

New MPA database to promote better use of Singapore waters

Zhaki Abdullah

A new database on Singapore's waters, from its coastlines to the seabed, was launched yesterday by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA).

Dubbed GeoSpace-Sea, it aims to provide comprehensive geospatial data for port and coastal planning, among other things, as well as environmental management.

"It will be something like the SLA's (Singapore Land Authority's) OneMap," said MPA deputy chief hydrographer Jamie Chen, referring to the map service which will provide geospatial data as well as land ownership information.

The MPA's database will help Singapore's waters be used and developed in a safe and sustainable manner, he added.

The GeoSpace-Sea initiative is a collaboration between the MPA, the National University of Singapore's Tropical Marine Science Institute and 11 government agencies, including the SLA, PUB and the National Environment Agency.

The system will be developed in phases, with the first one – which should begin in the third quarter – expected to include the collation of hydrographic data, as well as habitat and marine environment data such as coastline details.

Future phases will see the initiative extended to institutes of higher learning and marine science institutes for marine science



Senior Minister of State for Transport and Health Lam Pin Min trying out a sextant yesterday. With him is Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore assistant chief executive for operations, Captain M. Segar.
ST PHOTO: JASON QUAH

research, as well as the development of applications for coastal and seabed visualisation.

Senior Minister of State for Transport and Health, Dr Lam Pin Min, who attended the launch of the event at Raffles House at Fort Canning, said the initiative would benefit Singapore in a variety of areas, including marine conservation, climate change adaptation and disaster response.

"I am confident that our high-quality hydrographic data will continue to support safe navigation, and when integrated with other data will allow us to derive marine knowledge for further applications," he said.

The MPA – which hosted working committee meetings for the East Asia Hydrographic Commission here over four days beginning

on Tuesday – also discussed the possible development of such a system on a regional basis with representatives from other countries such as China and Japan.

Yesterday also saw the launch of the third Smart Ports Challenge, an annual competition in which start-ups compete to develop innovative solutions for the maritime industry.

Earlier this week, the MPA – together with the World Maritime University and former International Maritime Organisation secretary-general Koji Sekimizu – launched the WMU-Koji Sekimizu PhD Fellowship on Maritime Governance, which aims to assess the role and impact of maritime governance over the past 60 years.

azhaki@sph.com.sg