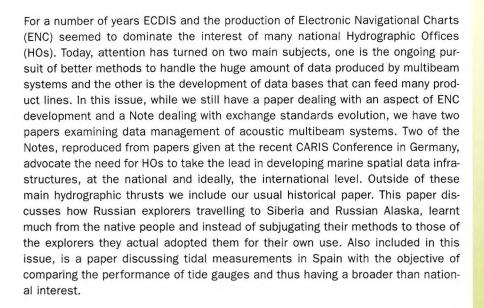
## **Editorial**



The Notes, dealing with data management in Hydrographic Offices, seem particularly pertinent to their future activities. There has been an increasing realisation that the seas are not just for navigators or even fishermen and there is more and more demand for a very broad range of data and for products that make them available to users. There has been also the increasing realisation that it is inefficient to manage these many different kinds of data by numerous data storage and distribution channels and that the ideal is a single multi-dimensional data base from which the different products can be developed. This is in fact a Geographical Information System. However, apart from the huge size and complexity of such an information system there remain some difficult problems to resolve. These include the need for truly international standards – a matter discussed in yet another Note on the future of the IHO S 57 standard, the need for datums, both horizontal and vertical, that satisfy both land and sea mappers and the need to develop truly satisfactory generalisation algorithms so that products of an infinite number of scales can be produced from a single density data base.

The Note describing a Future Edition of IHO S-57 (4.) is of great importance and has already been published on the IHO website. Given the difficulty experienced by many HOs in starting to produce ENCs, some may have wished that there would never have seen another edition of S 57 but the approach taken to develop Edition 4 is important because it will considerably broaden the international scope of S 57 by allying it to the ISO (International Standards Organisation) standards.

Adam J. Kerr, Editor

