

HOW TO JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION?

INFORMATION FOR COASTAL STATES ON THE IHO AND THE PROCESS TO BECOME AN IHO MEMBER

1. This site is aimed to provide potential new member states with general information on the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the way to become a Member State. Embedded links lead to a range of information documents containing further details. Further direct contact, please approach the IHO Secretariat under info@iho.int.
2. The IHO is the inter-governmental technical and consultative organization that sets global standards for hydrography and nautical charting and provides global coordination and support for the world's national hydrographic services. The IHO is based in Monaco and currently comprises 88 Member States. Further *basic information on the IHO* (www.iho.int) is [available here](#).
3. It is a recurring recommendation of the General Assembly of the United Nations and of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), that every coastal State should be a member of the IHO in order to meet its international obligations and at the same time maximise the national economic benefits that accrue from a comprehensive national hydrographic programme. Studies have shown consistently that the cost to benefit ratio for national hydrographic programmes exceeds 1:10.
4. It is without doubt vital to the interests of any coastal State to ensure harmonized and proper chart coverage for its vessels sailing around the world. Becoming a Member State opens access to all of the activities of standardisation and capacity building to develop further relevant coastal State's national hydrographic activities.

Annual Financial Contribution

5. The annual financial contribution to the IHO is individually calculated according to the registered flag tonnage of the State. The relevant extract of the financial regulations is [available here](#).

Benefits of Membership

6. **Capacity Building by Training.** IHO membership provides access to significant training opportunities. Most are at no or minimal cost to the participating organization. The full IHO Capacity Building Work Programme (CBWP) for each year is available on the IHO web site at:

http://www.iho.int/srv1/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=534&Itemid=407&lang=en

7. **Technical visits and Advice.** Developing IHO Member States, including non-member States, can request a team of experts in a particular discipline to pay an in-country visit. Such a technical/advisory assesses the current situation and propose appropriate solutions for improvement for the respective national hydrographic capacity. For the case of a potential accession the nominated experts may undertake an in-depth evaluation and propose suitable IHO instruments for improvement.

8. **Regional Coordination.** Coordination at the regional level is achieved through Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHC). After joining the IHO, the new Member State would automatically become a full member of the relevant RHC, subject the Statutes of the RHCs. As such, it would have voting rights and the right to seek to Chair the relevant Commission. Details of the Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHC) are available on the IHO web site at:

http://www.iho.int/srv1/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=420&Itemid=379&lang=en

9. ***IHO Assembly.*** Member States have full voting and rights of participation at the IHO Assembly that is held every three years. In addition to approving the strategy, budget and programme of the IHO, the Assembly elects the Secretary-General and Directors of the IHO.

10. In addition to their participation and voting rights at the Assembly, Member States of the IHO have a right to participate in all the subordinate bodies of the Organization. Details of the activities of all the IHO Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups is available on the IHO web site at:

https://www.iho.int/srv1/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=404&Itemid=362&lang=en

11. ***IHO Council.*** Thirty Member States occupy seats on the IHO Council. The Council is appointed by the Assembly coordinate the activities of the Organization during the Inter-Assembly period.

Process of becoming members of IHO

12. Any State may join the IHO simply by submitting a Letter of Accession to the Convention on the IHO through diplomatic channels, to the Government of the Principality of Monaco. This link leads to the [details for the application](#) process.

13. The IHO Secretariat is available to support and facilitate the application process at all steps. If you have any question, we stand ready to provide assistance by e-mail (info@iho.int) or by telephone (+377 93 10 81 00). We look forward to receiving your application for IHO membership in the near future.

Attachments:

1. [Basic Information about the IHO](#)
2. [Extract of Financial Regulations of the IHO](#)
3. [Process to join the IHO – Template for a Note Verbale](#)