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INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

Thirty-third Session of the Assembly
UNESCO, 25 June–3 July 2025

Covers all items of the Revised Provisional Agenda

PROVISIONAL ACTION PAPER

The Action Paper provides the information necessary for effective participation in the discussion of the agenda items. This information includes: (i) identification of relevant documentation; (ii) identification, under each substantive agenda item, of the issue before the Assembly and the expected decision or draft resolution when available to date; (iii) background information (if the relevant background includes a separate document, it is issued as a working document).

The Action Paper also provides the basis of the draft summary report of the session. It is written in past tense to streamline the reporting process. A summary of the discussion that led to decisions under each agenda item will be prepared by the Secretariat and the Rapporteur and will be included in the draft summary report. Draft decisions and resolutions are proposed in the document in order to focus on decisions during the discussion of each agenda item without prejudice to the prerogatives of any Member State, partner organization, Officer or the Executive Secretary.

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1. OPENING

1. The Chair, Prof. Yutaka Michida, opened the session at 10:00 hrs on Wednesday 25 June 2025 in room II of UNESCO Headquarters, Paris.

2. The Chair asked participants to stand for a minute of silence to honour distinguished individuals who had participated in the work of the Commission and have passed away during this intersessional period: Prof. Doğan Kalafat (1959–2024, Türkiye); Mr Haiqing Li (China, (1958–2025); Dr Kazuhiro Kitazawa (Japan, 1938–2024); Prof. Zulficar Yasin (Malaysia, 1959–2025); and Ms Forest Collins (1970–2024, USA).

3. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

2.1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

[Rule of Procedure 45]

<u>Working documents</u>	IOC/A-33/2.1.Doc Prov. Rev.	Revised Provisional Agenda
	IOC/A-33/2.1.Doc Add. Prov. Rev.	Revised Provisional Timetable
	IOC/A-33/AP Prov.	Provisional Action Paper (<i>this document</i>)
<u>Report</u>	IOC/EC-58/SR Prov.	Provisional Executive Summary Report of the 58th Session of the IOC Executive Council, 24 June 2025

4. The Chair reminded that the Executive Council, acting as the Steering Committee for this Assembly session, examined the revised provisional agenda for the session and noted there was no request for supplementary items. The Executive Secretary informed that the Secretariat received ____ draft resolution(s) by the deadline of 20 June 2025: (title(s) and agenda item(s) __ to be completed). The draft Resolution on 'Governance, programming and budgeting matters' of the Commission (agenda item 5.4) was prepared during the session as per paragraph 16 of document [IOC/INF-1315](#).

Draft Decision A-33/2(I)

The Assembly,

I. Agenda

1. Adopts the agenda and the timetable of work as set out in documents IOC/A-33/2.1.Doc Prov. and Add. [with the following additional modifications:]

5. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

2.2. DESIGNATION OF THE RAPPORTEUR
[Rule of Procedure 8.4]

Draft Decision A-33/2(II)

The Assembly,

II. Rapporteur

2. On a proposal of [country], seconded by [countries],
3. Designates _____ of [country] Rapporteur for its present session to assist the Chairperson and the Executive Secretary in the preparation of the draft provisional report of the session;

6. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

2.3. ESTABLISHMENT OF SESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS
[Rule of Procedure 49.2]

Report

IOC/EC-58/SR Prov. Provisional Executive Summary Report of the
58th Session of the IOC Executive Council, 24
June 2025

7. Referring to the recommendations made by the Executive Council (EC-58/Dec. __) on this item, acting as the steering committee for the present session, the Chair reminded of the mandate of the three statutory sessional committees, the open-ended composition thereof, and the working arrangements made for their meetings.

Draft Decision A-33/2(III)

The Assembly,

III. Sessional Committees and Working Groups

4. Establishes the following sessional open-ended committees and refers to them the following agenda items and responsibilities:

Financial Committee: to examine the documentation and prepare a resolution under item 5.4, which covers items 3.2 (budget implementation and financial report), 5.1 (draft43 C/5), 5.2 (external assessment), and 5.3 (IOC & the Future of the Ocean); under the chairship of Mr Juan Camilo Forero Hauzeur (Colombia, Vice-chair) with the following Member States participating: _____. Ms Ksenia Yvinec provided the Secretariat support to the Financial Committee.

Resolutions Committee: to report on all draft resolutions duly presented for consideration at the session; under the chairship of [name] (country) with the following Member States participating: _____. Ms Alison Clausen provided the Secretariat support to the Resolutions Committee.

Nominations Committee (to examine all proposals of candidates for the elections to the chair, vice-chairs and to the Executive Council at the present session, and to

report on them – item 5.5): under the chairship of Ms Marie-Alexandrine Sicre (France, Vice-chair) with the following Member States participating: _____. Mr Bernardo Aliaga and Ms Joanna Post provided the Secretariat support to the Nominations Committee.

8. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

2.4. INTRODUCTION TO TIMETABLE; DOCUMENTATION
AND IOC MEMORIAL LECTURES
[Rule of Procedure 48; Dec. EC-55/5.3; Dec. A-31/3.2]

<u>Working documents</u>	IOC/A-33/2.1.Doc Prov. Rev.	Revised Provisional Agenda
	IOC/A-33/2.1.Doc Add. Prov. Rev.	Revised Provisional Timetable
	IOC/A-33/DocList Prov.	Provisional List of Documents
	IOC/A-33/AP Prov. Rev.	Revised Provisional Action Paper (<i>this document</i>)
<u>Information</u>	IOC/A-33/2.4.Inf.1	Working Arrangements for the session
	IOC/A-33/2.4.Inf.1 Add.	Template for submission of written records to the Assembly summary report
	IOC/BRO/2025/9	Programme of the 2025 IOC Ocean Science Day, 30 June, UNESCO Headquarters

9. The Executive Secretary introduced this item. He reminded the Assembly of the deadline for submitting nominations for the elections – 27 June, 18:00 Paris time. With regard to the organisation of the session, the Executive Secretary reminded delegates that the programme of parallel meetings to this session was available on the session's web page independently of the Assembly's official timetable. He thanked in advance the Member States and partner organizations for organizing side events and for offering Coffee/tea services during this session. The Executive Secretary informed the Member States that the Assembly would unfortunately have to change its plenary room on 2 and 3 July in order to accommodate other important events to be held at the same time as the Assembly. He pointed out the increasingly difficulty to organise meetings during the month of June, especially a two-week meeting such as the Assembly.

10. The Executive Secretary then referred to the programme for Ocean Science Day (OSD) prepared by the IOC Ocean Science Section, which was to be held on 30 June in the same meeting room. The theme for the day was 'Ocean solutions for mitigating climate change,' divided into two panels: 1. Deep dive into ocean solutions and 2. Risks, governance gaps and scientific priorities.

11. OSD provided a platform for the second IOC Mário Ruivo Memorial Lecture and two other IOC memorial lectures. The IOC M. Ruivo Memorial Lecture was delivered by Ms Vânia Baptista, an Early Career Ocean Professional who was selected on a competitive basis. Her lecture focused on collaborative research to enhance marine biodiversity conservation and sustainable fisheries management in São Tomé and Príncipe. The Executive Secretary welcomed a joint initiative with [EurOcean](#) and Portugal, which pays tribute to late Professor Mário Ruivo's long-life commitment to ocean science and the sustainable development of the

ocean, and his significant contributions to the work of IOC, ocean knowledge, international cooperation, capacity development and ocean literacy.

12. The IOC Anton Bruun Memorial Lecture 2025 “Co-Producing Ocean Solutions: Empowering Coastal Communities Through Science and Policy Integration” was delivered by Professor Dato’ Dr Aileen Tan Sau Hwai (Malaysia), Director Centre for Marine and Coastal Studies. Executive member of CoastPredict (an Ocean Decade endorsed programme). Prof Dato’ Dr Aileen Tan Sau Hwai is recognized for her leadership in climate and marine biodiversity science, particularly ocean acidification and the progress in developing science-based solutions to these challenges. The Anton Bruun Memorial Lecture Series is dedicated to the memory of the Danish oceanographer and the Commission's first Chairman (1961–1962), Dr Anton Frederick Bruun. The lectures cover important developments that have taken place between sessions in the fields of solid earth studies, physical and chemical oceanography and meteorology, as well as marine biology.

13. The IOC N.K. Panikkar Memorial Lecture 2025 “Building Capacity towards Operational Oceanography in the Black Sea” was delivered by Dr Atanas Palazov (Chair, Bulgarian National Oceanographic Commission). Dr Atanas Palazov is recognised for his dedication to delivering training for building capacity in operational oceanography with a focus on the Black Sea. The series of Conferences is dedicated to the memory of the Indian zoologist, Director of the Indian Programme of the International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE), and former Chairman of IOC (1964–1965). The lectures cover capacity building in marine science issues at regional and/or national levels.

14. Following their presentations, Professor Tan and Dr Palazov were awarded the IOC Anton Bruun Medal and the IOC N.K. Panikkar Medal, respectively.

No decision is proposed under this item. [Any changes to the timetable would be reflected in Dec A-33/2].

15. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3. IOC MATTERS AND REPORTS

3.1. STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON [Rule of Procedure 45.1(a)]

Information

IOC/A-33/3.1.Inf

Statement from the IOC Chairperson on the Occasion of the 33rd Session of the Assembly, 25 June–3 July 2025 [to be published during the session]

16. In accordance with rule of procedure 45.1(a), Chair Yutaka Michida delivered an oral statement on recent developments in the work of the Commission and perspectives for the coming years (Annex ____).

17. The Assembly thanked the Chair for his remarks and leadership.

No decision is proposed under this item.

18. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.2. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ON THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED SINCE THE THIRTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
[Rules of Procedure 45.1(b)(c)(g), 31]

<u>Working documents</u>	IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(1) & Addendum	Report of the IOC Executive Secretary on the work accomplished since the Thirty-second Session of the Assembly (June 2023–May 2025)
	IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(2)	Report on 2024–2025 (42 C/5) budget implementation as at 31 December 2024
	IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(3)	Financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2024 and forecast for 2025
<u>Information</u>	IOC/A-33/3.2.Inf.1	Progress on planning for the 2026 <i>State of the Ocean Report</i> (StOR)
	IOC/A-33/3.2.Inf.2	Progress report on the third edition of the <i>Global Ocean Science Report</i> (GOSR)

19. The Executive Secretary introduced this item using a PowerPoint presentation.

20. He highlighted that the rapid and accelerating changes in the ocean place new demands on the IOC to deliver on its mandate to generate and apply knowledge. Ocean observations must be enhanced in order to provide more, and continuously updated, knowledge. The application of learning and knowledge, the second part of IOC's mandate, is growing in importance in line with the evolving global ocean governance landscape, and the increased relevance of regional policy and governance mechanisms.

21. With the IOC's share of UNESCO's regular budget for 2024–2025 (42 C/5) increased to 3% at the request of its Member States, two thirds (68%) of additional non-staff resources were allocated across the board to stabilise all IOC functions, and one third (32%) was used as additional targeted investment in the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange System (IODE) and Capacity Development through IOC regional subsidiary bodies.

22. Strengthening IOC's work in ocean observations and ocean data results in products and services supporting for example, marine monitoring for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the BBNJ Treaty and pollution-related frameworks, as well as cementing IOC's role as a global knowledge partner for sustainable ocean planning. In this context, he highlighted the importance of making the Global Ocean Observing System fit-for-purpose for a fast-changing ocean and build an integrated IOC data architecture, which can better meet the needs of ocean decision-makers and managers.

23. Twenty years since the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, IOC can be proud of the progress achieved. With tsunami warning systems operational in the four ocean basins, there are now 100 recognized Tsunami Ready communities in 31 Member States, 15 of which are SIDS. But much remains to be done to achieve the ambitious goal of covering all at risk communities by 2030.

24. The programmatic capacity development work of IOC, guided by the *IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030*, is complemented by the Ocean Decade Capacity Development Facility that aims to develop and deliver priority capacity development initiatives

in the framework of the Ocean Decade, with a focus on SIDS, Least Developed Countries and Early Career Ocean Professionals. IOC regional subsidiary bodies continue their critically important work of catalysing engagement and impact on the ground.

25. The Executive Secretary then gave an overview of programmatic highlights and milestones across all functions of the Commission.

26. He concluded by emphasizing that the dual objectives of learning and application are reflected in the *IOC Medium-Term Strategy* and align with the ethos of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), which seeks to generate the science needed for the decisions required for a sustainable ocean. The IOC-led programmes and projects that are being developed under the framework of the 'Ocean Decade' range from observations to research, to sustainable ocean planning. They are testbeds of transformative approaches to the generation of timely, relevant and co-designed knowledge that has direct applicability to decision-making. The diverse stakeholder communities evolving through Ocean Decade processes will be important networks for the IOC in a post-Decade era in the efforts to better deliver on generation of knowledge as well as its application. The Ocean Decade thus provides the framework for IOC programmes to work in new ways, with new partners focusing on emerging issues and thus build the foundation of the future IOC that will be our legacy after the end of the Decade and will meet the expectations of Member States.

Draft Decision A-33/3.2

Report of the Executive Secretary

The Assembly,

1. Having examined documents IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(1) & Addendum, IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(2) and IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(3),
2. Thanks the Executive Secretary for a very comprehensive report;
3. Takes note of the information provided, welcoming significant advances in many programmatic areas.

27. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.3. REPORTS OF THE IOC SUB-COMMISSIONS AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES
[Rule of Procedure 30.3]

**3.3.1 IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States:
8th Session of IOCAFRICA, Mombasa, Kenya, 7–9 May 2025**

Report

IOCAFRICA-VIII/3s Executive Summary Report of the 8th Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, Mombasa, Kenya, 7–9 May 2025

28. The newly elected IOCAFRICA Chair, Amb. Hellen Gichuhi (Kenya), presented an overview of the activities implemented by the Sub-Commission during the intersessional period

from 2023 to 2025 and reported on the major outcomes of the intergovernmental session, referring to the report of the 8th session of IOCAFRICA for detail.

29. Ambassador Monica Gichuhi's report on the intersectoral period covers several action areas contributing to the development of ocean science cooperation mechanisms, and several partnerships and platforms in ocean observations, ocean data and information, climate change impacts and related African coastal ecosystem vulnerability assessment, Marine Spatial Planning, and capacity development, showcasing best practices in co-design at the science-policy-society interface. The Sub-Commission deals with hard infrastructure, such as sensors and data hubs, but also diplomacy and narrative shaping, to establish Africa's Ocean agenda within global frameworks such as UNFCCC, IPCC seventh Assessment Report, the African Union Blue Economy Strategy, SDG14 and UN Ocean Conference, and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030).

30. As host of the Ocean Decade Coordination Office for the region, the IOCAFRICA Secretariat facilitate regional coordination of Decade Actions through a new Science and Knowledge for a Sustainable and Resilient Ocean Economy in Africa (SEAWARD programme), improving ocean observation and monitoring systems through GOOS-Africa collaboration, expanding early warning and hazard preparedness, advancing capacity development initiatives for institutions and professionals across Member States, supporting Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs) to engage in training, research, and international collaboration, promoting initiatives on ocean science and climate change, strengthening ocean literacy through targeted outreach and education, and advancing cross-sectoral partnerships to promote ocean sustainability and the blue economy in Africa, and promoting science-policy integration through high-level dialogues. The IOCAFRICA Chair reported five new National Decade Committees, bring the total number of active NDCs in the region to eight.

31. In the Chair's view, the challenge is to translate this orchestration into tangible benefits (access to data, training, best practices, improved coastal livelihoods) and measurable resilience and prosperity for the continent's 100+ million coastal citizens. To this end, Ambassador Gichuhi, called for the reinforcement of the Secretariat capacity and sustainable financing, detailed in the report of IOCAFRICA-VIII.

32. Ambassador Gichuhi informed the Assembly that the Eighth Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, held in Mombasa from 7–9 May 2025, concluded with the adoption of seven strategic decisions and seven supporting recommendations that will guide IOCAFRICA's work during the 2026–2027 intersessional period. These outcomes, she noted, reflect the Sub-Commission's ambition to accelerate regional ocean science, data systems, early warning capacities, and institutional development, in line with the IOC Medium-Term Strategy and the Africa Ocean Decade Roadmap.

33. She highlighted the adoption of decisions on the establishment of the Africa Ocean Data and Information Working Group, the IOCAFRICA Ocean-Climate Working Group, and the revitalization of the IOCAFRICA Group of Experts on Harmful Algal Blooms. The Sub-Commission also adopted decisions supporting the development of an Ocean Early Warning System for Africa, the hosting of the Global Ocean Accounts African Community of Practice, the promotion of national ocean science plans and strategies, and the creation of a Rolling Plan for Ocean Capacity Development.

34. In support of programme implementation, the Sub-Commission endorsed recommendations related to the Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–2027, as well as the development of detailed work plans across four core pillars: ocean observations and monitoring, ocean sciences, biodiversity and assessments, ocean data and information management, and capacity development, partnerships and resource mobilization, and the overall workplan for 2026–2027 in Recommendation IOCAFRICA-VIII/5.2.

35. Recognizing the limited regular programme resources available for the implementation of these priorities, Ambassador Gichuhi urged IOC Member States to increase extra-budgetary contributions and in-kind support, taking into consideration the proposed work plan.

36. The session brought together 67 participants representing 13 IOCAFRICA Member States and 16 regional and international organizations. The IOCAFRICA Chair then introduced the three newly elected vice-chairs of the sub-commission: Dr Bope Bope Lapwong (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Dr. Gilbert Siko (South Africa), and Dr Massata Ndao (Senegal).

Draft Decision A-33/3.3.1

IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the Executive Summary report of the 8th session of the IOC's Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, Mombasa, Kenya, 7–9 May 2025 (IOCAFRICA-VIII/3s),
2. Takes note of the progress made in the implementation of IOCAFRICA's programme during the 2023–2025 intersessional period, in alignment with the IOC Medium-Term Strategy and the Africa Ocean Decade Roadmap;
3. Commends the IOCAFRICA Secretariat for its leadership in coordinating Decade Actions, advancing regional ocean observation, marine data and early warning systems, ocean literacy and promoting inclusive engagement in ocean science across Africa;
4. Acknowledges the reinforcement provided to the IOCAFRICA Secretariat both in terms of budget and staff through the 2024–2025 IOC Programme and Budget;
5. Thanks the Member States and partners who have provided financial, technical, and in-kind contributions to IOCAFRICA programmes, especially the Governments of Flanders (Belgium), Kenya, Morocco, Norway, Sweden, and China;
6. Endorses the report of IOCAFRICA-VIII, the decisions and recommendations therein, including the work plan for 2026–2027;
7. Recognizes the increasing demands placed on the IOCAFRICA Secretariat due to the expanding scope of its activities, and affirms the need to strengthen its institutional capacity to ensure sustained and effective programme delivery;
8. Requests the IOC Executive Secretary to:
 - (i) Explore opportunities for additional regular programme resources and extra-budgetary funding to reinforce the IOCAFRICA Secretariat;
 - (ii) Support the provision of additional staffing, including professional and GS-level positions, as outlined in the report of IOCAFRICA-VIII;
9. Invites IOC Member States and partners to continue and increase their support to IOCAFRICA through financial contributions, secondment of personnel, and joint

implementation arrangements, particularly in support of the approved 2026–2027 Work Plan;

10. Notes that funding for relevant activities and staffing will be identified as part of the overall Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting matters of the Commission.

37. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.3.2 IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific: 15th Session of WESTPAC, Tokyo, Japan, 11–13 March 2025

Report

IOC/SC-WESTPAC-
XV/3s

Executive Summary Report of the 15th Intergovernmental Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC), Tokyo, Japan, 11–13 March 2025

38. The Chairperson of WESTPAC introduced this agenda item and presented the major advances over the last intersessional period and key results of [the 15th WESTPAC Intergovernmental Session](#) (11–13 March 2025, Tokyo).

39. The Chair highlighted that the Sub-Commission has been upholding the value of ocean science for society, making immense effort to strengthen the science-policy interface, advance ocean science, accelerate marine spatial planning, engage relevant stakeholders, and develop ocean science-based solutions. Through these efforts, WESTPAC continues to empower IOC Member States in the region to foster sustainable development of ocean, marine and coastal resources.

40. Situated in a developing region known for the world's richest marine biodiversity, and a dense population highly dependent on the ocean for development, the Sub-Commission continued to foster robust international cooperation mechanisms to enhance collaboration among Member States, as demonstrated by several key mechanisms such as *the Senior Government Officials Roundtable, the biennial WESTPAC Intergovernmental Session, and the triennial WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference*. It also has operationalized a dynamic co-design and co-development process to stimulate international leadership and collective actions across the region, initiating and aligning international initiatives with priority issues, as well as bringing together experts from across the region to refine and advance these efforts.

41. The Sub-Commission continued to take the lead in the region, motivating and engaging experts, institutions, and countries in the Ocean Decade. Over the past two years, notable efforts and accomplishments include: [The 2nd UN Ocean Decade Regional Conference & the 11th WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference](#) organized in Bangkok on 22–25 April 2024, hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and Department of Marine and Coastal Resources of Thailand. The grand conference, inaugurated by the Vice Prime Minister of Thailand, convened more than 1,200 participants coming from various ocean communities in 40 countries. The remarkable turnout set a new benchmark in the history of the Sub-Commission and the region.

42. Meanwhile, the Sub-Commission has been continuously advancing its initiated UN Ocean Decade Actions. The four Actions include: [UN21-Accelerate Marine Spatial Planning in](#)

[the Western Pacific](#); [UN22-Stem the tide of Asia's riverine plastic emission into the ocean](#); [UN23- Accelerating capacity development transformations in the Western Pacific – Regional Network of Training and Research Centres](#) (RTRCs) on Marine Science, and [UN24-Second Cooperative Study of Kuroshio and Adjacent Regions](#) – from its sciences to human well beings. In November 2024, the Sub-Commission initiated a new UN Ocean Decade Action-[UN39: Ocean Solutions in the East Asian Seas](#), to advance multidisciplinary research on multiple stressors in the coastal ecosystem and their impacts, *with a focus* on providing science-based solutions to benefit coastal communities, nature, and livelihoods.

43. The WESTPAC Chair informed the Assembly that, among its 29 programmes, projects, working groups, great progress could be demonstrated in several key areas over the last intersessional period: (i) with *Accelerating Marine Spatial Planning in the Western Pacific*, WESTPAC has taken major steps to advance MSP, including the establishment of an open-ended Group of Experts (GoEs) and organization of [the 1st WESTPAC MSP Expert Workshop](#) (14–15 November 2023); six MSP demonstration sites have been set up across five Member States, and over 150 ocean practitioners have participated in national capacity-building workshops in China and Thailand. Additionally, an Action Framework for Accelerating MSP in the region has been developed to accelerate MSP implementation; (ii) with *Advancing the 2nd Cooperative Study of Kuroshio and its Adjacent Regions (CSK-2)*, substantive progress continued on the CSK-2 initiative with key meetings of its International Steering Group, including [the fourth meeting](#) (4–6 December 2023, Qingdao, China) and [the fifth meeting](#) (15 November 2024, Sendai, Japan) together with the [2nd CSK-2 Science Symposium](#) on 13–14 November 2024. Furthermore, a feasibility mission has been conducted to establish a CSK-2 Support Office at the Laoshan Laboratory in Qingdao. To date, [14 projects have been endorsed](#) under the CSK-2 framework in line with [the CSK-2 Science Action Plan](#), laying a strong foundation for further advancement; (iii) with *Harnessing the potential of environmental DNA for marine biodiversity conservation and MPA management*, [a training workshop on eDNA](#) was held on 27–29 November 2023, followed by a Decade Incubator on eDNA during the 11th WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference in April 2024. The outputs of the initiative provided momentum to expand the application of eDNA techniques across the region, enhancing marine biodiversity monitoring and assessment capacity in support of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs); (iv) with *Combatting riverine plastic emissions*, [an international workshop was organized \(21–23 November 2023, Sanya, China\)](#) to foster partnerships, standardize methodologies, and identify pilot rivers for targeted action. In 2024, fieldwork was conducted at identified pilot rivers in Egypt, Thailand, and Viet Nam to address plastic pollution.

44. The Sub-Commission contributes to the implementation of the *IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2023–2030)*, by co-designing and co-developing capacity development initiatives tailored to their specific needs, ensuring the sustainable development of ocean, seas and coasts. Over the past intersessional period, the Sub-Commission focused on the development of its led [UN Decade Action 23: “Accelerating capacity development transformation in the Western Pacific through the Regional Network of Training and Research Centres \(RTRCs\) on Marine Science.”](#) The Initiative of RTRCs has been recognized by Member States as a best practice for capacity development in the region.

45. The RTRC network is expanding steadily with more research institutions and universities joining and contributing to capacity development in the region. Up to the year of 2024, six RTRCs had been established with specific focuses and commitments to the Western Pacific and its adjacent areas. The six RTRCs currently focus on *Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health* (National Research and Innovation Agency, Indonesia), *Coastal Contaminant Monitoring and Marine Innovation Technology* (City University of Hong Kong, China), *Marine Toxins and Seafood Safety* (Institute of Oceanography, Viet Nam), *Marine Plastic Debris and Microplastics* (East China Normal University, China), *Reef Restoration and*

MPAs (University of the Philippines), and Ocean Dynamics and Climate (First Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources, China).

46. The WESTPAC Chair reported on the major results of the 15th Intergovernmental Session (WESTPAC-XV, 11–13 March 2025). Throughout the session, Member States expressed their overwhelming support for the tireless effort of the Sub-Commission in assisting countries to address their development challenges, and for its leading role in the region in mobilizing support and actions for the Ocean Decade. As an integral part of the session, the [2nd Senior Government Officials Roundtable](#) was held on 12 March 2025 to share experience and perspectives of decision-makers on science-informed ocean management and conservation practices. Additionally, [the 2nd National Decade Committees \(NDCs\) Forum](#) was also organized to promote the sharing of experience among NDCs in the region.

47. Member States emphasized the critical importance of developing ocean science capacity for BBNJ implementation—particularly in developing regions—for the effective implementation of the BBNJ Agreement. Therefore, the Sub-Commission decided to establish an open-ended Intersessional Task Force on BBNJ Agreement. In relation to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), Member States recognized the close relevance of the Sub-Commission's efforts in marine biodiversity conservation to the achievement of the GBF goals and targets. Accordingly, the Sub-Commission decided to align, as much as possible, its biodiversity-related initiatives with the GBF goals and targets, scale up its efforts in actionable science—research that can be used to inform decision-making and policy, and pursue international funding opportunities to support Member States in the effective implementation of their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs).

48. The Sub-Commission welcomed the offer of the Philippines to host the 12th WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference & 3rd UN Ocean Decade Regional Conference, tentatively scheduled for March–May 2027. In order to provide a comprehensive portfolio of actions to accelerate conducive to accelerating marine spatial planning processes in the region, the Sub-Commission adopted, in principle, the Action Framework for Accelerating Marine Spatial Planning in the Western Pacific and its Adjacent Areas (2025–2030).

49. Considering the growing engagement of broader communities in the 2nd Cooperative Study of the Kuroshio and its Adjacent Regions (CSK-2), and based on evaluation results, the Sub-Commission endorsed the establishment of a CSK-2 Support Office to be hosted by the Laoshan Laboratory in Qingdao (China). Additionally, the Sub-Commission also encouraged Member States and their institutions to consider hosting additional regional training and research centres that align with regional priority issues and their specialized areas. Considering the growing need expressed by Member States for ocean literacy and the lack of a strategic and holistic approach to its development in the region, the Sub-Commission decided to establish an Intersessional Task Force on Ocean Literacy to lead efforts in advancing ocean literacy in the region.

50. The Sub-Commission congratulated Japan for chairing the 2nd Senior Government Officials Roundtable and welcomed the 'Joint Statement-SGOs Tokyo Statement on Ocean Science Development and Cooperation for Sustainable Development in the Western Pacific and Adjacent Areas'.

51. In response to emerging ecological, social, and economic challenges, the Sub-Commission decided to establish four new initiatives, including a programme *on Prediction of Marine Ecosystem Changes in the Northwest Pacific Ocean (2025–2030)*, a project *on Methane Fluxes and their Impacts on Climate and Ecosystem in the Indo-Pacific Region (2025–2029)*, and two working groups *focusing on Seagrass Research in the Indo-Western Pacific (2025–2028) and Blue Carbon Ecosystem Restoration initially centred on Mangroves (2025–2028)*.

52. Recognizing the indispensable role of the WESTPAC Office acting also as Decade Coordination Office in ensuring the effectiveness, dynamism, and responsiveness of the Sub-Commission and the Ocean Decade in the region, the Sub-Commission expressed its deep concern at the critically limited human resources to the office, which currently has only one IOC professional post.

53. The WESTPAC Chair informed the Assembly that the Sub-Commission tentatively scheduled its next session of March–April 2027.

54. Finally, the session finally elected by acclamation, *Aileen Tan Shau Hwai from Malaysia* as Chairperson; *Vyacheslav Lobanov from the Russian Federation*, *Sung Hyun Nam from the Republic of Korea*, and *Aletta Yñiguez from the Philippines* as Vice-Chairpersons of the Sub-Commission for the next intersessional period.

Draft Decision A-33/3.3.2

IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific

The Assembly,

1. Having considered the executive summary report of the 15th Intergovernmental Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (11–13 March 2025, Tokyo, Japan),
2. Notes with appreciation the efforts made during the intersessional period in assisting Member States to address their development challenges, and taking the lead in the region to mobilize support and actions for the Ocean Decade;
3. Thanks the Member States and partners who have provided support, either in cash or in kind, for the development and implementation of a wide range of programmes of the Sub-Commission, in particular to:
 - The Government of Thailand, through its Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, for the provision of office space and facilities for the WESTPAC Office and Decade Coordination Office, and for having hosted the 2nd UN Ocean Decade Regional Conference & 11th WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference in Bangkok, Thailand, 22–25 April 2024;
 - The Government of Japan, through its Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), for hosting the 15th Intergovernmental Session, 11–13 March 2025;
 - The Government of Indonesia, through its National Research and Innovation Agency for hosting the Regional Training and Research Centre on Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health with annual training having been provided since 2016;
 - The Government of China for its in-cash voluntary contribution to the Sub-Commission's activities, sending Junior Programme Officer to the WESTPAC Office, hosting the Regional Training and Research Centre on Ocean Dynamics and Climate, and the Regional Training and Research Centre on Marine Plastic Debris and Microplastics (East China Normal University);
 - The Governments of the Philippines and Viet Nam for hosting the Regional Training and Research Centre on Coral Reef Restoration and MPAs (University of the Philippines Diliman), and Marine Toxins and Seafood Safety (Institute of Oceanography), respectively;

- Member States for their in-kind support for various WESTPAC programmes and activities, including China, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Thailand, and Viet Nam;
- 4. Expresses significant concerns over the understaffed and overstretched situation of the WESTPAC Office, which threatens UNESCO and IOC's ability to establish itself as the leading agency for ocean research and the coordinating agency for the UN Decade in the region;
- 5. Endorses the report of WESTPAC-XV and the decisions therein, including the work programme for the Sub-Commission for 2026–2027;
- 6. Notes that the budget for these activities will be identified as part of the overall Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting matters of the Commission;
- 7. Appreciates the offer of the Government of the Philippines to host the 3rd UN Decade Regional Conference in conjunction with the 12th WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference in early 2027;
- 8. Encourages Member States and partners to consider any possibility of providing and increasing their support, either in cash or in kind, to the Sub-Commission, including secondments and loans of staff.

55. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.3.3 IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions: 18th Session of IOCARIBE, Brasilia, Brazil, 23–25 April 2025

Report

IOC/SC-IOCARI-
BE-XVIII/3s

Executive Summary Report of the 18th Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (IOCARI-
BE), Brasilia, Brazil, 23–
25 April 2025

56. The IOCARI-
BE Chair, Mr Marck Oduber, introduced this agenda item and presented the Sub-Commission's principal achievements over the last intersessional period and the main outcomes of the 18th IOCARI-
BE Intergovernmental Session (23–25 April 2025, Brasilia) (cf report [IOC/SC-IOCARI-
BE-XVIII/3s](#)).

57. The Chair informed the Assembly that the Government of Antigua and Barbuda had expressed interest in joining UNESCO's IOC and participating in IOCARI-
BE activities.

58. The Sub-Commission has strengthened regional ocean governance and science coordination by expanding the IOCARI-
BE-ANCA network on Harmful Algal Blooms, strengthening the relationship with the Caribbean Hub of the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON), enhancing integration of ocean data systems through IOCARI-
BE-GOOS and IODE, and building momentum for ocean literacy through the establishment of the IOCARI-
BE Ocean Literacy Task Team and the rollout of the Caribe Blue Schools Network across the region. The Sub-Commission's priority areas of implementation include strengthening ocean observing systems for improved forecasting and resilience, supporting the expansion of multi-hazard early warning systems, promoting marine spatial planning in support of sustainable ocean management, advancing capacity development

tailored to regional needs, and integrating ocean literacy into national education systems to foster a culture of ocean stewardship.

59. The Sub-Commission's new implementation areas include advancing deep-sea science and exploration in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ), deploying fishing vessel-based ocean observations to enhance coastal data collection, expanding ocean science efforts to address the impacts of ocean warming, developing blue carbon initiatives as part of nature-based climate solutions, establishing regional best practices through the ADAPT project, and strengthening ocean governance through the Ocean Coordination Mechanism under the UNDP/GEF/UNOPS PROCARIBE+ Project.

60. The Ocean Decade has catalysed regional action through the Tropical Americas and Caribbean (TAC) Roadmap and the expansion of Decade coordination structures, including the newly established TAC Decade Coordination Office (DCO), the TAC Task Force, National Decade Committees, the TAC Ocean Decade Network, and a mechanism allowing Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to appoint individual Ocean Decade Focal Points to participate in a Regional Decade Committee (RDC) when establishing full National Decade Committees is not feasible due to capacity constraints. These structures support 120 endorsed Decade Actions in the region, 108 of which are led by TAC-based institutions, and have facilitated greater engagement of youth, Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs), and SIDS through inclusive, co-designed programmes.

61. Mr Marck Oduber (Aruba) was re-elected as Chairperson; Ms Soraya Silva (Venezuela) and Mr Roberto Dantas de Pinho (Brazil) were re-elected as Vice-Chairpersons; and Dr Rahanna Juman (Trinidad and Tobago) was elected as a new Vice-Chairperson.

62. The Sub-Commission decided to hold its 19th Intergovernmental Session during the third quarter of 2026 to better align with the timeline of IOC's work plan and budgeting period for 2028–2029. Expressions of interest to host the 19th Session were received from Guatemala, Mexico and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

63. The Sub-Commission adopted 14 decisions and engaged discussion on its workplan for 2026–2027. The summary report for the session also reflects on several suggestions that could not be finalized by a decision during this session. These included co-developing a draft Action Paper with the IOCARIBE Board well in advance of SC-IOCARIBE-XIX to allow earlier input from Member States and establishing a dedicated subgroup to initiate early consultations on the upcoming biennium's workplan and budget. Participants also called for greater support for locally led deep-sea research, improved coordination with ICG/CARIBE-EWS, and expanded delivery of the ADAPT ocean observation training programme in English. Further suggestions included encouraging integration of Ocean Literacy into national education curricula, following Brazil's example, and continuing efforts to establish a trilingual Secretariat to enhance regional communication and inclusivity.

Draft Decision A-33/3.3.3

IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions

The Assembly,

1. Having considered the Executive Summary Report of the 18th session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Region (IOCARIBE-XVIII/3s), Brasilia, Brazil, 23–25 April 2025,

2. Notes with appreciation the efforts made by the Sub-Commission during the intersessional period to facilitate regional cooperation in ocean research, services and capacity development;
3. Welcomes the substantial progress in advancing the implementation of the Ocean Decade throughout the Tropical Americas and Caribbean (TAC) region;
4. Expresses serious concern regarding the anticipated budget reduction for the IOCARIBE Office, which may undermine UNESCO and IOC's capacity to serve as the leading agency for ocean research and for guiding the implementation of the UN Ocean Decade in the region;
5. Endorses the report of SC-IOCARIBE-XVIII and the decisions therein;
6. Notes that additional funding will need to be mobilized to complete the budget required for the implementation of the activities foreseen in the adopted decisions of SC-IOCARIBE-XVIII;
7. Encourages Member States and partners to explore opportunities to provide resources or enhance their support to the Sub-Commission, whether through financial contributions, in-kind assistance, or the secondment and loan of personnel.

64. The representatives of ___ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.3.4 IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean: 1st Session of IOCINDIO, Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, 21–23 May 2025

Report

IOCINDIO-1/3s Executive Summary Report of the 1st Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean, Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, 21–23 May 2025

65. The new-elected Chair of the IOCINDIO sub-commission, Dr Saif ALGhais (UAE), introduced this agenda item. At its 32nd session (2023), the Assembly decided, through Resolution A-32/1, to establish the IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO) as an intergovernmental body responsible for promoting regional cooperation in the field of ocean sciences, building on three decades of work of the IOCINDIO Regional Committee. To date, a total of 11 (eleven) Letters of Adhesion were received by the IOC Executive Secretary from competent national focal points of IOC Member States, namely Bangladesh, France, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, and the United States of America, thereby establishing IOCINDIO as a sub-commission. Mauritius joined the sub-commission at this first session. The Chair invited interested Member States to join the sub-commission and to send a letter to that effect to the IOC Secretariat.

66. The Chairperson referred to the executive summary for the session (report IOCINDIO-1/3s) and reported on the outcomes of the first session of the IOC Sub-Commission and the 22 decisions it adopted. Those decisions serve as the basis for a workplan for IOCINDIO to be finalised when more clarity will be cast on the current financial situation. Four sessional groups were established to facilitate the development of a workplan for the next biennium, 2026–2027. Their recommendations resulted in a list of priority actions, potential partners and estimated budget requirements.

67. The Sub-Commission acknowledged the provisions made in the IOC Programme and Budget for 2024–2025 (42 C/5 Approved) for a secretariat hosted at UNESCO New Delhi regional office and expressed the need to expedite the implementation at the earliest.

68. At the session, a board of Officers for the sub-commission was elected by acclamation: Dr Saif ALGhais (UAE) as Chairperson, Dr Balakrishnan Nair TM (India) & Dr Maryam Ghaemi (Islamic Republic of Iran) as vice-chairpersons.

69. Dr Saif ALGhais, on behalf of the Member States of IOCINDIO, expressed his sincere gratitude to his predecessor, RA (retired) Khurshid Alam (Bangladesh), for his years of dedicated service to the IOCINDIO Regional Committee and for his tireless efforts in elevating the status of IOCINDIO.

70. The session was attended by 50 participants including representatives of 14 countries, and 6 local and regional organizations.

Draft Decision A-33/3.3.4

IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the Executive Summary Report of the 1st Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean, Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, 21–23 May 2025,
2. Notes with appreciation the efforts made during the intersessional period by the regional committee, including its Member States, staff and Board, to facilitate regional cooperation in ocean research, services and capacity development;
3. Recognizing the substantial progress achieved by the Sub-Commission in advancing the implementation of the UN Ocean Decade, GOOS and IOOE-2 in the Indian Ocean region,
4. Expresses serious concern regarding the anticipated budget reduction for the proposed IOCINDIO Secretariat, which may undermine UNESCO and IOC's capacity to serve as the leading agency for ocean research and policy, and for guiding the implementation of the UN Ocean Decade in the region;
5. Welcomes the proposed actions on Cities with Oceans and Ocean Literacy among the UN Ocean Decade implementation in the region;
6. Appreciates Member States and partners for pursuing synergies with IOCAFRICA towards setting a model of inter-sub-commission cooperation;
7. Endorses the report of IOCINDIO-1 and the recommendations therein;
8. Notes that additional funding will need to be mobilized to complete the budget required for the implementation of the activities included in the adopted decisions of IOCINDIO-1;
9. Encourages Member States and partners to explore opportunities to provide resources or enhance their support to the Sub-Commission, whether through financial contributions, in-kind assistance, or the secondment and loan of personnel.

71. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.4 REPORTS OF OTHER IOC SUBSIDIARY BODIES

3.4.1 Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards

[Rule of Procedure 30.3]

3.4.1.1 Regional Early Warning Services

<u>Reports</u>	IOC/ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XVIII/3s	Executive Summary Report of the 18th Session of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XVIII), online, 5–7, and 9 May 2025
	IOC/ICG/PTWS-XXXI/3s	Executive Summary of the 31st Session of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/PTWS-XXXI), Beijing, China, 7–11 April 2025
	IOC/ICG/IOTWMS-XIV/3s	Executive Summary Report of the 14th Session of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/IOTWMS-XIV), Banten, Indonesia, 16–19 November 2024
	IOC/ICG/NEAMTWS-XIX/3s	Executive Summary Report of the 19th Session of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami Early Warning and Mitigation System in the North-eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas (ICG/NEAMTWS-XIX), UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 27–29 November 2024
<u>Information</u>	IOC Technical Series, 206 (Draft)	Draft Technical Report of the Tsunami Preparedness Capacity Assessment in the Pacific Ocean
	IOC Technical Series, 193	Capacity Assessment of Tsunami Preparedness in the Indian Ocean: Status Report 2024
<u>Reference</u>	IOC Technical Series, 187	EXERCISE CARIBE WAVE 2024 – A Caribbean and Adjacent Region Tsunami Warning Exercise, 21 March 2024
	IOC Technical Series, 181	INDIAN OCEAN WAVE 23. An Indian Ocean-wide Tsunami Warning and Communications Exercise, 4–25 October 2023
	IOC Technical Series, 191	EXERCISE PACIFIC WAVE 2024: A Pacific-wide Tsunami Warning and Communications Exercise, September–November 2024
	IOC Workshop Reports; 315	Report of the Expert Meeting on Tsunami sources, hazards, risk and uncertainties associated with the Vanuatu, Solomon and New Britain Subduction Zones, Port Vila, Vanuatu, 14–17 May 2024
	IOC Technical Series, 184	EXERCISE NEAMWave 23. A Tsunami Warning and Communication Exercise for the North-eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and Connected Seas Region, 6–7 November 2023
	IOC Technical Series, 192	Community perceptions of coastal Multi-hazards Risks in the North-Eastern Atlantic, Mediterranean and Connected Seas (NEAM) Region

72. Mr Gérard Metayer, Chair of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (ICG/CARIBE-EWS), presented the report of the 18th Session of the group (ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XVIII), online, 5–7, and 9 May 2025. He highlighted the results of the CARIBE WAVE 2025 exercises that mobilized around 500,000 people in total on 20 March 2025.

73. At this session, the ICG appreciated that the U.S. National Weather Service, through its Tsunami Warning Centres and International Tsunami Information Center, is committed to continue to provide timely and effective tsunami services for the protection of life, livelihoods and economic prosperity in the U.S. and the Pacific and the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions.

74. Within the ICG/CARIBE-EWS, a total of 23 communities from 14 Member States (of which 10 are SIDS) are now recognized as Tsunami Ready under UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme. In 2024, [St. James Central](#), Barbados, [Cahuitta](#), Costa Rica, [Portsmouth](#), Dominica and [Laborie](#), Saint Lucia obtained Tsunami Ready recognition, joining 19 other communities in the CARIBE-EWS region.

75. Mr Metayer also mentioned CARIBE WAVE 26 exercise, which will take place on Thursday 19 March 2026. Member States are requested to consider conducting all or part of their exercise response activities during non-working hours, particularly at night, to be better prepared for tsunami events that are more likely to occur during non-working hours.

76. ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XVIII recommended that the Central America Tsunami Advisory Centre (CATAC) continue to operate fully in an interim basis in order to assist the National Tsunami Warning Centres (NTWCs), Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFPs), and emergency management authorities in Central America in addressing these challenges. It further recommended that the Steering Committee of ICG/CARIBE-EWS work with CATAC and Member States to consider the possibility of designating CATAC as a Tsunami Service Provider at its 19th session in 2026 and recommend its admission to the next session of the IOC Executive Council in June 2026.

77. The ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XVIII noted with satisfaction the intention expressed by Barbados at its previous session and by Curaçao at the ICG/CARIBE EWS-XVIII to host the next session of the ICG/CARIBE-EWS in 2026 and invited both countries to send a formal invitation to the Secretariat to that effect by 15 June 2025. If no such invitation is received, the Secretariat will invite all ICG/CARIBE-EWS member States to extend an official invitation to host the next session of the ICG. The Chair reported that the ICG was considering holding its future sessions in-person only every second year and online in the intervening years. The ICG is considering holding ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XIX online in 2026 if no official invitation were received by the Secretariat by 30 September 2025.

78. A new Board of Officers were elected, with Mr Gérard Matayer (Haiti) re-elected as Chair, Ms Marie-Noëlle Raveau (France) and Ms Regina Browne (US Virgin Island) re-elected as Vice-Chairs and Dr Silvia Chacon Barrantes (Costa Rica) elected as Vice-Chair for her first term.

79. Mr Pattabhi Rama Rao Eluri, Chair of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the India Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/IOTWMS) presented the report of the 14th session of the group, 17–19 November 2024, Banten, Indonesia. Mr Rama Rao highlighted several significant events organised over the last year including the [Tsunami Capacity Assessment Validation Workshop for Indian and Pacific Oceans](#), Bangkok, 4–6 September 2024, 2nd UNESCO-IOC Global Tsunami Symposium “Two Decades After 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Reflection and the Way Forward”, Banda Aceh, 11–14 November

2024, and the [IOTWMS-IOTIC Training Workshop on Tsunami Evacuation Maps, Plans and Procedures and UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme](#), Hyderabad, 15–23 April 2025.

80. He recognised the forty-eight (48) UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Communities in India and Indonesia and encouraged all Member States to implement the UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP) in vulnerable communities to meet the UN Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme goal of 100% at-risk communities resilient and prepared for tsunamis. He highlighted the efforts in IOTWMS to develop products for non-seismic tsunamis and NAVAREA Maritime products, as well as densification of observing networks.

81. He noted the successful outcomes of Phases 1, 2a and 2b of the UNESCAP-funded project *Strengthening tsunami early warning in the North-West Indian Ocean through regional cooperation* and the implementation of Phase 2c of the North West Indian Ocean UNESCAP project involving training in inundation and evacuation mapping in support of implementation of the TRRP in the region.

82. He informed the meeting of the comprehensive nature and value of the 2024 Capacity Assessment of Tsunami Preparedness in the Indian Ocean including inputs from 22 Member States.

83. He highlighted the success of IOWave23 Tsunami Exercise organized in October 2023 with four scenarios including a non-seismic scenario which attracted participation from 20 Member States and 45,000 participants around the Indian Ocean. He announced that Exercise IOWave25 will be conducted in late 2025 and include both seismic and non-seismic scenarios.

84. He informed that the Government of the Sultanate of Oman intends to host the 15th session of the ICG/IOTWMS in 2026.

85. Finally, Mr Eluri acknowledged with appreciation the valuable contribution and continued support of the Government of Australia for hosting the IOTWMS Secretariat and the support of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia for hosting the Indian Ocean Tsunami Information Centre (IOTIC).

86. Dr Alessandro Amato (Italy), Chair of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami Early Warning and Mitigation System in the North-eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas (ICG/NEAMTWS) informed the session on the results of the 19th Session of group (ICG/NEAMTWS-XIX), UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 27–29 November 2024.

87. Dr Amato highlighted several events organised in 2024, including the side event [Coastal Cities and Communities Joining Tsunami Ready](#) at the 2024 UN Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona, the [Coastal Horizons: Pathways and Actions to Strengthen Resilience to Coastal Hazards](#), held during the IOC 57th Executive Council and the *Tsunami Warning @Stromboli Island workshop: Observations, Modelling, Hazard, Forecasting*, organized by the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV) in Stromboli, Italy, from 5–7 October with 80 international experts to advance understanding of non-seismic tsunami sources and the need to enhance early warning systems for Stromboli-generated tsunamis.

88. He informed the participation of several ICG/NEAMTWS members at the [2nd UNESCO-IOC Global Tsunami Symposium](#) “Two Decades After 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Reflection and the Way Forward” that took place in Banda Aceh, Indonesia in November (11–14 November 2024).

89. He reported on the launch of [two short documentaries](#) highlighting the tsunami risk and early warning system for Stromboli volcano, as well as the distant tsunami risk for Malta.

90. He reported on the newly recognized UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Communities in Egypt ([Alexandria](#)), France ([Cannes](#)), Greece ([Samos](#)), Italy ([Minturno](#)), Spain ([Chipiona](#)) and Türkiye ([Büyükçekmece](#)) in 2024 and work in progress in Cyprus (Larnaca), Malta (Marsaxlokk) and Morocco (El Jadida). Dr Amato reaffirmed the target to establish a total of 25 Tsunami Ready recognized communities in Mediterranean countries by the end of 2026, contributing to making 100% of communities at risk of tsunami prepared for and resilient to tsunamis by 2030 through the implementation of the UNESCO/IOC Tsunami Ready Programme and other initiatives.

91. He announced the official start of Phase II of the new CoastWAVE Project ([CoastWAVE 2.0](#)) '*Scaling-Up and Strengthening the Resilience of Coastal Communities in the North-Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Regions to the Impact of Tsunamis and Other Sea Level-Related Coastal Hazards*' on 1 July 2024 and its kick-off workshop on 6 November 2024 following the closure of Phase I of the European Union DG-ECHO CoastWAVE project on 30 June 2024.

92. He acknowledged with appreciation the contributions made by DG ECHO under the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UPCM) to support the development and improvement of tsunami early warning systems and preparedness in the NEAM region and noted that these efforts should be considered as a valuable contribution to the Early Warning for All ([EW4All](#)) initiative and [EU Disaster Resilience Goals](#).

93. He informed the Assembly of progress regarding submarine SMART Cables initiatives in particular the [Portugal Atlantic Smart CAM](#) and the planned deployment of two Ocean Bottom Pressure Sensors by INGV, Italy in the Ionian Sea in 2025.

94. Dr Amato pledged new efforts to increase the availability of seismic and sea level data in the North of Africa through agreements with Member States and with the institutions in charge of the management of the monitoring networks.

95. He concluded by announcing that the next NEAMWave exercise, NEAMWave26, would take place in March 2026, and informed that Italy intends to host the twentieth session of ICG/NEAMTWS in 2025 to commemorate 20 years of the regional Intergovernmental Coordination group.

96. Mr Dakui Wang (China), recently elected Chair of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/PTWS), introduced the report of the 31st session of the group that took place on 7–11 April 2025 in China, and his three newly-elected vice-chairs: Ms Lara Bland (New Zealand), Ms Mylene Villegas (Philippines), and Mr Levu Antfalo (Vanuatu).

97. He further reported the successful organisation and conduct of PacWave24 exercise which took place from September to November 2024, as well as the first test of the dissemination of the maritime safety products, specifically to the Coordinators of NAVAREAs VI, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, and XVI). He noted that Exercise Pacific Wave 2026 (PacWave26) would take place from September to November 2026 and would test the ability of countries to carry out their warning and response responsibilities in the event that one or more PTWS TSPs were unable to provide timely guidance. More complex scenarios, such as non-seismic sources or multiple events scenarios will also be considered to strengthen cooperation with local, national or regional geohazard monitoring agencies.

98. He noted that within the ICG/PTWS, 23 communities from 8 Member States (of which 5 are SIDS) are now recognized as Tsunami Ready under UNESCO-IOC's Tsunami Ready

Recognition Programme (TRRP). Palau was the first UNESCO-IOC Pacific Member State and Small Island Developing State (SIDS) to achieve this recognition. At its 31st session, the ICG/PTWS provisionally approved the PTWS Tsunami Ready Equivalency Guidance, which will enable Member States to report on existing tsunami risk management strategies in a manner similar to the TRRP, in line with the second Objective of the UNESCO-IOC Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme, namely that by 2030, 100% of communities at risk are prepared and resilient to tsunamis through efforts such as the UNESCO-IOC TRRP.

99. Dr Wang reported that the Pacific Tsunami Preparedness Capacity Assessment, as the first system-wide measurement of the existing capacities to informing next efforts to improve the PTWS, was launched in January 2025 under the kind support of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The final report of this initiative will be made available in September 2025 to be distributed to ICG/PTWS Tsunami National Contacts (TNC) for their considerations.

100. Dr Wang also indicated that the 32nd session of the ICG/PTWS will be kindly hosted by Ecuador in 2027, with specific dates and venue to be determined.

101. Regarding the need for the active engagement of Argentina with the ICG/CARIBE-EWS and ICG/PTWS regarding Argentinian Search and Rescue (SAR) and NAVAREA VI coordination responsibilities as reflected through the IOC Executive Council Decision EC-57/3.2.1, he reported on Argentina’s active participation in the PacWave24 as the Coordinator of the NAVAREA VI for the purposes of testing tsunami maritime safety product dissemination, and its participation to the ICG/PTWS-XXXI as an observer, and that ICG/PTWS encourages Argentina to actively participate in the future PacWave exercises with respect to its Search and Rescue (SAR) and NAVAREA VI coordination responsibilities.

102. With regard to the full operational status of Central America Tsunami Advisory Centre (CATAC) as a Tsunami Service Provider of ICG/CARIBE-EWS, he recalled the recommendation of the ICG/PTWS at its 30th session to admit CATAC to full official operations, with the start date to be determined after coordination with the ICG/CARIBE-EWS (Recommendation ICG/PTWS-XXX-6), taking note of the recommendation of the ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XVII.8, to consider admitting CATAC as a TSP in view of its final admission by the Assembly at the present session.

3.4.1.2 *Global Coordination of Warning and Mitigation Systems
for Ocean Hazards
[Dec. A-31/3.4.1]*

Report	IOC/TOWS-WG-XVIII/3	Report of the 18th Meeting of the Working Group on Tsunamis and Other Hazards related to Sea Level Warning and Mitigation Systems (TOWS-WG-XVIII), 24–25 February 2025, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris
Reference	IOC/BRO/2025/1	Second UNESCO-IOC Global Tsunami Symposium, Banda Aceh, Indonesia, 11–14 November 2024
	IOC. Technical series, 183	Monitoring and Warning for Tsunamis Generated by Volcanoes
	IOC Technical Series, 200	Meteotsunamis: definition, detection and alerting services investigation

103. Mr Amr Zakaria Hamouda (Egypt), IOC Vice-Chair and Chair of the Working Group on Tsunamis and Other Hazards Related to Sea-Level Warning and Mitigation Systems (TOWS-WG), reported on the 18th Meeting of the group, 24–25 February 2025 at UNESCO-IOC Headquarters.

104. He reported that the meeting evaluated the progress made in respect to the IOC Assembly Decision A-32/4.3.1. and the IOC Executive Council Decision EC-57/3.2.1. He informed that the group reviewed reports by the IOC Intergovernmental Coordination Groups (ICGs), the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme Scientific Committee (ODTP-SC) as well as the reports of its Task Team on Disaster Management and Preparedness (TT-DMP) and Task Team on Tsunami Watch Operations (TT-TWO).

105. Mr Hamouda noted the continued cooperation with the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) that has invited IOC to co-develop the World Tsunami Awareness Day 2025 Theme, connecting the UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP), the Making Cities Resilient 2030 campaign and the [#GetToHighGround](#) and [#TsunamiReady](#) hashtags to engage citizens on tsunami awareness.

106. He reported that the group endorsed the publication of a revised version of the *Tsunami Watch Operations. Global Service Definition Document*, [IOC Technical Series, 130](#) (2016), with the updates suggested by the TT-TWO.

107. Mr Hamouda noted the strong appreciation of the TOWS-WG and the four regional ICGs to the Government of Indonesia for having successfully co-hosted and organised the *2nd UNESCO-IOC Global Tsunami Symposium on Two Decades After 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Reflection and Way Forward, Banda Aceh, 11–14 November 2024*.

108. Mr Hamouda finally reported that the group recommended the IOC Assembly to extend the tenure of the Inter-ICG TT-DMP and TT-TWO and recommended the approval of updated Terms of Reference for the Task Team on Tsunami Disaster Management and Preparedness.

Draft Decision A-33/3.4.1

Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the executive summary reports of the recent sessions of the regional Intergovernmental Coordinating Groups of the four Tsunami Warning Systems (ICG/NEAMTWS-XIX/3s, ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XVIII/3s, ICG/PTWS-XXXI/3s, and ICG/IOTWMS-XIV/3s), and the report of the Working Group on Tsunamis and Other Hazards Related to Sea-Level Warning and Mitigation Systems (TOWS-WG-XVIII),
2. Accepts the reports by the IOC/ICGs and TOWS-WG;
3. Notes with satisfaction the progress made during the intersessional period, including:
 - (i) coordination of the Wave exercises: the PacWave 24 (September to November 2024), the CARIBEWAVE 24 (21 March 2024), the NEAMWave 23 (6–7 November 2023) and the IOWave23 (4–25 October 2023);
 - (ii) the continued progress in the implementation of UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP) in the Caribbean, Indian Ocean, Pacific region, and in the NEAM regions, with over 100 communities recognised in 31 Member States by April 2025;
 - (iii) the continuous engagement of the Task Team on Tsunami Watch Operations (TT-TWO) in developing specialized Tsunami Service Providers

- (TSP) bulletins for the maritime community in consultation with the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) Sub-Committee on the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service (WWNWS-SC);
- (iv) the planned collaboration with the World Meteorological organisation (WMO) to develop a global Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) template for Tsunami Service Providers (TSP) to facilitate dissemination of bulletins from TSPs to National Tsunami Warning Centres (NTWC), between TSPs of different basins, and for public TSP bulletins, to be presented and approved by the TOWS-WG at its next meeting;
 - (v) publication of the Reports *Monitoring and Warning for Tsunamis Generated by Volcanoes* ([IOC Technical Series No.183](#)) and *Meteotsunamis: definition, detection and alerting services investigation* ([IOC Technical Series No.200](#)), and the Summary Statement from the 2nd UNESCO-IOC Global Tsunami Symposium on Two Decades After 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Reflection and Way Forward, Banda Aceh, 11–14 November 2024 ([IOC Brochure 2025-1](#));
 - (vi) the conduct of the Expert Meeting on Seismic Sources in the Northwest Caribbean and on Non-Seismic Sources of Tsunamis for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions during 3–5 December 2024 in Heredia, Costa Rica;
 - (vii) the Report of the Expert Meeting on Tsunami sources, hazards, risk and uncertainties associated with the Vanuatu, Solomon and New Britain Subduction Zones, Port Vila, Vanuatu, 14–17 May 2024 ([IOC/2025/WR/315](#));
 - (viii) launch of the UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Awareness and Tsunami Ready online trainings through the Ocean Teacher Global Academy ([OTGA](#)) platform;
 - (ix) the [Tsunami: Sea Change for Resilience](#) exhibition prepared in partnership with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and Nautilus, featuring portraits by Matt Porteous and inspiring stories together with the historical and contemporary artworks which commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami; organization of the [20th Anniversary of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami Commemoration Event](#) at the UNESCO Headquarters on 26 November 2024 to reflect on resilience, honour those affected, and reaffirm our commitment to disaster preparedness;
4. Welcomes the appointment of new ICG/IOTWMS, ICG/PTWS (and ICG/CARIBE-EWS, TBC) Officers for the biennium 2025–2027;
 5. Expresses its strong appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for having successfully co-hosted and organised the 2nd UNESCO-IOC Global Tsunami Symposium on Two Decades After 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Reflection and Way Forward, Banda Aceh, 11–14 November 2024;
 6. Approves the Tsunami Ready Coalition Implementation Plan as reviewed by the UN Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme Scientific Committee (ODTP-SC) and the Task Teams on Tsunami Disaster Management and Preparedness, and Tsunami Watch Operations (TT-DMP and TT-TWO respectively) including:
 - (i) The Coalition mandate and terms of reference,
 - (ii) The Coalition structure, and
 - (iii) The identified key Coalition Partners;

7. Instructs the regional ICGs :
 - (i) to establish arrangements among Tsunami Service Providers (TSP) within each ICG to ensure that service provision is ensured at all times for the full Area of Service of the ICG;
 - (ii) to develop SOPs for volcanoes with a tsunamigenic potential within their ~~Earthquake Source Zone (ESZ)~~ Area of Service [Australia];
 - (iii) that dissemination of the specialized TSP bulletins for the maritime community is tested in CARIBE-EWS, IOTWMS and NEAMTWS by at least one TSP either through the planned communication tests or tsunami exercises;
 - (iv) that full operational implementation of TSP bulletins for the maritime community by at least one TSP in each ICG takes place in 2025;
8. Recommends the regional ICGs:
 - (i) to create relationships between National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHS) and TSPs/NTWCs in order to ensure that tsunami-specific instrumentation including Tsunameters/DART® and ocean cable systems are correctly monitored and utilized for detection of meteotsunami;
 - (ii) continuation of the investigation and the possibility to adopt tsunami forecasting methods, including probabilistic methodologies, toward impact-based forecasting, that could also assist post-disaster response, recovery and needs assessment processes;
 - (iii) to prioritize regional Tsunami Ready workshops or summits in 2025 and conduct further workshops or summits before 2030;
9. Requests the IOC Member States to prioritize installation/deployment of additional coastal tide gauges and tsunami detection/observation systems in regions under high tsunami risk with priority areas with known coverage gaps (in alphabetical order: Aegean Sea, Caribbean Sea (West, North and South-East), Indian Ocean (East and North), North Africa, Philippine Sea, Solomon Sea, South China Sea, Timor Sea, and Yellow Sea), to ensure tsunami detection and verification as early as possible;
10. Encourages Member States to provide voluntary financial contributions to the IOC special account and in-kind contributions to support the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme, the IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme and the Tsunami Ready Coalition.
11. Requests the IOC Secretariat to:
 - (i) inform Member States of the availability of the *Tsunami Ready Toolkit* through an IOC circular letter addressed to the Tsunami National Contacts, National Tsunami Ready Boards, and more widely by the attaching it as an appendix to the *UNESCO-IOC Standard Guidelines for the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme* ([IOC Manuals and guides, 74](#));
 - (ii) disseminate the final version of the basic tsunami warning product/template for use by the radio amateurs, as a guidance;
 - (iii) finalize the Tsunami Ready Coalition Implementation Plan in consultation with the Tsunami Ready Coalition Chair the Coalition Partners, 'Ambassadors' or similar namesake, and Coalition Co-Chair;

- (iv) extend invitations to the proposed Coalition Partners and 'Ambassadors' or similar namesake, and a Coalition Co-chair, and urgently address needed resources;
12. Decides to extend the tenure of the Inter-ICG TT-DMP and TT-TWO and with updated Terms of Reference for the Task Team on Tsunami Disaster Management and Preparedness as included in Annex 1.

Annex 1 of Dec. A-33/3.4.1

Task Team on Tsunami Disaster Management and Preparedness (TT DMP)

Revised Terms of Reference

- (i) Facilitate in collaboration with key international stakeholders and organizations (such as UNDRR, IFRC, UNDP, WMO, etc.), or initiatives (such as the Tsunami Ready Coalition, Coastal Inundation Forecasting Initiative etc.) the exchange of experiences and information on preparedness and mitigation actions, education/awareness, and other matters related to disaster management and preparedness for tsunamis and other coastal sea level related hazards;
- (ii) Promote and facilitate the implementation of Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme, and similar initiatives, as well as related capacity development efforts, specifically targeting SIDS and LDCs;
- (iii) Promote preparedness to build resilient coastal communities through education and awareness products and campaigns;
- (iv) Facilitate capacity development and training across ICGs to strengthen emergency response capabilities of Member States and their Disaster Management Offices;
- (v) Promote existing and encourage the development of preparedness programmes and assessment tools, and synergies with other initiatives (e.g. resilient cities, safe schools etc) that have been successful in one regional Tsunami Warning and Mitigation Systems as appropriate;
- (vi) Facilitate the coordination of the TICs of the ICGs and reinforce their ability to serve as a clearinghouse for the development of educational and preparedness products, and capacity development and training;
- (vii) Report to the TOWS–WG.

The representatives to the Inter-ICG Task Team on Disaster Management and Preparedness shall be nominated by their respective ICG Chairpersons. The membership shall consist of two representatives from each ICG, one of which may represent the ICG's Tsunami Information Centre. The IOC Chair will appoint the Chair of the Task Team.

109. The representatives of ___ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.4.2 International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange: 28th Session of IODE, Santa Marta, Colombia, 12–14 March 2025

<u>Report</u>	IOC/IODE-28/3s	Executive Summary Report of the 28 th session of the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange Committee, Santa Marta, Colombia, 12–14 March 2025
<u>Information</u>	IOC/IODE-28/3	Summary Report of the 28 th session of the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange Committee, Santa Marta, Colombia, 12–14 March 2025
	IOC/IODE-28/3 Annex II	IODE-28 Adopted Decisions and Recommendations
	IOC/IODE-28/3 Annex V	IODE-28 Action Sheet
	IOC/IODE-28/6.3	Performance Review of the IOC Project Office for IODE 2024

110. Ms Lotta Fyrberg/Dr Paula Correa Sierra, IODE Co-Chair(s) introduced this item and informed the Assembly on the outcome of the 28th session of the IODE Committee and the preceding 3rd International Ocean Data Conference (IODC-III), both hosted by the Marine and Coastal Research Institute (INVEMAR) in Santa Marta, Colombia.

111. [IODC-III](#) gathered 198 participants, leading experts in marine biodiversity data, oceanography, information technology, and data science, as well as experts in ecosystem management, marine spatial planning, and even emerging topics of geodata management and marine governance in the Antarctic continent.

112. The conference underscored the importance of strengthening data infrastructure, improving accessibility, and fostering collaboration to ensure inclusive and equitable participation in the global digital ocean ecosystem. A key focus of IODC-3 was enhancing data interoperability and standardization to support major global frameworks, such as the United Nations Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). Discussions emphasized the need for FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) data principles, robust infrastructures, and harmonized methodologies to streamline data-sharing and integration efforts. Emerging technologies, including environmental DNA (eDNA), autonomous underwater vehicles, and AI-driven interfaces, were highlighted as game-changers for marine biodiversity monitoring and conservation. These innovations facilitate cost-effective data collection, enhance biodiversity assessments, and support decision-making for marine protection. However, integrating these new data streams into existing repositories remains a challenge that requires further coordination and technical solutions.

113. The conference stressed the need for inclusive data collection approaches, incorporating local knowledge and regionally driven initiatives. Community-driven projects and mobile-based tools demonstrated how grassroots engagement can contribute to marine data repositories, enhancing global datasets while addressing local environmental and socioeconomic needs. Strengthening policy frameworks, improving regional monitoring, and fostering collaboration between scientific and local communities were identified as key priorities. Capacity-development efforts remain fundamental to ensuring equitable access to ocean data. Regional collaborations, such as those within Latin America and the Caribbean, aim to enhance data-sharing and accessibility across diverse stakeholder groups. Training programmes, mentorship initiatives, and the development of best practices support long-term

sustainability in marine data management. Beyond technological advancements, IODC-3 recognized the indispensable role of people in ocean data collection, curation, and application. Volunteer networks, citizen science initiatives, and workforce training are crucial in sustaining high-quality marine biodiversity information. Ensuring sustainable funding and institutional support for these efforts is essential to maintaining the long-term integrity of ocean data systems. The conference reaffirmed the urgency of building a unified and inclusive digital ocean ecosystem where scientific, cultural, historical, and local knowledge converge. Achieving this vision requires sustained efforts in data harmonization, policy alignment, and international cooperation. By strengthening these foundations, the ocean science community moves closer to a future where ocean knowledge is accessible, actionable, and impactful for all.

114. A breakout session on the implementation of the Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) from a non-technical perspective made the following recommendations: (i) communicate what ocean data are useful to share; (ii) when the Ocean Decade Office for Ocean Data Sharing (DCO-ODS) are revising the *Data Publication Cookbook* later this year, make it clear that the recommendation is for open publication and open access; (iii) strengthen the National Oceanographic Data Centres, initially through raising the profile of their existence and their purpose and the importance of data management activities; (iv) as the IOC Data Architecture develops (see item 3.4.3), incorporating ODIS, collaboration and communication with other intergovernmental organizations is recommended, using the collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization as an example; (v) DCO-ODS and ODIS should communicate closely on the issues that Decade Actions and other bodies are having with connecting to the ODIS federation to prioritize systems and process developments; (vi) DCO-ODS should prepare communications to raise the profile of the existence of and the purpose of the National Oceanographic Data Centres (NODCs); (vii) IODE Management Group to encourage the IOC regional offices to communicate with and meet with the NODCs; (viii) IODE Management Group to encourage the new chair of the IODE Quality Management Framework to remind NODCs that the accreditation process is part of strengthening the NODCs; and (ix) develop a “lessons learned” page for the ODIS book to help people understand the challenges others have faced in joining the ODIS federation.

115. Ms Lotta Fyrberg/Dr Paula Correa Sierra reported that the IODE-28 session was attended on-site by 71 participants from 24 Member States and 2 organizations. In order to ensure wider participation, especially from global south Member States, the session was also broadcast online with the option to send comments and questions by chat. The online broadcast was attended by 62 participants.

116. The Committee focused its attention mainly on the following key issues: (i) contribution of the IODE programme to the implementation of the IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029); (ii) status of the IODE network and NODC health status; (iii) progress of the IODE programme components and programme activities; (iv) progress with joint activities with IOC programmes and other organizations; (v) outcome of the 3rd International Ocean Data Conference; (vi) progress of cooperation of IODE with the UN Ocean Decade; (vii) Advancing Ocean Data Sharing for Sustainable Development in areas within national jurisdiction; (viii) Development of the IOC Data Architecture; (ix) Renewal of the MOU between the Flanders Marine Institute and IOC regarding the IOC Project Office for IODE (2027–2031); and (x) work plan and budget for 2025–2026.

117. The Committee noted that IODE contributes to four of the five objectives through its Programme Components OBIS, ODIS and OTGA but requested the secretariat in consultation with the IODE Management Group to: (i) identify relevant KPIs; and (ii) to take into consideration the need for collaboration with other IOC programmes bearing in mind the cross-cutting nature of ocean data and information management and sharing.

118. During the intersessional period, three Member States (Mauritius, Panama and Egypt) (re-) established an NODC, two NODCs moved to other host institutions, and six organizations successfully applied to join IODE as IODE Associate Data Unit. The Committee stressed the importance of hosting an NODC and urged IOC Member States that have not yet established an NODC to do so to ensure their ocean data are shared globally and that their national ocean scientists have easy access to the global ocean data commons.

119. Ms Lotta Fyrberg/Dr Paula Correa Sierra reported that the first NODC health status check had been undertaken using basic criteria. This revealed that a substantial number of the NODCs obtained a low score. This indicates that many NODCs require attention in terms of their involvement in international IODE activities. While recognizing that this first health check requires further finetuning, the Committee expressed its concern over the NODCs that scored low.

120. Regarding the IODE/GOOS Ocean Best Practices activity, the Committee, taking into consideration the relevance of IOC Ocean Best Practices System to all IOC programmes, called on IOC Member States to consider OBPS as an IOC-wide activity and on IOC programmes (global and regional) to co-fund OBPS with GOOS and IODE (see item 3.4.4).

121. Ms Lotta Fyrberg/Dr Paula Correa Sierra informed the Assembly that cooperation with other IOC programmes as well as other organizations has continued and expanded. These include cooperation on the Harmful Algal Information System (HAIS), Global Ocean Oxygen Database and Atlas (GO2DAT), facilitation of the delivery of SDG 14.3.1 indicator data into a dedicated online portal, the UNESCO-IOC *Global Ocean Science Report* (GOSR), the IOC *State of the Ocean Report* (StOR), implementation with GOOS of the Ocean Best Practices System (OBPS), cooperation with all IOC programmes on the IOC Data Architecture, cooperation with the IOC Tsunami Resilience Section on the development of online learning materials through OTGA, cooperation with IOC Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section on development of a self-paced MSPglobal online training course under OTGA.

122. Ms Lotta Fyrberg/Dr Paula Correa Sierra further reported that the IOC Executive Secretary informed the Committee that, after the retirement of Mr Peter Pissierssens on 31 May 2025, Ms Joanna Post, Head Ocean Observations and Services Section will replace him in an acting capacity. The Committee stressed the urgent need to establish a permanent solution for the replacement of the Head of the IODE Project Office as soon as possible. It also emphasised the importance of recruiting an OBIS Data Manager under the Regular Programme, relaunching a call before the end of 2025, and creating a more stable administrative support position for IODE.

123. At the regional level IODE also continued and expanded cooperation with IOCAFRICA (OIH/ODIS, OTGA course implementation, support of ECOPS), IOCARIBE (OIH/ODIS, OTGA course implementation), and cooperation is starting with IOCINDIO.

124. Regarding cooperation of IODE with the UN Ocean Decade, Ms Lotta Fyrberg/Dr Paula Correa Sierra reported that especially the collaboration with the Decade Coordination Office (DCO) for Ocean Data Sharing (ODS) has shown good progress: it was established in June 2023 and hosted by the IOC Project Office for IODE, the DCO-ODS acts as sub-unit of the central IOC Decade Coordination Unit to catalyse and coordinate Decade Actions falling under its scope, assist Decade actors with data and information challenges and opportunities, promote cooperation amongst UN and Member State partners, monitor progress, communicate on achievements and mobilise resources. Throughout the first-year initial assignment (June 2023–June 2024), the DCO-ODS played a central role in building and cementing community relations in the Decade Digital Ocean ecosystem, within and among Decade entities and with wider experts in the field. Through interactions with Decade Actions and a dedicated stakeholder survey, the DCU, IODE and the DCO-ODS gained a deeper understanding of the activities and needs of Decade Actions regarding data collection,

managing and sharing, to inform future activities and actions. Due to funding issues the DCO-ODS had to pause its activities for approximately seven months. A detailed plan of work has been prepared for 2025–2026 that includes: (i) close collaboration with the IODE Project Office and the wider IODE community as the goals of both the DCO-ODS and IODE are common and complementary; (ii) the DCO-ODS will also work closely with other Decade Collaborative Centres and Coordination Offices, with reference to the DCO-Ocean Observing and DCC-Ocean Prediction, to further the shared vision of a Decade Digital Ocean ecosystem.

125. The DCO-ODS is working closely with the UN Ocean Decade's Corporate Data Group to promote ocean data sharing from private industry where data has traditionally been siloed and inaccessible, and a proposal was prepared to further the use of the *IOC Data Policy and Terms of Use (2023)* particularly in the licensing and permitting of commercial activity which generates data within national jurisdiction. It calls upon Member States to recognise that data sharing practices will strengthen the collective ability of all to meet the goals of the UN Ocean Decade and to address UN Sustainable Development Goal 14, and urges Member States to collaborate with industry, research and data infrastructure stakeholders to standardize ocean data sharing practices through the establishment of national data-sharing policies, regulations and permissions for all ocean-related activities conducted within their territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones, including through the inclusion of the provisions of the *IOC Data Policy and Terms of Use* in licensing and permitting within their jurisdictions. The Committee adopted Recommendation IODE-28/6.2.5 (Advancing Ocean Data Sharing for Sustainable Development in areas within national jurisdiction).

126. Regarding the MoU between the Flanders Marine Institute and IOC regarding the IOC Project Office for IODE, Ms Lotta Fyrberg/Dr Paula Correa Sierra noted that an “internal review” is a requirement included in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) and IOC. As the current agreement will expire on 31 December 2026 and taking into consideration that a renewal needs to be requested by the IOC Assembly, it was decided to implement the review of the current agreement prior to IODE-28 for consideration by this Assembly.

127. Dr Lesley Rickards and Mr Taco De Bruin had kindly accepted to undertake the review. The Review concluded that the Project Office plays an essential role in and beyond the IOC data ecosystem through OBIS, ODIS and OTGA, and operates with great efficiency. Based on the results outlined in the report of the review of the Project Office, the reviewers identified a number of areas which the IODE Project Office should consider in the future (full text of the conclusions and recommendations is available in the review report: <https://oceanexpert.org/document/35719>)).

128. The Committee expressed its great appreciation to the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) and the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) for the long-term support provided to the IOC Project Office for IODE, stressing that the Office has been crucial for the continuing growth and success of the IODE Programme and IOC in general. The Committee requested the IOC Assembly to invite the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) to continue its support of the IOC Project Office for IODE and invited other Member States to complement the support to allow further development of the IODE, its activities, products and services.

Draft Decision A-33/3.4.2

International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange

The Assembly,

I – 28th Session of IODE, 12-14 March 2025

1. Having examined the Executive Summary Report of the 28th session of the IOC Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE-28, Santa Marta, Colombia, 12–14 March 2025) (IOC/IODE-28/3s),
2. Endorses the report of the 28th session of the IOC Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange including the recommendations and workplan for 2025–2026 contained therein;
3. Strongly encourages Member States to establish IODE National Oceanographic Data Centres (NODCs) or Associate Data Units (ADUs) or ODIS nodes;
4. Notes that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the overall Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting matters of the Commission;

II – Revision of the Terms of Reference of the Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS)

5. Recalling the establishment, by the IOC Assembly at its 31st session, through Decision A-31/3.4.2, of the IOC Ocean Data and Information System Project (ODIS),
6. Recognizing that a major component of the ocean data and information system landscape is not linked to the IOC and the need to collaborate with those communities/systems in order to achieve improved accessibility, unrestricted use and interoperability of data and information,
7. Also recognizing the key role that distributed and interoperable data, information, and digitized knowledge resources will have during the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development,
8. Recalling that the IODE Committee, at its 27th session, approved the designation of IODE activities as Programme Components, Programme Activities and Projects, considering that this should make IODE activities more attractive to partners for cooperation, and decided to designate ODIS, OBIS and OTGA as Programme Components and to take this into consideration in the work plan and budget,
9. Considering that the rapid growth of the ODIS network as a federation of data systems requires an efficient and agile governance mechanism, focused on co-design, user requirements and community feedback,
10. Decides to revise the ODIS terms of reference as attached in Annex 1, the terms of reference of the ODIS Steering Group as attached in Annex 2, and establishment of the ODIS Operations Group as attached in Annex 3;
11. Invites all IOC programmes, IOC regional subsidiary bodies and partner organizations to collaborate in ODIS by sharing their ocean data and information with ODIS;

III – Advancing Ocean Data Sharing for Sustainable Development in areas within national jurisdiction.

12. Recalling:

- (i) that the *IOC Data Policy and Terms of Use* was published in 2023 and recommends the findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable sharing of ocean metadata, data and products with minimally restrictive and voluntary common use licenses,
- (ii) that the WMO unified Data Policy (Resolution 1,CG-EXT (2021)) WMO-No. 1281 mandates the WMO members to share ocean data as follows: Members shall share observations of the GOOS physical essential ocean variables (EOVs) and GCOS physical ocean domain essential climate variables (ECVs) made as part of a GOOS observation network, programme or project and should share all other EOVs and Ocean based ECVs further notes that this is a national commitment that is supported of the IODE Action,
- (iii) the importance of sustainable ocean management as emphasized in the *Implementation Plan of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)* endorsed at the 75th United Nations General Assembly in 2020,

13. Recognising that:

- (i) there is a critical role for data in supporting and allowing science-based decision making, including effective marine spatial planning,
- (ii) the need for sharing ocean data is also recognised within the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Part XIII) and Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (Parts II, V, VI),
- (iii) the private sector holds and is actively collecting a vast reservoir of valuable ocean data, acquired through commercial activities in support of marine resource management, offshore energy exploration and development, marine infrastructure development and monitoring, and scientific research in every ocean basin,
- (iv) the sharing of data collected by private sector bodies offers the possibility of immense benefits to science, policymakers, and the private corporations themselves,
- (v) only a fraction of ocean-related data from private sector industries is shared publicly,

14. Noting that the sharing of these data collected by private industry using the *IOC Data Policy and Terms of use (2023)* would dramatically increase the volumes of data available for monitoring, understanding and modelling the ocean advancing scientific research and improving data-driven decision making in sustainable ocean management,

15. Encourages Member States to support the implementation of the *IOC Data Policy and Terms of Use (2023)* for the sharing of data for all-ocean related data collection, both publicly and privately funded, in their territorial waters and exclusive economic zones;

16. Calls upon Member States to recognise that data sharing practices will strengthen the collective ability of all to meet the goals of the UN Ocean Decade and to address UN Sustainable Development Goal 14;

17. Urges Member States to collaborate with industry, research and data infrastructure stakeholders to standardise ocean data sharing practices through the establishment of national data-sharing policies, regulations and permissions for all ocean-related activities conducted within their territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones, including through the inclusion of the provisions of the IOC Data Policy and Terms of Use in licensing and permitting within their jurisdictions;
18. Affirms that sustainable ocean management requires unlocking the large volume of ocean data collected and held by private industry for collective benefit to scientific research, policy making and industry operations;
19. Takes note of the establishment of an IODE Inter-sessional Working Group on Advancing Ocean Data Sharing for Sustainable Development in areas within national jurisdiction (IWG-DSNJ) with terms of reference in Annex 4;

IV – The UNESCO/IOC Project Office for IODE in Ostend, Belgium

20. Recalling:
 - (i) Assembly Resolution XXII-7 (2003) which accepted with appreciation the offer of the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) and the city of Ostend to host the IODE Project Office,
 - (ii) Resolution XXII-1 which adopted the *Guidelines for the Establishment of IOC Decentralized Offices*, subsequently published in Document IOC/INF-1193,
21. Noting with appreciation:
 - (i) the positive results of the review the IOC Project Office for IODE (2025),
 - (ii) that the IOC Project Office for IODE has successfully continued the implementation of its objectives:
 - a) the successful development and hosting of data/information products/services in particular OBIS, ODIS and OTGA, which all form key elements of the global digital ecosystem now under development for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development,
 - b) the successful development and hosting of the training system OceanTeacher Global Academy,
 - c) the continued management of an excellent international meeting and conference centre,
 - (iii) the considerable financial support provided by the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) to the IOC in general and to the IOC Project Office for IODE and the excellent in-kind support provided by the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ),
 - (iv) the complementary nature of the activities carried out at the Project Office and the financial support provided by the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) through the UNESCO/Flanders Fund-in-Trust for the support of UNESCO's activities in the field of Science (FUST),
 - (v) the contribution by the IOC Project Office for IODE (as the IODE secretariat and Meeting & Training Facility) to the further development of Ocean Data and Information Networks in developing regions,

- (vi) the efficient and effective management of the Project Office and the professionalism of its Staff,
- 22. Expressing its gratitude to the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) and the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) for the considerable support provided, both financially and by hosting of the Project Office, as from April 2005,
- 23. Invites the Government of Flanders to continue hosting the IOC Project Office for IODE as well as its considerable financial and in-kind contributions and support;
- 24. Decides (conditionally to the Government of Flanders agreeing to continuing the hosting) that:
 - (i) the IOC Project Office for IODE in Ostend, Belgium be continued;
 - (ii) the Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO-IOC and the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) through the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) be renewed.

Annex 1 to Dec. A-33/3.4.2

Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS)

Terms of Reference

Objectives: The objectives of this Programme Component are to:

- (i) develop in collaboration with programmes across the IOC, the IOC Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) as a foundational digital ecosystem where users can discover and access data and information products, services, and other assets provided by Member States, projects and other partners associated with IOC;
- (ii) work with partners, linked and not linked to the IOC, to improve the accessibility and interoperability of existing data and information and digital service orchestration across data systems;
- (iii) promote the collective maturation of the ODIS digital ecosystem towards greater interoperability and seamless, trusted, and secure data and information flows across partner systems (e.g. towards data fabric and data space models).

Annex 2 to Dec. A-33/3.4.2

IODE Steering Group for the IOC Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS-SG)

Terms of Reference

The ODIS-SG will have the following Terms of Reference:

- (i) In coordination with the ODIS Secretariat, propose a set of strategic priorities for one-, five-, and ten-year time horizons for the ODIS Programme Component, revised each year;
- (ii) Review high-level workplans for the ODIS Programme Component, proposed by the ODIS Operations Group (ODIS-Ops), proposing changes where needed;
- (iii) Advise the ODIS Secretariat and ODIS-Ops on relevant developments in national, regional, global, or sectoral data and information policy, national and international data law and practice which may impact ODIS operations;

- (iv) Propose and, where feasible, facilitate coordination between ODIS Secretariat and new stakeholder or other interest groups;
- (v) Identify funding sources to further develop ODIS.

Membership: The Steering Group will be composed, *inter alia*, of:

- A Chair or co-Chairs of the Steering Group(*);
- Representatives from IOC Programmes;
- Invited Experts, prioritising the coverage of regions, digital capacity levels^[1], socio-economic sectors, UN Ocean Decade Actions, and key groups pursuing, consolidating, or maintaining digital sovereignty;
- Representatives of major interest groups and selected ODIS partners (based on priorities following an open call) including regional/international organisations developing multi-year / decadal data strategies or with unique insight into strategically relevant issues;
- ODIS programme manager;
- IODE Secretariat;
- Representatives from relevant UN Ocean Decade Decade Coordination Offices and Collaborative Centres, and the Decade Coordination Unit

Membership will be for a period of one year (renewable).

(*) A Chair and Co-Chair of SG-ODIS will be elected at the end of the first meeting (and thereafter annually) by the members of the Group in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for IODE Programme Components, Programme Activities and Projects (IOC Manuals and Guides, 91).

^[1] The standing capacity of an entity to participate in digital activities

Annex 3 to Dec. A-33/3.4.2

Operations Group for the IOC Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS-Ops)

Terms of reference

Tasks:

- (i) To ensure the uninterrupted operation of ODIS Nodes^[2] by remedying issues identified by the ODIS-SG, ODIS Secretariat or by other ODIS Partners.
- (ii) To promote broader and deeper interoperability between all ODIS Nodes, beginning at metadata / asset catalogues, and progressing to subject data, services, and other capacities as identified;
- (iii) To guide the ODIS Nodes, and ODIS as a whole, in fulfilling the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development's Data and Information Strategy and its Implementation Plan, and - more broadly - addressing its Challenges;
- (iv) To hold monthly meetings (online) not exceeding 60 minutes, distributed across time zones of the Group's members;^[3]
- (v) To contribute to, or produce status briefings on, the state of the ODIS Federation (i.e. the collection of ODIS partner organisations) as a whole, and of individual ODIS Nodes, detailing any issues limiting data and information exchange, as well as any opportunities to enhance it;

- (vi) To identify and work to resolve any issues relating to data and information exchange and cross-Federation interoperability, by posting and pursuing issues on the ODIS-Arch GitHub repository^[4] or another appropriate repository;
- (vii) To make all members of ODIS-Ops aware of regionally, nationally, or locally specific requirements, regulations, or legal frameworks regarding data access and/or exchange which may affect the operations of the ODIS Federation;
- (viii) To identify and describe opportunities for ODIS to provide utility to (potential) user groups and other;
- (ix) To review and regulate the addition, suspension, or removal^[5] of ODIS Nodes to/from the Federation;
- (x) To report operational affairs to the ODIS Chair, SG-ODIS and ODIS Secretariat, and consult these for strategic and programmatic guidance.

Membership

Membership of ODIS-Ops shall initially include:

- ODIS Chair or Co-Chairs(*)
- ODIS Programme Manager (ODIS Secretariat)
- One technical expert which has been selected by each ODIS Partner operating at least one ODIS Node
- External experts -in advisory roles- in areas relevant to the activities of the Group
- Representatives of other IODE programme components and/or IODE programme activities or IODE Projects
- Other, ad hoc members, as agreed by the regular membership.

Membership will be for a period of one year (renewable).

(*) A Chair and Co-Chair of ODIS-Ops will be elected at the end of the first meeting (and thereafter annually) by the members of the Group in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for IODE Programme Components, Programme Activities and Projects (IOC Manuals and Guides No. 91).

^[2] An “ODIS Node” is a data system which provides a machine-to-machine interface to the digital assets each ODIS Partner wishes to share. An ODIS Node 1) has a current and valid registration in the ODIS Catalogue of Sources (ODISCat), 2) provides sufficient metadata in ODISCat for its asset catalogues to be discovered and processed, 3) maintains its asset catalogues in a form which is interoperable across the ODIS Federation, and in compliance to the ODIS Architecture

^[3] Where resources allow, ad hoc, in-person meetings may be organised, particularly to more effectively resolve or pursue regional or thematic issues or opportunities.

^[4] <https://github.com/iodepo/odis-arch>

^[5] ODIS Nodes may be suspended or removed if they begin producing erroneous, invalid, or poor quality (meta)data, or if their products are incompatible with the ODIS Architecture and interoperability conventions. Nodes may be reinstated as soon as any outstanding issues are resolved and interoperability is verified.

Annex 4 to Dec. A-33/3.4.2

IODE Inter-sessional Working Group on Advancing Ocean Data Sharing for Sustainable Development in areas within national jurisdiction (IWG-DSNJ)

Terms of Reference

Objectives:

- (i) Engage with and encourage the implementation by Member States of IODE Recommendation IODE-28/6.2.5 through providing practical advice and developing case studies,
- (ii) Document the implementation of the *IOC Data Policy and Terms of Use (2023)* as outlined in the recommendation,
- (iii) Disseminate successful examples of national policies which include effective ocean data sharing, regulations and permissions for all ocean-related activities conducted within their territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones,
- (iv) Report progress on the adoption by Member States of the recommendation to the 29th session of the IODE Committee.

Modalities: The IWG will normally conduct its business through entirely electronic means. Should any face-to-face meetings be deemed necessary, participation will be optional with alternative arrangements for electronic participation and in-person participation will be entirely self-funded.

Expected meeting frequency will be at least once per month or as required by ongoing actions. The IWG will operate its own secretarial tasks.

Membership: Initial membership will be composed of:

- One of the IODE co-chairs, and/or a representative of the IODE secretariat
- Data & Knowledge Management Officer, representing the Decade Coordination Unit, the Data Coordination Group and the Corporate Data Group
- Lead of the Decade Coordination Office for Ocean Data Sharing
- Heads of Decade Regional Coordination Offices and Collaborative Centres
- Other membership to be called for at IODE-28 to represent the IOC Committee on IODE. The following member states expressed interest: Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium), UK, Australia, Colombia.

129. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.4.3 IOC Data Architecture

[IODE-28; GOOS-SC-14 recommendations]

<u>Working document</u>	IOC/A-33/3.4.3.Doc(1)	Outline of the IOC Data Architecture Concept proposal
<u>Information</u>	IOC/INF-1550	IOC Data Architecture Concept Proposal
<u>Reference</u>	IOC Workshop Reports, 311	IODE/GOOS Data Workshop Report, 30 September–2 October 2024, Ostend, Belgium
	GOOS-305	Report of the 14th Session of the Global Ocean Observing System Steering Committee, UNESCO HQ, 19–21 February 2025
	IOC/IODE-28/3s	Executive Summary Report of the 28 th session of the International Oceanographic Data and Information

Exchange Committee, Santa Marta, Colombia, 12–14
March 2025

130. Representatives of GOOS and IODE introduced this item. They informed the Assembly that the IOC/IODE-GOOS Data Workshop was held at the IOC Project Office for IODE between 30 September and 2 October 2024. It focused on enhancing collaboration between the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) and the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS). The goal was to enhance coordination and discuss an integrated and scalable IOC digital architecture that would improve data sharing, management, and accessibility, across ocean systems, and enhance the IOC's support to Member States and key United Nations mandates. The meeting was attended by experts from the different elements of GOOS and IODE, as well as the IOC Ocean Sciences Section and Tsunami Unit, and experts from relevant elements of the Ocean Decade structure. The report of the meeting is available as IOC Workshop Reports, 311.

131. Key objectives of the workshop were to: (i) identify roles and synergies: clarifying the mandates, responsibilities, and connections between GOOS and IODE, for all Essential Ocean Variables (EOVs); (ii) develop a joint vision for an IOC Data Architecture: establishing a co-evolved, integrated, FAIR and CARE aligned, IOC data architecture to support the ocean digital ecosystem; (iii) technical foundation: developing the technical architecture for a unified IOC Data space to be presented at the IOC Assembly in 2025; (iv) coordination: define coordination between GOOS, IODE and other IOC programmes to evolve and mature the IOC Data Architecture; and (v) future planning: outlining next steps (short- and long-term) for meeting future user needs.

132. The workshop participants agreed on a draft basic schema for the IOC Data Architecture, linking key IOC components into a holistic ecosystem that would provide a joint vision for an IOC Data Architecture, and to develop an implementation plan for such an architecture.

133. Representatives of GOOS and IODE reported that many elements of the proposed IOC Data Architecture already exist, however the workshop outlined an approach forward to optimise connections between existing elements, as well as clarification of support needed, that would strengthen delivery of ocean data for operational services. The workshop had decided to set up a working group to prepare a concept paper which has been provided as IOC/INF-1550 (IOC Data Architecture Concept Proposal) and outlined in IOC-33/3.4.3Doc(1) (Outline of the IOC Data Architecture Concept Proposal).

Draft Decision A-33/3.4.3

Development of an IOC data architecture

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the concept proposal as outlined in IOC/A-33/3.4.3.Doc(1) and detailed in IOC/INF-1550,
2. Recalling:
 - (i) the acceptance of the Global Ocean Observing System Strategy (Decision IOC-XXX/7.1.1), which identified Strategic Objective 7 as 'ensure GOOS ocean observing data and information are FAIR with appropriate quality and latency', with key outcomes around open data access and products based on essential ocean variables (EOVs), and the 13th GOOS Steering Committee Meeting, April 2024, had an action to 'create and adopt a cross GOOS Digital

- Infrastructure/Ecosystem Strategy in alignment with IODE, Ocean Decade Data Strategy and other partners' (GOOS Reports, 299),
- (ii) the establishment, by the IOC Assembly at its 31st session, through Annex II to Decision A-31/3.4.2, of the IOC Ocean Data and Information System Project (ODIS),
 - (iii) the adoption, of the *IOC Strategic Plan for Ocean Data and Information Management (2023–2029)*, published as IOC Manuals and Guides, 92, by the IOC Assembly during its 32nd session (A-32/3.4.2),
 - (iv) that the IODE Committee, at its 27th session, March 2023, instructed its Co-Chairs to 'engage with the GOOS Observations Coordination Group Data Strategy Implementation Plan to ensure that it is fit for purpose from the ocean data management community standpoint',
 - (v) that the IOC Executive Council at its 57th session requested GOOS to provide a proposal to it at its 33rd session to evolve GOOS (EC-57/4.1.) and identified 'Create a functioning Digital Ecosystem to enable end user applications' as one of five key elements of this work,
3. Recognizing that an integrated data ecosystem will underpin delivery on all IOC Medium Term Strategy High Level Objectives (IOC/INF-1412), including the IOC-wide Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (SOPM), as defined in documents IOC/A-32/4.7.Doc(1),
 4. Welcomes the outcomes of the First IODE/GOOS Data Workshop (IOC Workshop Reports, 311), that agreed:
 - (i) on a basic schema for the IOC Data Architecture, linking key IOC components into a holistic data ecosystem;
 - (ii) to develop a proposal for the IOC Data Architecture that can be presented to the 33rd session of the IOC Assembly in June 2025;
 - (iii) to establish an IOC Data Architecture Working Group to write a proposal for a cross IOC data architecture/space, with Terms of Reference as noted in IOC Workshop Reports, 311;
 5. Also welcomes the establishment of the interim Working Group on the development of the IOC Data Architecture and its initial work on the development of a concept proposal as outlined in IOC/A-33/3.4.3.Doc(1);
 6. Notes that the 14th session of the GOOS Steering Committee in February 2025, welcomed the results of the IODE-GOOS Data Workshop and the proposal to develop an IOC Data Architecture;
 7. Also notes that the IODE Committee, at its 28th session (March 2025):
 - (i) welcomed the development of the IOC Data Architecture as an important collaboration within IOC to position the IOC in its leadership role to support Member States in achieving the high-level objectives under the IOC Medium Term Strategy;
 - (ii) also welcomed the alignment of the proposed IOC Data Architecture with the core digital architecture of the UN Ocean Decade;

- (iii) agreed on the important role of ODIS and OBIS as systems, and requested that the role of NODCs and ADUs are recognized in the emerging IOC data architecture;
- 8. Endorses the IOC Data Architecture concept as outlined in IOC/A-33/3.4.3.Doc(1);
- 9. Approves the Terms of Reference of the intersessional Working Group on the development of the IOC Data Architecture, as outlined in the annex to this decision;
- 10. Requests the IOC Data Architecture working group of experts to deliver a detailed implementation plan and minimum viable product demonstrators for the consideration of the IOC Executive Council at its 59th session in June 2026.

Annex to Decision A-33/3.4.3

Intersessional Working Group on the development of the IOC Data Architecture Terms of Reference

Taking into account the tasks as outlined in the IODE-GOOS Data Workshop report¹ and feedback from the 14th session of the GOOS Steering Committee and IODE-28, the IOC Data Architecture working group of experts will undertake the following set of synthesised tasks.

Tasks:

- (i) Consult with a range of stakeholders on the proposal concept and integrate the feedback into a revised document;
- (ii) Develop a detailed implementation plan for Phase 1 of an IOC data architecture to be submitted to the IOC Executive Council at its 59th session in June 2026;
- (iii) Develop a limited set of minimal viable product demonstrators, that are feasible for implementation within a year and that will demonstrate the value of an integrated IOC Data Architecture to the IOC Executive Council in 2026;
- (iv) Communicate with, and seek feedback from, stakeholders, including Member States, on the implementation plan for an IOC data architecture prior to the 59th session of the IOC Executive Council.

(1) The tasks defined at the IODE-GOOS Data Workshop are available in the final report (IOC Workshop Reports, 311), Section 13, subsection 13.1, under point 2. Establish and start the work of the IOC Data Architecture Working Group.

Membership

Membership of the intersessional Working Group on the development of the IOC Data Architecture consists of focal points from relevant IOC and Ocean Decade structures and components:

- IODE Ocean Data Information System
- IODE Ocean Biodiversity Information System / GOOS BioEco Panel
- GOOS Observations Coordination Group
- WMO-IOC Operational Centre—OceanOPS
- GOOS Management Team
- IOC Ocean Science Section

- GOOS Biogeochemistry Panel
- IODE Management Ocean Decade: Coordination Office for Ocean Observing, Coordination Office for Ocean Data Sharing, Collaborative Centre for Ocean Prediction, corporate Data Group
- Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section (IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management)
- With additional experts invited as required.

134. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.4.4 An IOC Ocean Best practices System (OBPS)
[Decision IOC-XXX/7.2.1 (III)]

<u>Working document</u>	IOC/A-33/3.4.4.Doc(1)	An IOC Ocean Best Practices System
<u>Reference</u>	SG-OBPS-VI/3	IOC Ocean Best Practices System Steering Group, Sixth Annual Meeting (SG-OBPS-VI) Summary report, 12–14 November 2024, Paris

135. Representatives of GOOS and IODE introduced this item on behalf of Ms Rebecca Zitoun (OBPS Co-Chair), who was unable to attend. They informed the Assembly that the Ocean Best Practices System (OBPS) is a UNESCO-IOC Project, adopted at the 30th session of the IOC Assembly (June/July 2019) through Decision IOC-XXX/7.2.1, supported by the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE). OBPS’s vision is to have and share broadly adopted methods across ocean research, operations, and applications.

136. They reported that the OBPS held its sixth annual Steering Group meeting in Paris, France, from 12–14 November 2024. The meeting offered an opportunity to evaluate the implementation of the 2024 workplan and discuss key priorities for the next intersessional period. These priorities include advancing the OBPS repository, upgrading its software, and reconfiguring analytics to maintain the system's operational effectiveness. A major focus was also placed on evaluating the repository's content, implementing a robust review process to ensure that only relevant content is retained. Additionally, the evolving OBPS endorsement process was discussed, with efforts to more effectively recognize and promote best practices through active community engagement and the establishment of endorsing organizations.

137. They explained that the development of a 5-year strategic plan was identified as a top priority to align with IOC strategies. A key focus of strategic discussions was expanding OBPS's role beyond IODE and GOOS to secure its long-term sustainability and relevance to all IOC programmes and regional sub-commissions. Additionally, a proposed decision was put forward to co-develop and co-fund OBPS across the IOC, accompanied by revisions to the IOC-OBPS Terms of Reference and Steering Group Terms of Reference to strengthen governance and collaboration within the OBPS.

Draft Decision A-33/3.4.4

An IOC Ocean Best practice System (OBPS)

The Assembly,

1. Recalling Decision IOC-XXX/7.2.1 (III) on the Establishment of the IOC Ocean Best Practices System Project (OBPS),
2. Also recalling the restructuring of elements of the IODE programme into programme components and programme activities by IODE-XXVII (2023), and the categorization of OBPS as an IODE programme activity,
3. Noting that the Ocean Best Practices System Repository (OBPS-R) of best practices will support all IOC programmes as well as contribute to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and UN Sustainable Development Goals by providing a permanent curated archive of adopted methodologies and best practices in ocean sciences,
4. Also noting that within the context of the OBPS a best practice is defined as a methodology that has repeatedly produced superior results relative to other methodologies with the same objective; to be fully elevated to a best practice, a promising method will have been adopted and employed by multiple organizations,
5. Further noting that best practices can be guidelines, standard operating procedures, manuals, technical specifications, and papers,
6. Recognizing that:
 - (i) the dissemination and use of rigorously tested adopted methodologies and best practices related to the IOC mandate will facilitate activity within and across disciplinary boundaries of ocean science,
 - (ii) the experience gained by IODE and GOOS through the OBPS project led to the establishment of: (a) a permanent repository offering its community a platform to publish their ocean-related best practices and find practices of others using innovative search and access technology; (b) an endorsement model whereby GOOS endorsed best practices for ocean observing networks and Essential Ocean Variables (EOVs) are identified within the community and in the OBPS-R; (c) a peer review journal publishing outlet; and (d) a community forum and a training resource leveraging community capabilities, can be used more widely across IOC,
 - (iii) best practices relevant for and across all IOC mandates will be essential for the implementation of the entire value chain, for interoperability of data along that value chain, and for the development of ocean products and services with high societal benefits,
 - (iv) involvement and cooperation in the further development of OBPS by all IOC programmes and regional sub-commissions will be essential to ensure the widest possible development, dissemination and use of best practices and involvement of multiple stakeholder communities,
 - (v) IOC and WMO have established close, efficient and effective collaboration in ocean best practices leveraging the OBPS,
7. Decides to:
 - (i) transition the “IOC Ocean Best Practices System (OBPS) project” to the “IOC Ocean Best Practices System” under all IOC programmes and sub-commissions with revised terms of reference as attached in Annex 1 of this decision;

- (ii) establish the IOC Steering Group for the Ocean Best Practices System (OBPS) with the terms of reference as attached in Annex 2 to this decision;
- 8. Notes that any financial or administrative implications of the activities fall within the parameters of the IOC Programme and Budget, as adopted by IOC Governing Bodies;
- 9. Urges Member States to actively participate in the OBPS by submitting relevant community practices on ocean observation, data management, research methods, products and services, through the relevant IOC programmes and sub-commissions, and by promoting the use of practices contained in the OBPS at the national, regional and global level;
- 10. Recommends that the OBPS reports back to the IOC Assembly at its 34th session in 2027 on progress against its objectives, workplan and cross-IOC engagement.

Annex 1 to Decision IOC-3.4.4

IOC Ocean Best Practices System (OBPS)

Terms of Reference

Objectives:

- (i) Foster innovation and excellence by engaging with relevant IOC communities in a joint and coordinated effort towards producing, regularly reviewing and sustaining relevant best practices and standards;
- (ii) Increase efficiency, reproducibility and interoperability of the value chain of IOC by providing the community with a unified, sustained and readily accessible interdisciplinary knowledge base of adopted methodologies and best practices;
- (iii) Maintain and advance the OBPS Repository as a universal and accessible platform for IOC-relevant ocean related best practices and standards.

Annex 2 to Decision IOC-3.4.4

IOC Ocean Best Practices System Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Objectives

- (i) Propose the vision, strategy, biannual workplan and associated budget for consideration by Member States;
- (ii) Advise on technical, operational and user aspects;
- (iii) Report on progress against the biannual workplan, as part of overall IOC reporting to the IOC Assembly, and to other components of IOC and partners as relevant;
- (iv) Provide advice to the OBPS Manager as relevant;
- (v) Assist in identifying extra-budgetary funding sources to further develop the OBPS;
- (vi) Advocate for the OBPS as a preferred resource for adopted methodologies and best practices within the IOC mandate;

Membership

- (i) Representatives from IOC programmes and regional sub-commissions;

- (ii) OBPS Manager;
- (iii) IODE IT Manager;
- (iv) OBPS Co-Chairs;
- (v) Invited Experts as relevant;
- (vi) Representatives of partner organizations, projects or programmes as relevant;
- (vii) Representatives of the IOC Secretariat.

The Steering Group will meet annually and will elect its (Co-)Chair(s) for a period of two years, preferably from amongst its members, renewable once.

138. The representatives of ___ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.4.5 IOC-FAO Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms: 17th Session of IPHAB, FAO, UNESCO, 18–20 March 2025

Report

IOC-FAO/IPHAB-
XVII/3s

Executive Summary Report of the 17th Session of
IOC-FAO Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful
Algal Blooms, UNESCO, 18–20 March 2025

139. Mr Philipp Hess (France), IPHAB Chair, introduced this item and reported to the Assembly on the outcome of the 17th session of the IOC-FAO Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms which held at UNESCO Headquarters, 18–20 March 2025. This was the 2nd session of IPHAB, since IPHAB-III in 1995 with FAO back as co-sponsor of the Panel, and the first session under the new MoU with FAO signed in May 2024.

140. Mr Hess summarized the actions completed during the intersessional period and noted that the Decisions and Recommendations of the 16th session (March 2023) had been implemented highly satisfactorily within the available resources. The major achievements reported during the intersessional period, several of which are still ongoing, include: the continued publication of the IOC *Harmful Algae News*; the continued compilation of data at all levels for the IPHAB-IODE Harmful Algae Information System with HAEDAT and OBIS databases as providers of high-quality information on HAB events, status and trends of HAB occurrence, and a toxin database linked to the taxonomic reference list via WoRMS; the implementation of six international training courses and several regional and in-country courses; the developments under the joint IOC-SCOR GlobalHAB science programme for a new decadal plan for an international HAB research programme focusing on understanding HABs in the context of global sustainability; the results from the ICES-IOC Working Group on Harmful Algal Bloom Dynamics and ICES-IOC-IMO Working Group on Ballast and other Ship Vectors; the development of the regional activities in Western Pacific (IOC/WESTPAC/HAB), and the Caribbean (IOC/IOCARIBE/ANCA), and South America (IOC/IPHAB/FANSA) despite a lack of resources; the publication of the GlobalHAB white-paper *Fish-killing marine algal blooms: causative organisms, ichthyotoxic mechanisms, impacts and mitigation* as IOC Manuals and Guides, [93](#); the joint GlobalHAB-GESAMP publication *Sargassum white paper: addressing the influxes of the holopelagic Sargassum spp. in the equatorial and subtropical Atlantic: recent scientific insights in their dynamics*, as IOC Manuals and Guides, [96](#); and the advances in testing enhancement of HAB monitoring in Africa into early warning systems.

141. He then presented the 11 decisions adopted by the IPHAB session and which, in addition to presentation to the Assembly, will be submitted to the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI). The decisions concerns primarily the work organized under the IPHAB Task Teams.

The Task Team focus on the Early Detection, Warning and Forecasting of HAB Events; the continued development of the Harmful Algal Information System and a periodic Global Harmful Algal Bloom Status Report; on Benthic Harmful Algae and their Toxins; on Harmful Algae and Desalination of Seawater; on Biotoxin Monitoring, Management and Regulations; on Algal Taxonomy; on Fish Killing Microalgae and Ecosystem Effects; and on HAB Communication. The Panel also took decision on a new decadal plan for the IOC-SCOR GlobalHAB programme and on HAB training and capacity development initiatives within OTGA. On the latter subject including to secure the future of the International Phytoplankton Intercalibration exercise (IPI).

142. At IPHAB-XVII, Mr Philipp Hess (France) was re-elected as Chair and Dr Begoña Ben Gigurey (Spain) was elected as Vice-Chair.

Draft Decision A-33/3.4.5

Harmful Algal Blooms

The Assembly,

1. Having considered the Executive Summary Report of the 17th session (UNESCO, 18–20 March 2025) of the IOC-FAO Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms (IPHAB),
2. Endorses the Executive Summary Report of IPHAB-XVII and the decisions it contains (IOC-FAO/IPHAB-XVII/3s).

143. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

3.5 IOC REPORT TO THE 43rd GENERAL CONFERENCE OF UNESCO
[Statutes Art. 3.2; Rule of Procedure 50]

Working document: IOC/A-33/3.5.Doc(1) Report of the IOC activities (2024–2025) to the Forty-third General Conference of UNESCO

144. The Executive Secretary briefly introduced this item, explaining that the information included in the document is based on the reports presented to the Assembly under agenda item 3.2.

Draft Decision A-33/3.5

IOC Report to the Forty-third General Conference of UNESCO

The Assembly,

1. Recalling Article 3.2 of the Statutes and Rule of Procedure 50,
2. Having examined document IOC/A-33/3.5.Doc(1),
3. Takes note of the report to be presented to the 43rd session of the General Conference of UNESCO, and requests the Executive Secretary to submit the report

on IOC activities (2024–2025) to the 43rd General Conference of UNESCO (November 2025) as document 43 C/REP.____.

145. The representatives of ____ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

4. PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENTS

4.1 DRAFT IOC-WIDE STRATEGY ON SUSTAINABLE OCEAN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT
[Dec. IOC-XXVI/8.2; Dec. A-32/4.7; Dec. EC-57/4.3]

<u>Working document</u>	IOC/A-33/4.1.Doc(1)	Revised Draft IOC-Wide Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (2025–2030) and Implementation Plan
<u>Information</u>	IOC/INF-1541	Report of the IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management during the intersessional period (2024–2025)

146. The co-Chairs of the IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management, Ms Marinez Scherer (Brazil) and Mr Gunnar Finke (Germany) introduced this agenda item. At its 32nd session, the IOC Assembly took first note of the scope and process for developing the IOC-wide Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (SOPM) for the period 2024–2030 through document [IOC/A-32/4.7.Doc\(1\)](#), and requested the IOC Secretariat to collect input from Member States, IOC programmes and technical bodies, and other relevant stakeholders, and to present a revised document to the IOC Executive Council at its 57th session. The draft IOC-SOPM Strategy was presented to the IOC Executive Council at its 57th session, through document [IOC/EC-57/4.3.Doc\(1\).Rev.](#) The draft IOC-SOPM was based on input solicited through IOC Circular Letter [2968](#), a survey which was developed and rolled out to better understand the existing landscape for SOPM and identify needs of stakeholders regarding technical and scientific support. Inputs received were synthesized in document [IOC/INF-1537](#) and its addendum and two online consultation meetings were organized with IOC Member States in May 2024.

147. The IOC Executive Council through decision EC-57/4.3 instructed the establishment of the IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management with the task *inter alia* to finalise the draft IOC-SOPM Strategy and a supporting Implementation Plan. The Working Group met two times, online on 6 February 2025 and in person from 4–6 March 2025 and provided feedback through two additional consultation rounds. A third online meeting was organized on 15 April where the final ‘IOC-SOPM Strategy and Implementation Plan’ was finalized by the working group. Given the need to establish a mechanism to track and guide the implementation of the Strategy during the period 2025–2030, and to consider the outputs of the ‘IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation process’ as these relates to Sustainable Ocean Planning, Terms of Reference for the continuation of the IOC Working Group on SOPM have been drafted for consideration by the IOC Assembly.

Draft Decision A-33/4.1

IOC-wide Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management

The Assembly,

1. Having examined document IOC/A-33/4.1.Doc(1),
2. Recognizing the importance for the IOC to develop a comprehensive framework to deliver knowledge and capacities for sustainable ocean planning and management needs of IOC Member States, in accordance with its statutes, and in support of the IOC Medium Term Strategy (2022–2029), and adopted Programme and Budget,
3. Adopts the 'IOC wide-Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management for 2024–2030' as presented in document IOC/A-33/4.1.Doc(1);
4. Decides to continue the IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management with the revised Terms of Reference annexed to this decision;
5. Requests the Working Group to report to the IOC Assembly at its 34th session;
6. Invites Member States to contribute to the implementation of the Strategy, including through the provision of financial and in-kind support.

Annex to Decision Dec. A-33/4.1

IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (2025–2030)

Terms of Reference

The Group is established to guide the implementation of the IOC-wide Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (2024–2030) and evaluate its progress.

Membership

- (i) experts nominated by IOC Member States through a call by circular letter that will define the expertise required,
- (ii) representatives of IOC programmes and regional bodies, and
- (iii) observers from partner organizations with a focus on SOPM.

Expert members will be appointed for an initial two years, renewable once for an additional two years.

The designated co-chairpersons will be elected on a rotating basis, for an initial two-year period, with a maximum of two consecutive terms.

The Working Group will function for the period 2025–2030, which aligns with the IOC-SOPM's Strategy's timeline.

The Working Group will work primarily by correspondence and will meet in-person once a year.

Purpose

The purpose of the Working Group is to:

1. Monitor the implementation of the SOPM Strategy and Implementation plan, and guidance in the regular assessment of user-needs in the area of SOPM;

2. Update the IOC-SOPM Strategy (in 2027, linking with the results of the 'IOC and the Future of the Ocean consultations') and Implementation Plan (for 2028–2030) as relevant;
3. Advising on identifying emerging needs and science, data and knowledge issues with potential implication for SOPM practitioners;
4. Advising on the design and delivery of IOC activities in support of the SOPM Strategy;
5. Advising on the IOC contribution to the UN Ocean Decade Programme on Sustainable Ocean Planning;
6. Advising on the 'IOC and the Future of the Ocean' Consultation process' (2024–2027) as it relates to SOPM;
7. Providing inputs to the development of the IOC Medium-Term Strategy processes, to be initiated in 2027;
8. Undertaking any endeavour as requested by the IOC Governing Bodies.

148. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

4.2 DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE IOC CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2023–2030 [Dec. A-31/3.5.3; Dec. IOC-XXIX/10.1; Dec. EC-57/4.6]

<u>Working document</u>	IOC/A-33/4.2.Doc(1)	Draft Implementation Plan for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030
<u>Information</u>	IOC/GE-CD-VI	Report of the Sixth Session of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development (22–24 October 2024, Ostend, Belgium)
<u>Reference</u>	IOC/INF-1433	IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030

149. Dr Suzan El-Gharabawy, Co-Chair of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development (GE-CD) introduced this agenda item. She recalled that the Assembly, at its 32nd session, through Decision A-32/4.3, adopted the IOC Capacity Development 2023–2030 published as document [IOC/INF-1433](#) and its Outreach and Communications Plan ([IOC-32/4.3.Doc\(2\)](#)).

150. She recalled that following the decision of the IOC Executive Council, at its 57th session through Dec. EC-57/4.6 to continue the role of the GE-CD and revise its Terms of Reference in June 2024, IOC Circular Letter [3001](#) was issued to invite Member States to nominate experts to the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development. The IOC Executive Secretary approved the renewed IOC GE-CD with 29 members (<https://oceanexpert.org/group/540>). The Group elected Dr Suzan El-Gharabawy and Dr Lina Eyouni as Co-Chairs of the IOC GE-CD.

151. Dr El-Gharabawy reported to the Assembly on the outcomes of the sixth session of the IOC GE-CD, which was held at Ostend, Belgium on 22–24 October 2024. To deliver the tasks under the new TOR of the Group (Annex Decision EC-57/4.6), a Task Team on Needs Assessment and a Working Group on Implementation Plan were established to start developing a draft Implementation Plan for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 to be presented to this IOC Assembly session in June 2025.

152. The Co-Chairs of the Task Team on Needs Assessment, Dr David O’Sullivan and Ms Laura Correa, convened the Task Team in nine online meetings between November 2024 and January 2025 to develop a template and approach to capture the inputs of the regional sub-commissions in the Implementation Plan, based on the identified priority CD needs in their respective regions as discussed in the regional sessions and outcomes of the IOC CD biennial needs assessment surveys. Since the adoption of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy in 2023, the IOC CD Secretariat has been working with the regional sub-commissions on mapping the priority needs of the regions. IOCAFRICA and IOCARIBE provided inputs in the discussions during the sixth session of the GE-CD as members of the Task Team. The new IOCINDIO Head, upon the start of his engagement from January 2025, joined the work of the Task Team and started close consultation with the IOC CD Secretariat to provide inputs to the draft Implementation Plan on time.

153. Dr El-Gharabawy referred to Document IOC/A-33/4.2.Doc(1) ‘IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 Implementation Plan’ for the main body of the Implementation Plan. The Co-Chairs of the Working Group on the Implementation Plan, Dr Rebecca Lahl and Dr Carlos Torres, convened the working group in nine online meetings between November 2024 and April 2025, after the initial discussions at the GE-CD-VI in October 2024.

154. The resulting draft Implementation Plan aims to translate the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 into concrete, actionable steps that address the specific needs and challenges of regions and Member States, aligning with the objectives of the UN Decade of Ocean Science. The Implementation Plan will provide a structured pathway to achieving these objectives, ensuring that the Strategy translates into measurable, region-specific actions that support the global mission of sustainable ocean science development. It will also articulate in greater detail how the Actions listed in the Strategy will be implemented and progress and effectiveness monitored.

155. Dr El-Gharabawy highlighted that the draft Implementation Plan puts forward eleven overarching recommendations to effectively implement the plan and maximize its impact: (i) Leverage Existing Programmes; (ii) Improve implementation capacity; (iii) Strengthen Regional Implementation; (iv) Global Coordination; (v) Global Forum on Ocean Capacity Development; (vi) Strategic Partnerships; (vii) Strengthen Equity, Inclusion and Decolonialisation; (viii) Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs) as Change-Makers; (ix) Enhanced Outreach and Communication; (x) Prioritization and Risk Management; and (xi) Monitor, Evaluate and Adapt.

156. The GE-CD subsequently considered the results of the work of the Task Team and the Working Group which resulted in the draft decision for consideration by the Assembly.

Draft Decision A-33/4.2

Implementation Plan for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy, 2023–2030

The Assembly,

1. Recalling the adoption, at its 32nd session, of the *IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2023–2030)*, and an accompanying outreach and communications plan,
2. Recognizing the importance of Capacity Development as one of the six functions of the *IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029)*, enabling all Member States to participate in, and benefit from, ocean research and services that are vital to sustainable development and human welfare on the planet,

3. Appreciates the work of the GE-CD Working Group and Task Team in putting together the draft implementation plan for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030;
4. Having examined document IOC/A-33/4.2.Doc(1) that contains the proposed 'IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 Implementation Plan',
5. Adopts the Implementation Plan of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030;
6. Strongly encourages IOC primary subsidiary bodies (global programmes and regional subsidiary bodies) to take the following actions:
 - (i) develop programmatic and regionally relevant capacity development workplans based on the implementation plan, and the IOC CD biennial needs assessments survey conducted in close collaboration with regional subsidiary bodies;
 - (ii) mobilize resources in order to reinforce the Secretariat staffing of the regional subsidiary bodies, and global programmes;
 - (iii) catalyze capacity development through global, regional, and national programme development, including projects prepared in consultation with Member States with a view to raise extra-budgetary resources; and
 - (iv) strengthen collaboration and communication between its global programmes and regional subsidiary bodies, through a central IOC CD global coordination unit, ensuring more effective support for actions contributing to (i), (ii) and (iii) above;
7. Urges IOC Member States to:
 - (i) identify needs and new opportunities to participate in, and benefit from, reinforced partnerships through the IOC to achieve their capacity development goals based on their regional priorities;
 - (ii) appoint and actively engage national CD focal points to participate and facilitate the implementation process of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 Implementation Plan;
 - (iii) mobilize the knowledge, personnel, infrastructural and financial resources to support IOC's catalytic role in helping Member States achieve these goals; and
 - (iv) raise the visibility of IOC's unique niche in capacity development.
8. Decides to continue the role of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development and to revise its Terms of Reference as in the annex to this decision.

Annex to Dec. A-33/4.2

IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development (GE-CD)

Terms of Reference

The IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development (GE-CD) is composed of experts nominated by IOC Member States responding to a call by circular letter detailing the GE-CD membership.

The IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development (GE-CD) is responsible for the following tasks:

- (i) assist global and regional programmes with the implementation of capacity development needs assessments in a consistent manner;
- (ii) also assist global and regional programmes with the development of programmatic and regionally relevant capacity development workplans based on the IOC CD Strategy and related needs assessments, building on ongoing activities and making use of existing training and education facilities;
- (iii) provide advice to global and regional programmes on the implementation of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 and on relevant methods and tools to improve the quality and impact of CD efforts;
- (iv) advise the IOC CD Secretariat on the design and implementation of the IOC biennial CD survey in close collaboration with the regional subsidiary bodies, possibly including the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework detailing implementation impact monitoring/metrics/indicators, also taking into account other methods such as regional reviews, science conferences, global CD forums, etc.;
- (v) ensure coordination of the work of the Group of Experts with *Global Ocean Science Report* and CD aspects of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, including the Capacity Development Facility;
- (vi) guide the further development and promotion of the Ocean CD-Hub by highlighting linkages of CD activities and collaboration opportunities between users and providers and among other global, regional and national organizations;
- (vii) provide advice to Member States on the promotion of visibility and reach of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 to assist with the planning and implementation of their capacity development efforts;
- (viii) report results to the Assembly at its 34th session.

157. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

4.3 GENERAL BATHYMETRIC CHART OF THE OCEANS (GEBCO) – REPORT AND FOLLOW UP ON THE GOVERNANCE REVIEW [Dec. A-32/4.1; Dec.EC-57/4.4]

<u>Working document</u>	IOC/A-33/4.3.Doc(1)	Report of the GEBCO Guiding Committee to the IOC on its activities, 2024–2025
<u>Information</u>	IOC/INF-1543	General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) Strategy Implementation Process
<u>Reference</u>	IOC/EC-57/4.4.Doc(1)	Report and Recommendations of the GEBCO Governance Review Project Team (2024)

158. Mr Evert Flier, the Chair of the GEBCO Guiding Committee (GGC), introduced this item. He provided an overview of GEBCO developments for the period 2024–2025 as well as the outcomes of the 41st Meeting of the GEBCO Guiding Committee (November 2022, Nadi,

Fiji)). These include: (i) progress in raising the percentage of ocean floor mapped under GEBCO and Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project; (ii) update on the implementation of the GEBCO Strategy adopted in 2024; (iii) and follow-up to the GEBCO Governance review conducted in 2023–2024.

Draft Decision A-33/4.3

GEBCO Report and Follow-up on the Governance Review: Implementation Plan

The Assembly,

1. Taking note of the Report of the GEBCO Guiding Committee to the IOC on its activities (2024–2025) through document IOC/A-33/4.3.Doc(1) and document IOC/INF-1543 related to the GEBCO Strategy Implementation Process,
2. Encourages Member States to:
 - (i) cooperate to advance basin-scale campaign mapping and accelerate the delivery of GEBCO objectives and general knowledge of the ocean in particular by supporting and contributing to the Nippon Foundation—GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project;
 - (ii) facilitate GEBCO capacity development, including training opportunities;
 - (iii) actively participate in the next assessment, to be conducted by the Working Group on User Requirements and Contributions to GEBCO Products in 2026; and
 - (iv) contribute to the work of GEBCO through in-kind/financial contributions and the secondment of staff to the IOC Secretariat to facilitate the engagement of the oceanographic community in support of the GEBCO Strategy.

159. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

4.4 IOC OCEAN LITERACY ACTION PLAN AND STRATEGY
[Dec. IOC-XXX/11.2; Dec. A-31/3.5.4]

<u>Working document</u>	IOC/A-33/4.4.Doc(1) and Addendum	Draft IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action for 2026–2030
<u>Reference</u>	IOC/POL/2025/1	Promoting Ocean Literacy- an education policy brief
	IOC/2024/ODS/51.11	A Theory of Change for the Ocean Decade Challenge 10
	IOC/2025/MG/98	Global Blue Schools Network: a toolkit for its implementation

160. Professor Ronaldo Christofoletti, Chair of the Ocean Literacy Group of Experts for, introduced this item. He recalled the main activities of the working group since its establishment including establishment of five dedicated working groups focusing on Advocacy, Communications, Education, Fundraising, and Ocean & Climate. The Group of Experts have

also contributed to the development of the new *Theory of Change for Ocean Decade Challenge 10 (2025–2030)* (ref.: IOC/2024/ODS/51.11).

161. He then provided an overview of activities that have contributed to progressing the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action (2018–2021), and introduced an updated Ocean Literacy Plan of Action (2026–2030) (IOC/A-33/4.4.Doc(1)), which outlines activities aimed at integrating ocean knowledge with public action; empowering informed decision-making to address pressing challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution; and fostering global stewardship in support of transitioning to sustainable ocean management,

162. Finally, Professor Christofletti reported on the activities developed within the context of the UN Decade of Ocean Science with particular reference to outcome 7 and challenges 9 and 10 of the Ocean Decade Implementation Plan, and the main elements of the document ‘Ocean literacy within the UN Ocean Decade: a framework for action’ ([IOC/2021/ODS/22](#)). He also provided an overview of documents produced on ocean literacy since the 32nd Assembly including ‘Promoting Ocean Literacy: an education policy brief’ ([IOC/POL/2025/1](#)), ‘A Theory of Change for the Ocean Decade Challenge 10 (IOC/2024/ODS/51.11), and ‘Global Blue Schools Network: a toolkit for its implementation’ (IOC/2025/MG/98).

Draft Decision A-33/4.4

IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action 2026–2030

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the draft IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action (2026–2030) contained in IOC/A-33/4.4.Doc(1),
2. Recalling the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 ([IOC/INF-1433](#)) in which Ocean Literacy is identified as a main activity of the strategy output 5: Visibility, awareness and understanding on the roles and values of the ocean and ocean research in relation to human wellbeing and sustainable development increased,
3. Taking into account the IOC’s progress on Ocean Literacy and the role it can play as a cross-cutting element across all IOC programmes and sectors, the IOC collaborates with regional subsidiary bodies like IOCARIBE, IOCINDIO, IOCAFRICA, and WESTPAC. These partnerships aim to connect local communities with global environmental goals, share resources on climate change, and foster collaboration between educators, policymakers, and local stakeholders,
4. Considering the role of Ocean Literacy in the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), and the establishment of the Decade Coordination Office (DCO) for Connecting People and Ocean under the Challenge 10, coordinated by the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, Italy,
5. Recognizing the significant achievements of the IOC Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy in supporting the advancement of Ocean Literacy at global, regional, national and local scales,
6. Decides, to establish the IOC Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy as one of the permanent expert groups of the Commission, with updated terms of reference as presented in the annex to this decision, and to launch a call for nominations for

the renewal of the Group, ensuring continuity, geographical and gender balance, and multidisciplinary expertise;

7. Requests the IOC Secretariat to start a consultation process with its Member States, other IOC programmes and regional sub-commissions to review the draft 'IOC Ocean Literacy Action Plan 2026–2030', and to present a revised version to the IOC Executive Council at the 59th session for endorsement;
8. Calls on the IOC Secretariat to steer the development of a Blue Schools Global Network, in collaboration with the UNESCO Education Sector and relevant partners;
9. Expresses its appreciation to the Government of Sweden for the continued financial support provided to the IOC's Ocean Literacy activities and encourages other Member States to follow this example;
10. Expresses its gratitude to the European Commission and the Prada Group for their ongoing financial contributions to the IOC's Ocean Literacy activities;
11. Agrees that the budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission (A-33/DR.[5.4]).

Annex to Dec. A-33/4.4

IOC Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy

Terms of Reference

The Group will be composed of 20 experts from diverse and relevant disciplines and interested parties reflecting the multi-stakeholder nature of ocean literacy and taking into consideration geographical and gender balance. Experts will be selected following a call to Member States and partner organizations and suggestions from the IOC Secretariat. The Group of Experts will elect its Chair and Vice-chair.

The Group of Experts will advise on and, where applicable, will contribute to the implementation, coordination, and evolution of the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action (IOC/A-33/4.4.Doc(1)) through:

- (i) improved coordination of ocean literacy activities implemented across regions;
- (ii) identification of synergies with relevant groups, including but not limited to UNESCO Sectors, international organizations, academic institutions, NGOs, relevant networks, and private sector associations;
- (iii) support the assessment and monitoring progress of ocean literacy across Member States;

The Group of Experts will participate, with the support of the IOC Secretariat, in ocean advocacy and diplomacy initiatives to advance ocean literacy and policy decisions, paying particular attention to priority groups, such as youth and SIDS;

The Group of Experts can be called upon to advise Member States and relevant stakeholders when support is required to implement and deliver ocean literacy initiatives, as appropriate.

The Group of Experts' contributions will include, but not limited to:

- (i) Proactively drafting position and white papers;
- (ii) Supporting the targeted use and dissemination of ocean communication strategies and toolkits, ensuring they reach appropriate audiences in ways that are contextually relevant and aligned with the Plan of Action;
- (iii) Leveraging a directory of specialists to foster collaboration between different sectors and audiences;
- (iv) Contributing to and reviewing IOC ocean literacy documents;

The Group of Experts will proactively communicate its progress, activities, and initiatives to relevant stakeholders.

The Group of Experts shall report to each session of the IOC Assembly, which shall decide on its renewal in four years at its 35th session.

163. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

4.5 GLOBAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM

4.5.1 GOOS Governance

[Rule of Procedure 45.1(j); Dec. EC-57/4.1]

<u>Working document</u>	IOC/A-33/4.5.1.Doc(1)	Proposal for a Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Reform
<u>Information</u>	GOOS-305	Summary Report of the 14th Session of the GOOS Steering Committee (SC-14), 19-21 February 2025, UNESCO, Paris
<u>Reference</u>	IOC/EC 57/4.1.Doc(1)	Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Governance

164. Ms Joanna Post, Head of the Ocean Observations & Services Section introduced this item. She presented an overview of the proposal to evolve GOOS governance and proposed actions moving forward. The proposal was requested in Decision EC-57/4.1.

165. She explained that the evolution of GOOS will follow a double diamond approach. The first diamond during 2025 will define the mission and scope of GOOS moving forward—the Why and the What. A consultancy has been recruited to undertake this work which includes a mission and scope review and revision, structure review, and provision of a draft proposal for structure, governance and delivery mechanisms.

166. Activities in the second diamond, 2026 and beyond, will develop and deliver a reformed GOOS—the How. Depending on the outcomes from the first diamond, these activities will consider and evolve the revised GOOS delivery (mission, scope, structure, terms of reference, transparent processes, reporting and delivery mechanisms), a user and uptake

strategy, development of a GOOS basic network, co-implementation across GOOS and IOC of the IOC Data Architecture, GOOS Communications Plan and, by 2029, a GOOS 2030+ revised strategy.

Dec. A-33/4.5.1

Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Governance

The Assembly,

1. Having examined IOC/A-33/4.8.1.Doc(1),
2. Recalling IOC Decisions A-32/4.8.1 and EC-57/4.1,
3. Endorses the Approach to GOOS Reform as contained in document IOC/A-33/4.5.1.Doc(1);
4. Requests the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the GOOS Steering Committee and representatives from Member States and GOOS sponsors, to provide an update on the work to the IOC Executive Council at its the 59th session for Member States review and additional guidance;
5. Notes that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the overall Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting matters of the Commission, Resolution A-33/[5.4].

167. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

4.5.2 GOOS Steering Committee Workplan
[Res. XXVI-8]

<u>Working document</u>	IOC/A-33/4.5.2.Doc(1)	Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Steering Committee Workplan
<u>Report</u>	GOOS-305	Report of the 14th Session of the Global Ocean Observing System Steering Committee, UNESCO, 19–21 February 2025

168. The GOOS Steering Committee (SC) Co-Chairs, Balakrishnan Nair and David Legler, introduced this item. They reported to the Assembly on the outcomes of the 14th session of the GOOS SC (SC-14) which was held at the IOC HQ, Paris, 19–21 February 2025. The GOOS Co-Chairs informed Member States of the SC’s approach to steering GOOS moving forward and provided an update on the outcomes of SC-14 and the GOOS Workplan 2025–2027.

169. The co-chairs highlighted that, as per its mandate, the SC will focus, in the next biennium and beyond, on steering clear decision making and identification of strategic actions towards a multipurpose and sustained observation system, including transparent organizational and process improvements and changes, to support Member States and the multi-user community of GOOS.

170. Current resource requirements do not enable GOOS to move at the pace needed and demanded by Member States, society and private-sector stakeholders. However, the Steering

Committee also recognises that there is a need to implement and build clearer and more transparent management, stronger and focused collaboration and well-defined processes, as well as manage change (which is taking place under the GOOS governance reform process).

171. Discussions at SC-14 focussed on action- and knowledge-driven outputs and outcomes the long term aim is to move GOOS into a new paradigm where it becomes more sustained in its operations with a complementary R&D component; more decisional and more transparent in its deliberations, processes and decisions; more integrated both across IOC, WMO and with other communities such as the satellite community and the private sector. The SC will continue to steer GOOS to support a robust system driven by the needs of Member States and other relevant stakeholders that is aligned for strategic effectiveness as well as to support discussions on funding mechanisms for GOOS.

172. The co-chairs explained that the SC-14 discussed priority topic areas to guide the subsequent GOOS Workplan 2025–2027. The Workplan has the following sections: (i) coordination and management (core activities); (ii) Observation system integration, design, development and delivery (GOOS 2030 Strategy, Goal 2); (iii) Maintain and strengthen data integration and delivery (new focus area across all 3 goals); (iv) System implementation: (a) at national and regional levels, and (b) and applications (GOOS 2030 Strategy, Goal 1); (v) Outreach: projects, partners and communications (GOOS 2030 Strategy, Goals 1 and 3) and (vi) GOOS Reform (GOOS 2030 Strategy, Goal 3).

173. The co-chairs informed on three topics from the SC-14 linked to other agenda items discussed at the Assembly. Firstly, the SC-14 welcomed the results of the IODE-GOOS Data Workshop and proposal to develop an IOC data architecture (agenda item 3.4.3) jointly with GOOS and noted that demonstration ‘products’ will help make visible the benefits of ocean observation and related data management/sharing. Secondly, the SC-14 adopted a change in approach to GOOS projects, moving to a system for GOOS endorsed projects. In this context, the SC considered and agreed that the IODE-GOOS OBPS Project should become a cross-IOC Ocean best Practices System, with a broader funding based supported by all IOC sections (agenda item 3.4.4). Thirdly the GOOS SC are strongly involved in the GOOS governance reform process (agenda item 4.5.1) and held a focused workshop at the SC-14 to steer the process moving forward.

Draft Decision A-33/4.5.2

**Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Workplan
(2025–2027)**

The Assembly,

1. Recalling IOC Resolution XXVI-8,
2. Having examined document IOC/A-33/4.5.2.Doc(1) and the GOOS Steering Committee Report of its 14th session (SC-14),
3. Recognizing the fundamental role of GOOS in coordinating and integrating a system for global sustained ocean observations across all functions of the IOC Medium-Term Strategy as well as for global, regional and national scientific, environmental and operational needs for forecasting, early warning, climate and ocean health, and ocean economy growth, to meet the needs of Member States,
4. Endorses the Report of the GOOS Steering Committee (SC-14) and the recommendations contained therein;

5. Agrees to the GOOS Workplan for 2025–2027;
6. Notes that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the overall Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting matters of the Commission;
7. Expresses its deep appreciation for the support to the GOOS management team provided by Denmark, European Commission, France, Monaco, USA, and WMO, and to all relevant Member States for their support to OceanOPS as well as in the implementation of the global ocean observing system;
8. Strongly encourages Member States and partners to: (i) provide voluntary financial contributions to the IOC for the implementation of GOOS, as well as in-kind support, such as staff secondments, to the Secretariat and OceanOPS; and (ii) support regional and national coordination and implementation of the global ocean observing system;
9. Requested Member States to identify whether they would be prepared to host an in-person GOOS community meeting in 2027, led by the GOOS Steering Committee, with regional and national focal points, GOOS expert panel representatives, and other relevant stakeholders including from the data community and private sector, and to inform the Secretariat before the 59th session of the IOC Executive Council.

GOOS Steering Committee Regional Membership

10. Recalling the GOOS Steering Committee regional membership appointment defined in IOC Resolution XXVI-8, and also recalling the IOC Circular Letter [3030](#) inviting Member States to the 33rd Assembly and requesting nominations of experts for appointment by Member State Electoral Groups,
11. Notes the appointment by the Member State Electoral Groups of a regional expert member of the GOOS SC for 2026–2027:
 - (Group I)
 - (Group II)
 - (Group III)
 - (Group IV)
 - (Group V)

174. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

4.5.3 Report of the Intersessional Working Group on Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction [Dec. EC-55/3.4; Dec. A-32/4.8.2]

<u>Working document</u>	IOC/A-33/4.5.3.Doc(1)	Report of the Intersessional Working Group on Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction (2025)
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175. The co-chair of the Intersessional Working Group, Dr Suzan Mohamed El Gharabawy introduced this agenda item. She recalled that the Assembly, at its 32nd session, through Decision A-32/4.8.2, established an *ad hoc* intersessional Working Group, which had the Terms of Reference provided in the Annex to that decision. It was further recalled that the working group provided an interim report ([IOC/EC-57/4.2.Doc\(1\)](#)) to the 57th session of the Executive Council, which encouraged the working group to continue its work ([Decision EC-57/4.2](#)).

176. The mandate for the working group was to review background materials, discuss concrete cases and their solution spaces, prepare recommendations regarding potential actions and present the results from these discussions, with any recommendations for action on this issue, to the IOC at this Assembly.

177. The co-chairs highlighted key outcomes from the discussions and the potential actions identified as described in document IOC/A-33/4.5.3.Doc(1).

178. The co-chairs identified that further work addressing ocean observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction should be carried out in accordance with the recommendations from the working group. They concluded that the intersessional working group had completed its work.

Draft Decision A-33/4.5.3

Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction

The Assembly,

1. Having examined document IOC/A-33/4.5.3.Doc(1) on the reporting of the Intersessional Working Group on Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction,
2. Recalling decision A-32/4.8.2 establishing the IOC ad hoc intersessional Working Group on Ocean Observations in Areas of National Jurisdiction, and decision EC-55/3.4 encouraging the group to continue its work towards the 33rd session of the IOC Assembly,
3. Recognizing that the IOC ad hoc intersessional Working Group on Ocean Observations in Areas of National Jurisdiction has met the terms of reference and fulfilled its mandates by presenting results from discussions to it at its 33rd session,
4. Requests GOOS to raise awareness of the marine scientific research (MSR) process, such as through relevant communications, including appropriate links to information;
5. Also requests GOOS to consult with its networks, and relevant UN organizations and stakeholders, including DOALOS, on the feasibility of revising the 2010 DOALOS "Marine Scientific Research. A revised guide to the implementation of the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea" and report back to it at its 34th session;
6. Invites Member States to promote collaboration between neighbouring coastal States to facilitate bilateral and regional facilitation of MSR clearance;

7. Invites IOC's regional subsidiary bodies and GOOS regional alliances to act as intermediaries between national authorities and research networks and facilitate awareness of the MSR clearance process by offering consistent technical advice and guidance, as well as coordinating efforts to streamline procedures among countries with similar regional characteristics;
8. Requests the GOOS Steering Committee to provide a draft proposal on the actions that IOC could take to address the challenges, identified by the working group, for the Ship-of-Opportunity Programme to the IOC Executive Council at its 59th session, with the aim to present a proposal for consideration by the IOC Assembly at its 34th session;
9. Decides to close the IOC ad hoc intersessional Working Group on Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction;
10. Acknowledges the contributions from the Working Group and thanks the co-chairs and Member States who contributed to its work.

179. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

4.6 JOINT WMO-IOC COLLABORATIVE BOARD (JCB) STRATEGIC ADVICE
ON JOINT WORK TO ACHIEVE COMMON OBJECTIVES
[Res. XXX-2; Dec. A-31/3.5.5; Dec. A-32/4.9]

Working document IOC/A-33/4.6.Doc(1) Report of the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board (JCB)

180. Prof. Yutaka Michida, Chair of IOC and acting co-chair of the JCB, introduced this agenda item. He reminded Member States that the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board was created by IOC Assembly Resolution XXX-2 (2019) and is guided by its terms of reference as well as the [WMO/IOC Collaborative Strategy](#).

181. Prof. Michida noted that the JCB has made significant progress (IOC/A-33/4.6.Doc(1)) over the last year. He presented the outcomes of the JCB meeting of September 2024 as well as activities since the meeting. The primary aim of the meeting was to identify key priority areas for the JCB's efforts. This was determined through a multi-criteria analysis of potential topics and led to the identification of four prioritized work areas and key actions under each work area which are now ongoing.

182. Prof. Michida finished by confirming that there is strong commitment from IOC and WMO towards supporting the JCB in fulfilling its mandate and invited comments from Member States in view of the forthcoming meeting of JCB.

Draft Decision A-33/4.6

**Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board (JCB) Strategic Advice
on Joint Work to Achieve Common Objectives**

The Assembly,

1. Having examined document IOC/A-33/4.6.Doc(1),
2. Recalling IOC Assembly Resolution XXX-2 (2019) creating the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board (JCB), as a high-level coordination mechanism with broader engagement of the key relevant bodies of the WMO and IOC,
3. Having considered the outcomes of the JCB meeting in September 2024, which identified four primary work areas for the JCB in the next two-year period,
4. Noting the establishment of JCB subgroups on Global Ocean Basic Observing networks (GBON) and on data management to advance the activities of two primary work areas,
5. Decides to prolong the WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy 2022–2025 through 2027 in its present form (cf. IOC/A-31/3.5.5.Doc(1) Rev.);
6. Requests the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board to report on progress in the four work areas to the WMO and IOC Executive Councils in 2026;
7. Also requests the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board to engage with WMO Members and IOC Member States, including through WMO Regional Associations and IOC regional sub-commissions, to build an understanding of the common issues faced by meteorological and oceanographic communities that the JCB could address;
8. Invites Members to:
 - (i) Collaborate within national systems on the four work areas identified by the JCB;
 - (ii) Support the work of the JCB, and engage with it, through IOC national focal points and WMO Permanent Representatives, including on any common issues identified at the national level;
 - (iii) Provide a written submission by 1 September 2025 identifying:
 - a) barriers and opportunities for delivering the actions under the four work areas above at the national level to inform the work of the JCB;
 - b) future priority topics that the JCB could address (recognizing that some future topics have already been identified and are listed in the JCB-3 Part 2 report);
 - c) Actively contribute to the prioritized work areas, in particular, the acceleration of the achievement and readiness of the UN Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative and early action by all.

183. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

4.7 IOC CONTRIBUTIONS TO UN GOVERNANCE PROCESSES [Rule of Procedure 45.1(g)]

Working document IOC/A-33/4.7Doc(1) IOC Contributions to UN Governance Processes (2025)

<u>Information</u>	<i>To be completed</i>	UNOC Political Declaration (<i>available after 13 June 2025</i>)
<u>Reference</u>	CBD/COP/16/INF/3 /Rev.1	Revised guidance on using the indicators of the monitoring framework of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
	CBD/COP/16/INF/4	Revised Guidance on needs related to implementing the monitoring framework of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*
	A/AC.296/2025/9	Statement by the Co-Chairs of the BBNJ Preparatory Commission at the closing of the first session

184. The IOC Executive Secretary introduced this agenda item. Recognising its role in the UN system, in accordance with its Statutes, as a competent international organization in the fields of Marine Scientific Research and Transfer of Marine Technology, IOC contributes to various United Nations processes related to the ocean.

185. He outlined the outcomes of the recent UN Ocean Conference and the key messages conveyed by the IOC at the Conference, namely to advance ocean science and knowledge as a basis for action to achieve SDG 14 and the 2030 Agenda in line with IOC's mandate and strategic priorities.

186. IOC's engagement and key messages at UNOC focused on: (i) fulfilling the critical knowledge priorities through the Ocean Decade as identified in [The Barcelona Statement](#); (ii) increasing sustained investment in ocean science activities and infrastructure for observations and data; (iii) accelerating science-based sustainable ocean plans; (iv) increasing the generation of data, knowledge and capacity to support the implementation of commitments under BBNJ and GBF; (v) as well delivering collaborative action for disaster risk reduction and preparedness in the face of ocean hazards.

187. The Secretariat also actively engaged in the 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Cali, Colombia, 21 October–1 November 2024) in contribution to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework which identified 23 action-oriented global targets to curb biodiversity loss and restore ecosystem by 2050. The Executive Secretary reported that several of the GBF targets relies on the provision and access to measurable data, making sustained ocean observations and accessible data vital for informed decision-making. GOOS and OBIS therefore play a pivotal role in supporting several GBF targets and indicators by providing essential ocean data, coordinated marine biological and ecosystem observations, structured around a set of Essential Ocean Variables (EOVs). Furthermore, OBIS was also added to the list of tools designed to help countries monitor biodiversity and track progress in ocean, species, and ecosystem protection. In this regard, *CBD COP16 Revised Guidance on needs related to implementing the monitoring framework of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* (CBD/COP/16/INF/4) make specific reference to GOOS and OBIS.

188. Within the framework of the UNCLOS Treaty on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, the IOC Secretariat took part in the 1st Preparatory Commission for the Entry into Force of the Agreement and the Convening of the First Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Agreement (April 2025). Importantly for the Commission, the Agreement makes reference to the possible cooperation with UNESCO-IOC in the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism to be created under the auspices of the new treaty potentially opening a pathway for deploying IOC's tested and fully operational platforms and programmes in capacity development and transfer of marine technology for the benefit of all countries.

189. The Executive Secretary further highlighted plans for developing an IOC-wide approach to marine biodiversity in order to frame the contribution of its programmes to marine biodiversity across the whole IOC value chain.

190. Principals of the other UN agencies attending the Assembly were given the opportunity to intervene to highlight their collaboration with IOC.

Draft Decision A-33/4.7

IOC Contributions to UN Governance Processes

The Assembly,

1. Having examined document IOC/A-33/4.7.Doc(1),
2. Recalling IOC decision EC-XLIX/4.1 defining the strategic contributions of IOC to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDG process and acknowledging the role of IOC as custodian agency for SDG indicators 14.3.1 and 14.a.1,
3. Welcomes the outcomes of the 1st meeting of the Preparatory Commission for the Entry into Force of the BBNJ Agreement (14–25 April 2025, UN Hq)), including the proposal to establish a group involving experts to advance work related to the BBNJ Clearing House Mechanism;
4. Also welcomes the recent developments under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity such as the new process for identifying Ecologically or Biologically Significant marine Areas (EBSAs);
5. Further welcomes the recent developments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including through the regular Ocean/Climate Dialogue organised yearly;
6. Invites IOC Member States to engage in the above-mentioned processes through relevant national coordination mechanism, and to highlight the value proposition and expertise of the IOC to these ocean governance processes, particularly in the area of coordination of international ocean science processes, ocean observation and exchange of ocean data, the assessment of national and regional capacities in ocean science, the design/implementation of tailored capacity development initiatives and regional collaborative approaches, as well as science-based application for ocean management;
7. Requests the IOC Executive Secretary to continue to engage and reinforce cooperation with relevant UN organizations managing these processes, and provide technical and scientific inputs, as appropriate, to support the implementation of these ocean governance mechanisms;
8. Encourages Member States to continue regular measurements and data collections for SDG 14.3.1 and 14.a.1 indicators, as well as the support to relevant IOC mechanisms, in particular the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network, the Ocean Acidification Research for Sustainability Ocean Decade programme, the SDG 14.3.1 data portal working groups, the *Global Ocean Science Report* and GOSR Tracker.

191. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

4.8 REPORT ON THE UNITED NATIONS OCEAN DECADE 2021–2030
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND RESULTS OF THE MID-TERM EVALUATION
[Dec. EC-XLIX/5; Res. XXIX/1; Res. EC-LI.1; Res. EC-57/1]

<u>Working documents</u>	IOC/A-33/4.8.Doc(1)	Update on implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development
	IOC/33/4.8.Doc(2)	Summary of the mid-term evaluation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and Management Response to Evaluation Findings
	IOC/A-33/4.8.Doc(3)	Revised Terms of Reference for the Decade Advisory Board
<u>Information</u>	IOC/INF-1545	United Nations Ocean Decade 2021–2030: Mid-Term Evaluation Report
	IOC/INF-1546	International Platform for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS) and Options for Future Role of IOC
	IOC/2024/ODS/50	Ambition, Action, Impact: the Ocean Decade Pathway to 2030: consolidated Outcomes of the Vision 2030 Process
<u>Reference</u>	IOC/2023/ODS/45	Ocean Decade data & information strategy: The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)

192. The Executive Secretary introduced this item. He highlighted that the Decade is at the mid-point of its implementation and that the portfolio of Decade Actions is continuing to grow rapidly with strong thematic diversity across all Ocean Decade Challenges. He underscored the importance of the work of the Decade Advisory Board and thanked its co-chairs and members for their commitment and strategic advice in guiding implementation of the Decade. He emphasized the emergence of a growing network of regional and thematic decentralized coordination structures to support the work of the Decade Coordination Unit and recalled that 40 National Decade Committees are now operational. He reminded Member States that a number of Decade Actions and coordination structures are led by IOC and that, if adequately resourced, these initiatives have the potential to substantively contribute to the sustained growth, positioning and impact of IOC. He recalled the presence of the Ocean Decade in international and regional ocean convenings and conferences over the last 12 months that has contributed to an increasing global visibility for IOC and Decade Actions. He also highlighted the importance of the mid-term evaluation process that has been undertaken over the last 12 months and drew attention to his management response to the evaluation that sets out the broad direction for the Decade delivery in the next five years. He recalled the urgent need for increased investment and engagement by Member States in the Decade in order to ensure effective implementation of the actions identified in the management response related both to central coordination by the IOC, as well as IOC-led decentralised coordination structures and Decade Actions.

193. Following the Executive Secretary's introduction, Mr Julian Barbière, Ocean Decade Coordinator a.i. supported by Ms Alison Clausen, Programme Specialist, presented an overview of the progress in operationalizing the Implementation Plan. He reported that to date, 8 Calls for Decade Actions have been concluded and have resulted in the endorsement of 59 Decade programmes, 535 Decade projects and 109 Decade contributions. The ninth Call for

Decade Actions is currently open until 31 August 2025. He reported that while the portfolio of Decade Actions exhibits strong thematic diversity, there are still important gaps in leadership from partners in SIDS and LDCs. He indicated that the Decade would increasingly focus on: (i) soliciting new Decade Actions that are directly aligned with priorities identified in *The Barcelona Statement*; and (ii) consolidating the collective impact of the existing portfolio of Decade Actions to inform policy- and decision-making, including UN conventions and frameworks.

194. Mr Barbière reported that the growing network of decentralised coordination structures including 12 Decade Collaborative Centres and Decade Coordination Offices and 20 Decade Implementing Partners are essential partners to coordinate and support existing Decade Actions, analyze gaps and future priorities, and catalyze new Decade Actions in response to future Calls for Decade Actions. He thanked partner institutions for their commitments in establishing decentralized coordination structures but indicated that gaps in the network remained in priority thematic areas and geographies and reminded the Assembly that the Decade Coordination Offices led or proposed by IOC required additional resources to become fully operational.

195. He reported on the work of the Decade Advisory Board that met four times over the last 12 months and played an important role in making recommendations on Decade programme endorsement, as well as providing advice on strategic issues including related to the engagement of SIDS and LDCs in the Decade, measures to enhance the engagement of indigenous and local knowledge holders, and resource mobilisation. He noted that the term of the current membership of the Decade Advisory Board will come to an end in December 2025 and indicated that new call for nominations will be launched in the third quarter of 2024.

196. Mr Barbière confirmed that 40 National Decade Committees have been established and are operational but highlighted the uneven geographic distribution of these Committees with fewer Committees in SIDS or LDCs. He reminded the Assembly of the importance of National Decade Committees to convene diverse stakeholders to identify national ocean science and capacity development priorities, to strengthen the science-policy interface at the national level, and the important role that Committees can play in aligning national resource allocation decisions with Decade priorities. He encouraged Member States to develop new National Decade Committees and indicated that the Decade Coordination Unit and existing group of National Decade Committees could provide mentoring and support to this process.

197. He outlined the contribution of IOC to the Decade in the form of Decade programmes and projects, the central Decade Coordination Unit, and the supporting role of its Sub-Commissions Secretariats acting as Decade Coordination Offices. He highlighted the strong potential for IOC-led Decade Actions and coordination structures to contribute to the strengthening and strategic expansion of IOC programmes and Regional Subsidiary Bodies, but noted the significant resource constraints that persist. He strongly encouraged Member States to provide additional in-kind and financial resources to support the central positioning of IOC within the Decade both in its coordination role as well as through its programmatic contributions.

198. Mr Barbière highlighted the important role that the members of the Ocean Decade Alliance and Foundations Dialogue have played in raising awareness and mobilising in-kind and financial resources for the success of the Decade. He welcomed the new Patrons and institutional members of the Ocean Decade Alliance and encouraged their active engagement in the future activities of the Decade.

199. He recalled that the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference that was generously hosted by Spain in Barcelona in April 2024 was a critical moment in the implementation of the Decade and that the resulting *Barcelona Statement* is guiding the work of the Decade in relation to science and knowledge priorities. Mr Barbière noted the importance of strong articulation of

these priorities with the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference that is co-hosted by France and Costa Rica from 9–13 June.

200. Mr Barbière recalled the mid-term evaluation process of the Ocean Decade that was led by UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service between September 2024 and April 2025 and thanked all Member States and partners who participated in the comprehensive consultation process. He outlined key elements of IOC/A-33/4.8.Doc(2) as the management response to the recommendations contained in the evaluator's report, including actions to streamline and strengthen governance, increase engagement of UN agencies, strengthen national and regional engagement, enhance the impact of Decade Actions, and increase the leveraging of the Decade for a stronger, future IOC. He noted that IOC/A-33/4.8.Doc(3) containing the revised Terms of Reference for the Decade Advisory Board was an important first response to the evaluation and highlighted that the successful implementation of the full management response would require the mobilisation of increased resources from Member States and partners.

201. Mr Barbière thanked all Member States who expressed interest to host the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference and congratulated the successful bidder. He reiterated the importance of the Conference to lay the groundwork for a strong legacy of the Ocean Decade, and encouraged the active participation of all Member States and partners in the preparatory process that will commence in early 2026.

202. Finally, Mr Barbière informed the Assembly about a several information documents related to the implementation of the Decade including IOC/INF-1545 on the International Platform for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS) and Options for the Future Role of IOC. He reminded the Assembly that the Decade was a voluntary mechanism, and that coordination was resourced entirely from extrabudgetary sources. He highlighted the call made to Member States through previous circular letters to provide in-kind and financial support to the Decade and warmly thanked those Member States and partners who have provided essential support to Decade coordination and Decade Actions.

Draft Resolution A-33/[4.8]

Submitted by _____

**Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)**

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

1. Recalling

203. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational

5. **GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING**

[Statutes Art. 6B]

5.1 DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2026–2029 (DRAFT 43 C/5, FIRST BIENNIUM OF THE 2026–2029 QUADRENNIUM)

<u>Working documents</u>	IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(1)	Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–2027 (Draft 43 C/5, first biennium of the 2026–2029 quadrennium)
	IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(2)	Report of the Chairperson of the IOC Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (2024–2025) <i>(available at the beginning of the session)</i>

204. The Executive Secretary introduced this item.

205. The Executive Secretary highlighted that in developing its proposals for the detailed workplans for the first biennium of the last quadrennium of its current Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029), the Secretariat was guided by the Commission’s Mission statement, Vision and High-Level Objectives and IOC Resolutions A-32/4 and EC-57/4 on budgeting priorities.

206. This programme falls at a critical time in the second half of implementation of the Ocean Decade and the finishing line for the SDGs of 2030 Agenda. It draws on the initial results of Phase 1 of the ongoing consultation process ‘IOC and the Future of the Ocean’ which is identifying the evolving needs of Member States in response to rapid changes in the state of the ocean, dynamic global ocean governance and policy landscape, and an increased focus of IOC on the application of science and knowledge for decision making.

207. In this context, and pending the outcome of the above-mentioned consultation that will further inform the process and may introduce adjustments at future governing bodies’ sessions, it is proposed that the IOC’s work in the first biennium of the 43 C/5 will focus on delivering on the IOC Output:

- (i) ‘Member States critically supported in strengthening their capacity to conduct marine scientific research, generate knowledge, and develop and implement science-based tools, services and policies in order to reverse the decline in ocean health and accelerate the transition towards sustainable management of ocean-related risks and opportunities’,

208. And giving priority to key action areas:

- (ii) Upscaling and sustaining the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) infrastructure to address user needs including Member States own needs and providing data and information to support implementation UN conventions and frameworks including in relation to climate, biodiversity and ocean health.
- (iii) Expanding the Ocean Data & Information System (ODIS) to achieve global coverage and operationalizing a coordinated IOC data architecture.
- (iv) Strengthened coordination in relation to marine biodiversity to better support Member States in fulfilling commitments in implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the BBNJ Agreement, as well as regional policy frameworks.
- (v) Advancing the Tsunami Programme ambition to achieve 100% of communities at risk to be Tsunami Ready and initiating planning and implementation of broader multi-hazard early warning systems to support climate resilience, sustainable biodiversity and ecosystem management, and food security.
- (vi) Supporting Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management including through

strengthened regional delivery mechanisms and acting as global knowledge partner for Member States' commitments to develop and implement Sustainable Ocean Plans.

- (vii) Enhancing Member State's capacity to engage in and benefit from IOC programmes with a particular focus on Africa and SIDS.
- (viii) Enhancing delivery of the Ocean Decade to strengthen the collective impact of IOC-led and partner-led Decade programmes and projects to inform societal decision making at all scales and lay the foundation for the post-2030 legacy of the Decade.
- (ix) contributing to UNESCO Intersectoral Outputs on Environmental Education and Early Warning For All with focus on SIDS.

209. Work across these action areas will be underpinned by evidence on societal and economic benefits of return on investment in ocean science and supported by cross-cutting actions in capacity development, ocean literacy, and strategic communications. IOC-led assessment and knowledge synthesis products, and IOC's contributions to partner-led products will be key elements of the work to deliver global and regional information across the science-policy-society interface. Actions will be tailored to regional needs and will have a specific focus on priority groups including Africa, SIDS and Early Career Ocean Professionals. Partnerships within and beyond UN system will be further strengthened to ensure effective delivery of IOC's work.

210. Regarding the Draft 43 C/5 budget, the Executive Secretary explained that UNESCO 43 C/5 regular budget proposal (Member States' assessed contributions), needs 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. Considering these fixed costs and the UNESCO Executive Board's request for budget options, UNESCO presented three scenarios for its regular budget ceiling:

- (i) **Scenario 1: Zero Real Growth (ZRG)**, maintaining a cautious fiscal approach, allowing for partial adjustment for inflation while upholding overall budgetary restraint—overall UNESCO ceiling of \$719.7million, IOC appropriation \$21,874,400.
- (ii) **Scenario 2: Zero Nominal Growth (ZNG1)**, preserving the nominal level of the 42 C/5 regular budget with all fixed costs and the additional financing decisions absorbed—overall UNESCO ceiling of \$685.4 million, IOC appropriation \$20,707,320.
- (iii) **Scenario 3: Zero Nominal Growth (ZNG2)**, preserving the nominal level of the 42 C/5 regular budget with partial deferral of some costs —overall UNESCO ceiling of \$685.4 million, IOC appropriation \$20,983.999.

211. With all the three scenarios foreseeing no new regular budget-funded positions, simply covering the statutory staff costs increase for the same number of posts as in the 42 C/5, many critical areas of the Commission's work remain understaffed, ultimately affecting its ability to deliver on Member States' expectations.

212. The impact of statutory staff increases with imply the activity budget decrease compared to 42 C/5 of 4.5% under the ZRG scenario, 17.4% under the ZNG 1 and 14.3% under ZNG 2.

213. In preparing its proposals for the Draft 43 C/5 allocations, the Secretariat was guided by Member States' definition of priorities as reflected in IOC Resolutions [A-32/4](#) and [EC-57/2](#).

214. With all proposed scenarios implying a reduction of the non-staff (activity) portion of the budget, the cut across the board in the two UNESCO Zero Nominal Growth scenarios keeps the proportional increases to GOOS, IODE, Capacity Development and regional subsidiary bodies already agreed in the 42 C/5 approved.

215. The Zero Real Growth scenario allows to keep those ‘critically vulnerable’ areas at the same budgetary level as in the 42 C/5 approved and to earmark some funding toward planning the design, development and implementation of IOC-coordinated multi-hazard warning systems and of evolving the IOC Ocean Best Practices System from a GOOS-IODE project-based activity to a cross IOC programme.

216. The Executive Secretary also explained that the Secretariat is projecting \$22.3 million in voluntary contributions in 2026–2027, or 18.7% less than in the previous biennium. This projection reflects a realistic assessment of available resources and the Secretariat’s implementation capacities.

Draft Decision A-33/5.1

**Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–2027
(draft 43 C/5, first biennium of the 2026–2029 quadrennium)**

The Assembly,

1. Recalling IOC Resolutions A-32/4 and EC-57/2,
2. Takes note of documents IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(1) and IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(2) subject to further examination by the Financial Committee with a view of formulating a draft resolution for discussion in plenary under agenda item 5.4 and subsequent adoption.

217. The representatives of ___ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

**5.2 ASSESSMENT OF IOC’S GOVERNANCE
AND MANAGEMENT PROCESSES**
[Res. EC-57/2]

Working document IOC/A-33/5.2.Doc(1) Assessment of IOC’s governance and management processes

218. The Executive Secretary made a brief introduction to this item. He recalled that the IOC Executive Council through IOC Resolution [EC-57/2](#) requested *‘the IOC Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Officers of the Commission, to launch an external assessment of IOC’s governance and management processes, with a view to streamlining operations and optimising the use of resources to be truly fit for purpose in response to the fast-evolving ocean agenda and increasing demands of Member States and multilateral processes’*.

219. The Executive Secretary recalled that this request from Member States should be seen against the backdrop of IOC’s significantly increased regular budget and the need to ensure efficient, effective and accountable execution of IOC’s mandate and responsibilities, in full compliance with the Commission’s Statutes.

220. The scope of the assessment carried out by Farman & Partners and presented to the Assembly as document IOC/A-33/5.2.Doc(1), encompassed the governance structure and processes, the management and operational processes, the stakeholder engagement and collaboration, and resource optimization and sustainability.

221. In addition to analysing the relevant documentation, the contractor interviewed a geographically representative panel of 25 present and past IOC elected officials, Member State focal points and partners. The report and its findings were discussed at the IOC Officers' meeting in January 2025 and discussed by the Intersessional Financial Advisor Group at its third online meeting on 16 April 2025 and the in-person meeting on 23 June 2025. IFAG work on the matter is reported to the Assembly in the Report of the IFAG Chair (intersessional period 2024–2025), document IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(2).

Draft Decision A-33/5.2

Assessment of IOC's Governance and Management Processes

The Assembly,

3. Recalling IOC Resolution EC-57/2,
4. Takes note of document IOC/A-33/5.2.Doc(1) subject to further examination by the Financial Committee with a view of formulating a draft resolution for discussion in plenary under agenda item 5.4 and subsequent adoption.

222. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

5.3 IOC AND THE FUTURE OF THE OCEAN CONSULTATION PROCESS
[Dec. EC-55/3.2.Doc(1); Res. XXX-3; Dec. EC-55/3.2; Res. EC-57/2]

<u>Working documents</u>	IOC/A-33/5.3.Doc(1)	IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation Process: Summary of Phase 1
	IOC/A-33/5.3.Doc(2)	Action Plan in response to the IOS Evaluation of the IOC Strategic Positioning: Update on implementation
<u>Information</u>	IOC/INF-1547	Summary of UN Best Practices for Gender Equality
<u>Reference</u>	IOC/A-33/3.4.3.Doc(1) & Add.	Outline of the IOC Data Architecture Concept proposal

223. The Executive Secretary introduced this agenda item recalling that a unique combination of external and internal factors provides the rationale for the consultation process on IOC and the Future of the Ocean. He highlighted that rapid changes in the state of the ocean caused by accelerating pressures and competition for ocean resources and maritime space, coupled with an emerging strengthened global policy and governance framework, mean that the ocean science and knowledge priorities and needs of Member States are evolving. He also recalled that the statutes of IOC relate to both the generation of knowledge and the application of that knowledge, and while significant investment and achievement had been made in relation to the first part of the statutes, there has been less focus to date on application of knowledge as per the second part of IOC's mandate. The consultation process is therefore

necessary to ensure that the services and support that IOC offers Member States address their evolving needs and optimise the application of both parts of IOC's statutes.

224. He recalled that the consultation process was being undertaken in three phases and building on the Action Plan in response to the *IOS Evaluation of the IOC strategic positioning* [IOS/EVS/PI/197](#) and the *IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029)*. The first phase, which is being reported to the 33rd session of the Assembly focuses on a demand side assessment to identify the under-served needs of Member States in relation to fulfilment of national commitments under UN conventions and frameworks, existing and emerging actions in relation to Sustainable Ocean Planning, and goals and objection for sustainable ocean-based economic development. He reminded Member States that the second phase of the consultation (2025–2026) would focus on a supply-side assessment, and the third phase (2026–2027) would be an integrated assessment, the combined results of which would guide the development of the next Medium-Term Strategy.

225. The Executive Secretary informed Member States that the Phase 1 consultation had involved a Member State survey, approximately 20 key informant interviews, five focus group discussions (including with the four regional subsidiary bodies and the Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management Working Group), and consultations with IFAG. He thanked all Member States for their active engagement in the consultation process.

226. He summarised the key findings of the Phase 1 consultation process including a need for tailored thematic and regional assessment and knowledge synthesis products; increased coordination in capacity development activities including regionally; an enhanced focus on services and applications derived from observations and data, including biodiversity data, that could be used by Member States to fulfil national commitments to global policy frameworks; an increased focus on support for scientific coordination on emerging issues, including data and information needed to support economic and social aspects of Sustainable Ocean Planning; and an expansion of observations and data infrastructure and enhanced coordination across IOC observations and data systems. On this latter point, he noted the separate agenda item of the Assembly on an IOC Data Architecture (item 3.4.3). He also noted that there were specific needs identified at a regional level, particularly by SIDS and LDCs. He advised Member States that the results of Phase 1 of the consultation would be used to inform programming and budget proposals for IOC in the next two biennium, as well as the next Medium-Term Strategy.

227. He concluded by outlining the proposed methodology for the second phase of the consultation that would include a detailed mapping of, and consultation with, UN and non-UN partners to determine the most effective means of meeting the identified needs of Member States including through IOC-led initiatives, stronger support to engagement of Member States in multilateral frameworks, and/or through partnerships with UN and non-UN partners. He confirmed that the results of the second phase of the consultation would be reported to the IOC Executive Council at its 59th session in June 2026.

Draft Decision A-33/5.3

IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation Process

The Assembly,

1. Recalling the IOS Evaluation of the IOC strategic positioning (IOS/EVS/PI/197) and IOC Resolutions A-32/4 and EC-57/4,
2. Takes note of the results of Phase 1 of the 'IOC and the Future of the Ocean' consultation process (IOC/A-33/5.3.Doc(1)), the update on the implementation of

the Action Plan in response to the IOS Evaluation of the IOC Strategic Positioning (IOC/A-33/5.3.Doc(2)), and the proposed methodology for the Phase 2 consultation subject to further examination by the Financial Committee with a view of formulating a draft resolution for discussion in plenary under agenda item 5.4 and subsequent adoption.

228. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

5.4 REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE [Statutes Art. 1.2]

229. The Chair of the Financial Committee, Vice-Chair of IOC Juan Forero Hauzeur (Colombia), reported to the Assembly on the results of the Committee's examination of the items entrusted to it by the plenary in addition to the ones foreseen in the Rule of Procedure 45.1(c).

230. On behalf of the Executive Council, the Chair thanked Vice-Chair Juan Camilo Forero Hauzeur for his leadership and all those who participated in the work of the Financial Committee for their commitment and contributions.

Draft Resolution A-33/[5.4]

Submitted by _____

Governance, programming and budgeting matters of the Commission

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

[Draft Resolution to be finalised during the session]

231. The representatives of __ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

5.5 ELECTIONS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE COMMISSION AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL [Statutes Art. 6.B.5 and 7; Annex I to the Rules of Procedure]

Information

IOC/A-33/5.5.Inf(1)	Updated listing of the IOC electoral groups and listing of the distribution of seats on the Executive Council among the electoral groups
IOC/A-33/5.5.NOM(1)	List of candidates for Elections
IOC/A-33/5.5.NOM(2)	Report of the Chair of the Nominations Committee

232. The Chair of the Nominations Committee reported on this item (IOC/A-33/5.5.NOM).

233. The membership of the Executive Council for the next intersessional period is given in Annex ____ to the present report.

5.5.1 Election of the Chairperson of the Commission

5.5.2 Election of the Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission

5.5.3 Election of the Members of the Executive Council

Draft Decision A-33/5.5

IOC Elections 2025

The Assembly,

I. Election of the Chair of the Commission

1. Taking note that:
 - (i)
 - (ii)
2. Elects _____ (country)

II. Election of the Vice-chairs of the Commission

3. Taking note that:
 - (i)
 - (ii)
4. Elects
 - _____ (country) (Group 1)
 - _____ (country) (Group 2)
 - _____ (country) (Group 3)
 - _____ (country) (Group 4)
 - _____ (country) (Group 5)

III. Election of the Members of the Executive Council

5. Taking note that:
 - (i)
 - (ii)
6. Elects _____

5.6 34th SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY AND 59TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL [Rule of Procedure 43]

Report

IOC/EC-58/SR Prov.

Provisional Executive Summary Report of the
58th Session of the IOC Executive Council, 24
June 2025

234. The Executive Secretary reminded the Assembly of the recommendations of the 58th session of the Executive Council, acting as the Steering Committee for this Assembly, on the

dates and duration of the 59th session of the Council in 2026 and duration of the 34th session of the Assembly in 2027 (decision EC-58/___).

235. The Executive Secretary also informed the Assembly of the main events/conferences that will need to be taken into account when choosing the dates for the next sessions.

Draft Decision A-33/5.6

Dates and Places of next Sessions of the Executive Council and Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling the recommendations of the Executive Council at its 58th session (Dec. EC-58/___),
2. Decides to hold:
 - (i) The 59th session of the Executive Council for ___ days in UNESCO Headquarters, Paris over the period of ___,
 - (ii) The 34th session of the Assembly for a duration of six [or days 6.5] plus one Ocean Science Day, at UNESCO Headquarters, over the period from _____ to _____ in June-July 2026, preceded by a one-day session of the Executive Council (60th session) acting as the steering committee of the Assembly.

236. The representatives of ___ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: _____.

6. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND MODALITIES FOR THE FINALISATION OF THE REPORT

[Statutes Art. C.7; Rule of Procedure 30]

Report

IOC/A-33/Decisions Adopted Decisions and Recommendations – Thirty-third Session of the IOC Assembly, 25 June–3 July 2025

237. The IOC Chairperson thanked the Rapporteur Mr/Ms _____ from [country] for his/her excellent work in support of the work of the session.

238. The Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee reported to the Assembly on the work of the Committee during the session (Annex ___ to the present report).

239. The IOC Chairperson then invited the Assembly to adopt, in plenary, the draft decisions that were still pending after discussion in plenary and ___ resolutions. Parts of the draft summary report of the discussions at the present session were available to the Assembly in English for information.

Draft Decision A-33/6

Adoption of Resolutions and modalities for the finalisation of the Summary Report

The Assembly,

1. Having considered the recommendations of the Executive Council at its 58th session (Dec. EC-58/___) on organization matters,
2. Adopts the decisions and ___ resolutions of the session;
3. Takes note of the draft summary report of the session; and
4. Requests the Executive Secretary to circulate the narrative part of the report to Member States in the four working languages of the Commission by 29 August 2025.

7. CLOSURE

240. In concluding the session, the Chair [to be completed]

241. The Chair of the Commission, Professor Yutaka Michida, closed the 33rd session of the Assembly at ___ on Thursday 3 July 2025.

242. The Assembly met in plenary session during ___ days from 26 June to 3 July, considered ___ items on its agenda and approved ___ decisions and ___ resolutions. The plenary meeting was supported by ___ preparatory meetings, ___ side events, ___ regional informational meetings and ___ meetings of sessional committees. The Chair of the Commission closed the 33rd Session of the Assembly at ___ on 3 July 2023. The gender ratio of Assembly Member State representatives and all participants, including speakers, was _____ (female:male).