

2. As the international authority for hydrography and nautical charting, the IHO sets the international standards for hydrographic surveying and charting.
3. Another important role of the IHO is to coordinate nautical charting services across the world - so that mariners have charts to navigate wherever they need to go. This is done primarily through the 15 Regional Hydrographic Commissions and an IHO Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica that have been established by IHO Member States to coordinate and where possible improve the levels of surveying and charting at the regional level.
4. The IHO has an active capacity building programme that assists countries to develop and improve their hydrographic capabilities. Capacity building projects are often undertaken in collaboration with other international organizations and increasingly with active industry participation.
5. **Hydrography supporting the Blue Economy.** The seas and oceans are major contributors to the world economy and therefore the well-being of everyone that lives on the planet. Over 90% of all the world's trade travels by sea. In addition, the seas and oceans represent a vast resource for food, mineral resources, energy, water, bio-medicines, and infrastructure that in turn creates wealth for individuals and for nations. Each of these important and growing maritime sectors also creates jobs; however without good maps and charts of the seas, these benefits are difficult to realize.
6. **State of surveying and charting worldwide.** Every human activity conducted in, on or under the sea depends on knowing the depth and the nature of the seafloor and an understanding of the tides and the currents. However, many parts of the world's seas, oceans and coastal waters remain unsurveyed. This has a major impact on the effective management, sustainable exploitation, and well-informed policing of the seas and oceans.
7. While most of the world's established shipping routes are relatively safe navigationally because of widespread use by many ships over many years, the advent of larger vessels and the need for vessels to travel to new destinations is not being supported by adequate surveys and charts. In that respect, the Polar regions are a major area of concern.
8. It is a fact that mankind has higher resolution maps of the Moon and Mars than for most of the seas and oceans. This has a big impact on what mankind can do at sea today in a safe and economically sustainable manner. It is impeding progress and economic development in many, if not most, States.
9. Many of the national hydrographic authorities represented in the IHO are reporting that government-sponsored surveying activity is now decreasing because of financial pressures and competing priorities in home waters.
10. The IHO, through its Member States' national hydrographic agencies stand ready to assist, advise and coordinate national and regional surveying and charting priorities - but cannot do so without appropriate levels of government commitment and support and the provision of suitable resources.

Status of Membership of the IHO

11. There are 82 Member States of the IHO, with a further seven States in various stages of joining the Organization. Meanwhile, there are currently 162 States party to SOLAS, 166 States party to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and more than 180 States that have a recognisable coastline. Every coastal State has a dependence on hydrography and nautical charting and will be in some way impeded in its development if there are gaps in its knowledge of the nature of the sea, the seafloor and any hazards that may exist on it. All coastal States should be encouraged to ensure that their seas and coastal areas are properly surveyed and charted. All coastal States should consider membership of the IHO as an important way to ensure that appropriate and effective national hydrographic services can be implemented in their waters.

Safety of navigation

12. Through its technical programme, the IHO seeks to develop, maintain and extend technical standards, specifications and guidelines that enable the provision of standardised products and services that meet the requirements of mariners and other users of hydrographic information.

13. In support of the work of the IMO, the IHO continues to monitor and address issues related to the implementation of the requirements of SOLAS that certain ships carry Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS) according to a progressive scheme that started on 1 July 2012. In particular, the IHO is ensuring that feedback from mariners and equipment manufacturers are taken into account in the relevant IHO standards. The IHO continues to encourage and assist its Member States to achieve an adequate global coverage of Electronic Navigational Charts. In that respect, the issue of overlapping data continues to be a problem in those sea areas where geopolitical issues hamper swift resolution.

14. In the context of the development by the IMO of a strategy to implement “e-Navigation”, the IHO continues to develop standards related to new generation digital products and services under the framework of the IHO standard known as S-100 - *Universal Hydrographic Model*. This work is being conducted in close liaison with other international organizations representing would-be digital e-Navigation information providers such as the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Association of Marine Aids to

- Marine safety information training courses in the Caribbean and South Africa and Islands regions,
- GEBCO training project in collaboration with the Nippon Foundation of Japan,
- Basic course on Training for trainers in Korea.