

# **Ocean's Knowledge: the Role of the International Hydrographic Organization in the Incoming Decade**

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## **SUMMARY**

The actual decade, 2021-2030, will remain in history of humankind for the many initiatives in favor of the Ocean.

Ocean's knowledge is common and transversal to all those initiatives and it represents the key factor to fill up the significant gaps in our understanding and knowledge of the hydrosphere, predict extreme events such as the sea level rise, invest in a sustainable Ocean and address the various interacting and cumulative threats to our oceans and waters.

Yet, humankind has higher resolution maps of the Moon, Venus and Mars than for most of the seas and oceans. This has a significant impact on what humankind can do at sea today in a safe, economical and sustainable way. It is impeding progress and economic development in many, if not most, coastal States and has a major impact on the effective management, sustainable exploitation, and well-informed governance of the seas and oceans.

To face these and other challenges, the 94 IHO Member States approved a new IHO Strategic Plan. It defines organization's priorities for the coming years and is structured through three overarching goals, focusing the exercise of its mission during this period. It includes Goal 1 to evolve the hydrographic support for safety and efficiency of maritime navigation, undergoing profound transformation, Goal 2 to increase the use of hydrographic data beyond nautical charts and Goal 3 to increase participation in international initiatives on the sustainable use of the oceans.

These new three strategic Goals confirm IHO is now also clearly committed to reconciling the use and the preservation of the marine environment, and motivate IHO to become a relevant stakeholder helping to facilitate a paradigm shift in the design and delivery of qualitative and quantitative ocean

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knowledge, to inform solutions that will contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and particularly to the future of our oceans, seas and waters.

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