

Reflections on the Naming Dispute between Korea and Japan about East Sea/Sea of Japan at the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the Alternatives for the Revision of S-23

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국제수로기구(IHO)에서의 한국과 일본 간 동해/일본해 표기 분쟁 및 S-23 개정을 위한 대안에 관한 고찰

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Abstract : Taking into account the unresolved naming differences of IHO (International Hydrographic Organization) member states for the same sea area, this paper proposes four alternatives to enable the publication of the 4th edition of IHO publication S-23. For the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, the first alternative could be the most plausible. Naming 'East Sea' for the Korean-side sea area and naming 'Sea of Japan' for the Japanese-side sea area without the delineation of the limits of each sea would be the most neutral solution, which is also consistent with IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2.6. Delineating the limits of each sea can have the possibility to bring another dispute between Korea and Japan. Another possible solution could be to use 'East Sea' for the Korean EEZ (or Korean territorial waters) and to use 'Sea of Japan' for the Japanese EEZ (or Japanese territorial waters) with the delineation of limits of each sea.

Key Words : International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), East Sea, Sea of Japan, Limits of Oceans and Seas, Dual naming

요약 : 본 논문은 국제수로기구(International Hydrographic Organization, IHO) 회원국 간에 몇몇 바다의 명칭 표기에 대한 의견 차이가 여전히 지속되고 있는 현 시점에서 IHO S-23 제4판의 발행에 도움이 될 수 있는 네 가지 대안을 제시하였다. 한반도와 일본 열도 사이의 바다 지역에 대해서는 네 가지 대안 중에서 첫 번째 대안이 가장 적절할 수 있다. 바다의 경계를 표현하지 않으면서 한국 쪽의 바다에는 동해로 표기하고 일본 쪽의 바다에는 일본해로 표기하는 것이 가장 중립적인 해결책이 될 수도 있다. 이 대안은 IHO 기술적 결의 A 4.2.6에도 부합한다. 이 경우에 IHO S-23 지도 상에서 동해와 일본해 간의 경계를 획정하는 것은 한일 간의 분쟁의 소지가 될 수도 있다. 다른 가능한 해결책으로는 IHO S-23 지도 상에 바다의 경계를 표현하면서 한국 EEZ(또는 한국 영해)에는 동해로 표기하고 일본 EEZ(또는 일본 영해)에는 일본해로 표기하는 방법이 있을 수도 있다.

주요어 : 국제수로기구(IHO), 동해, 일본해, 해양과 바다의 경계, 이중 명명

I. Introduction

S-23 is an International Hydrographic Organization

(IHO) technical publication referring to 'Limits of Oceans and Seas.' S-23 is a very important international reference document since many international organizations, gov-

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ernments, and mapmakers refer to S-23 not only in naming oceans and seas but also in delineating the limits of oceans and seas. The 3rd edition of S-23 dated 1953 remains the current edition but is out of date. The 11th International Hydrographic Conference (IHC) in 1977 by decision No. 17 tasked the International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB) to undertake a revision of this publication (International Hydrographic Organization, 2002). However, after 43 years, this work has yet to be completed.

It may be noted that the different positions taken by Korea and Japan in naming the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, are a significant reason for the lengthy deliberations and delay in the progress of the revision of S-23 over the last forty-three years. Bilateral discussions have taken place between Korea and Japan without any agreement. Various options proposed in naming the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago have been rejected by either one or both of the interested states or did not receive the support of the appropriate majority of IHO member states.

IHO member states, in 2009, overwhelmingly supported the proposal of the directing committee of the IHB for the establishment of the S-23 Working Group (S-23 WG) with, in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference (ToR), the following task to ‘produce a revised edition of special publication S-23, Limits of Oceans and Seas, and submit a report of its work together with a draft 4th edition of the publication to the IHB, for the subsequent approval of IHO member states.’ The Rules of Procedures (RoP) of the S-23 WG indicate that ‘decisions of the S-23 WG should generally be made by consensus’ (International Hydrographic Organization, 2009; 2012).

The S-23 WG, in accordance with its RoP, worked mainly by correspondence and had two face-to-face meetings. The first meeting took place in Monaco on June 1, 2009, organized by the IHB, prior to the 4th Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference (EIHC) and was attended by 39 delegates from fourteen IHO member states. The second meeting took place in

Singapore in 2010 and was attended by 42 delegates from thirteen IHO member states (International Hydrographic Organization, 2009; 2012). However, eventually, the mission of the S-23 WG was not achieved.

Taking into account the unresolved naming differences of IHO member states for the same sea area, this paper seeks to propose alternatives to enable the publication of the 4th edition of IHO publication S-23 and focuses on IHO, East Sea/Sea of Japan issue, and dual naming principle of the IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2.6. Reflections on not only the IHO and the East Sea/Sea of Japan issue but also the dual naming principle of the IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2.6 are structured as follows.

In section 2, this paper examines the naming of the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago from the 1st edition of S-23 (1929) to the final draft of the 4th edition of S-23 (2002). This paper, in section 3, illustrates the proposal by Australia and France to the S-23 WG. In section 4, this paper explores ongoing naming dispute about the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago. Finally, in section 5, this paper proposes four alternatives as a conclusion to enable the publication of the 4th edition of IHO publication S-23.

II. Naming of the Sea Area between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Archipelago from the 1st Edition of S-23 (1929) to the Final Draft of the 4th Edition of S-23 (2002)

In the 1st edition of S-23 (1929), the 2nd edition of S-23 (1937), the 3rd edition of S-23 (1953), and the draft of the 4th edition of S-23 (1986), the name of the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago was ‘Japan Sea.’ However, in the final draft of the 4th edition of S-23 (2002), the pages for the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, the sea area 7.6 in the chartlet-index, was left blank, due to the naming dispute between Korea and Japan.

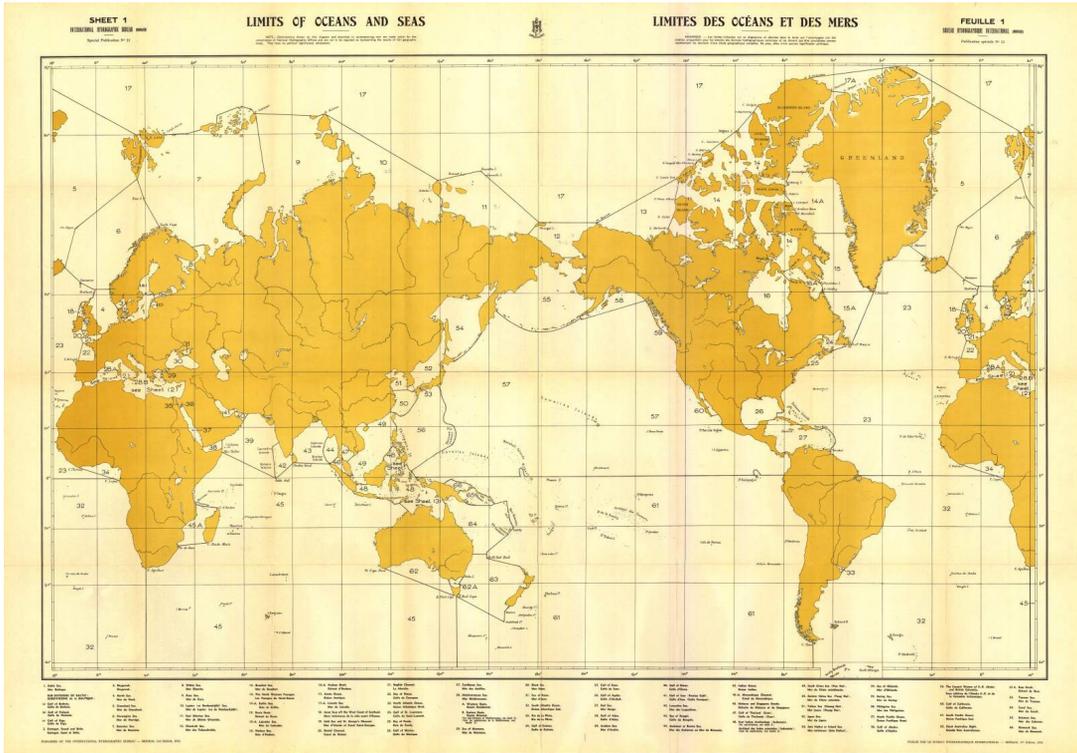


Fig. 1. Sheet 1, Limits of Oceans and Seas, 3rd Edition of S-23 (1953)

Source : International Hydrographic Organization, 1953.

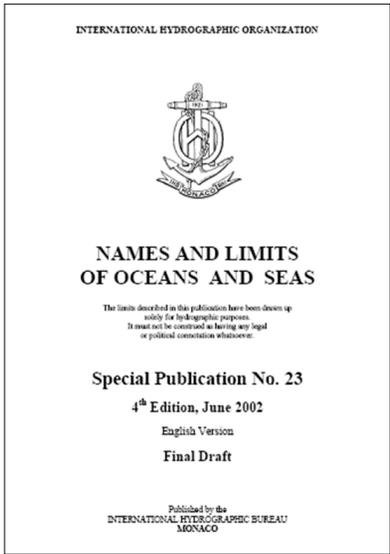


Fig. 2. The Front Cover of the Final Draft of the 4th Edition of S-23 (2002)

Source : International Hydrographic Organization, 2002.

In August 2002, the final draft of the 4th edition was submitted to member states for approval. In this draft 4th edition, the two pages referring to the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago were not included, with an explanation given in the circular letter that an addendum could be issued to address the matter at a later stage. However, in September 2002, for some reason, the new directing committee of IHB decided to interrupt the voting procedure (International Hydrographic Organization, 2005).

At the 17th IHC in 2007, the president of the conference proposed the publication of a 4th edition of S-23 in two volumes. One volume could incorporate all the agreed issues and could be published immediately, while a second volume would cover unresolved matters being withheld until any outstanding issues could be resolved. However, this proposal was not accepted (International Hydrographic Organization, 2007).

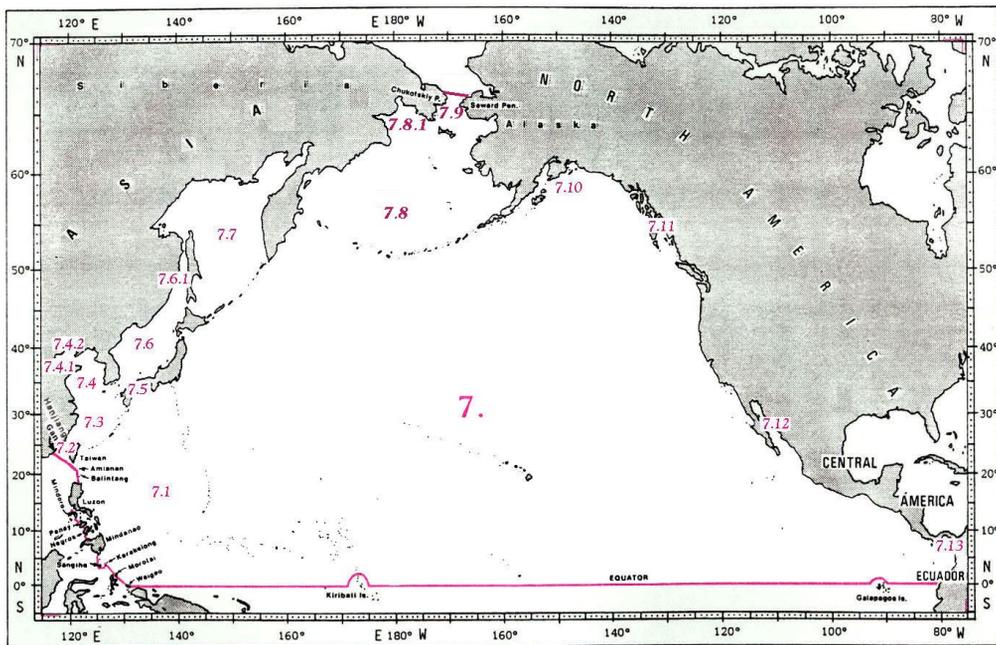


Fig. 3. The Chartlet-index of North Pacific Ocean and its Sub-divisions in the Final Draft of the 4th Edition of S-23 (2002)
 Source : International Hydrographic Organization, 2002: 7-1.

Several options have been proposed on how the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago could be named in S-23, but these have been rejected by either one or both of the interested states or else did not receive the support of the appropriate majority of member states.

III. Proposal by Australia and France to the S-23 Working Group

At the second meeting of S-23 WG in Singapore in 2010, Australian delegate stated that it is clear that there are some sea and ocean areas where national interests are so strong that it will be impossible to reach consensus on a single name. The publication S-23 should be an international reference document that shows the generally agreed names and limits of the sea and ocean areas. Where there are significant national reservations and another name is in use then the alternate name and/or limits are also shown. This will serve the specific

purpose of the publication to provide information to support navigation safety (Choi *et al.*, 2005; International Hydrographic Organization, 2012; Ryu, 2012; 2015; 2018; Sung and Kang, 2013).

Australian proposal provides a method of including alternate positions relating to the name or limit of sea and ocean areas and will thus enable a new edition of S-23 to be published. The proposal by Australia to the S-23 WG is as follows.

1. The following text should be added to the front cover of the draft of the 4th edition of S-23:

‘The publication S-23 should be considered an international reference document that shows the generally agreed names and limits of the sea and ocean areas in common use. Where there are significant national reservations and another name is in use then the alternate name and/or limits are also shown.’

2. When and only when consensus cannot be reached on the name or limits of a sea or ocean area then the alternative positions are to be included in S-23 by one

Table 1, S-23, section 52

Endonym KR/KP		Endonym RU		Endonym JP		Exonym** en	Exonym* fr	Exonym es
동해	Donghae	Япо́нское мо́ре	Yapónskoye móre	日本海	-	East Sea	Mer de l'Est	TBD
						Sea of Japan***	Mer du Japon	TBD

*,** Exonym in English or French may vary from one nation to another. Each nation can make its own choice in accordance with national toponymy policies.

*** Variant: Japan Sea.

of the following methods:

a. the fact that there is a reservation by (an)other member state(s) be included on the main page referring to the sea or ocean area, and details of the reservation, such as a alternative name/limits be clearly detailed in an annex, or

b. the fact that there is a reservation by (an)other member state(s) be included on the first page referring to the sea or ocean area and a second page for the same sea or ocean area be inserted in S-23 immediately following the first. The second page will show the alternative name(s) or limits of the sea or ocean area where consensus was not reached.

In short, the Australian proposal provided two options for detailing reservations; either use of an ‘*annex*’ or ‘*a second page immediately following the first*.’ The Australian proposal could form a possible basis for naming of the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago.

Australia presented a proposal with two options at the 2nd S-23 WG meeting in Singapore. The first, ‘*to provide reservations in an annex*’ was presented to S-23 WG members, and was rejected by the Republic of Korea and others thus did not gain consensus. According to the Australian delegate, Australia later agreed that the second option, ‘*to include a separate page with alternative naming immediately following the first*’ need not be formally presented to all working group members as it became clear that this option would not lead to consensus when Japan advised the Australian delegate that it was not acceptable.

Regarding the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, the proposal by France is as follows (International Hydrographic Organization, 2012; Ryu, 2012; 2015; 2018).

- S-23 sheets covering the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago
- No name at all, but single reference to the ad hoc sections of S-23 (e.g. ‘See § 52’, Table 1)

France’s proposal can be used in conjunction with the Australian proposal. However, unfortunately, France’s proposal was withdrawn by France’s delegate for some reason.

IV. Ongoing Naming Dispute about the Sea Area between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Archipelago

A list of three areas of concern was identified and circulated by IHB. The three areas of concern are (1) sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, (2) Malacca Strait, and (3) South China Sea – East China Sea. According to the IHB, the majority of the responses received from IHO member states about the areas of concern refer to the issue of naming the sea area between the Korean peninsula and Japanese archipelago. Three groups of positions can be recognized from the responses. Those, which is the majority, indicating that the countries concerned must come to an agreement before moving to an update with some additional comments and views, those which support the

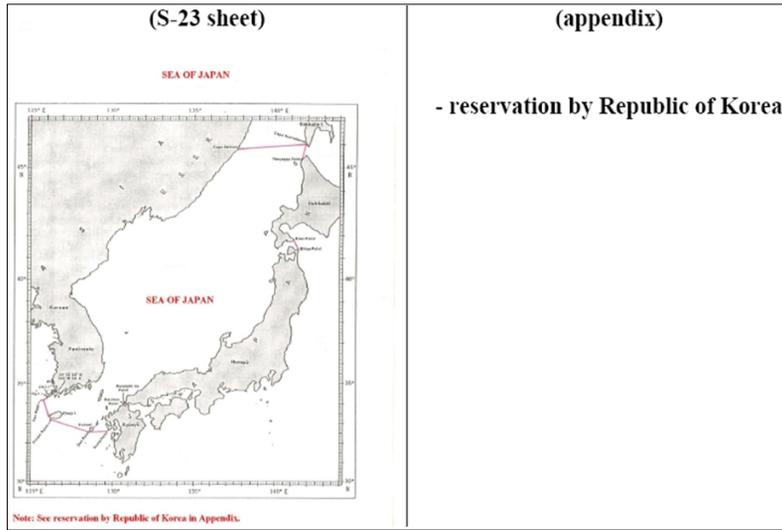


Fig. 4. A Proposal by Australia to the S-23 Working Group

Source : Ryu, 2018: 124.

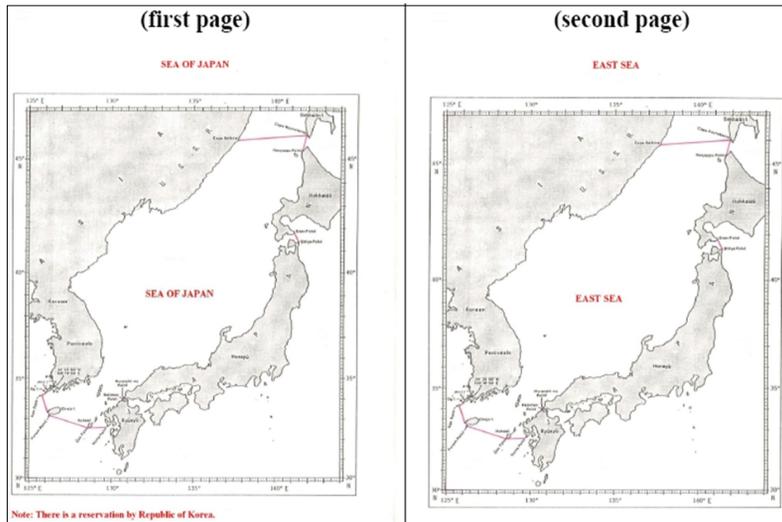


Fig. 5. Alternative Proposal by Australia to the S-23 Working Group

Source : Ryu, 2018: 125.

different names to appear on the relevant page and not in the annex, and those which support one name with reservations to be inserted in an annex. The position of both the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is that both names 'East Sea' and 'Japan Sea' should be used simultaneously on the same page in S-23 (International Hydrographic Organ-

ization, 2012).

It is clear that consensus has not been reached among S-23 WG members on all of the 'areas of concern.' The Australian delegate points out that it is apparent that the root cause of not reaching consensus on S-23 is due to political pressures related to strong national positions rather than differences over technical depiction of names

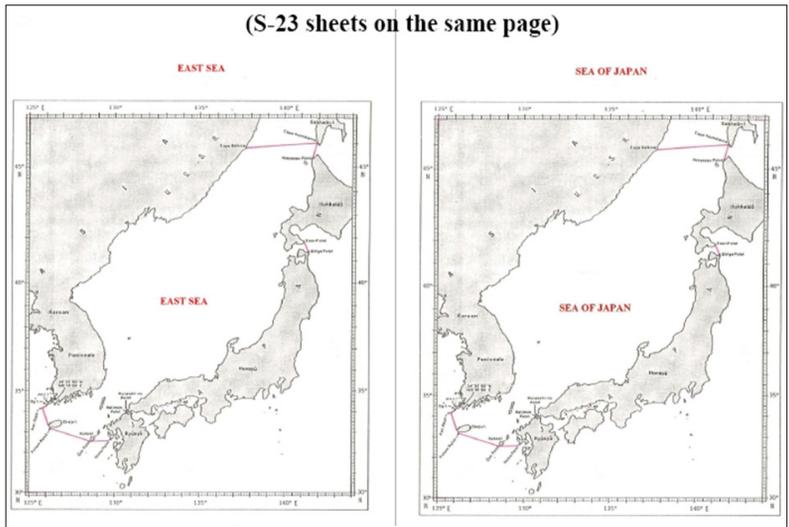


Fig. 6. Proposal by the Republic of Korea in Response to the Proposals by Australia to the S-23 Working Group
 Source : Ryu, 2018: 125.

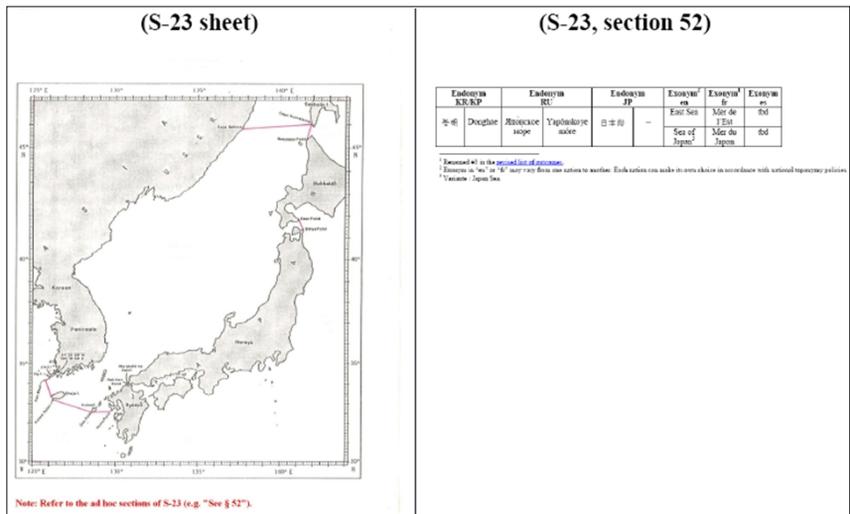


Fig. 7. Proposal by France to the S-23 Working Group
 Source : Ryu, 2018: 126.

and limits. France’s withdrawal from the S-23 WG highlighted this fact and subsequent statements by France’s S-23 WG members have confirmed it (International Hydrographic Organization, 2012; Ryu, 2012; 2015; 2018). The IHO must decide whether S-23 is to be a technical hydrographic publication and thus proceed to resolve national disagreements using the technical methods, or

accept that political imperatives have the over-riding importance, accept that these cannot be solved by the IHO and recommend the withdrawal of the S-23 publication from the IHO catalogue. In fact, the naming of geographical features is inherently intertwined with political matter (Alderman, 2002; 2006; Chi, 2012; Short, 2012; Alderman and Inwood, 2013; Radil, 2016; Kim,

2017; Yi *et al.*, 2017; Rose-Redwood *et al.*, 2019).

Furthermore, the Australian delegate argues that there are already internationally recognized means for displaying differing names for the same geographical feature in use by United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and adopted by the IHO. For example, the final draft of the 4th edition of S-23 in 2002 clearly states that both names of 'English Channel (*La Manche*)' can be used on charts according to IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2, paragraph 6 (International Hydrographic Organization, 2012; Ryu, 2012; 2015; 2018). In a similar vein, 'East Sea' should be used concurrently with 'Japan Sea.' It is very important to note that this dual naming is in line with IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2.6.

At the 18th IHC in 2012, USA proposed chapter-by-chapter approach. However, for some reason, USA withdrew their proposal. Meanwhile, China proposed the abolishment of the S-23. Japan proposed an approach that was similar with the USA proposal. However, Japan's proposal was supported by Japan only. Most member states of the IHO abstained. Four countries including the Republic of Korea, China, Cuba, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea opposed the Japan's proposal (International Hydrographic Organization, 2012).

At the 1st Session of the IHO Assembly in 2017, the Assembly tasked the secretary-general to facilitate an informal consultation process regarding the future of S-23 among interested member states, including determining mutually agreed modalities of work and to report the result of the consultations to the assembly at the next ordinary session (International Hydrographic Organization, 2017).

The naming of the body of water separating the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago is a matter for negotiation between neighboring states. However, taking into account the unresolved naming differences between the Republic of Korea and Japan for the same sea area, the Republic of Korea proposes a plausible alternative to enable the publication of the 4th edition of IHO publication S-23. The option is to publish names and spatial details of the sea area in question incorp-

orating dual naming principle according to IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2.6 (Ryu, 2012; 2015; 2018). By the same token, United Nations Resolution on the Standardization of Geographical Names III/20 also clearly recommends that when countries sharing a given geographical feature do not succeed in agreeing on a common name, it should be a general rule of international cartography that the name used by each of the countries concerned will be accepted (Lee, 2004; Raper, 2010; Park, 2012; Woodman, 2017). Basically based on the important recommendation of the IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2.6, the Republic of Korea proposes that the body of water separating the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago should have dual names, namely, 'East Sea/Sea of Japan.'

The names 'East Sea' and 'Sea of Japan' should be used simultaneously to designate the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, on the following grounds:

Until the 19th century, various names had been used to designate the sea area concerned such as 'Sea of Joseon (ancient Korean Dynasty),' 'East Sea,' and 'Oriental Sea,' while 'Sea of Japan' had not been widely used even in Japan. Moreover, many maps at that time did not show any names for this sea area. With the rise of Japan as a regional power in Asia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the sea area had become widely known as 'Sea of Japan.' Korea, on the other hand, was unable to present its views on naming the sea area when the first and second editions of the 'Limits of Oceans and Seas' were published in 1929 and 1937 respectively, since it was under Japanese colonial rule. When the third edition was published in 1953, Korea was in the midst of the Korean War.

Historically, the name 'East Sea' has been used for the past 2,000 years in Korea. Currently, 75 million people living on the Korean peninsula use the name 'East Sea.' The use of 'East Sea' in world maps and media outlets has steadily increased (Stoltman, 2018). In addition, the simultaneous use of the names 'East Sea' and 'Sea of Japan' is consistent with the fundamental principles of the IHO.

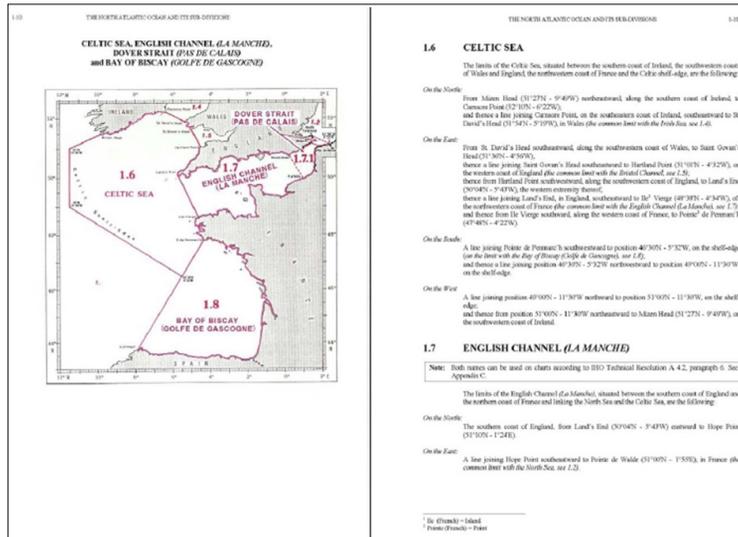


Fig. 8. Dual Naming of 'English Channel (*La Manche*)' according to IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2, Paragraph 6 in the Final Draft of the 4th Edition of S-23 in 2002

Source : International Hydrographic Organization, 2002: 1-10-1-11.

The IHO adopted Technical Resolution A 4.2,6 in 1974, which essentially provides that if two or more countries sharing a given geographic feature under a different name cannot agree on a common name, each of the names should be accepted (Ryu, 2012; 2015; 2018). This general rule of international cartography is also confirmed by the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in its resolution III/20 adopted in 1977.

Lying between Korea and Japan and extending north towards Russia, the sea area includes the territorial waters and exclusive economic zones of the countries encircling the area, and several countries have jurisdiction and sovereign rights over it. It would therefore be inappropriate to name the sea area after one particular country without the consent of other surrounding countries (Oh, 2017).

The current edition of S-23 does not reflect the names of oceans and seas in an appropriate manner. It is highly desirable to publish a revised version of the current edition. A major responsibility of the IHO is to consider all possible means and ways to produce the 4th edition of S-23. The IHO should comprehensively examine various

constructive proposals that have been made to publish the 4th edition of S-23. For example, the IHO should investigate the final draft of the 4th edition in 2002, the two-volume approach that was proposed by the former IHC chairman, Williams, and specially the IHO Technical Resolutions, and the United Nations Resolutions on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

In order to efficiently expedite the publication of the 4th edition of S-23, all of discussions and procedures should be considered. The IHO should examine the responses and all other relevant documents in order to develop possible solutions for areas of concern. However, in the preparation of the 4th edition of S-23, the IHO Technical Resolutions should be the most important elements for solutions for the areas of concern.

A lot of efforts and endeavors were already put to prepare the final draft of the 4th edition of S-23 in 2002, it would be logical to use the final draft as a starting point for discussion in order to produce the 4th edition of S-23. The purpose of the S-23 WG was to produce a revised draft of the 4th edition of S-23 based on the work that has been done in the past. Since the preparation of the draft of the 4th edition of S-23 in 1986,

a lot of efforts had been made by the IHB to prepare the final draft of the 4th edition of S-23 in 2002. In this regard, it is important to acknowledge the efforts to prepare the final draft in 2002. For the progress of S-23, it is very reasonable to use the 2002 final draft as a cornerstone in producing a revised draft of the 4th edition of S-23. To ignore the last final draft in 2002 that involved a lot of efforts of the IHB might hamper the credibility of the IHO that pursues the progress of S-23.

In addition to the technical and scientific issues associated with the S-23, the IHO should consider the political aspects of the S-23 because delineating limits of seas and naming of seas are inherently intertwined with political issues among neighboring states.

V. Conclusion

Taking into account the unresolved naming differences between Korea and Japan for the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, this paper proposes four alternatives to enable the publication of the 4th edition of S-23. These four options are as follows.

1. The first option is to use dual names, using each name within territorial waters or EEZs without (or with) the delineation of the limits of each sea (Choo, 2009; 2012).
2. The second option is to publish names and spatial details of the sea area incorporating dual naming principles according to IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2.6 and also have any IHO member states' reservations recorded with details in appendix.
3. The third option is to publish names and spatial details of the sea area as submitted by Korea and Japan, and then issue a page addendum when the naming disputes are resolved. Again any IHO member states' reservations can be depicted in appendix.

4. The fourth option is to publish the 4th edition of S-23 without pages of the sea names and spatial details of the sea area, and issue a page addendum when the naming disputes are resolved.

For the sea area between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelago, the first option could be the most plausible. Naming 'East Sea' for the Korean-side sea area and naming 'Sea of Japan' for the Japanese-side sea area without the delineation of the limits of each sea would be the most neutral solution, which is also consistent with IHO Technical Resolution A 4.2.6. Delineating the limits of each sea can have the possibility to bring another dispute between Korea and Japan. Another possible solution could be to use 'East Sea' for the Korean EEZ (or Korean territorial waters) and to use 'Sea of Japan' for the Japanese EEZ (or Japanese territorial waters) with the delineation of limits of each sea.

The limitation of this paper is that this paper does not include a detailed questionnaire survey on to what extent each of the four alternatives to enable the publication



Fig. 9. The First Option for the Naming of the Sea Area between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Archipelago

Source : Ryu, 2018: 129.

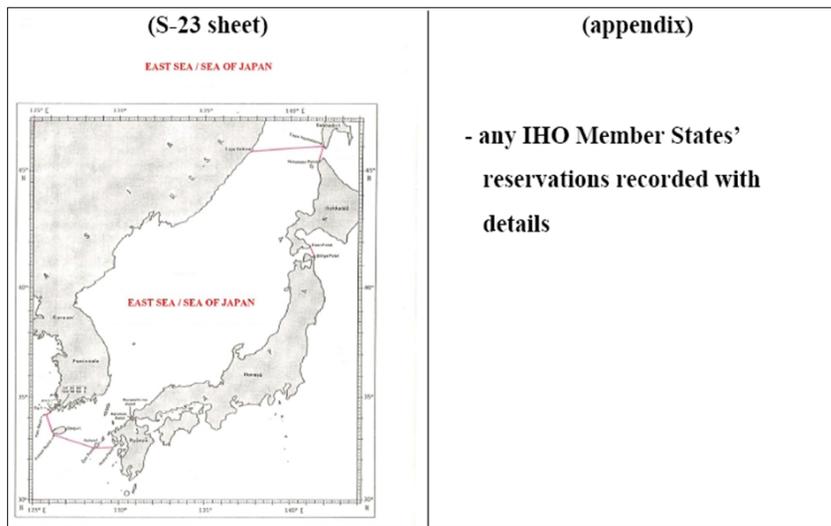


Fig. 10. The Second Option for the Naming of the Sea Area between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Archipelago
Source : Ryu, 2018: 130.

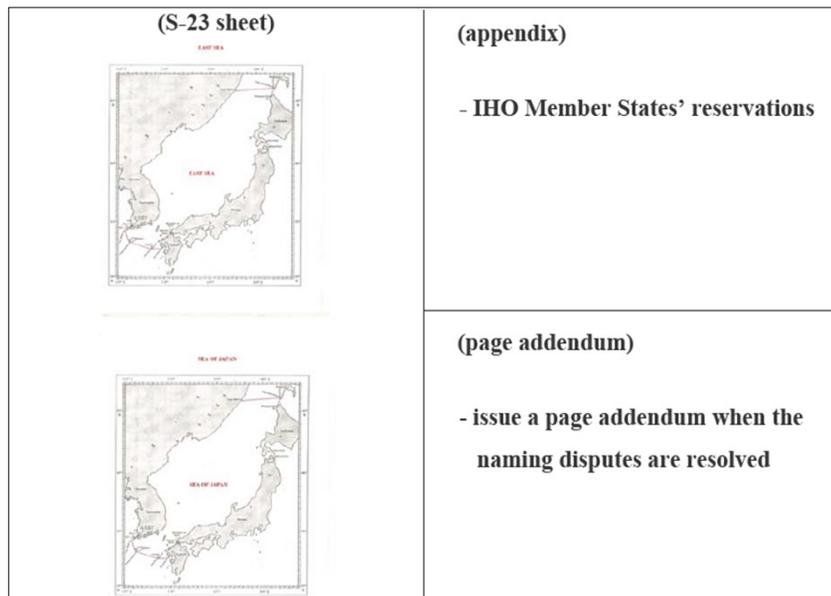


Fig. 11. The Third Option for the Naming of the Sea Area between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Archipelago
Source : Ryu, 2018: 130.

of the 4th edition of S-23 is plausible. Although naming 'East Sea' for the Korean-side sea area and naming 'Sea of Japan' for the Japanese-side sea area without the delineation of the limits of each sea would be the most neutral solution, which is consistent with not only IHO

Technical Resolution A 4.2.6 but also United Nations Resolution on the Standardization of Geographical Names III/20, an in-depth research from the viewpoint of international law is needed. In addition, an in-depth research on how using dual names, namely, East Sea/Sea of

Table 2. The Fourth Option for the Naming of the Sea Area between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Archipelago

S-23 Sheet and Main Pages	Page Addendum
- without pages of the sea names and spatial details of the sea area or - blank pages	- issue a page addendum when the naming disputes are resolved

Source : Ryu, 2018: 130.

Japan, for the sea area between Korean peninsula and Japanese archipelago can be legitimized simultaneously by Koreans, Japanese, and international society is needed.

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