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Abstract

Advances on the methodology for the Inland Waterways Classification for South America

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In most of the South American countries, there is no official classification of waterways elaborated for the navigation purposes which would account for the diversity of the types of navigation activities on the most South American waterways (from deep draught navigation to barges and pushed convoys to local and informal navigation). On major South American waterways in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Paraguay in Peru, only the values of the minimum water depths are determined and, in some cases, guaranteed. National classifications exist in Brazil and Colombia and they are currently being revised, in the context of the work on the countries' national inland navigation policies. These basic classifications consider minimum water depth as the main criterion but are not sufficient for most of the planning and investment decisions or the work on the national strategic plans for IW development.

There is, therefore, a need for a common classification for South America which would result in a more efficient, transparent and sustainable use of inland water transport and logistics services, in general. Since October 2016, ECLAC and PIANC are working together in close collaboration with the experts from South American countries on a common classification for the inland waterways and the first results of this work will be presented in this paper.

The paper will offer:

- Overview of the inland waterways' classifications in South America
- Identification of the main parameters (i.e. metrics) for the harmonized South American classification
- Proposals on the classification methodology
- Guidelines and recommendations for further development and application.