

IOC Circular Letter No 3047
(Available in English, French, and Spanish)

IOC/VR/EH
8 August 2025

To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for Liaison with the IOC (IOC Member States)

C.c. : Permanent Delegations to UNESCO of IOC Member States
National Commissions for UNESCO in IOC Member States
IOC Officers
Chairs of GOOS Steering Committee

Subject: Open call for applications: For two Co-Chairs for the Global Ocean Observing System Observations Coordination Group (GOOS OCG)

Action required:

(i) *Share with your networks to promote applications for the Co-Chairs of the GOOS Observations Coordination Group (OCG), deadline 26 September 2025*

The Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) is seeking applications for Co-Chairs of its Observations Coordination Group ([OCG](#)). GOOS is the global locus for ocean observing coordination. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO is lead sponsor of GOOS and collaborates closely with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) as well as United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and International Science Council (ISC) as co-sponsors. GOOS is the major ocean observing programmatic element of the IOC Medium-term Strategy 2022–2029 and the WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy.

GOOS supports ocean observing frameworks and coordinating infrastructure, it works with its 84 contributing nations, observing networks, institutions, and community of scientists, technicians and practitioners to strengthen the global ocean observing system through standards, best practices, FAIR data implementation, and co-design towards a fit-for-purpose ocean observing information delivery system. GOOS advocates across the United Nations on the critical need for ocean observations to safely navigate the future and that the global ocean observing system is viewed by nations as a part of their critical infrastructure. GOOS connects observing partners and policy instruments around climate, weather, biodiversity, coastal resilience and a sustainable blue economy to ensure that the global ocean observing system meets stakeholder needs for ocean information.

Chairperson

Yutaka MICHIDA, Prof.
Special Presidential Envoy
for UN Ocean Decade
The University of Tokyo (Atmosphere
and Ocean Research Institute)
Kashiwanoha 5-1-5
2778564 Kashiwa
JAPAN

Executive Secretary

Mr Vidar HELGESEN
Intergovernmental Oceanographic
Commission — UNESCO
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris Cedex 07 SP
FRANCE

Vice-Chairpersons

Ms Allison D. REED
Foreign Affairs Officer
U.S. Department of State
Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs
Washington, DC
USA

Dr Atanas PALAZOV
Former Director, Professor
Institute of Oceanology
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
40 Parvi May Str.
9000 Varna
BULGARIA

Capt Carlos ZUÑIGA ARAYA
Director of the Chilean Navy Hydrographic and
Oceanographic Service (SHOA)
Casilla 324,
Valparaiso, 237-0168
CHILE

Dr Hansan PARK
Principal Research Scientist, Korea
Institute of Ocean Science & Technology
(KIOST)
Director general of the Korea-Indonesia Marine
Technology Cooperation Research Center
385, Haeyang-ro, Yeongdo-gu, Busan
REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Prof. Amr Zakaria HAMOUDA
President of Marine Hazards
Mitigation Center (MHMC)
National Institute of
Oceanography and Fisheries
(NIOF)
Qaitbay, Al-Anfoshi
Alexandria
EGYPT

The OCG works to guide and strengthen the implementation of GOOS and the WMO Integrated Global Observing System (WIGOS) through identifying, coordinating and developing relevant initiatives across the global ocean observing networks (see the OCG Terms of Reference, membership, governance, and operating principles [here](#)). The work of the OCG is expanding and becoming more complex as societal demand for ocean information is increasing, the number of global ocean observing networks increases, and also connections with partners and the private sector. GOOS is now seeking two Co-Chairs instead of one Chair to lead this core GOOS component.

The OCG vision is to support the delivery of a fit-for-purpose, integrated, and coherent Global Ocean Observing System of networks. There are now 13 mature ocean observing networks and 4 emerging observing networks, and the OCG also manages the Work Plan of the IOC-WMO Joint Operational Centre – [OceanOPS](#) – which provides services to GOOS, WMO, and to the global ocean observing networks. It develops actions under 8 current foci:

- Defining and responding to observing system needs
- Observing Advances
- Standards and Best Practices
- Data Management
- OceanOPS
- Metrics
- Environmental Stewardship
- Capacity Development

The work of the OCG is at the heart of strengthening, streamlining, and evolving the ocean observing system to be responsive to the needs of Member States and other users. Insight into the current work of the OCG can be gained from the most recent annual meeting [OCG-16](#).

The OCG works with the other components of GOOS, the GOOS Expert Panels in Physics and Climate, Biogeochemistry, Biological and Ecological observations, the GOOS Regional Alliances, the Expert Team on Operational Ocean Forecasting and the GOOS National Focal Points, towards achieving the [GOOS 2030 Strategy](#). The OCG reports into the GOOS Steering Committee where the OCG Co-Chairs are *ex-officio* members. The Co-Chairs also represent the interests of ocean observing networks, OCG, and GOOS, to the science, government, and policy decision-maker communities.

The OCG Co-Chair is an active working role and requires someone who is experienced in ocean observing at a senior level and interested in evolving the OCG, the GOOS observing networks and OceanOPS, and thus evolving GOOS within the overall framework of the GOOS Strategy and governance. It is anticipated that the role will take 10-15% of a normal working week, the Co-Chair has support from IOC and WMO secretariats, and works with OCG Vice Chairs for WMO, Data, Standards and Best Practices and OceanOPS to evolve the work. Although there is permanent secretariat support from IOC and WMO for the OCG, it is helpful if candidates can come with some support from within their institution/organization.

The ideal candidates will have senior management experience in ocean observing, knowledge of the work of the GOOS OCG and the global ocean observing networks. The set of attributes and skills that GOOS is seeking are laid out in Annex 1, and the commitments in Annex 2. The OCG Co-Chairs are appointed for a term of up to 5 years. It is anticipated that the two new Co-Chairs will be appointed in early October and will have a transition period with the current OCG Chair.

Application process

Applicants are kindly requested to send their CV and covering letter, indicating how they meet the attributes and skills required, as outlined in Annex 1. In addition, applicants are requested to include

confirmation that they have or anticipate receiving, as relevant, permission from their employer to undertake this role, and a letter of support from their IOC National Focal Point (list [here](#)) would be advantageous.

Please send the applications no later than 26 September 2025 via email to Ms Weronika Kmiec (w.kmiec@unesco.org) with Dr Emma Heslop (e.heslop@unesco.org) in cc. Any questions about the role can be addressed to Dr Emma Heslop (e.heslop@unesco.org).

The selection will be made in late September 2025, and candidates will be invited to interview.

This call for two Co-Chairs of the GOOS OCG replaces as earlier call for an OCG Chair ([CL-3014](#) of 27 November 2024).

Thanking you in advance for your consideration,

[signature]

Vidar Helgesen
Executive Secretary

Enclosures (2): 1/ Attributes, skills, and experience required and/or advantageous for Chair OCG Role
2/ Commitments and background information

1/ Attributes, skills, and experience required and/or advantageous for the Role

Attributes required:

- Demonstrated ability to develop a compelling strategic direction, within an overall organisational vision, strategy, and implementation plan.
- Demonstrated capability to lead others and develop functional coalitions.
- Ability to delegate responsibilities and actions to OCG Vice-Chairs and sub-bodies as required.
- Demonstrated ability to represent the interests of ocean observing networks, OCG, and GOOS to science, government, and policy decision-maker communities.
- Committed to diversifying participation in GOOS and the development of early career professionals.

Skills required:

- Strong strategic leadership capabilities.
- Demonstrated ability to lead teams, in marine science and/or ocean observing.
- Demonstrated leadership in complex and/or distributed organizations.
- Ability to communicate with diverse stakeholders.
- Analytical thinking and decision making.

Experience required:

- Practical working knowledge of the global ocean observing system and observing networks.
- Experience working with intergovernmental bodies (e.g. WMO, IOC).
- Knowledge of, and interest in, the application and impact of ocean observing to end users through value chains.
- Knowledge of the application and impact of ocean observing to societal issues.

Experience that would be advantageous:

- Demonstrated success in securing support for activities, meeting organisation, etc.
- Systems thinking and a system-wide perspective is important.
- Appreciation of private and public sector roles in advancing ocean observing.

2/ Commitments and background information

The OCG includes the Co-Chairs, the Vice Chairs of Data Management, Standards and Best Practices, and WMO, the OceanOPS Manager, IOC and WMO secretariats, an ECOP/developing country focal point, the leadership of the 13 mature global ocean observing networks and 4 emerging networks. See the OCG Terms of Reference, membership, governance, and operating principles [here](#).

Meetings:

- The OCG meets annually, generally in person, for 3.5 days to report on progress, discuss emerging and ongoing issues, take decisions and to set the annual work plan.
- There are also 3 OCG Roundtables (online) per annum, these are forums to evolve the work and interact on emerging issues.

- The OCG Executive Committee, which includes the Co-Chairs, Vice Chairs OceanOPS, ECOP/developing country focal point and IOC and WMO secretariats, meets biweekly online to evolve the tasks and discuss the OCG work plan.

Management commitments

- The OCG Co-Chair is a member of the OceanOPS Management Group, which meets regularly (bi-monthly online) with the IOC and WMO Secretariat.
- The OCG Co-Chair is a member of the GOOS Executive Committee, representing the OCG, with the leadership of the other GOOS components.
- The OCG Co-Chair is an *ex officio* member of the GOOS Steering Committee which meets annually and generally in person in April/May for 3.5 days, and also meets online every quarter to discuss the GOOS work plan.

Co-Chair tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Leading the bi-weekly OCG Executive Group calls, the annual OCG Session and quarterly OCG Roundtable Calls, with support from the IOC secretariat.
- Ensuring that there is a coherent OCG work plan, with support from the IOC secretariat.
- Representing the OCG and reporting on progress to the GOOS Steering Committee.
- Working with the secretariat to evolve the various OCG Task Teams and lines of work, ensuring work is online with long-term goals of OCG and GOOS.
- Participating in the management of OceanOPS.

There is permanent secretariat support from IOC and WMO for the OCG/OCG Co-Chair. However, it is helpful if candidates can come with some support from within their institution/organization.

The time commitment for the OCG Co-Chair role is approximately 10-15% of a normal working week.