

EXPERT TEAM ON SEA ICE – FIFTH SESSION

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STEERING GROUP FOR THE PROJECT
GLOBAL DIGITAL SEA ICE DATA BANK (GDSIDB) –
THIRTEENTH SESSION

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REPORT BY THE EUROPEAN ICE SERVICES

Summary and Purpose of Document

This document describes a status report on the European Ice Services (EIS) the cooperative activities in operational ice service supporting maritime navigation in the Baltic Sea.

ACTION PROPOSED

The Team is invited to:

- (a) Note and comment on the information contained in the report;
- (b) Take actions on the issue raised in the report, as appropriate.

References: none

Appendices: none

DISCUSSION

Introduction

1. The European Ice Services (EIS) is cooperation between the national ice services of governmental organizations in Europe, responsible for operational ice services. EIS was founded in October 2007 by DMI (Denmark), FIMR (Finland), and Met.no (Norway). In May 2008 SMHI (Sweden) joined the cooperation and in 2009 the responsibilities of FIMR were transferred to FMI.
2. In 2013 EIS became a working group of NORDMET the cooperation of the national meteorological institutes of the Nordic Countries. To reflect this, a new Memorandum of Understanding has been signed, now also including IMO (Iceland).
3. The Area of Responsibility for the EIS is all waters of Europe including Greenland, which contain sea ice, and which are of operational interest to users.
4. The objective of this cooperation in the field of basic ice service is to work together as a network, to help:
 - providing an ice service of a higher quality and better cost efficiency than the former level,
 - providing better ways to distribute products and services,
 - providing uninterrupted services in the case of mission critical failure in either centre,
 - improving the capacity to participate and contribute in an international infrastructure development,
 - providing common opportunities for the participating Parties to benefit from the cooperation.
5. To fulfil this, the concept of EIS is to create a harmonized suite of products and services for ice information for the area of responsibility, and to offer a single point-of-entry for operational ice information.

Activities

6. Among ongoing actions of EIS is that FMI and SMHI are working together for a new ice charting program that is based on ArcGIS10. The first development versions have been released, and the goal is to have an operational version by the end of 2014. The Ice Object Catalogue will be used in the new ice charting program. FMI and SMHI have provided comments on the catalogue draft.
 7. Also the research project ICEMAR is running as an EIS activity, ending by the end of 2014.
 8. Actions to be planned include sharing of training material, and sharing manual observations. Finally discussions on harmonizing ice charts are to be planned. SMHI and FMI both cover the Baltic Sea while Met.no, DMI, and IMO have overlapping areas of interest in the Greenland Sea.
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