

**INTERNATIONAL HIDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION**  
**SOUTH-WEST ATLANTIC HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION**

**STATUTES**  
**of the**  
**SOUTH-WEST ATLANTIC HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION (SWAtHC)**

as amended by the 13<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Commission held in Buenos Aires, Argentina  
(March 2019)

**ARTICLE 1: THE COMMISSION**

- a) The South-West Atlantic Hydrographic Commission henceforth referred to as "The Commission", has been established according to the Resolution N° 2/1997 of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), and shall be governed according to these Statutes.
- b) The geographic area covered by the Commission shall be that defined by the limits presented in Annex A and are:
  - North, the 0° parallel,
  - East, the 20° W meridian,
  - South, the 47° 20' S parallel; and
  - West, the Baselines of:
    - a) the Federal Republic of Brazil,
    - b) the Oriental Republic of Uruguay,
    - c) the Republic of Argentina and
    - d) including the hydrographic basins flowing into the defined geographic area.

**ARTICLE 2: THE MEMBERS**

- a) The Full Members of the Commission are the South-West Atlantic Region States, as defined in Article 1 b) above, who are IHO Member States, whose representatives are responsible for hydrography, cartography and nautical information in their respective countries and are signatories of these Statutes, depending on the unanimous approval of the SWAtHC Member States.
- b) Other States may, with the previous agreement of all full Members, be invited to participate in the Commission, acquiring the Associate Member or Observer status, whatever applies. In order to participate, the Associate Members shall sign these Statutes and be represented by the national authority responsible for hydrography, cartography and nautical information.
- c) The Associate Members defined in Article 2 b) will have the same rights and obligations as the Full Members of the Commission except the rights to vote and to be elected Chair or Vice-Chair of the Commission.

### **ARTICLE 3: THE OBJECTIVES**

- a) The Commission shall have an advisory, scientific and technological character; it shall not exert any authority over the Hydrographic Services or Institutions responsible for hydrography, cartography or nautical information in the member countries and its activities shall not include matters concerning international political matters.
- b) The objectives of the Commission are to:
  - 1. Promote technical co-operation, capacity building and training and to conduct combined scientific investigations in the domain of hydrographic surveying, cartography and nautical information.
  - 2. Analyze the consequences, within its area of responsibility, of issues in which the IHO is concerned, avoiding any interference with other IHO bodies and other established Regional Hydrographic Commissions.
  - 3. Stimulate its Members to expand their hydrographic activities within their areas of interest and to encourage them to seek advice and technical assistance from the IHO in order to strengthen their hydrographic capabilities.
  - 4. Facilitate the exchange of information related to surveys, research, and scientific and technical development in order to assist in planning, organizing and executing hydrographic activities without interfering in the national responsibilities of each Hydrographic Service.
  - 5. Stimulate the development of the INT Chart Program and to maintain contact with other bodies related to International Charts.
  - 6. Carry out studies through committees and working groups, when deemed necessary.

### **ARTICLE 4: THE MEETINGS**

- a) The Commission shall meet annually in ordinary plenary meeting in one of the Full Member States and shall allow bilateral discussions. These meetings shall take place in the first semester of each year. In the years in which the IHO Assembly shall meet, these meetings will be held at least 45 days before the Assembly meeting.
- b) The Secretariat of the IHO will be invited to participate in the meetings of the Commission in accordance with the IHO Resolution N° 2/1997.
- c) The Hydrographic Commissions that have boundaries with the Commission may be invited to participate in the meetings as Observers. The Observers may participate in the discussions but shall not have voting rights.
- d) The Members shall be represented at the meetings by the Heads of the Hydrographic Services or their representatives, and may be accompanied by advisors.
- e) The Commission shall establish committees or working groups to consider and execute projects of specific interest.
- f) With the previous agreement of all Full Member of the Commission, the Commission Chair may invite experts, who are not Member States' representatives, to participate in the meetings, committees and working groups as observers and/or advisors.

- g) The presence of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Full Members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum.
- h) Members will host meetings in alphabetical order. When the designated host is unable to organize the meeting, it shall inform the Commission Chair at least four (4) month before the meeting date. The next country in alphabetical order will have priority to host the meeting. The subsequent meeting must be coordinated by the country that could not host the previous meeting.

#### **ARTICLE 5: THE CHAIR**

- a) The position of Commission Chair will be held in alphabetical order of the Full Members and the Chairmanship will last approximately three (3) years. The corresponding Head of the Hydrographic Service will hold this position.
- b) The Chair of the Commission will chair the meeting. The next Chair shall take office forty five (45) days after the end of the meeting. In the years in which the IHO Assembly will meet, the Chair will take office when the Assembly will ratify the members nominated for the Council. The incoming Chair will represent the Commission in the Council.
- c) The Vice-Chair shall be the Full Member that follows the Chair's country in alphabetical order. His/her role is to temporarily replace the Chair when necessary. Such substitution will not alter the place where the meeting is held.
- d) The Commission Secretariat shall be exercised by the Member State of the Chair, who will be responsible for appointing the Secretary.
- e) The outgoing Chair shall complete the pending work related to his/her term within a maximum of forty five (45) days.

#### **ARTICLE 6: RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS**

- a) The resolutions and decisions of the meeting will normally be reached by consensus of the Full Members. If consensus could not be reached, the resolutions and decisions will be adopted by a simple majority of the Full Members.
- b) Each Full Member will have right to one vote and the voting will be done by raising the hands.
- c) At the end of the meeting, the Chair shall read the text of the Resolutions and Decisions agreed during the meeting. In case one of the Heads of the Hydrographic Offices is not present, his/her representative shall forward these Resolutions and Decisions for the ratification of the Head within a period of no more than thirty (30) days. These Resolutions and Decisions shall enter in force within a maximum of three (3) months after the end of the meeting.

## **ARTICLE 7: THE DUTIES OF THE SECRETARIAT**

- a) To collate from the Full Members the proposals to be included in the agenda of the next meeting three (3) months before the beginning of the meeting.
- b) The proposals to be included in the meeting's agenda shall to be sent to the Chair, with copy to the Vice-Chair, at least two (2) months before the date agreed for the opening of the meeting.
- c) To prepare the provisional agenda and to submit it to the Chair for his/her consideration. One of the agenda items will be a report on the activities of the Commission since the last meeting.
- d) To prepare and distribute the list of participants at least one (1) month before the opening of the meeting.
- e) To prepare for the Chair the report of the meeting within twenty (20) days after the meeting, including the discussions and decisions taken as well as any report submitted to the Full Members for their approval and for information to the other Members. Once approved by the Chair, the report will be sent to the Members that shall approve the report within ten (10) days. Any objection to the report shall be made by electronic mail.
- f) The final report will be prepared in Spanish and translated to English, to be sent to the IHO Secretariat.
- g) To respond and handle any requirement from the Members.

## **ARTICLE 8: EXPENSES**

The travel and accommodation expenses of the Members' representatives, of the IHO Secretariat and of the observers shall be covered by their respective countries and organizations.

## **ARTICLE 9: AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTES**

Full Members of the Commission may propose amendments to these Statutes. Such proposals shall be considered in the following plenary meeting and shall be approved unanimously by all Full Members.

## **ARTICLE 10: THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE COMMISSION**

The official language of the Commission shall be Spanish.

## **ARTICLE 11: DISSEMINATION OF DECISIONS**

Any information considered by the Commission to be of interest to all IHO Member States shall be communicated formally to the IHO Secretariat for its dissemination.

**ARTICLE 12: ENTERING INTO FORCE OF THE STATUTES**

This Statute will enter into force immediately after its signature and shall be translated into English and Portuguese.

Annex A



**Signatures: Full Members**

|           |                         |  |
|-----------|-------------------------|--|
| Argentina | Nombre<br>Título/Puesto |  |
| Brasil    | Nombre<br>Título/Puesto |  |
| Uruguay   | Nombre<br>Título/Puesto |  |

**Associate Member**

|          |                         |  |
|----------|-------------------------|--|
| Paraguay | Nombre<br>Título/Puesto |  |
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