

**2<sup>nd</sup> IHO-HSSC Meeting**  
**Rostock, Germany, 26-29 October 2010**

**Paper for Consideration by HSSC**

**Report to HSSC-2 on the Correspondence Group on Definition and Length of Coastline**

**Submitted by:** France (Vincent Donato)

**Executive Summary:** This paper reports on the advance of the CG on Definition and Length of Coastline.

**Related Document:** HSSC1-03F Report on the creation and first outcomes of the Correspondence Group on Definition and Length of Coastline

**Related Projects:**

**Introduction / Background**

Following a request from the European Commission, the 20<sup>th</sup> CHRIS Meeting (November 2008) decided the creation of a correspondence group aimed at harmonizing the way member states define and measure the length of their national coastlines.

France has volunteered to coordinate a study on the feasibility of such standardization and members were invited to join the group.

**Activities Report**

The second part of 2009 was the occasion for the group to establish a set of issues to deal with, as a frame for the program of work (see Related Document). These issues were listed as follows:

1. What are the needs?
2. What scale do we want to use?
3. Which generalization method?
4. How do we deal with the dynamical aspect of the coastline?
5. How do we measure river mouths?
6. What about artificial structures on the shore?

Amid the very preliminary conclusion, there seemed to be an agreement on the fact that the delineation of the coastline should be made on the basis of imagery, considering the high water line. Some members suggested that 1/100k 1/300k would be a convenient scale range to work at, as it would fit satellites' resolution and act as a filter for the chaotic aspect of coastline.

In 2010 the activity of the group was scarce. The following causes have been identified:

1. It is difficult to deal both with the theoretical complexity of the subject (connection with fractal theory) and the need of a pragmatic approach that allows for general consensus and practical use.
2. Trying to cope with that long-going cartographic problem only by the means of electronic communication might not be the proper solution.

In order to go beyond these difficulties it has been suggested to set up a physical meeting on the subject, which France would be pleased to host hopefully in the first quarter of 2011.

***Conclusion***

This suggestion has to be approved by the group.

***Action Required of HSSC***

The HSSC-2 is invited to take note on this information.