

THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

The Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea (ROK) is a peninsula of 99,300 km² located on the east part of the Asian Continent.

Its climate is temperate, with four different seasons, due to the influence of a continental weather pattern. The average annual temperature is between 1°C and 15°C, and the average precipitation 1,000 mm to 1,400 mm.

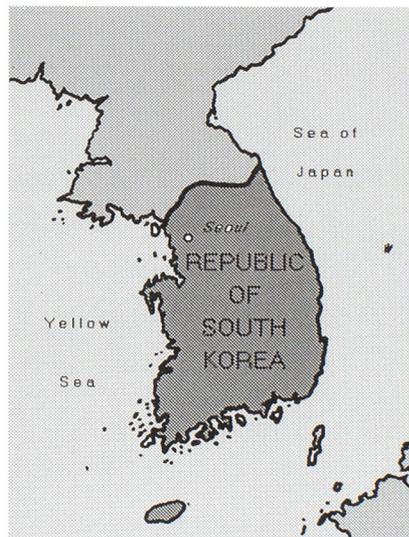


FIG. 1.- The Republic of Korea.

The topography of ROK is characterized by high mountains in the east, but in the south and west lies a simple Lias coastline. Chejudo is the largest island and a popular international holiday site located on the southern part of the country.

Tides in ROK waters range from 0.2 m to 0.3 m in the east coast, 4 m to 5 m in the south coast and 8 m to 9 m in the west coast in which, in particular,

Inchon Port and its approaches have one of the highest tidal measurements in the world.

Founded by the mythological figure Dankun, the history of Korea dates back to BC 2,333. The Hangul (Korean) alphabet and language, the Aegukka (national anthem), the Taegukki (national flag), and the Mugungwha (national flower) are all symbols of a proud nation.

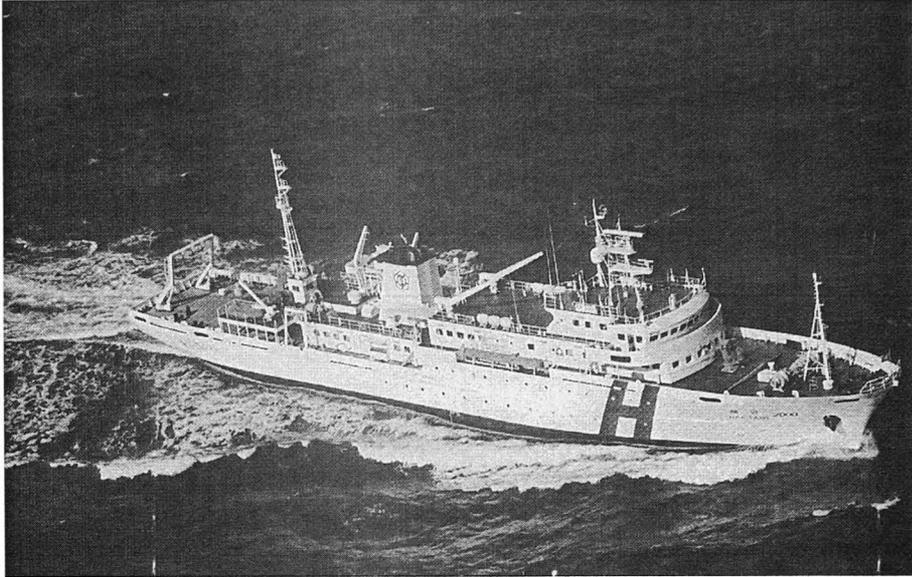


FIG. 2.- HAE YANG 2000.

ROK however, has been in the unfortunate position, for the last 50 years, of being divided into two parts by a militarily controlled demilitarised zone. Recently though both countries have been participating in talks, aimed at unifying the country. ROK has a population of 45 million, with the capital city, Seoul, being one of the largest cities in the world with a population of 11 million.

Other major centres include the city of Pusan, in the south, with 4 million people, the city of Taegu in the southeast with 2.4 million, and Inchon, an important port city in the northwest, with 2.2 million people. As of the end of 1995, the GNP of ROK was 414 billion dollars and Korea is one of the 10 most important trading countries in the world.

ROK has hosted major world events, such as the 24th Olympiad in 1988 and Expo in the city of Taejon in 1993. Through these and other international symposia, such as annual meetings between USA and Japan with ROK, IHO and EAHC conferences, the country is involved in a world-wide participation. The current President KIM, Young Sam intends that ROK should play an important role in world affairs. An example of this may be the launching, last year, of the Mugunghwa-ho scientific satellite.

ROK puts considerable effort in the development of oceanography, and is currently focusing budget considerations on the research of oceanographic

characteristics, marine resources development, marine environmental conservation and variation. In 1988, the Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute established Sejong Base at King George Island in Antarctica in order to research and investigate the polar environment and marine ecosystem, the earth environmental variation and the weather analysis, the polar marine physics and the chemical characteristics necessary to implement such projects.

National Oceanographic Research Institute

The National Oceanographic Research Institute (NORI), the name given to the previous Office of Hydrographic Affairs, was established in 1949 under jurisdiction of the Navy. In 1963, the Institute was transferred to the Ministry of Transportation (currently the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, newly established on 8 August 1996) which places the Organization under civilian control. The Institute is headquartered at Incheon, and is composed of five divisions: the General Affairs, Maritime Safety, Survey, Nautical Chart, and Oceanographic Divisions. In addition, there are three Regional Offices, Tonghae, which has jurisdiction over the east coast, Pusan over the south coast, and the Changhang Regional Office which covers the west coast.

The NORI employs about 240 persons and is under the direction of the Director General Mr. CHO, Se Yun. The Institute, in general, is responsible for collecting and analyzing national and international oceanographic and hydrographic-related information for implementation of maritime safety. The Institute has a portfolio of approximately 325 charts and 40 publications which contribute to mariners.

In order to produce the charts and publications required for safe navigation, the NORI carries out sounding, tidal observation, and tidal current observation, as well as geomagnetic, gravity, bathymetric, sea-bed and base-line surveys. A 3-dimensional sea map has been produced using swath survey techniques and CARIS has been used for the production of charts. ENC's will be available for use in the near future.

In charge of advanced hydrography in ROK, the NORI is a member of IHO and EAHC, and contributes to safe navigation and marine development internationally through the exchange of information with Member States of IHO. The NORI constructed the survey vessel HAEYANG2000 (G/T 2,533) in December 1995. This vessel contains all the state-of-the-art equipment necessary to produce updated hydrographic and oceanographic materials. Such equipment include satellite positioning system, multi-beam echo sounder, gravity meter, a hydrographic data acquisition system and 21 other quality instruments. Its completion represents a new age for oceanographic data processing and development of ENC database in Korea. Hydrographic affairs research and development in general will be launched to the forefront of the forecoming industry.