

An Edition of EIHC to Build on



The 5th EIHC, which took place from 6-10 October 2014 in Monaco, has laid the foundations for further developments. Robert Ward, Gilles Bessero, Mustafa Iptes and conference president Mathias Jonas took a moment to provide an update on the meetings that made this edition special. From the 82 Member States, 66 were present as well as 10 Observer States, much more than earlier EIHC editions. Most important was the high level of interaction during the meetings, IHO president Robert Ward, told Hydro International.



This Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference included a couple of new elements, one of them being the Information Sessions. In four themed sections, stakeholders from the industry and related organisations sketched their view on developments on hydrography, technical aspects and the profession. "This created an overwhelming outcome in the discussions", continued Robert Ward. "In some cases, Member States may have felt uncomfortable but the overall impression was that these contributions were thought provocative and interesting, inspiring." The interaction and engagement of all Member States was higher than previous and one important signal was that every State was having their say, even as they in an earlier edition would be more likely to keep silent.



Building and moving forward

During the meeting, practical decisions are made to build on moving forward. Capacity building is an important subject on the agenda where a new direction for the future is to be developed, continuing in the direction that has been laid out in the past years. "We do recognise the environment, and we are more aware of sustainability than say 10 years ago", Ward continued. "We also see that hydrography is for more than just nautical charts and the power of geographical data is getting stronger in the maritime world. As professionals, we will continue to look



for innovative ways to gather supplementary data to fill in the gaps." As there are still a lot of areas that are not covered by bathymetric data, or by old data. Those areas will require care. "In a digital age, we need to recognise the reliability and value other kinds of data so we can make use of them," was one of the conclusions.

Stronger organisation

Conference president Mathias Jonas praised the discussions – he was not expecting that many views. Respecting the expertise and the difference in this by the various countries, he is very curious where we will be in a couple of years. "We are all rowing in the same boat and we have to establish that we are rowing in the same direction – and that this will be the right direction", Robert Ward added with



confidence. The Observing States will be getting closer to the organisation which he considers promising as it facilitates further growth.

The network has been reinforced by this meeting, new connections made. The legacy of this EIHC is to be felt in the years that come, as the emphasis on especially capacity building will only grow.



Image: The networking during the conference is an important aspect to create links. The closing reception at the trade show floor was one of these occasions.

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