

# CROWDSOURCED BATHYMETRY WORKING GROUP (CSBWG)

## Terms of Reference

Ref. 7<sup>th</sup> IRCC Meeting (Mexico City, June 2015)  
10<sup>th</sup> IRCC Meeting (Goa, June 2018)  
16<sup>th</sup> IRCC Meeting (Galapagos, June 2024)

### 1. Preamble

The 5<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference (EIHC-5) considered Proposal 4 on Crowdsourced Bathymetry (CSB) and decided by Decision 8 to task the IRCC to establish a Working Group (WG) to prepare a new IHO publication on policy for trusted crowd-sourced bathymetry, taking into account EIHC-5 Proposal 4 and the comments made during the Conference. At the first session of the IHO Assembly and the first meeting of the IHO Council, it was agreed that the scope and tasks of the CSBWG should be considered by the IRCC with a view to expanding the role of the CSBWG beyond that of maintaining IHO publication B-12 - *IHO Guidelines for Crowdsourced Bathymetry* – to include consideration on the potential uses and portrayal of CSB, guidance on data quality and standards, and incentives to increase data contribution by mariners. The IRCC tasked the CSBWG to take into account the programmes already being progressed by other IHO bodies, such as the GEBCO Seabed 2030 and standards development by DQWG and HSPT, and to liaise with these bodies to ensure a harmonized approach and results.

### 2. Objectives

- a. Maintain the IHO publication B-12 through periodic reviews and updates identified by Member States;
- B. Engage with HOs and IHO Member States on matters relating to CSB uses, including but not limited to Nautical Cartography;
- C. Monitor Member State and Regional Hydrographic Commission progress regarding development of best practices and CSB initiatives and incorporate into B-12 as appropriate;
- D. Investigate ways to foster and facilitate data providers (i.e.: Trusted Nodes), increase data contributions and identify incentives on how and why mariners should become involved;
- E. Investigate and promote greater end use of CSB data in and outside the hydrographic community;
- F. Provide guidance on data quality and standards for CSB in liaison with appropriate IHO Working Groups;
- G. Liaise with other relevant IHO and allied bodies involved with CSB data to improve coordination and promote its use and development;
- H. Liaise closely with the IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry (DCDB) as it continues to develop technology to collect, display and distribute CSB data to the public;
- I. Encourage and support all aspects of the CSB data life cycle from acquisition through archival to discovery and distribution, emphasizing automation and efficiency whenever possible;
- J. Encourage and expand scholarly discourse regarding the benefits of CSB to support U.N. Decade on Ocean Science and GEBCO objectives by encouraging contributions to scientific, legal, and policy literature; and
- k. Deliver the IHO CSB Initiative.

### **3. Authority**

- a. The WG is a subsidiary of the Inter Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC) and its work is subject to IRCC approval.

### **4. Composition and Chairpersonship**

- a. The WG shall comprise representatives of IHO Member States, invited Expert Contributors, including members of IHO-IOC Technical Sub Committee on Ocean mapping (TSCOM) and Observers from accredited NGOs and a representative of the IHO Secretariat.
- b. Member States, invited Expert Contributors and Observers may indicate their willingness to participate at any time. A membership list shall be maintained, posted on the IHO website and confirmed annually.
- c. Invited Expert Contributor membership is open to entities and organizations that can provide a relevant and constructive contribution to the work of the WG.
- d. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be a representative of a Member State. The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair should be decided at the first meeting following each ordinary session of the Assembly and, in such case, shall be determined by vote of the Member States present and voting.
- e. If a secretary is required it should normally be drawn from a member of the WG.
- f. If the Chair is unable to carry out the duties of the office, the Vice-Chair shall assume the Chair with the same powers and duties.
- g. Invited Expert Contributors shall seek approval [of membership / for attendance] from the Chair.
- h. Invited Expert Contributor membership may be withdrawn in the event that a majority of the MS represented in the WG agree that an Expert Contributor's continued participation is irrelevant or unconstructive to the work of the WG.
- i. All members shall inform the Chair in advance of their intention to attend meetings of the WG.
- j. In the event that a large number of Invited Expert Contributor members seek to attend a meeting, the Chair may restrict attendance by inviting the Invited Expert Contributors to act through one or more collective representatives.

### **5. Procedures**

- a. The WG should work primarily by correspondence.
- b. The WG should meet at least annually, whenever possible in conjunction with another related conference or meeting. The WG meetings should not normally occur later than nine weeks before a meeting of the IRCC. The Chair or any appointed member, as considered necessary, with the agreement of the simple majority of all members of the WG, can call extraordinary meetings.
- c. The WG should seek advice and input from relevant HSSC WGs as required.
- d. Decisions should generally be made by consensus. If voting is required on issues or to endorse proposals presented to the WG, only IHO Member States may cast a vote. Votes at meetings shall be on the basis of one vote per MS represented at the meeting. Votes by correspondence shall be on the basis of one vote per MS represented in the WG. In all cases of voting, a majority shall be determined based on the number of Member States casting a vote.