

**EASTERN ATLANTIC HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION (EAtHC)
9th Conference, Dakar, Senegal, 6-8 December 2006**

REPORT ON COOPERATION WITH PMAWCA

By Captain Hugo GORZIGLIA (Chile), IHB Director

At the 8th EAtHC Meeting, Brest, France, 28-29 October 2004, the IHB reported on the invitation received from the Port Management Association of West and Central Africa (PMAWCA) to attend the meetings of its Technical Committee in charge of Environment and Security issues that will meet in Luanda (Angola) from the 9th to the 12th of November 2004.

The invitation was to address the Committee on the functions of the IHO and the importance of hydrography as well as to provide a summary on the main regional hydrographic problems and proposed actions. This offer was considered to be in line with the objectives of the EAtHC and its members strongly supported the need to be present in this event. Unfortunately the IHB and the officers of the EAtHC had prior engagements and consequently resolved to offer Nigeria to represent the IHO at the PMAWCA meetings, bearing in mind the proximity and sole membership of IHO and EAtHC in the West African Sub-Region. Unfortunately last minute unexpected problems prevented the Hydrographer of the Nigerian Navy to make it to the PMAWCA Meeting.

In this scenario, the IHB assured PMAWCA that IHO was ready to explore other opportunities to liaise with PMAWCA. As a result of this communication, the IHB was invited to attend the 28th Annual Council and 4th Round Table of the PMAWCA, held in Douala, Cameroon, from 17th to 23rd February 2005.

At the round table several proposals were made by the IHB:

- to have PMAWCA contributing to raise awareness on the importance of hydrography at the appropriate governmental levels of its members.
- to highlight the importance of the IHO and request Member Governments that are not members of the IHO to consider joining the Organization.
- to have PMAWCA assisting to nominate focal points of contact with IHO and to contribute to identify needs.
- an offer of assistance by the IHB in case the PMAWCA might wish to consider evaluating the need to establish a regional training capability and exploring the interest of the Regional Maritime Academy of Accra to incorporate these disciplines on their offer of training.

A permanent contact was kept with the Secretary General of PMAWCA, and her participation as speaker at the Capacity Building Seminar organized by the IHB in Trieste, Italy was very successful. During this event there was opportunity to explore and discuss initiatives that would help bridging both organizations. Among others, it was considered that an MOU would provide the basis for further work.

In December 2005 an invitation to attend the 29th PMAWCA Council was received and everything was arranged to brief the Directing Committee in Point Noire, Republic of Congo, in February 2006. This time it was the weather that worked against the IHB participation, as Nice airport was closed and the mission could not take place. Nevertheless the IHB sent the

documentation and presentations, but certainly that does not have the same effect as a personal presentation.

Considering that the IHO Work Programme 2003-2007, Task 2.1.2 refers to Western and Central Africa, and echoing the references made by the United Nations as regard to African States, a Memorandum of Understanding was jointly worked and agreed. The MOU was signed 28 April 2006 by the President of PMAWCA and on the 12th of May by the President of IHB.

Thanks,

Hugo Gorziglia
Captain - Chilean Navy
Chairman IHOCBC