and the hydrographic community.

5. Conclusions:

Even though the EAtHC region coordination is quite efficient regarding the charting coordination, some ways of improvement remain obvious: MSI dissemination, strong governance of hydrography at national levels. As the standard capacity building toolbox tends to have shown its limits with

dealing with African coastal states of the region singularly, the EAtHC places great expectations with the emerging cooperation with sub-regional maritime bodies such as MOWCA, which has expressed its vision of hydrography as an enabler for the global maritime strategy of the sub-region.