

# IHO welcomes Cabo Verde as 99th Member State



The Republic of Cabo Verde, an archipelago located 500km off the west coast of Africa in the Atlantic Ocean, has taken a stride towards improving its hydrographic capacity by becoming the 99th Member State of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO). This strategic move positions Cabo Verde at the centre of international cooperation in the area of ocean affairs, unlocking a

myriad of benefits for the nation and its rich marine environment.

As a fully-fledged IHO Member State, Cabo Verde will be able to actively engage in relevant IHO Working Groups and Project Teams. This will allow it to stay abreast of advancements in nautical cartography, technology and ocean data, while also enabling its voice to be heard on matters of importance. It also gains access to the full IHO capacity-building programme, fostering the development of its hydrographic capabilities.

“There are several reasons why it is important for Cabo Verde to develop its national hydrography service: to improve the safety of navigation in the mid-Atlantic region and around the archipelago, but also to support the development of both recreational and sporting nautical tourism activities, know and identify possible living and non-living marine resources, and mitigate the effects of climate change considering that Cabo Verde is a small island state and ecologically fragile,” said Dr Seidi dos Santos, president of the Board of Directors, IMP (Maritime Port Institute).

## Shipping routes and marine biodiversity

Situated at the crossroads of major east-west and north-south shipping routes, Cabo Verde plays a crucial role in global maritime trade and connectivity. Sea transport is also integral to the country’s infrastructure, connecting the ten islands and numerous islets of the archipelago whose maritime area is 178 times larger than its land area. With the inclusion in the IHO community, Cabo Verde’s efforts to ensure safe navigation in the region will be reinforced.

Cabo Verde boasts a rich marine biodiversity and is located on the migration route for megafauna, including sharks and whales. To safeguard these ecosystems, initiatives are underway to establish marine protected areas. With enhanced ocean data provided through IHO collaboration, Cabo Verde can strengthen its conservation efforts, ensuring the sustainability of its marine environment for generations to come.

“Without a doubt, being a member of the IHO combined with the implementation of a national hydrographic service will allow the State to maximize the economic benefits which normally arise from a comprehensive national hydrographic programme as well as to establish protocols with other countries in the region and beyond,” commented Dr Seidi dos Santos.

## Benefits of being part of the IHO

There are numerous benefits for countries that are part of the [IHO](#), such as being in an environment that stimulates cooperation between nations on technical matters, but also increasing capability through the training of staff. Cabo Verde already has a long-standing cooperation with Portugal, exemplified through collaboration with the Portuguese Hydrographic Institute (IHPT), which carries out hydrographic surveys and produces and updates nautical charts in its waters. To bolster its national capacity, Cabo Verde representatives have also benefitted from Cat A and B courses at the IHPT.

Cabo Verde has a history of engagement in regional hydrographic cooperation. As an Associate Member of the Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission, the country hosted the 17th Conference in Mindelo in 2022. Being an IHO Member State, the country becomes a full member of the [EAHC](#). The ultimate objective of Cabo Verde is to be able to carry out its obligations and commitments independently when ratifying international instruments such as UNCLOS and SOLAS, so without the assistance of a third-party country.

Cabo Verde’s inclusion as the 99th Member State of the International Hydrographic Organization marks a pivotal moment in the nation’s maritime journey. With a focus on safety, environmental conservation and economic development, Cabo Verde stands poised to harness the benefits of IHO membership, further solidifying its position as a player in the global maritime community.



Cabo Verde would like to further develop nautical activities and tourism. (Image source: IHO)

