

The Proposed Eastern Caribbean Hydrographic Initiative

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Background

The National Hydrographic Office



Antigua and Barbuda formally established its National Hydrographic Office in April 2010, within the ADOMS, in preparation for the VIMSAS audit in June 2012.

Capacity Building

Antigua and Barbuda hosted the *Introduction to Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Course* under the auspices of the *MESO-American and Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission (MACHC)*

Introduction to Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Course



Participants from:

Antigua and Barbuda

Barbados

British Virgin Island

Dominica

El Salvador

Grenada

St. Kitts and Nevis

St. Lucia

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

- a. there has been very little systematic hydrographic survey in the Eastern Caribbean region for the past thirty years;
- b. the vast majority of hydrographic survey data on which modern charts are based was collected primarily using old survey technology:
 - fail to meet modern IHO standards
 - not suitable for satellite navigation
- c. the available survey data is inadequate to support the many new requirements (need higher density data sets):
 - complex coastal zone mapping and management projects
 - tsunami inundation mapping

The Eastern Caribbean Reality cont'd

- d. hydrographic surveying is an expensive undertaking
 - major costs in mobilization/demobilization of personnel and equipment;
- e. hydrographic survey equipment is expensive and technically challenging to operate and maintain;
- f. trained personnel (ideally internationally qualified hydrographic surveyors) are required to undertake the data collection, while some form of hydrographic office is required to process, analyze and store the data

The Proposed eastern Caribbean Hydrographic Initiative

Level 1

to conduct systematic area surveys throughout the Eastern Caribbean through the creation of an **inter-island collaborative hydrographic survey project** using international funding and delivery by commercial resources.

- **Level 2**

to maintain survey data to modern standards, post **Level 1**, by the creation of a **regional hydrographic survey unit** trained and equipped with mobile survey equipment to conduct minor maintenance surveys (e.g. ports and approaches), new surveys for development purposes and post natural disaster work.

The OECS /UKHO Partnership

For **Level 1**- the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO) would be a key partner in:

- identifying and prioritizing the survey programme;
- assisting in survey specification definition;
- provide a financial estimate of the costs; and
- provide expert project management to ensure that surveys are conducted to, and meet IHO Standards.

For **Level 2** - the UKHO could also advise on:

- the composition of the future regional hydrographic structure;
- the composition of the future hydrographic unit;
- equipment and personnel; and
- training and long term mentoring.

The Organisation Of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)

An undertaking of this nature and magnitude is best driven under the aegis of an established and functional regional body, and the OECS is considered a suitable vehicle.

This project could easily fall under Article 4, (*Purposes and Functions of the Organisation*), paragraph 4.2 (g) (*external transportation and communication...*) or paragraph 4.2 (o) (*matters relating to the sea and its resources*), of the Revised Treaty of Basseterre establishing the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Economic Union.



OECS member States:

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Dominica
- Grenada
- Montserrat
- St. Kitts and Nevis
- St. Lucia
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Associate Member States:

- Anguilla
- British Virgin

Significant Milestones

- The Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and the *UK National Hydrographer* agreed to collaborate on this initiative and to present the proposition of a *Regional Hydrographic Mechanism* to the members of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) for consideration

Significant Milestones

- The framework for the collaboration was finalized in December 2011, with the Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS), supported by the UKHO, tasked to prepare a concept paper for the Government of Antigua and Barbuda to submit to the OECS Heads of Government Assembly in June 2012.
- In January 2012, the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda discussed the concept with Mr. Jeremy Browne, MP, Junior Minister in the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, at the UK Caribbean Ministerial Forum. The PM later introduced the project to the Heads of the OECS States at the 54th Assembly meeting that followed the Forum.
- Also in January 2012, the ADOMS/UKHO team conducted consultation with stakeholders and potential interest groups in Antigua and Barbados.

Significant Milestones

- The ADOMS/UKHO Team gave presentations on the fundamentals of hydrography and the proposed OECS Hydrographic Project at the OECS and Commonwealth Secretariat's *Regional OECS Workshop on Ocean Governance*, held over the period 8-9 February 2012, in St. Lucia
- At the 55th OECS Assembly meeting in July 2012, Antigua and Barbuda tabled the concept paper. The Heads directed that the concept paper be sent to the OECS Ocean Governance Committee for perusal and recommendations.

Significant Milestones

- The Ocean Governance Team discussed the concept paper and concluded that the scoping study proposed in the concept paper was a worthwhile undertaking. The Director General of the OECS directed that a scoping study proposal should be prepared and that the secretariat would seek to secure funding before taking back the paper to the Heads for approval.
- Coming out of the 13th MACHC meeting, Antigua and Barbuda's Commissioner to the OECS, who currently chairs the OECS Ocean Governance Team, was invited to participate Maritime Funding Session in Washington on the 27th February 2013.
- The OECS Heads approved the Scoping Study in June 2013, and endorsed the Secretariat's initiative regarding funding.
- The Commonwealth Secretariat is committed to funding 60% of the scoping study. The OECS Secretariat is actively pursuing the funding for the remainder of the scoping budget. The UKHO is funding their involvement.

Objectives of the Scoping Study

- Assessment of maritime spatial data currently available to the OECS states;
- Assessment of the requirement and projected need of OECS member states for maritime spatial data (MSD);
- Development of a MSD gathering submission to meet the requirements of OECS states for MSD in support of national development and commitments;
- Development of the long-term recurring maritime spatial data requirement;

Objectives of the Scoping Study cont'd

- Development of an OECS maritime spatial data infrastructure, a driver for the effective exploitation of the Eastern Caribbean's Blue Economy;
- Development of the OECS Eastern Caribbean Hydrographic Service to fulfil the long-term recurring maritime spatial data requirement;
- To provide realistic costings associated with parts three and four of the project - *the resurvey of the waters of the Eastern Caribbean and the Eastern Caribbean Hydrographic Service.*

Current Status

The next OECS Ocean Governance Committee Meeting is scheduled for February 2014 where it is expected that specific timelines regarding the scoping study will be finalized.

Any Questions ?

