

**IHO-IOC GEBCO
(GENERAL BATHYMETRIC CHART OF THE OCEANS)
PROJECT ANNUAL MEETINGS
Virtual Online Events, 11 – 20 January**

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2021	
Task 3.6.1	Attendance of GEBCO Guiding Committee (GGC) and associated bodies including TSCOM, SCRUM and GEBCO symposium

Due to the ongoing global health pandemic and the associated travel restrictions, instead of holding the IHO-IOC GEBCO (General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans) meetings at the headquarters of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC) in Paris, a series of meetings related to the GEBCO project were held online from 11 to 20 January 2021:

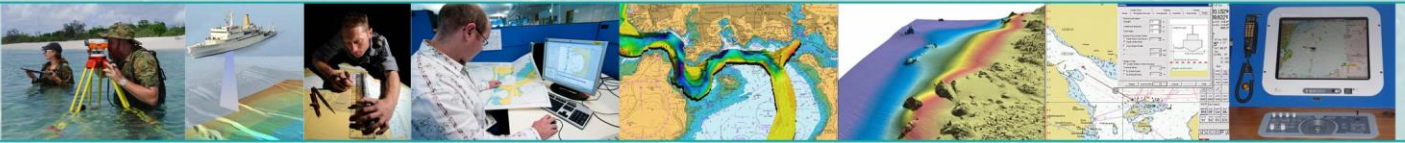
- 12 and 13 January: Sessions of the 8th Sub-Committee on Regional Undersea Mapping (SCRUM) and the 2nd Sub-Committee on Communications, Outreach and Public Engagement (SCOPE) meetings;
- 11 and 14 January: Sessions of the 37th Technical Sub-Committee on Ocean Mapping (TSCOM) meeting;
- 15 January: Joint session of the Sub-Committees; and
- 18 to 20 January: 37th Meeting of the GEBCO Guiding Committee (GGC)

The IHO Secretariat was represented at the TSCOM, SCRUM, SCOPE and Joint meetings by Assistant Director David Wyatt and joined by Director Luigi Sinapi for the meeting of the GGC.

TSCOM, SCRUM and SCOPE

The individual online sessions of TSCOM, SCRUM and SCOPE were chaired, respectively, by Dr Thierry Schmitt (France), Chair of TSCOM, Dr Vicki Ferrini (USA), Chair of SCRUM, and Professor Hyo Hyun Sung (ROK), Chair of SCOPE. The Joint session was chaired by Dr Thierry Schmitt (France).

TSCOM continued to investigate ways to provide technical and methodological advice in order to maintain and improve GEBCO products and supporting data. In particular a comprehensive report was received from the Chair of the Metadata Working Group, which included work on the development of the Seabed 2030 metadata schema and the engagement with the Seabed 2030 Regional Centers to review the different metadata



services being employed. It was agreed that the main task should be to harmonise the different metadata schemas and provide input to B-11 - *GEBCO Cookbook*. The Chair of the GEBCO Cookbook Working Group reported on the ongoing investigation on how best to transform the current format into a suitable e-Publication format, for which contract professional assistance may be required. The Sub-Committee agreed to disband the Cookbook Working Group and establish a Cookbook Editorial Board under the leadership of the Dr Karen Marks, the current Chair of the Cookbook Working Group.

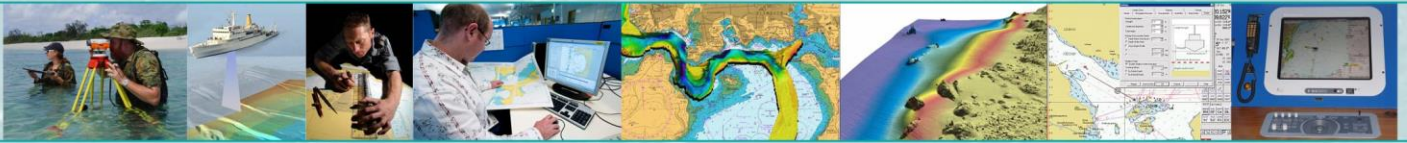
The Sub-Committee also received a progress report on the GEBCO website development work and confirmation that all International Bathymetric Chart (IBC) pages and the GEBCO community contact list had been transferred successfully from the IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry (DCDB) website. A brief was given on the further development of the GEBCO grid reviewing application as a result of the feedback received. Updates on the production of the annual GEBCO grid and the ongoing developments of the IHO DCDB were followed by a demonstration of a prototype Track Planning application and an explanation on the integration of the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) data into the GEBCO grid.

SCRUM continued to liaise, engage and cooperate with all existing regional mapping efforts relevant to GEBCO products, to foster coordination between relevant regional bathymetric mapping projects and the IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry (IHO DCDB) to capture, for long-term archive, the bathymetric data used by these projects and to encourage the establishment of new IHO/IOC regional bathymetric mapping projects to fill current gaps in global bathymetry. In particular reports on progress from the groups involved with the IBC for the Arctic Ocean (IBCAO), the IBC of the Southern Ocean (IBCSO) and the IBC of the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico (IBCCA) were received, all of which included increases in percentage coverage due to the receipt of additional data.

The engagement with the IHO Crowdsourced Bathymetry Working Group (CSBWG) and the various Regional Hydrographic Commissions were noted and a number of regional projects and initiatives were highlighted, including AusSeabed and work with the Schmidt Ocean Institute vessel *RV Falkor* around the Australian coast, various projects in Canada and an initiative to restart the South East Pacific Bathymetric Chart through collaboration between the South East Pacific Regional Hydrographic Commission (SEPRHC) member states. Activities in China, Ireland, USA and Europe under the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet) were presented.

SCOPE continued to support the external relations and communications efforts of GEBCO by developing and advising on communications strategies, developing and reviewing material, and identifying opportunities for engagement with GEBCO's diverse community of stakeholders, to foster coordination and consistency across the external relations and communication activities of IHO-IOC GEBCO sub-committees and projects and to identify the current issues related to the potential usage of GEBCO products and generate publicity. In particular progress on the finalisation of the communication strategy was noted.

The Sub-Committee discussed various elements related to communication and outreach including the development of a generic presentation template and GEBCO slide deck, the current GEBCO Map Production Principles, which it was agreed were in need of review and revision, the need to manage on a full time basis the GEBCO social network presence, the



SCOPE website and how to transfer the contents into the main GEBCO website. A proposal to update the IHO publication B-10 - *History of GEBCO* - in time for the 120th anniversary of GEBCO in 2023 was presented. Initial statistics and analysis of the GEBCO *Map the Gaps* symposium were provided and the advantages and disadvantages of the online format were discussed.

During the Joint Sub-Committees session, the Work Plans and budget resource bids were discussed; in particular the various tasks and actions identified during the individual sessions were discussed and prioritised. It was proposed to hold the GEBCO week for the Sub-Committees and the Symposium in late October/early November, with the Symposium containing a virtual element to maintain the broad participation at all career levels, which was evident for the solely online version this time. The exact dates and location will be published on the IHO, IOC, GEBCO and Map the Gaps websites when confirmed.

GEBCO Symposium

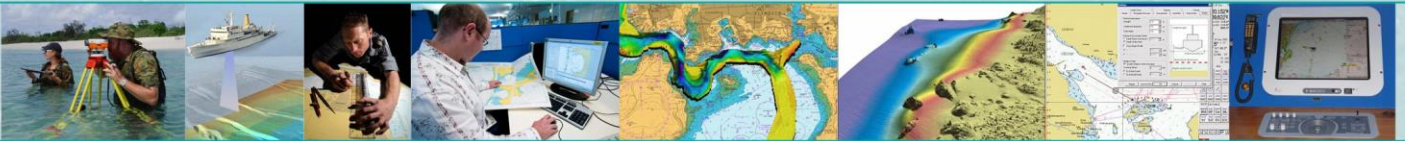
For the thirteenth consecutive year, the GEBCO Project organized a symposium on the theme of ‘Map the Gaps’. The symposium was held as a series of webinar sessions and opened by Dr Vladimir Ryabinin, Executive Secretary of the IOC, and Capitaine de vaisseau Pierre-Yves Dupuy, Deputy Director Service hydrographique et océanographique de la Marine (Shom) and Director Public Services and International Relations. The symposium, which included contributions from a broad spectrum of institutions involved in all aspects of ocean mapping, featured 34 presentations on a diverse range of topics and one panel session on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Ocean Mapping. The symposium was closed by Director Luigi Sinapi. The associated presentations and session recordings are available from the GEBCO web site at: (<https://www.mapthegaps.org/symposium/>).

GEBCO Guiding Committee

All of the IHO appointed representatives on the GEBCO Guiding Committee were present. Representatives of Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, USA, IOC, IHO and representatives from various government departments and academic institutions attended the meeting as observers with a number of industry stakeholders attending as expert contributors.



Some of the participants at the 37th GEBCO Guiding Committee (GGC37) meeting



The Chair, Mr Shin Tani (IHO - Japan), introduced the agenda and programme. The GGC received brief reports from its Sub-Committees and endorsed the work which they had undertaken. The GGC also received reports from key personnel performing functions on behalf of GEBCO as well as reports from its parent bodies, IHO and IOC, on activities since the previous meeting.

The GGC considered outreach and ways to raise the profile of the GEBCO project among the different stakeholder and user communities, including the IHO and the IOC Member States, the maritime and scientific communities and the general public. The GGC reviewed the communications strategy and approved SCOPE to continue its work in line with the strategy. The GGC devoted considerable time on discussions on the Seabed 2030 Project. The Seabed 2030 Project Director provided a comprehensive presentation on the activities of the Seabed 2030 Project Team and the Regional Centers. The GGC reviewed a proposed Seabed 2030 Funding Strategy, as well as reviewing the Year 3 Seabed 2030 Project report and the proposed Year 4 Project Work Plan and both were endorsed after some clarifications and recommendations.

The GGC also reviewed its current financial situation in relation to proposed planned projects. The Committee addressed the budget submissions from its subordinate bodies and approved the proposed allocations. The draft consolidated GEBCO Work Plan and budget will be reported to the 13th meeting of the IHO Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC) and the 31st session of the IOC Assembly, for consideration and endorsement of the parent organizations.

The GGC reviewed the state of membership and it was noted that there were two IOC appointed vacancies with the cancellation of one appointment and the declaration that Dr Johnathan Kool (Australia) would not be seeking a second five-year term. The IOC agreed to inform the Chair when the selections to fill the vacancies had been confirmed.

The GEBCO Secretary, Mr David Wyatt (IHO), advised the GGC that he would be completing his term at the IHO Secretariat at the end of September and therefore GGC37 would be his final meeting as GEBCO Secretary, which also coincided with completion of his five-year appointment as GEBCO Secretary. The GGC requested the IHO Secretariat continue to provide secretarial support to the GEBCO Project.

As a result of the completion of the terms of the current Chair and Vice-Chair and the confirmation that the current Vice-Chair would not be seeking to step-up to the Chair position, elections were held for both positions. The GGC unanimously elected Mr Evert Flier (IHO-Norway) as Chair and Dr Marzia Rovere (IOC-Italy) as Vice-Chair for the next triennium.

All meeting documents and reports will be available from the IHO website (IHO → Committees and Working Groups → IRCC → GEBCO).

It was proposed that, in line with the decision at GGC36, the GGC38 should be held in late January/early February 2022 at the IHO Secretariat in Monaco and that the GEBCO Week, containing the Sub-Committee meetings and the GEBCO Symposium, should be held in late October/early November 2021. A host location was requested, with confirmation of the venue and dates to be provided by the end of March.