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**IOC/A-33/Decisions**

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**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION  
(of UNESCO)**

**Thirty-third Session of the Assembly**

UNESCO, Paris, 25 June – 3 July 2025

**ADOPTED DECISIONS & RESOLUTIONS**



## ADOPTED DECISIONS

### IOC Decision A-33/2

#### **Organization of the Session**

The Assembly,

#### **I. Agenda**

Adopts the agenda and the timetable of work as set out in documents IOC/A-33/2.1.Doc Prov. and Add. Rev.;

#### **II. Rapporteur**

On a proposal of Spain, seconded by, Thailand, China, Colombia, India, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Poland, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa;

Designates Prof. (Mr) Mitsutaku MAKINO of Japan Rapporteur for its present session to assist the Chairperson and the Executive Secretary in the preparation of the draft provisional report of the session;

#### **III. Sessional Committees**

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: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Grenada, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Togo, Türkiye, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America. 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 Mr Luís Menezes Pinheiro (Portugal) with the following Member States participating: Australia; Brazil; Chile; China; Honduras; Japan; Kenya; Monaco; Portugal; Russian Federation; Thailand; Türkiye; USA. 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: Bulgaria; Brazil; Chile; China; Greece; India; Japan; Mexico; Pakistan; Portugal; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Senegal; Spain; Thailand; Türkiye; USA. Mr Bernardo Aliaga and Ms Joanna Post provided the Secretariat support to the Nominations Committee.

IOC Decision A-33/3.2

**Report of the Executive Secretary**

The Assembly,

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),

Thanks the Executive Secretary for a very comprehensive report;

Takes note of the information provided, welcoming significant advances in many programmatic areas.

IOC Decision A-33/3.3.1

**IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Islands States**

The Assembly,

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),

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;

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;

Acknowledges the reinforcement provided to the IOCAFRICA Secretariat both in terms of budget and staff through the 2024–2025 IOC Programme and Budget;

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;

Endorses the report of IOCAFRICA-VIII, the decisions and recommendations therein, including the work plan for 2026–2027;

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;

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;

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;

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.

#### IOC Decision A-33/3.3.2

### **IOC Sub-commission for the Western Pacific**

The Assembly,

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),

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;

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;

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;

Endorses the report of WESTPAC-XV and the decisions therein, including the work programme for the Sub-Commission for 2026–2027;

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;

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;

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.

### IOC Decision A-33/3.3.3

#### **IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Region**

The Assembly,

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,

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;

Welcomes the substantial progress in advancing the implementation of the Ocean Decade throughout the Tropical Americas and Caribbean (TAC) region;

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;

Endorses the report of SC-IOCARIBE-XVIII and the decisions therein;

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;

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.

### IOC Decision A-33/3.3.4

#### **IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean**

The Assembly,

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,

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;

Recognizing the substantial progress achieved by the Sub-Commission in advancing the implementation of the UN Ocean Decade, GOOS and IIOE-2 in the Indian Ocean region,

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;

Welcomes the proposed actions on Cities with Oceans and Ocean Literacy among the UN Ocean Decade implementation in the region;

Appreciates Member States and partners for pursuing synergies with IOCAFRICA towards setting a model of inter-sub-commission cooperation;

Endorses the report of IOCINDIO-1 and the recommendations therein;

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;

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.

#### IOC Decision A-33/3.4.1

### **Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards**

The Assembly,

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),

Accepts the reports by the IOC/ICGs and TOWS-WG;

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 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;

Welcomes the appointment of new ICG/IOTWMS, ICG/PTWS (and ICG/CARIBE-EWS) Officers for the biennium 2025–2027;

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;

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;

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 any volcanoes with a tsunamigenic potential affecting the Area of Service of Tsunami Service Providers within the ICGs;
- (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;

Requests the ICG/PTWS to invite Argentina, as well as the ICG/CARIBE-EWS, to actively participate in all organizational and implementation stages of any scientific workshop carried out to assess the potential tsunamigenic risk of the Scotia Arc;

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;

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;

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;

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;

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 to Decision A-33/3.4.1

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

Revised Terms of Reference

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;

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;

Promote preparedness to build resilient coastal communities through education and awareness products and campaigns;

Facilitate capacity development and training across ICGs to strengthen emergency response capabilities of Member States and their Disaster Management Offices;

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;

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;

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.

IOC Decision A-33/3.4.2

**International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange**

The Assembly,

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),

Endorses the report of the 28th session of the IOC Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange including the workplan for 2025–2026 contained therein;

Notes the decisions taken by IODE-28, inter alia the decision to establish an Inter-sessional Working Group to Enact a Rapid Response Mechanism for Emerging Issues;

Strongly encourages Member States to establish IODE National Oceanographic Data Centres (NODCs) or Associate Data Units (ADUs) or ODIS nodes;

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)**

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),

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,

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,

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, 2023–2025;

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,

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;

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**

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,

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,

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,

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 in their territorial waters and exclusive economic zones;

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;

Invites Member States to collaborate with industry, research and other 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;

Affirming 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,

Establishes 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**

##### Recalling:

- (i) (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,

##### 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,

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,

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;

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 Decision 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<sup>[1]</sup>, 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 Decision 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<sup>[2]</sup> 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;<sup>[3]</sup>
- (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<sup>[4]</sup> 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<sup>[5]</sup> 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 Decision 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 Decision A-33/3.4.2 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 and the 59<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Council.

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
- Experts nominated by IOC Member States through a call by circular letter that will define the expertise required.

#### IOC Decision A-33/3.4.3

### **Development of an IOC data architecture**

The Assembly,

Having examined the concept proposal as outlined in IOC/A-33/3.4.3.Doc(1) and detailed in IOC/INF-1550,

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,

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),

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 interim [Germany] 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;

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;

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;

Endorses the IOC Data Architecture concept as outlined in IOC/A-33/3.4.3.Doc(1);

Establishes the IOC Data Architecture Working Group with the Terms of Reference in the Annex to this decision;

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 report<sup>1</sup> 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.

IOC Decision A-33/3.4.4

**An IOC Ocean Best Practice System (OBPS)**

The Assembly,

Recalling Decision IOC-XXX/7.2.1 (III) on the Establishment of the IOC Ocean Best Practices System Project (OBPS),

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,

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,

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,

Further noting that best practices can be guidelines, standard operating procedures, manuals, technical specifications, and papers,

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,

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;

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;

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;

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, through circular letter to Member States;
- (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.

### IOC Decision A-33/3.4.5

#### **Harmful Algal Blooms**

The Assembly,

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),

Endorses the Executive Summary Report of IPHAB-XVII and the decisions it contains (IOC-FAO/IPHAB-XVII/3s), including the work plan and the recommendations therein.

### IOC Decision A-33/3.5

#### **IOC Report to the Forty-third General Conference of UNESCO**

The Assembly,

Recalling Article 3.2 of the Statutes and Rule of Procedure 50,

Having examined document IOC/A-33/3.5.Doc(1),

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.9.

### IOC Decision A-33/4.1

#### **IOC wide Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management**

The Assembly,

Having Examined document IOC/A-33/4.1.Doc(1),

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,

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);

Decides to continue the IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management with the revised Terms of Reference annexed to this decision;

Requests the Working Group to report to the IOC Assembly at its 34th session;

Invites Member States to contribute to the implementation of the Strategy, including through the provision of financial and in-kind support.

Annex to Decision 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.

#### IOC Decision A-33/4.2

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

The Assembly,

Recalling the adoption, at its 32nd session, of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2023–2030), and an accompanying outreach and communications plan,

Recognizing that capacity-building is a core Purpose of the IOC, as included in IOC Statutes,

Also 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,

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;

Having examined document IOC/A-33/4.2.Doc(1),

Notes document IOC/A-33/4.4.Doc(1);

Also notes that the remit of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 and its Implementation Plan include elements of ocean literacy;

Adopts the Implementation Plan of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023-2030;

Decides to continue the work of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development with the terms of reference included in the Annex to this decision;

Encourages the Executive Secretary to explore opportunities to align the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 Implementation Plan with the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action for 2026–2030 through joint working of the Capacity Development and Ocean Literacy Secretariat and the respective Group of Experts;



Requests the Chair of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development to report on the outputs of joint work and the mechanisms developed for alignment with the Ocean Literacy Group of Experts to the IOC Executive Council at its 59th session;

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;

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.

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 Decision 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; and the Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy;
- (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;
- (ix) ensure the coordination of the work of the Group of Experts with the Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy, with a particular focus on aligning the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action 2026–2030 with the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030;
- (x) assist the IOC Secretariat in developing a longer-term mechanism for coordinating capacity development and ocean literacy related priorities and actions across the IOC.

#### IOC Decision A-33/4.3

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

The Assembly,

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,

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.

#### IOC Decision A-33/4.4

### **IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action 2026-2030**

The Assembly,

Having examined 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,

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,

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,

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,

Having examined the draft IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action (2026–2030) contained in IOC/A-33/4.4.Doc(1),

Notes document IOC/A-33/4.2.Doc(1) that contains the proposed 'IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 Implementation Plan' which considers priority areas of action for ocean literacy;

Decides to continue the work of the IOC Ocean Literacy Group of Experts with the terms of reference included in the Annex to this decision;

Requests the IOC Secretariat to seek and use all available synergies with the Education Sector of UNESCO, corresponding to intersectoral Output 2.6 of 43 C/5, in implementing the Plan of Action, in particular its enhanced Priority 1;

Encourages the Executive Secretary to explore opportunities to align the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action for 2026–2030 with the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023-2030 Implementation Plan through joint working of the Capacity Development and Ocean Literacy Secretariat and the respective Group of Experts;

Requests the Chair of the Ocean Literacy Group of Experts reports on the outputs of joint work and the mechanisms developed for alignment with the Capacity Development Group of Experts to the IOC Executive Council at its 59th Session;

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;

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;

Expresses its gratitude to the European Commission and the Prada Group for their ongoing financial contributions to the IOC's Ocean Literacy activities;

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-33/3).

Annex to Decision A-33/4.4

**IOC Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy**

Terms of Reference

The IOC Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy (GE-OL) is composed of no less than 20 experts nominated by IOC Member States responding to a call by circular letter detailing the GE-OL membership and taking into consideration geographical balance, multidisciplinary expertise, gender balance and diversity of languages and cultures.

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, Indigenous Peoples, Civil Society Organizations, international organizations, academic institutions, NGOs, relevant networks, and private sector associations;
- (iii) support the assessment and monitoring progress of ocean literacy across Member States;
- (iv) ensuring the coordination of the work of the GE-OL with the GE-CD Experts, with a particular focus on aligning the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action 2026-2030 with the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030;
- (v) assisting the IOC Secretariat in developing a longer-term mechanism for coordinating ocean literacy and capacity development related priorities and actions across the IOC.

The Group of Experts will participate, with the support of the IOC Secretariat, in ocean 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 its results to the IOC Assembly at its 34th session.

#### IOC Decision A-33/4.5.1

### **Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Governance**

The Assembly,

Having examined IOC/A-33/4.8.1.Doc(1),

Recalling IOC Decisions A-32/4.8.1 and EC-57/4.1,

Endorses the Approach to GOOS Reform as contained in document IOC/A-33/4.5.1.Doc(1);

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;

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-33/3.

#### IOC Decision A-33/4.5.2

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

The Assembly,

Recalling IOC Resolution XXVI-8,

Having examined document IOC/A-33/4.5.2.Doc(1) and the GOOS Steering Committee Report of its 14th session (SC-14),

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, ocean health, and ocean economy growth, to meet the needs of Member States,

Endorses the Report of the GOOS Steering Committee (SC-14) and the recommendations contained therein;

Agrees to the GOOS Workplan for 2025–2027;

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;

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;

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;

Requests 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**

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,

Notes the appointment by the Member State Electoral Groups of a regional expert member of the GOOS SC for 2026–2027:

- Patrick Gorringer (Sweden) – 2nd term (Group I)
- (Group II)
- Matías Sifón (Chile) – 2nd term (Group III)
- KAWAI Michiyo (Japan) – 1st term (Group IV)
- Suzan Elgharabawy (Egypt) – 2nd term (Group V)

Further notes that Group II did not complete the selection process, and requests Group II to continue consultations to select an expert, in accordance with Resolution XXVI-8, to be completed well in advance of the start of the term of the GOOS-SC member.

### IOC Decision A-33/4.5.3

#### **Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction**

The Assembly,

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,

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,

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,

Requests GOOS to raise awareness of the marine scientific research (MSR) process, such as through relevant communications, including appropriate links to information;

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;

Invites Member States to promote collaboration between neighbouring coastal States to facilitate bilateral and regional facilitation of MSR clearance;

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;

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;

Decides to close the IOC ad hoc intersessional Working Group on Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction;

Acknowledges the contributions from the Working Group and thanks the co-chairs and Member States who contributed to its work.

#### IOC Decision A-33/4.6

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

The Assembly,

Having examined document IOC/A-33/4.6.Doc(1),

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,

Reaffirming the importance of the collaborative relationship between IOC and WMO through the WMO-IOC Collaborative Board in marine meteorology, oceanography and climatology, including in services, observation and information management, research and capacity building,

Having considered the outcomes of the third session of the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board (JCB-3), September 2024, which identified four primary work areas for the JCB in the next two-year period,

Noting the establishment of subgroups on Global Ocean Basic Observing networks (GBON) and on data management to advance the activities of two primary work areas,

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;

Also requests the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board:

- (i) 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;
- (ii) to develop a questionnaire and send it to Members in July 2025 to survey their capabilities, 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 JCB3 Part 2 report);
- (iii) on the basis of the results from the Member State consultation process, to provide recommendations to the WMO and IOC Executive Council in 2026 on future governance arrangements, including quadrennial WMO-IOC collaborative strategy and priority areas of work, for their consideration;

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) Actively respond to the survey by 1 September 2025;
- (iv) 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, and developing synergies and joint capacity development programmes.



IOC Decision A-33/4.7

**IOC Contributions to UN Governance Processes**

The Assembly,

Having examined document IOC/A-33/4.7.Doc(1),

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,

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 proposed establishment of an informal group on the technical aspects of the operationalization of the Clearing House Mechanism under this agreement;

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);

Further welcomes the recent developments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including through the regular Ocean/Climate Dialogue organised yearly;

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;

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 frameworks;

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;

Decide to establish an ad hoc Working Group with the annexed Terms of Reference with the purpose of providing scientific and technical advice and recommendations to support the engagement of the IOC in the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, within the IOC mandate, particularly regarding the BBNJ Clearing-House Mechanism, as well as other key areas of the Agreement, and to provide a progress report of its outcomes at the 59th Session of the IOC Executive Council and thereafter at the 34th session of the IOC Assembly.

Annex to Decision A-33/4.7

**IOC Working Group on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (IOC/WG-BBNJ)**

**1. Background and Context**

The United Nations adopted the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) in 2023. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, as a competent international organisation in relation to UNCLOS and the only UN body with a global mandate in ocean science, should play a crucial role in supporting the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, particularly in areas related to marine scientific research, capacity building, and the sharing of ocean data and knowledge.

## **2. Objectives**

The IOC Working Group on BBNJ is established to provide scientific and technical advice on matters related to the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement within the IOC mandate, and in particular:

- (i) Develop recommendations for IOC's potential role in the operationalization of BBNJ e.g., for area-based management tools; EIAs; capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology; and marine genetic resources, including the fair and equitable sharing of benefits;
- (ii) Identify, in cooperation with the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of legal Affairs of the United Nations acting as secretariat for the BBNJ Agreement, and promote IOC's role and contributions towards the establishment and operation of the future BBNJ Clearing-House Mechanism;
- (iii) Review and analyze scientific, technical, and capacity development aspects of the BBNJ Agreement relevant to the IOC;
- (iv) Identify needs and modalities to be delivered through IOC mechanisms to support Member States, particularly developing countries, in capacity development initiatives relevant to BBNJ implementation, in cooperation with the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of legal Affairs of the United Nations acting as secretariat for the BBNJ Agreement.
- (v) Propose strategies and mechanisms for enhancing data sharing and cooperation across national and regional institutions, including through IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies.
- (vi) Propose mechanisms for cooperation between IOC and BBNJ Agreement.

## **3. Membership, chairing and methods of work**

The Working Group shall be composed of experts nominated by IOC Member States, taking into account regional representation and relevant expertise (e.g., marine science, international law, capacity development, data management), as well as representatives from relevant IOC Programmes and Subsidiary Bodies. The Working Group will be chaired by an IOC Officers (Vice-Chair) to be identified by IOC Chairperson.

The Working Group shall conduct its work through virtual means and will work in English.

IOC 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,

Recalling IOC Resolutions A-32/4 and EC-57/2,

Takes note of documents IOC/A-32/5.1.Doc(1) and IOC/A-32/5.1.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.

IOC Decision A-33/5.2

**Assessment of IOC's Governance and Management Processes**

The Assembly,

Recalling IOC Resolution EC-57/2,

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.

IOC Decision A-33/5.3

**IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation Process**

The Assembly,

Recalling the IOS Evaluation of the IOC strategic positioning (IOS/EVS/PI/197) and IOC Resolutions A-32/4 and EC-57/4,

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.

IOC Decision A-33/5.5

**IOC Elections 2025**

Elects the members of its Executive Council for the period 2025-2027 as follows:

**I. Election of the Chair of the Commission**

- Yutaka Michida (Japan)

**II. Election of the Vice-chairs of the Commission**

- Allison D. REED (USA) (Group I)
- Atanas PALAZOV (Bulgaria) (Group II)
- Capt Carlos ZUÑIGA ARAYA (Chile) (Group III)
- Hansan PARK (Republic of Korea) Group IV)
- Amr Zakaria HAMOUDA (Egypt) (Group V)

### **III. Election of the Members of the Executive Council**

And the following Member States by electoral group:

- Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Türkiye, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America (Group I)
- Bulgaria, Poland, Ukraine (Group II)
- Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Peru (Group III)
- Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, Palau, Republic of Korea, Thailand (Group IV)
- Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Guinea, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Oman, South Africa (Group V).

#### IOC Decision A-33/5.6

### **Dates and Places of next sessions of the Executive and Assembly**

The Assembly,

Recalling the recommendations of the Executive Council at its 58th session (EC-58/SR Prov.),

Decides to hold:

- (i) The 59th session of the Executive Council for a duration of up to three and a half days at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, over the period from 29 June to 3 July 2026,
- (ii) The 34th session of the Assembly for a duration of up to six days, at UNESCO Headquarters, over the period from 21 June to 2 July 2027, preceded by a session of the Executive Council (60th session) acting as the steering committee of the Assembly.

IOC Decision A-33/6

**Adoption of Resolutions and Modalities  
for the Finalisation of the Summary Report**

The Assembly,

Having considered the recommendations of the Executive Council at its 58<sup>th</sup> session (EC-58/SR Prov.) on organization matters,

Adopts the 28 decisions and three resolutions of the session;

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.

**ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS**

IOC Resolution A-33/1

**Strengthening the IOCAFRICA Secretariat: a strategic imperative for advancing ocean science and governance in Africa and small island States**

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

**Recalling** the General Conference Resolution 41 C/56, Executive Board Decision 216 EX/44, and IOC Resolution A-32/4,

**Recognizing** the strategic importance of Africa's ocean and coastal regions to the mandate of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the African population and the world,

**Also recalling** that UNESCO's designation of Africa as a Global Priority, and the continued commitment through the 2030 Agenda and the African Union's Agenda 2063, provides a framework that aligns closely with IOC's goals for equitable and inclusive scientific cooperation,

**Further recalling** Resolutions IOC-XXIX/2 and IOC-XXXI/2, which established IOCAFRICA as the regional subsidiary body responsible for coordinating marine science, services, and capacity development in Africa and the Adjacent Island States,

**Also recognizing** IOCAFRICA's critical role in advancing the implementation of the IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029), the African Union's Blue Economy Strategy, Agenda 2063, and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030),

**Reaffirming** that Africa's and the Adjacent Island States marine and coastal zones are vital for global biodiversity, food security, livelihoods, and economic development, yet remain underrepresented in ocean research, data systems, and governance structures,

**Recalling** that IOCAFRICA has become a cornerstone of Africa's and the Adjacent Island States implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and

has served as the primary mechanism for delivering IOC's mandate across the African continent and Adjacent Island States,

**Emphasizing** the need for the IOC to strengthen programmatic support, institutional capacity, and representation for African and the Adjacent Island Member States, to ensure full and active participation in shaping global ocean policy and science agendas,

**Underscoring** that an adequately resourced and strategically positioned IOCAFRICA Secretariat is indispensable to ensuring Africa and Adjacent Island States equitable participation and leadership in global ocean governance, scientific cooperation, and policy dialogue,

**Acknowledging with appreciation** the increasing volume of African and Adjacent Island States-led projects, regional partnerships, and international collaborations facilitated through IOCAFRICA, which demonstrate both the relevance and efficiency of its Secretariat,

**Noting** the increased responsibilities of IOCAFRICA in coordinating the implementation of IOC/2022/ODS/36 Rev.2 'Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap', regional Early Warning Systems, ocean data and information infrastructure, and capacity development initiatives across more than 35 African coastal and Island States,

**Further recognizing**, that the IOCAFRICA Secretariat concurrently serves as the OceanDecade Coordination Office for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, thereby assuming dual responsibilities that extend well beyond capacity development to include strategic coordination, programme execution, technical backstopping, and continental stakeholder engagement,

**Further noting** that the need to maintain Africa as a budgetary priority within IOC programming has been emphasized by Member States during discussions at the IOC Assembly and Executive Council, IOCAFRICA Sessions, meetings of the Open-ended Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (IFAG), and the IOC Financial Committee, where similar concerns regarding under-resourcing of IOC regional subsidiary bodies have been raised,

**Appreciating** that a second professional post will be operational from July 2025 funded under the Regular Programme **and noting** that no General Service or other critically needed positions are covered by regular budget allocations,

**Acknowledging** that administrative and operational support has been sustained through in-kind secondment by the Government of Kenya and shared arrangements with the Africa Ocean Decade Coordination Office,

**Noting** with great concern the temporary freeze of IOCAFRICA budget allocations and activities under UNESCO's current Responsible Management Actions, and **recognizing** the negative impact of such measures on programme continuity and regional support,

**Also noting** the need to strengthen the staffing of the IOCAFRICA Secretariat through the consolidation of a suitably qualified and appropriately senior team to ensure effective capacity for technical programme implementation, resource mobilisation and donor management, outreach and engagement, as well as a range of operational and administrative functions,

**Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to develop a costed analysis of different scenarios for optimal future staffing of Regional Sub-Commission Secretariats, to ensure effective programme delivery in line with IOC/INF-1412 'IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029)' and its Global Priority Africa and Priority Group SIDS, and taking into account the recommendations

of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Ocean Decade and the results of the 'IOC and Future of the Ocean' consultation process and to present this analysis to the Executive Council at its 59<sup>th</sup> Session;

**Also requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to explore options for:

- (i) formal integration of General Service staff positions within the regular budget for the IOCAFRICA Secretariat;
- (ii) mobilizing additional resources, including extra-budgetary funding and co-financing arrangements, as well as human resources partnerships to support essential staff positions;
- (iii) providing optimal funding for operationalization of the office and programme activities; and
- (iv) ensuring prioritization of IOCAFRICA Secretariat's operational budget across all budget scenarios, in keeping with Africa's status as a UNESCO Global Priority;

**Urges** IOC Member States, especially IOCAFRICA Member States, to increase their voluntary and in-kind support to IOCAFRICA, including the secondment and loan of technical and administrative staff, and financial contributions earmarked for Secretariat strengthening;

**Encourages** strengthened collaboration with strategic partners, regional economic communities, and development agencies to establish jointly funded technical and programmatic support positions;

**Recognizing** the importance of a stable funding base to allow IOCAFRICA to effectively fulfil its dual mandate as the IOC's regional coordination mechanism and the Africa Ocean Decade Coordination Office,

**Further requests** the IOC Executive Secretary, in consultation with IOCAFRICA Officers, to explore:

- (i) a proposal for a dedicated IOCAFRICA Support Fund under the IOC Special Account to be presented to the IOC Executive Council at its 59<sup>th</sup> session; and
- (ii) the opportunities offered by Article 10.4 of the Statutes of the Commission such as establishing special purpose financial mechanisms or cost-sharing arrangements with donor Member States and to present a proposal to the IOC Assembly at its 34<sup>th</sup> Session;

**Calls upon** UNESCO Field Offices and Category 2 Centres in Africa to align their technical cooperation frameworks with the priorities and staffing needs of IOCAFRICA, enabling pooled technical assistance where feasible;

**Recalling** Africa's designation as a Global Priority and the decision by Member States at the 216<sup>th</sup> session of the UNESCO Executive Board, endorsed by the UNESCO General Conference in the 42 C/5 Appropriation Resolution, that the IOC's share of the available overall UNESCO regular budget remains at no less than 3%,

**Urges** the Director-General of UNESCO, to take management actions without delay to release the funds necessary to complete the implementation of IOCAFRICA's approved activities for the remainder of the 2024–2025 biennium.

IOC Resolution A-33/2

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

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

**Part I**

**Recalling** IOC Resolutions EC-53/1, A-31/1, A-32/3, EC-55/1, and EC-57/1 on the Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), thereafter the Decade,

**Considering** document IOC/A-33/4.8.Doc(1) *Update on the Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development*,

**Recognizing** the importance of strengthened Member States' and partner support to the Decade to allow it to fulfil its ambitions for the second half of its implementation,

**Taking note with satisfaction** of the contribution of the Decade Advisory Board (DAB) to the implementation and strategic development of the Decade in accordance with the DAB Terms of Reference, **also noting** that the term of the current DAB will end in December 2025 and **thanking** all members of the DAB for their commitment,

**Thanking** the Government of Spain for hosting the Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona in April 2024, and **reaffirming** its support to the implementation of the priorities and recommendations outlined in *The Barcelona Statement* (IOC/2024/ODS/55) arising from the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference,

**Thanking** all Member States who expressed interest in hosting the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference and **extending** its congratulations to the selected host of the Conference,

**Invites** Member States and partners to:

- (i) incorporate the priorities and recommendations contained in *The Barcelona Statement* into their national and regional science-policy frameworks, and to use them to inform their budget and resourcing decisions;
- (ii) provide voluntary financial contributions to support the work of the IOC Secretariat in coordinating the Decade, including in-kind support, such as staff loans and secondments, to the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU);
- (iii) offer to host and fund Decade Actions, Decade Coordination Offices (DCO), and Decade Collaborative Centres (DCC) as described in the *United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) Implementation Plan* (IOC/2021/ODS/20); and
- (iv) host regional or international Decade stakeholder events, including as part of the preparatory process for the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference;

**Also invites** Member States to establish and support National Decade Committees with a view to stimulate national activities and international cooperation,



**Encourages** United Nations Member States, UN-Oceans members, international scientific and academic organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to support the Decade in collaboration with IOC and to contribute to its implementation by proposing Decade Actions in accordance with the *United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) Implementation Plan*, by supporting the implementation of the priorities and recommendations of *The Barcelona Statement*, and by engaging in and supporting the preparatory process for the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference;

## Part II

**Having examined** IOC/A-33/4.8.Doc(2) *Summary of the Mid Term Evaluation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the Management Response to Evaluation Findings*,

**Taking note** of the findings of the Mid-Term Evaluation and the IOC Executive Secretary's management response,

**Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to develop an action plan on the basis of the management response for presentation to the DAB before the end of 2025 and to report on progress against the action plan at the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the IOC Executive Council,

**Having examined** IOC/A-33/4.8.Doc(3) *Revised Terms of Reference for the Decade Advisory Board*,

**Adopts** the revised Terms of Reference and **requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to launch a process to establish a new DAB to commence its work in January 2026;

**Expresses gratitude** to the Governments of Canada, China, France, Japan, Belgium (Government of Flanders), Norway, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Thailand, as well as the Fondation ENGIE, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Prada, REV-Ocean, and FUGRO for their valuable financial contributions and secondments or loans of personnel to the IOC Secretariat for the coordination of the Decade,

**Also expresses appreciation to:**

- (i) The Boticário Group Foundation for hosting the Fourth Ocean Decade Foundations Dialogue in Rio de Janeiro in September 2024; and
- (ii) The Qingdao Municipal People's Government, China for hosting the First International Ocean Decade Coastal Cities Conference in February 2025,

**Supports** the registration of new IOC-led Decade Actions, specifically:

- (i) *UN39 Ocean Solutions in the East Asian Seas* Decade Project led by IOC WESTPAC and the Centre for Marine and Coastal Studies (CEMACS), Universiti Sains Malaysia;
- (ii) *UN40 Enhance coastal resilience to sea level hazards* Decade Project led by Tsunami Resilience Section of IOC; and
- (iii) *A global ocean free from the harmful impacts of pollution* Decade Programme led by Ocean Science Section of IOC and UNEP,

**Also supports** the active roles of the IOC Regional and Technical Subsidiary Bodies and Programmes in facilitating Decade regional and thematic coordination and engagement activities, in particular:

- (i) WESTPAC Secretariat acting as DCO for the Western Pacific Region;
- (ii) IOCARIBE Secretariat acting as DCO for the Tropical Americas and Caribbean Region;
- (iii) IOCAFRICA Secretariat acting as DCO for Africa;
- (iv) IODE Programme Office acting as DCO for Ocean Data Sharing;
- (v) GOOS Project Office acting as DCO for Ocean Observations; and
- (vi) *UNESCO Regional Bureau* for Science and Culture in Europe, acting as a DCO for Connecting People and Ocean;

**Taking note** of the resource needs identified by the DCU, IOC-led DCOs and IOC-led Decade Actions to fulfil their commitments under the Decade,

**Invites** Member States, partners, and donor organizations to support IOC-led Decade Actions and coordination mechanisms, including through allocation of extra-budgetary resources to relevant IOC programmes and regions, to achieve their transformative ambitions, guide their respective communities, and catalyse further actions within and beyond the Decade.

#### IOC Resolution A-33/3

### **Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission**

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

**Having examined** documents:

- (i) IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(2) – Report on 2024–2025 (42 C/5) budget implementation as at 31 December 2024,
- (ii) IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(3) – Financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2024 and forecast for 2025,
- (iii) 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,
- (iv) IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(2) – Report of the Chairperson of the IOC Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (2024-2025)
- (v) IOC/A-33/5.2.Doc(1) – Assessment of IOC's governance and management processes and related Member State input to the IOC Intersessional Financial Advisory Group;
- (vi) IOC/A-33/5.3.Doc(1) – IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation Process: Summary of Phase 1,
- (vii) IOC/A-33/5.3.Doc(2) – Action Plan in response to the IOC Evaluation of the IOC Strategic Positioning: Update on implementation,

I.

**Report on 2024–2025 (42 C/5) budget implementation as at 31 December 2024 and Financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2024 and forecast for 2025**

**Confirms** that the IOC budget for 2024–2025, as reported in IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(2), has been executed as at 31 December 2024 in accordance with the Approved Programme and Budget 2024–2025 (42 C/5), including the adjusted budgetary appropriations for the IOC Special Account as approved by the IOC Assembly at its 32<sup>nd</sup> session through IOC Resolution A-32/4 and further reviewed by the IOC Executive Council at its 57<sup>th</sup> session through IOC Resolution EC-57/2;

**Acknowledges** the information on the financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2024 and forecast for 2025 provided in IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(3);

**Approves** the revised budgetary allocations for 2024–2025 for the IOC Special Account as proposed in Table 1 of IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(3);

**Thanks** Member States and partners who have provided voluntary contributions for the 2024–2025 programme implementation;

**Encourages** all Member States to provide voluntary contributions to ensure full achievement of the Commission's programmatic targets for 2024–2025 for all IOC Functions, preferably with non-earmarked contributions to the IOC Special Account;

**Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to intensify proactive efforts to obtain further voluntary contributions, including from private sector donors and other partners, and to achieve full implementation of the Commission's programmatic targets for 2024–2025, and explore options to facilitate processes for funding partnerships, including the establishment of additional financial arrangements as foreseen in the IOC Statutes;

**Notes with concern** that the IOC Assembly's decisions through IOC Resolution A-32/4 to '*give priority to stabilizing the functions of the IOC, including human resources*', have not been fully achieved, including as a result of not being able to fill established posts, even in the most critically vulnerable and understaffed functions of the Commission, slowing execution of the IOC programme and with implications for existing staff;

**Also notes with concern** that the execution of IOC's programme for 2025 is severely impacted by the disproportionate reduction of the 2025 regular budget allotment for the IOC, as a result of UNESCO's management actions to safeguard against the risk of a potential loss of income for the regular programme and budget (42 C/5);

**Requests** the Director-General of UNESCO to take management actions without delay to ensure compliance with the decision by Member States at the 216<sup>th</sup> session of the UNESCO Executive Board, endorsed by the UNESCO General Conference in the 42 C/5 Appropriation Resolution, that the IOC's share of the available overall UNESCO regular budget remains at no less than 3%;

II.

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

**Recalls** the decision of the UNESCO Executive Board at its 216<sup>th</sup> session to recommend that the UNESCO General Conference at its 42<sup>nd</sup> session agree to '*an increase in the IOC's share*

*of the UNESCO regular budget of [1%], not to be decreased by transfers of funds to other parts of the budget and 'that a baseline be identified and agreed for the IOC's share of UNESCO's regular budget under document 42 C/5 and future C/5 documents and that no reduction to this baseline be made in the future unless agreed by the General Conference';*

**Notes with appreciation** that the three scenarios proposed for the Draft 43 C/5 respect this decision in allocating 3% of the overall UNESCO regular budget to the IOC;

**Acknowledges** the presentation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–2027 (Draft 43 C/5), first biennium of the 2026–2029 quadrennium contained in IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(1), prepared as an integral part of the UNESCO Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–2029 (Draft 43 C/5), submitted by the Director-General of UNESCO to the UNESCO Executive Board at its 221<sup>st</sup> session;

**Welcomes** the UNESCO Executive Board decision 221 EX/Dec.20 that '*bearing in mind that the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) is established as a body with functional autonomy within UNESCO, with the IOC Assembly being the principal organ under the IOC Statutes, invites the Executive Secretary of the IOC to submit the sections relating to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission in Volumes I and II of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2026-2029 (43 C/5) to the IOC Assembly at its 33<sup>rd</sup> session and to forward the recommendations of the IOC Assembly to the General Conference at its 43<sup>rd</sup> session*';

**Thanks** the Chairperson of the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (IFAG) and the IOC Executive Secretary and his team for engaging Member States in regular online sessions and thus keeping them apprised of and involved with all relevant developments on this and other items covered by this Resolution, in line with the IOC Executive Council decision reflected in IOC Resolution EC-57/2;

**Also welcomes** the effort put in the development of the new Draft IOC Results Framework 2026–2027, aligned with the IOC Medium Term Strategy 2022–2029, as presented in Part II of IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(1);

**Considers** that the programmatic choices of the Secretariat in developing the Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–2027 follow Member States' strategic guidance, in line with the priority areas of the 42 C/5 and the spirit of maintaining the achievements related to the high-level principles of the IOC Resolutions A-32/4 and EC-57/2;

**Also acknowledges** that the working assumptions of the proposed budgetary scenarios for 2026–2027 may change in light of the potential loss of funding for the regular budget and voluntary contributions, adversely impacting the allocations to the IOC, while some of the Commission's critically vulnerable areas are still understaffed and under-resourced;

**Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary, in consultation with IFAG, to explore options to maintain and optimise the 43 C/5, with the number and level of positions foreseen in the 42 C/5 as the minimal baseline, in finalising the IOC proposal for the 43 C/5 budgetary scenario(s) to be presented to the 43<sup>rd</sup> session of the UNESCO General Conference;

**Endorses** the IOC approach to the preliminary proposals for the Programme and Budget for 2026–2027 (Draft 43 C/5), including the new IOC Results Framework as presented in Part II of IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(1);

**Also requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to ensure the transmission of this resolution to the 43<sup>rd</sup> session of UNESCO General Conference;

**Highlights** the critical importance of continuing and strengthening a clear and comprehensive consultation process with IOC Member States on governance, programming and budgetary matters of the Commission;

**Welcomes**, in this context, the IOC Executive Secretary's proposal to better align the schedules of IOC subsidiary bodies meetings with those of primary IOC Governing Bodies and the entire UNESCO programming and budgeting cycle;

**Further requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to continue bringing all relevant developments on this and other important matters pertaining to IOC governance, programming and budgeting to regular and timely online meetings of IFAG;

### III.

#### Assessment of Governance and Management Processes

**Recalls** that the IOC Executive Council in its 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 so as to be truly fit for purpose in response to the fast-evolving ocean agenda and increasing demands of Member States and multilateral processes'*;

**Takes note** of the analysis, findings and recommendations from interviews contained in document IOC/A-33/5.2.Doc(1), acknowledging that all of those ideas do not reflect the points of view of all IOC Member States;

**Welcomes** the significant material input by Member States to the process and in particular as background to the IFAG discussions as reflected in IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(2);

**Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Officers and IFAG, to review the working methods of the IOC Governing Bodies, in order to ensure greater effectiveness, efficiency and inclusiveness in the governance of the Commission, and to present to the IOC Executive Council at its 59<sup>th</sup> session concrete recommendations that could be implemented at the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the IOC Assembly;

**Highlights** the wide mandate and responsibilities of the IOC in the face of accelerating ocean changes and the increasing needs and demands on the Commission, and **noting** the concerns repeatedly raised by IOC Governing Bodies that some functional areas are critically vulnerable;

**Emphasizes** its commitment to making IOC fit for purpose by ensuring efficient and effective governance and management processes through a clearly defined accountability framework compliant with the IOC Statutes;

**Stresses** the IOC's statutory purpose as a vehicle for Member States as well as multilateral collaboration and coordination in ocean research, services, management and capacity development, and that a core strength of the IOC lies in its close operational relationship with Member State institutions and with relevant United Nations ocean frameworks and processes to which it contributes;

**Asserts** that the IOC, as a *'competent international organization'* (Article 3.1 of the IOC Statutes) and a *'body with functional autonomy within UNESCO'* (Article 1.1 of the IOC Statutes) shall henceforth operate as such and in accordance with the provisions of its Statutes;

**Recalls** that under the IOC Statutes, the UNESCO General Conference appropriates the IOC regular budget and correspondingly the IOC Assembly reports directly to the UNESCO General Conference on the execution of the budget;

**Also recalls** that within the framework of the budget the IOC defines and implements its programme;

**Also emphasizes** that all IOC Member States, whether or not they are Member States of UNESCO, have an equal right to exercise governance over the IOC and hold its Secretariat and Executive Secretary to account with respect to the IOC Statutes;

**Further emphasizes** that, under the IOC Statutes, the Assembly is the principal organ of the IOC and *'shall perform all functions of the Commission, unless otherwise regulated by these Statutes or delegated by the Assembly to other organs of the Commission'* (Article 6.2 of the IOC Statutes);

**Also asserts** that the regular budget of the IOC as appropriated by the UNESCO General Conference, should be dedicated to the implementation of the IOC programme;

**Further asserts** that, the IOC Executive Secretary, who is the equivalent of the level of Assistant Director-General (ADG) and acts with the instructions provided by the IOC Assembly and the Executive Council shall, without prejudice to other tasks that may have been or may be delegated to them, be accountable for:

- (i) executing IOC's approved programme and available budget, including any voluntary contribution, and reporting on that execution to the IOC Executive Council and Assembly, as well as drafting the report to be presented by the Assembly to the UNESCO General Conference;
- (ii) drafting the proposals for the IOC Medium-Term Strategy and the IOC programme and budget to be submitted to the IOC Assembly;
- (iii) defining the staffing requirements according to Article 8 of the IOC Statutes and Rule 14(b) of the IOC Rules of Procedures;
- (iv) the management of, in keeping with the IOC Statutes, collaboration with and representation to multilateral and Member State institutions and processes, including the IOC's own accreditation to intergovernmental institutions and processes; and
- (v) disseminating and promoting the recognition and use of the results of the IOC and co-sponsored programmes, including by means of reinstating and consistently using the distinct visual identity of the IOC in communications and publications;

**Emphasizes** the importance of ensuring the recruitment of technically competent staff suited for interaction with expert communities in Member States for IOC programmatic execution;

**Urges** the Director-General of UNESCO to delegate the authority to the IOC Executive Secretary to manage recruitments and select staff for IOC;

**Invites** the Director-General of UNESCO to contribute to the full implementation of the Commission's functions as established in its Statutes as well as the above-mentioned tasks

assigned to the IOC Secretariat, including by the delegation of authority to the IOC Executive Secretary, when applicable;

**Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to seek an agreement with UNESCO on the recovery of management costs charged to voluntary contributions to the IOC and include IOC's direct costs in project proposals, as appropriate;

**Also requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to keep IFAG updated on progress in fully aligning IOC governance and management processes with the IOC Statutes and to report on implementation to the IOC Executive Council at its 59<sup>th</sup> session and to the IOC Assembly at its 34<sup>th</sup> session;

#### **IV. IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation Process**

**Recalls** that IOC Decision A-32/5 agreed to *'initiate a consultation on how IOC could on the basis of its purpose as defined in its Statutes optimally facilitate activities of Member States and other stakeholders in science-based sustainable ocean planning, ocean science support to implementation of UN environmental conventions and frameworks, and development of a sustainable ocean economy'*;

**Also recalls** the decision of the IOC Executive Council in IOC Resolution EC-57/2 that:

- the IOC and the Future of the Ocean consultation shall *'allow for a three-year process synchronized with the calendar of IOC governing body sessions'* and that *'the consultation will first focus on an overall inventory of activities relevant to the role of IOC in assisting Member States and other stakeholders, including identifying what gaps and needs exist when it comes to delivering existing IOC programmes, in order to optimally facilitate current and emerging activities in science-based sustainable ocean planning, ocean science support to implementation of relevant UN conventions and frameworks, and support the development of a sustainable ocean economy'*;
- *'the gap assessment will be carried out by the IOC Secretariat in consultation with IOC programmes, IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies, IOC Member States including through the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group and other relevant IOC intersessional working groups, in particular the IOC working group on sustainable ocean planning and management, and other relevant stakeholders as necessary, and that the assessment will draw on the Action Plan in response to the IOS Evaluation of the IOC strategic positioning, the IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029), and other relevant resources as necessary'*;

**Takes note** of the summary of Phase 1 of the consultation process presented in IOC/A-33/5.3.Doc(1);

**Further recalls** that the IOC Assembly, at its 32<sup>nd</sup> session, requested the Secretariat to move forward with the implementation of the Action Plan *'considering the IOC's evolving situation, including the resources available, proposing adjustments accordingly and reporting on progress both to IOC and UNESCO Governing Bodies'*;

**Acknowledges** the update on implementation contained in IOC/A-33/5.3.Doc(2);

**Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to continue implementing the remaining recommendations as proposed in IOC/A-33/5.3.Doc(2) and submit the report to the IOC Executive Council at its 59<sup>th</sup> session;

**Also requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to proceed with Phase 2 of the consultation, as outlined in IOC/A-33/5.3.Doc(1), to analyse the effectiveness of supply to meet the needs of Member States and partners as identified in Phase 1 of the consultation, including via multilateral ocean frameworks and other relevant processes;

**Decides** that Phase 2 of the consultation be undertaken with IOC programmes, Regional Subsidiary Bodies, Member States, including through IFAG, other relevant intersessional working groups, and other relevant stakeholders as necessary, and drawing on the Action Plan in response to the IOS Evaluation of the IOC strategic positioning, the management response to the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Ocean Decade, the IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029), and other relevant resources as necessary;

**Further requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to report on the results of Phase 2 of the consultation to the IOC Executive Council at its 59<sup>th</sup> session.







