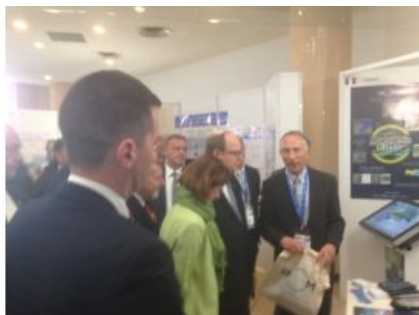


First IHO Assembly Considers Seas and Oceans



This week, Monaco is the venue of the first IHO Assembly. The meeting was officially opened by HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco. During the opening ceremony, attention was paid to the new structure of the IHO organisation. Several of the speakers underlined that, in addition to aiding safety of navigation, hydrographic data is increasingly being used for other purposes including science,

environmental protection and disaster response.

Secretary General of the IHO, Robert Ward, stressed that healthy seas and oceans are vital to the Earth. He also welcomed all countries represented, especially the new members that were presenting their flags.

IMO Secretary General Kitack Lim recognised the importance of the hydrographic data for the safety of navigation but added to this that hydrography has more to offer. The whole world relies on hydrographers, he said. He also referred to the increasing significance of the activities in the polar region and welcomed this being covered in the Polar Code.

Bathymetric Science

Environmental concerns were also expressed by Dr Petteri Taalas, Secretary General of the World Meteorological Organization. He stressed that from a climate point of view, the oceans absorb 92% of the excess heat and contribute to maintaining the balance.

Mr Michael Lodge, Secretary General of the International Seabed Association, emphasised the importance of bathymetric science for the development of the exploration of deep sea minerals. More than 30 years of research have led to the knowledge to make a start with these activities in the Pacific, the Indian and the Atlantic Oceans. He believes that sharing the knowledge of bathymetry, especially with developing countries, is very important.

Multiple Use of Hydrographic Data

In his keynote, HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco emphasised once again that there's more high-resolution mapping of the planets Venus and Mars than of the deep oceans. Even bathymetry of the navigable coastal waters could be improved. To achieve this, acquisition methods using satellite derived bathymetry and crowdsourcing should be used. He also indicated that the data can be used for other purposes like science, environmental monitoring, disaster response and tsunami warning systems.

With these words, the conference was opened – starting a week of building on the worldwide improvement of nautical mapping.

One of the special parts of the opening of the conference was the signing of the host agreement with Monaco. Due to the new structure of the IHO, changes were needed and could be confirmed witnessed by all Member States.

<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/news/first-iho-assembly-openend-with-eye-for-seas-and-oceans>
