

First Expert meeting of the UN-GGIM & IHO Joint Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information
with the theme “Advancing Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management”

Chiang Mai, Thailand
4 – 8 May 2026



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IHO Metadata Guidance Document & Task Group Initiative



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The Need for Standardised Metadata

Why Metadata Matters

- **Discoverability:** Enabling users to find the right data, quickly and efficiently.
- **Interoperability:** Ensuring seamless data exchange and integration across different systems.
- **Data Quality & Trust:** Providing context on data lineage, accuracy, and limitations.
- **Efficiency:** Reducing duplication of effort and accelerating data utilisation.
- **Compliance:** Meeting evolving international standards and regulatory requirements.



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Our Journey So Far: Laying the Groundwork

From Vision to Action: Progress on Metadata Standards

- **Initiated at the IHO MSDI WG 2025:** Recognising the critical need for a harmonised approach to marine metadata.
- **Extensive Research & Analysis:** A comprehensive review of existing metadata standards, best practices, and industry needs has been conducted.
- **Drafting the IHO Metadata Guidance Document:** A robust framework has been developed to guide the creation and management of marine metadata, based on the research undertaken.
- **Formulating the Task Group Terms of Reference:** Defining the scope, objectives, and operational framework for future work, building upon the foundational document.



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Introducing the IHO Metadata Guidance Document

Purpose: To provide clear, actionable guidance for the creation, management, and use of metadata within the IHO domain.

Key Components:

- Core metadata elements for maritime data.
- Recommended schemas and vocabularies.
- Best practices for metadata quality and maintenance.
- Guidelines for implementation across different marine data types.

Benefits:

- Promotes consistency and standardisation.
- Enhances data discoverability and usability.
- Supports the development of robust MSDI.



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Proposed Task Group: Driving the Initiative Forward

Terms of Reference for the IHO Metadata Task Group

Objective: To oversee the refinement, adoption, and implementation of the IHO Metadata Guidance Document.

Key Responsibilities:

- Review and validate the draft IHO Metadata Guidance Document.
- Develop implementation strategies and roadmaps.
- Promote awareness and adoption of the guidance.
- Address emerging metadata challenges and requirements.
- Liaise with relevant IHO working groups and international bodies.

Membership: Seeking representation from IHO members states.



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Next Steps & Call to Action

Moving Towards a Standardised Marine Data Landscape

Task Group Formation: Formal establishment and initial meeting of the Task Group.

Guidance Document Refinement: Incorporating feedback and finalising the document.

Pilot Implementations: Exploring opportunities for practical application of the guidance.

Community Engagement: Building a collaborative environment for metadata best practices.

We invite your active participation and support in this crucial initiative.



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