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| SummaryThis document presents IOCAFRICA’s key results framework for the 2026–2027 biennium. It is structured around UNESCO’s Draft 43 C/5 and outlines IOCAFRICA’s alignment with the Medium-Term Strategy 2022–2029 and its role in delivering on Strategic Objective 2: "Reconciling humanity with nature."Part I – Draft Programme and Budget 2026–2027Summarizes UNESCO’s Draft 43 C/5 proposal as presented to the 221st session of the Executive Board (221 EX/20), with specific reference to IOCAFRICA’s allocations under ZRG, ZNG1, and ZNG2 scenarios. It also highlights IOCAFRICA’s evolving staffing structure and funding needs to meet growing programme demands.Part II – Detailed IOCAFRICA Workplan and Results Framework presents IOCAFRICA’s functional-level planning and proposed deliverables across six strategic thematic areas: Ocean Observations and Monitoring; Ocean Sciences, Biodiversity and Assessments; Ocean Data and Information Management; Capacity Development, Partnerships and Innovation; Ocean Governance and Management, and Regional Governance and CoordinationThe proposed decision for endorsement is referenced as Dec. A-33/5.1 in the Provisional Action Paper (IOC/A-33/AP Prov.).Decision proposed is referenced Dec. IOCAFRICA-VIII/5.1 in the Provisional Action Paper document IOCAFRICA-VIII/AP. |

**Introduction**

1. IOCAFRICA’s Draft Programme and Budget for the 2026–2027 biennium is designed in alignment with UNESCO’s Medium-Term Strategy 2022–2029 and its Strategic Objective 2: “Reconciling humanity with nature.” It reflects the specific needs and strategic ambitions of African Member States and the adjacent island nations while contributing to Outcome 2: “A world where biodiversity, water and the ocean are valued and sustainably managed, in order to face the challenges posed by climate change and contribute to climate action.”
2. In compliance with Member States’ decisions, IOCAFRICA continues to operate under UNESCO’s Integrated Budgetary Framework (IBF), adapting its programmes to align with both global and African priorities. Within the broader IOC and UNESCO planning architecture, IOCAFRICA remains a key delivery mechanism for UNESCO's Global Priority Africa, contributing to the implementation of the Africa Blue Economy Strategy, the AU Agenda 2063, and the IOC Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap.
3. Regarding the regular budget proposal (Member States’ assessed contributions), the 43 C/5 regular budget will need to accommodate additional fixed costs stemming from specific decisions by the UNESCO Executive Board and the General Conference, as well as inflationary adjustments, including staff cost increases. The details on the nature of these costs can be found in the Executive Summary included in document [221 EX/20](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark%3A/48223/pf0000393069.locale%3Den). Considering these fixed costs and the UNESCO Executive Board’s request for budget options, UNESCO presented three scenarios for its regular budget ceiling:
* **Scenario 1: Zero Real Growth (ZRG):** A moderate increase to account for inflation, with an IOC appropriation of USD 21,874,400.
* **Scenario 2: Zero Nominal Growth (ZNG1):** Maintains the nominal 42 C/5 allocation with all cost increases absorbed, IOC appropriation: USD 20,707,320.
* **Scenario 3: Zero Nominal Growth with Deferred Costs (ZNG2):** Partial deferral of new financial obligations, IOC appropriation: USD 20,983,999.
1. In all three scenarios, no new posts are envisaged for IOC, implying that staffing costs will consume a larger share of the budget, reducing funds available for programme delivery. Under these scenarios, IOCAFRICA will experience an activity budget reduction of:
* 4.5% under ZRG,
* 17.4% under ZNG1,
* 14.3% under ZNG2.
1. IOCAFRICA anticipates that constrained operational budgets may limit the scope of national- and regional-level technical activities, particularly in Member States with limited absorptive capacity or co-funding options. This will require greater reliance on voluntary contributions, strengthened partnerships, and prioritization of catalytic interventions.
2. IOCAFRICA will seek to diversify and expand its resource base through new strategic partnerships and regional co-financing mechanisms.

**Table 1. Comparison of IOC Budgets in 42 C/5 and Draft 43 C/5 (in '000 USD)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Budget Type | 42 C/5 | Draft 43 C/5 (ZNG 1) | Draft 43 C/5 (ZNG 2) | Draft 43 C/5 (ZRG) |
| Non-Staff/Activity | 9,032 | 7,463 (36%) | 7,740 (37%) | 8,630 (39%) |
| Staff | 12,102 | 13,244 (64%) | 13,244 (63%) | 13,244 (61%) |
| Total Regular | 21,134 | 20,707 | 20,984 | 21,874 |
| Voluntary Contributions (Target) | 27,156 | 22,355 | 22,355 | 22,355 |
| Integrated Budgetary Framework | **48,290** | **43,062** | **43,339** | **44,229** |

**PART 1**

**Proposed 2026–2027 Budgetary Allocations (IOCAFRICA Context)**

1. Efforts will be made to protect core investments in:
* Ocean Observations and Monitoring
* Ocean Sciences, Biodiversity and Assessments
* Ocean Data and Information Management
* Capacity Development, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization
* Ocean Governance and Management
* Regional Governance and Coordination
1. The ZRG scenario offers the most favourable outlook, allowing IOCAFRICA to maintain most programme activities at 42 C/5 levels while advancing preparatory work on new themes such as multi-hazard early warning systems and sustainable ocean planning.

**Table 2. IOCAFRICA Indicative Allocations by Thematic Area (Under ZRG Scenario)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Thematic Area | Indicative Allocation (USD) | Share of RP Budget (%) |
| Ocean Observations and Data Systems | 180,000 | 20% |
| Early Warning Systems and Services | 130,000 | 14% |
| Climate Adaptation and Resilience | 130,000 | 14% |
| Capacity Development and Training | 300,000 | 32% |
| Ocean Literacy and Outreach | 80,000 | 9% |
| Governance, Planning & Coordination | 120,000 | 13% |
| Total Regular Programme Allocation | **940,000** | **100%** |

Chart 1: IOCAFRICA Budget Share by Theme (RP Allocation, ZRG Scenario)

Chart 2: IOCAFRICA Comparison: 42 C/5 Approved and Draft 43 C/5 – Integrated Budgetary Framework



**IOCAFRICA Regular Programme Budget Allocation – Staff vs Non-Staff (ZRG Scenario)**

1. Despite IOCAFRICA’s growing programme ambitions and expanding regional role, the Sub-Commission continues to operate with an under-resourced Secretariat. As of today, the staffing structure includes two Professional (P-level) staff posts under the Regular Programme—of which only one is currently filled and the second (P-3) is awaiting onboarding. In addition, there is one staff member seconded from the Government of Kenya as an in-kind contribution, and another GS-level administrative assistant whose role is jointly supported through the Ocean Decade Office in Paris and informally sustained by IOCAFRICA’s operational budget.
2. None of the General Service staff posts are formally included in the Regular Programme budget. This persistent staffing gap represents a structural constraint, especially in light of IOCAFRICA’s coordination role in the Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap, the African Ocean Innovation Incubator, early warning system expansion, and the delivery of regional science-policy programmes.
3. Recognizing these challenges and planning for improved efficiency, IOCAFRICA anticipates allocating approximately **USD 120,000** (13%) of its estimated **USD 940,000** Regular Programme budget under the ZRG scenario to staff-related costs. This reflects a commitment to minimal fixed overheads while prioritizing delivery, partnerships, and technical execution.

**Table 3: IOCAFRICA Regular Budget Staff/Non-Staff Ratio (ZRG Scenario)[[1]](#footnote-1)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Estimated Allocation (USD) | Share (%) |
| Staff Costs | 120,000 | 13% |
| Non-Staff | 820,000 | 87% |

**Anticipated Secretariat Staffing Requirements (2026–2027)**

1. Given the projected programme scope and delivery responsibilities, IOCAFRICA anticipates the need for a lean but effective Secretariat team comprising:
* **Programme Officer (P3):** Technical delivery, project implementation, and donor reporting *(to be funded through voluntary contributions)*
* **Programme Officer (P2):** Programme planning and activity execution *(to be funded through voluntary contributions)*
* **Programme Assistant (P1):** Administrative and technical coordination support *(to be funded through voluntary contributions)*
* **Administrative Assistant (GS):** Operational support, procurement, HR coordination
* **Communications and Outreach Assistant (GS):** Knowledge sharing, visibility, event communication, and stakeholder engagement
* **IT/Data Support Assistant (GS):** Digital content management, internal systems support, data infrastructure liaison
1. To meet these needs while adhering to budget constraints, IOCAFRICA will continue to advocate for:
* Formal integration of GS-level staff into the regular programme budget;
* Continued secondments and loaned personnel from Member States;
* Jointly funded positions through partnerships (e.g., Ocean Decade Office);
* Voluntary contributions earmarked for human resource strengthening.
1. This approach ensures that the Secretariat remains roburst, responsive, and fit-for-purpose while maximizing the impact of available resources through programmatic delivery and regional coordination.

**Table 3: IOCAFRICA Integrated Budgetary Framework 2026–2027 – Aligned with IOCAFRICA-VIII Agenda and Proposed Draft Decisions**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| IOCAFRICA Function / Workplan | 42 C/5 Approved (USD) | Draft 43 C/5 (ZNG1) | Draft 43 C/5 (ZNG2) | Draft 43 C/5 (ZRG) | Indicative VC (USD) | Total IBF (ZRG) (USD) | % Share |
| Ocean Observations and Monitoring | 109,328 | 90,317 | 93,825 | 109,328 | 500,000 | 609,328 | 20% |
| Ocean Sciences, Biodiversity and Assessments | 150,000 | 123,917 | 128,729 | 150,000 | 400,000 | 550,000 | 18% |
| Ocean Data and Information Management | 130,000 | 106,445 | 110,579 | 130,000 | 800,000 | 930,000 | 30% |
| Capacity Development & Ocean Literacy | 380,000 | 313,309 | 325,000 | 380,000 | 200,000 | 580,000 | 19% |
| Governance, Planning & Coordination | 120,000 | 98,825 | 102,165 | 120,000 | 100,000 | 220,000 | 7% |
| Regional Governance and Coordination | 120,000 | 98,825 | 102,165 | 120,000 | 100,000 | 220,000 | 7% |
| Total | **982,365** |  |  | **982,365** | **2,300,000** | **3,282,365** | **100%** |

This table reflects the ambition to protect and strategically expand core programmatic areas even under constrained scenarios, relying on blended funding and prioritization of high-impact themes.

**IOCAFRICA Programme Delivery by Functional Area (2026–2027)**

1. The delivery of IOCAFRICA's programme for 2026–2027 is structured around six core functional areas that respond directly to the mandates of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the guidance of Member States, and the priorities emerging from the IOCAFRICA-VIII session. These functional areas are designed to ensure coherence with UNESCO's 43 C/5 outcomes while maintaining regional specificity and addressing the most urgent and strategic needs of African coastal and island states.
2. Each function reflects an integrated response to interrelated challenges, including ocean observation capacity gaps, coastal and marine ecosystem stress, climate change vulnerabilities, fragmented governance frameworks, inadequate access to marine data and decision support tools, and the need for skilled human capital. They form the foundation of a robust and impact-driven delivery model to advance Africa’s ocean science, innovation, and policy leadership.
3. A cross-cutting emphasis is placed on scaling national implementation, enhancing subregional collaboration, and mobilizing partnerships to enable sustained and inclusive delivery. The table below outlines the structure and intent of each functional area:
4. This section outlines IOCAFRICA's proposed programme delivery strategy for the 2026–2027 biennium, organized around six strategic functional areas. These areas correspond to IOCAFRICA’s core mission and priorities endorsed during the Eighth Session of the Sub-Commission (IOCAFRICA-VIII), and are tailored to ensure impactful delivery in the context of UNESCO's 43 C/5 planning framework.
5. Each function reflects integrated responses to pressing regional challenges including climate impacts, data management gaps, ocean governance bottlenecks, and capacity development needs across Member States and institutions.

**Function 1: Ocean Observations and Monitoring**

1. This function forms the foundation of IOCAFRICA’s regional science delivery platform, focusing on the collection and provision of sustained ocean observations that are essential for climate forecasting, coastal hazard early warning systems, marine resource management, and operational oceanography. Emphasis will be placed on expanding Africa’s contribution to the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) through the African Ocean Observing System (AfOOS), improving sea level monitoring under GLOSS, and enhancing data integration for national marine decision-making.

*Focus 2026–2027*

* Expand and integrate Africa’s contribution to the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), with regional leadership under AfOOS.
* Improve operational readiness and data continuity for sea level, marine meteorology, and Essential Ocean Variables (EOVs).
* Advance ecosystem and climate forecasting by scaling deployment of sensors, tide gauges, and real-time data systems.

*Key Deliverables:*

* National AfOOS implementation roadmaps developed in at least 5 countries.
* Restoration or deployment of 10+ tide gauges contributing to GLOSS.
* Regional capacity-building events supporting instrument operation and data flow.
* Data integration tools linking observations to early warning dashboards.

**Function 2: Ocean Sciences, Biodiversity and Assessments**

1. This function addresses the growing scientific and policy demand for integrated, ecosystem-based knowledge to inform biodiversity conservation, blue carbon planning, and climate change adaptation in Africa. IOCAFRICA will promote interdisciplinary research on ocean-climate interactions and stressors (acidification, deoxygenation, heatwaves), while supporting Member States with coastal vulnerability diagnostics and biodiversity monitoring frameworks to support SDG and UNFCCC reporting.

*Focus 2026–2027*

* Foster multidisciplinary marine science including ocean-climate interactions, marine biodiversity and blue carbon ecosystems.
* Enhance regional science-policy interfaces through coastal vulnerability assessments and scenario planning.
* Promote ecosystem-based management by integrating biogeochemical monitoring and biodiversity mapping.

*Key Deliverables:*

* Coastal vulnerability assessments completed in 4–6 pilot countries.
* Strategic guidance documents on blue carbon, acidification, and ocean deoxygenation for policy use.
* Regional harmonization of biodiversity indicators for SDG reporting.
* Joint research campaigns with African and global marine institutes.

**Function 3: Ocean Data and Information Management**

1. This function strengthens the technical capacity of African institutions to generate, curate, and share ocean data and information through standardized systems. It promotes open and equitable access to marine data and services through enhanced participation in IODE, OBIS, and ODIS. In addition to infrastructure development, this function will focus on enabling Member States to implement national policies that align with FAIR data principles and support sustainable ocean management.

*Focus 2026–2027*

* Strengthen national ocean data systems by expanding engagement in IODE, OBIS, and ODIS.
* Develop African Ocean Data Guidelines to enable interoperability and standardization.
* Promote open access and equity in marine data services through regional training and policy support.

*Key Deliverables:*

* African Ocean Data Guidelines published and adopted by pilot Member States.
* 8+ institutions newly connected to ODIS and OBIS, with metadata repositories online.
* Support to National Oceanographic Data Centres (NODCs) to meet international best practices.
* Launch of a regional digital dashboard integrating marine datasets and metadata.

**Function 4: Capacity Development, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization**

1. This function responds to the human and institutional capacity gaps in ocean science, data, and governance in Africa. It operationalizes the IOC Capacity Development Strategy in the African context, expands delivery through the OceanTeacher Global Academy, and strengthens partnerships for co-designed training and innovation. Priority will be given to building the next generation of African ocean leaders and scaling innovation in ocean solutions via regional hubs and mentorship.

*Focus 2026–2027*

* Operationalize the implementation plan of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy in the African context.
* Expand OceanTeacher Global Academy (OTGA) regional nodes and tailored curricula.
* Support early-career ocean professionals (ECOPs) and innovation through dedicated incubation and mentoring platforms.

**Key Deliverables:**

* Delivery of at least 10 OTGA training courses in Africa, including regional workshops on MSP, marine pollution, and data governance.
* ECOP Leadership Programme scaled to at least 20 African countries with regional hubs.
* Launch of the African Ocean Innovation Incubator supporting grassroots marine solutions.
* Formalization of multi-stakeholder partnerships for co-financing and training delivery.

**Function 5: Ocean Governance and Management**

1. This function anchors IOCAFRICA’s role in promoting science-based marine spatial planning (MSP), sustainable ocean planning, and national ocean science strategy development. It enables countries to bridge the gap between marine science and policy implementation, advancing integrated ocean governance frameworks. The function will facilitate technical support, regional policy dialogues, and cross-sectoral engagement with RECs, AU agencies, and intergovernmental platforms.

*Focus 2026–2027*

* Strengthen integration of marine spatial planning (MSP), ocean-climate policy, and sustainable ocean planning.
* Support Member States in drafting and implementing national ocean science plans.
* Advance Africa’s engagement in global ocean governance forums through policy briefs and intergovernmental coordination.

*Key Deliverables:*

* National MSP processes supported in 10–15 Member States, including subregional cooperation pilots.
* Technical assistance to develop or update national ocean science strategies in at least 10 countries.
* Policy dialogues convened with RECs, AU, and national stakeholders on ocean sustainability.
* Co-authored regional policy briefs feeding into UNFCCC, CBD, and AU platforms.

**Function 6: Regional Governance and Coordination**

1. This function supports IOCAFRICA’s institutional role as a Sub-Commission of IOC in Africa, ensuring effective governance, strategic alignment, and programme coherence. It involves convening expert groups, aligning with regional and global agendas (e.g. the Africa Blue Economy Strategy and the Ocean Decade), and fostering coordination among Member States, regional organizations, and UN agencies. Through this function, IOCAFRICA provides the leadership and oversight necessary for the successful delivery of its workplan.

*Focus 2026–2027*

* Maintain IOCAFRICA’s central role in coordinating Africa’s engagement in the UN Ocean Decade.
* Strengthen the structure and work of the IOCAFRICA Taskforce and Working Groups.
* Promote integration across national, regional, and global institutional frameworks to enhance coherence and impact.

**Key Deliverables:**

* Support provided to 5 or more National Decade Committees with technical assistance and seed grants.
* Regular convening of IOCAFRICA Taskforce and Ocean-Climate Working Group.
* Mid-biennium review of IOCAFRICA implementation with participation of AU and RECs.
* Enhanced coordination across IOC programmes and alignment with the Africa Blue Economy Strategy.
1. This function-based delivery plan is built to be adaptive, impact-oriented, and regionally anchored. It supports IOCAFRICA’s ambitions to become the leading intergovernmental coordination platform for ocean science, services, and policy integration in Africa and its adjacent island states.

**GLOBAL PRIORITY AFRICA**

1. Member States in Africa have unique challenges in relation to the generation and application of ocean science and knowledge for sustainable economic development and are thus a focus of IOC’s efforts including through the Ocean Decade, and its African Roadmap, and the coordination provided by the IOCAFRICA Secretariat.
2. Key priorities will focus on enhancing regional capacity in ocean science and data services by leveraging IOC’s global technical expertise and training platforms to strengthen the capacities of scientists and institutions in ocean observation and data management—foundational elements for informed decision-making and sustainable ocean-based economic development. In doing so, articulating the work of the IOCAFRICA Sub-Commission with regional frameworks such as the African Union Blue Economy Strategy, and Agenda 2063 will be key, as well as fostering collaboration with the African Union and UN Regional Commission for Africa.
3. The Decade SEAWARD Africa programme, structured around four thematic components addressing sustainable management of marine resources; climate change and marine biodiversity; ocean pollution; and extreme events and disaster risk reduction, will provide a coordinated framework for the implementation of the [Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap](https://oceandecade.org/publications/ocean-decade-africa-roadmap/) formulated in 2023. Through IOCAFRICA, efforts will focus on strengthening the GOOS Africa network and coordination of observing systems with the aim to expend these and ensure delivery of data to end-users. Ocean observing capacity will be expanded through the coordination of deployment of instruments, to enhance real-time monitoring of ocean variables for climate, ecosystem and coastal hazards forecasting.

*Key deliverables 2026–2027:*

* Operationalization of the African Ocean Observing System (AfOOS): Scale up regional observation infrastructure through national implementation roadmaps, standardized data protocols, and integration of GOOS-Africa outputs into national early warning and marine policy systems
* Development of African Ocean Data Guidelines: In partnership with IODE and regional data centres, initiate the co-development of continental guidelines on ocean data collection, management, interoperability, and sharing, tailored to African institutional capacities and aligned with FAIR principles. These will serve as reference for national policies, regional platforms and international collaboration
* Strengthening national ocean science policies: Support at least 10 countries in the development or revision of national ocean science plans and strategies
* Scaling the multi-hazard early warning dashboard: Expand the pilot ocean early warning dashboard from West Africa to at least two additional subregions, incorporating sea-level rise, HABs, coastal flooding and marine heatwave indicators
* Launch of the African Ocean Literacy Strategy: Coordinate the roll-out of a continent-wide framework for advancing ocean literacy, including national action plans, teacher training modules, and promotion into education curricula
* African Ocean Innovation Incubator: Establish a multi-partner innovation facility to fund and mentor ocean science startups and community-led solutions focused on sustainable ocean economy, nature-based adaptation and marine technology
* Strengthening of the regional research vessel network: Coordinate access to oceanographic research vessels through and African charter mechanism, linking national research institutions, donor agencies, and vessel operators to support priority data collection missions
* Expanded ECOP Leadership Programme: Formalize a continent-wide leadership and mentoring scheme for Early Career Ocean Professionals, linked to national Decade Committees and UNESCO Chairs, to cultivate African leadership in ocean science and governance
* Support to 10-15 countries in Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) processes and piloting of MSP transboundary cooperation in one sub-region;
* The OceanTeacher Global Academy will expand its network of training centres in Africa and make full use of regional and local expertise to deliver needs-tailored training.

**SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

1. The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) adopted in 2024 by the UNGA will guide the work of IOC towards SIDS across the whole science value chain, considering the unique challenges that SIDS face due to their geographic isolation, vulnerability to climate change, reliance on ocean resources, and limited technical and financial capacity. Alliances with SIDS focused-partner organizations in the Atlantic and Pacific will ensure engagement of ocean basins not covered by IOC regional subsidiary bodies, whilst the four IOC Sub-Commissions will identify and address SIDS needs through their programmatic frameworks in their respective regions.
2. Targeted investments will allow customized approaches to capacity development based on SIDS-specific requirements and priorities. Ocean literacy and Intersectoral Programme IP2 dedicated action will be strengthened in SIDS. Leveraging its global expertise, IOC will focus on increasing SIDS technical and scientific capacity for climate resilience, marine related hazards responses, including invasive species, through adequate early detection/early warning systems and the use of innovation and technology for (near) real-time data collection for research, monitoring, enforcement, and decision making. Capacities of SIDS to implement Marine Spatial Planning/ Sustainable Ocean Planning Management will be supported through the application of SIDS-focused rapid assessment tools for SOPM, and targeted training provided through the MSP Global programme.
3. Ocean Decade Regional Task Forces and Capacity Development Facility will provide support for the formulation of SIDS-led Decade Actions, underpinned by technical training focusing on co-design, science-policy interface, national accounting, Marine Spatial Planning, and the use of indigenous and local knowledge in ocean management. Pacific SIDS will be supported to enhance coastal ecosystem resilience through ocean science collaborative action delivered by and for Pacific SIDS-based organizations and individuals.
4. With particular focus on resilience to tsunamis and other ocean-related hazards, the goal is that, by 2030, 100% of at-risk communities in the Caribbean, Pacific Ocean and Indian Ocean SIDS are recognized as Tsunami Ready.

*Key deliverables:*

* Programme for Sustainable Ocean Plans developed in SIDS within the context of the Ocean Decade Sustainable Ocean Planning Programme (SOP)
* Regional Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) framework established and supported to ensure the full engagement of ILK holders in the Ocean Decade and ensure exchange and collaboration of alternative knowledge systems to complement ocean science for sustainable ocean management
* Regular SIDS capacity development assessment part of IOC CD Strategy Ocean Decade Capacity Development Facility acting as match-making platform for addressing SIDS needs
* Country Assistance though Rapid Assessment for Marine Spatial Planning process – leading to national action plan (
* Support to Pacific SIDS in climate resilience through Online/In person Training, Community of Practice, SIDS Forum established in partnership with The Pacific Community
* 30% increase in number of SIDS (5 new) that have established a National Tsunami Ready Board (NTRB) and have got recognition for at least 1 new Tsunami Ready recognized community in the framework of the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP)
* eDNA monitoring (invasive species/biodiversity assessment) initiatives conducted in 5 SIDS.

**Table 4: Summary of IOCAFRICA 2026–2027 Key Deliverables by Functional Area**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Thematic Area | Focus | Key Deliverables 2026–2027 |
| Ocean Observations and Monitoring | GOOS-Africa expansion, infrastructure modernization, marine hazards, and forecast services | - **Infrastructure**: Restore/deploy 10+ tide gauges, ADCPs, and buoys across subregions including the Western Indian Ocean (WIO), Gulf of Guinea, Mediterranean and Benguela Current region- **Roadmaps**: Develop national AfOOS roadmaps in 5+ Member States- **Pilot Projects**: Launch 3 pilot projects on community-based ocean observing- **Dashboard**: Establish an interoperable dashboard integrated into DRR platforms- **Training**: Convene regional training on gliders, coastal buoys, and data use for EWS- **Status Report**: Prepare African regional status report on ocean observations- **Early Warning Tools**: Develop early warning data integration tools |
| Ocean Sciences, Biodiversity, and Assessments | Blue carbon, biodiversity conservation, climate and ecosystem health, BBNJ readiness | - **Assessments**: Conduct regional marine biodiversity assessments- **Restoration**: Map and begin restoration of 3 blue carbon ecosystem sites (mangroves, seagrasses)- **Training**: Pilot regional BBNJ science readiness training (2 subregions)- **Technical Briefs**: Prepare Africa-specific technical briefs on HABs, invasive species, and coastal tipping points- **Atlas**: Publish a digital African MPA & OECM atlas with biodiversity indicators- **Curricula**: Integrate underwater heritage into national school curricula (pilot in 4 countries)- **Vulnerability Assessments**: Conduct vulnerability assessments in 4–6 countries- **SDG Indicators**: Develop harmonized SDG biodiversity indicators |
| Ocean Data and Information Management | FAIR principles, digital innovation (AI, twins, blockchain), regional NODC strengthening | - **Guidelines**: Finalize and pilot African Ocean Data Guidelines in 6 countries- **NODCs**: Operationalize or upgrade 10 NODCs, connect to OBIS/ODIS- **Innovation Lab**: Establish a regional marine data innovation lab focused on AI for pollution tracking and forecasting, to be governed in collaboration with African universities, national marine institutions, and private-sector technology firms, with oversight from IOCAFRICA and IODE- **Digital Twins**: Deploy 2 digital ocean twin pilots- **Policy**: Publish regional data governance model policy and ethics framework- **Training**: Conduct FAIR data and sovereignty training for 150+ professionals- **Dashboard**: Develop a regional marine data dashboard |
| Capacity Development, Partnerships, and Resource Mobilization | Human capital, mentorship, institutional partnerships, and co-financing | - **Courses**: Deliver 12 OTGA Africa-certified courses targeting early career ocean professionals, public officials, data managers, and educators in priority Member States- **Mentoring**: Launch Pan-African ECOP mentoring and leadership scheme- **Innovation Incubator**: Operationalize African Ocean Innovation Incubator, issue 10 seed grants- **Investment Forums**: Convene 2 regional ocean investment forums- **Project Proposals**: Develop 3 bankable project proposals for climate, biodiversity, and capacity finance- **Alliance**: Establish African Ocean Science and Innovation Alliance across 5 subregions- **ECOP Programme**: Expand ECOP programme to 20+ countries |
| Ocean Governance and Management | MSP, national science plans, regional policy interface | - **MSP Support**: Provide MSP support to 15 Member States including 2 transboundary planning pilots- **Science Plans**: Develop or revise national ocean science plans in 10+ countries- **Policy Briefs**: Co-develop science-policy briefs for COP31, COP32, and BBNJ, to be co-branded with regional and global partners and submitted through regional blocs such as the African Union (AU) and African Group at the UN and UNESCO- **Training**: Deliver regional training on sustainable ocean planning tools and valuation- **Monitoring Tool**: Pilot a harmonized SOP monitoring and review tool- **Coordination**: Strengthen national-regional coordination for implementation of the AU Blue Economy Strategy- **Policy Alignment**: Align policy briefs with UNFCCC, CBD, and AU |
| Regional Governance and Coordination | Decade Africa Roadmap implementation, REC & AU engagement, IOCAFRICA taskforce delivery | - **Committees**: Reactivate and support 10 IOC National Committees and National Decade Committees with planning and reporting tools- **Workshops**: Organize 3 intergovernmental coordination workshops (REC–AU–UNESCO)- **Performance Review**: Conduct IOCAFRICA biennium midterm performance review- **Tracking Frameworks**: Align IOCAFRICA’s work programme with SDG 14.3.1 and 14.a.1 tracking frameworks, and develop an online regional reporting platform to facilitate progress monitoring and Member State engagement- **Taskforce**: Maintain and scale IOCAFRICA Taskforce, including thematic Working Groups and regional focal points- **Cross-Sector Coordination**: Strengthen cross-sector coordination with climate, biodiversity, fisheries, and education stakeholders- **Integration**: Integrate with Africa Blue Economy Plan |

**Recent and Anticipated Funding Pipeline**

IOCAFRICA’s delivery ambition for the 2026–2027 biennium is underpinned by a growing and increasingly diversified funding pipeline. Beyond the core allocations from UNESCO’s regular budget, the Sub-Commission has strategically mobilized external resources to scale delivery across its six priority functions. This includes both confirmed contributions and high-value proposals submitted to key multilateral partners.

**Table 5: Recent and anticipated funding pipeline 2025-2027**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Funding Initiative** | **Amount (USD)** | **Status** | **Partners** |
| Sea-level observation stations and capacity building in 4 Western Indian Ocean countries | 500,000 | Secured | Government of Flanders, IOC/TRS |
| Ocean Observation Infrastructure and Capacity in São Tomé and Príncipe | 1,000,000 | Submitted | African Development Bank (AfDB) |
| Fisheries and Blue Economy Resilience in African SIDS | 5,000,000 | Submitted | AfDB Targeted Support Window (Pillar III) |
| Sustainable Ocean Resource Management for Peace and Prosperity in West Africa | 5,000,000 | Submitted | AfDB + Global Ocean Accounts Partnership (GOAP) |
| Strengthening Inclusive Ocean Governance in the Western Indian Ocean (SINGER-WIO) | 15,000,000 | Submitted | IKI + AGNES, UNDP, UN Women, Governments of Kenya, South Africa, Comoros |

In parallel with the budget allocation under the 42 C/5 framework, IOCAFRICA successfully secured a new voluntary contribution of USD 500,000 from the Government of Flanders through the Flanders-UNESCO Science Trust (FUST) to be jointly executed with the IOC Tsunami and Resilience Section (IOC/TSR). This funding is earmarked for the development of sea-level observation stations and associated capacity-building activities in four African countries in the Western Indian Ocean region. This contribution further strengthens the Sub-Commission's commitment to enhancing ocean observing infrastructure and regional coordination on sea level monitoring and response.

These proposals, collectively valued at over **USD 26.5 million**, mark a significant evolution in IOCAFRICA’s profile—from a coordinating body to a regional programmatic delivery platform. They are not only thematically aligned with IOCAFRICA’s core functions (observation, early warning, ocean science, governance, and capacity) but also demonstrate strong alignment with Africa’s continental frameworks, including Agenda 2063, the Africa Blue Economy Strategy, and the Africa Ocean Decade Roadmap.

This resource mobilization strategy reflects IOCAFRICA’s growing ability to articulate large-scale, co-designed interventions that resonate with donor priorities and institutional mandates. The Secretariat has deepened its engagement with key partners—such as the African Development Bank, the German IKI, and the Government of Flanders—to co-develop and submit proposals designed to accelerate implementation.

Looking forward, the Secretariat will intensify its efforts to translate these proposals into fully funded projects, with a particular emphasis on multi-hazard early warning systems, capacity building for SIDS, and ocean data infrastructure. These investments will be essential to meet the ambitious targets of the 42 C/5 Work Plan and to elevate Africa’s contribution to the UN Decade of Ocean Science.

**Conclusion**

The 2026–2027 IOCAFRICA functional programme structure presented in this document offers a coherent and scalable framework to deliver transformative impact across ocean science, services, and policy in Africa and its adjacent island states. Grounded in the outcomes of the IOCAFRICA-VIII Session and aligned with the UNESCO 43 C/5 objectives, the six functional areas operationalize a balanced portfolio that integrates cutting-edge science, targeted capacity development, enhanced coordination, and actionable policy guidance.

By reinforcing Member State ownership, leveraging the power of partnerships, and aligning with Africa’s regional development agendas—such as the AU Blue Economy Strategy and Agenda 2063—IOCAFRICA is strategically positioned to accelerate ocean knowledge generation, ecosystem resilience, and inclusive governance across the continent.

Looking ahead, the Sub-Commission remains committed to the full implementation of the Africa Ocean Decade Roadmap and to positioning Africa as a central actor in the global ocean agenda.

1. These tables serve to illustrate IOCAFRICA’s budget logic under current assumptions and signal areas where voluntary contributions will be essential to expand reach and impact. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)