

Alternatives for Building Hydrographic Surveying Capacity in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

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SUMMARY

For many resource-constrained countries, particularly those that are Small Island Developing States (SIDS) the establishment of a conventional hydrographic office, is not always a viable alternative. The potential high costs associated with initial set up, the acquisition of survey vessels and equipment and the maintenance and retention of staff is understandably low on national budgets in the face of other pressing national needs. However strong a case can be made for capacity building, the establishment of hydrographic office in SIDS seems unlikely. Such States, if they are to satisfy their hydrographic survey needs must therefore examine more cost effective alternatives. This paper identifies alternatives to the conventional hydrographic office that lie in approaches that are based on three (3) main instruments. These are as follows 1. The use of information technology 2. The specialist training of hydrographic surveyors as hydrographic data managers and hydrographic data quality control professionals 3. The forging of cooperation among neighbouring States and participation in key international agencies and institutions The approach suggested has significant implications for resource allocation within SIDS and the reciprocal approach required of larger States and international agencies in hydrographic survey matters.

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