

IOC Circular Letter No 3054
(Available in English, French and Spanish)

IOC//VH/JP/pb
18 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 of IOC Member States
IOC Officers
Chair and Vice-Chairs of IOC Subsidiary Bodies (Scientific, Technical and Regional)

Subject: IODE Inter-sessional Working Group on Advancing Ocean Data Sharing for Sustainable Development in areas within national jurisdiction (IWG-DSNJ) – Call for nominations for members

In its Decision A-33/3.4.2 of June 2025, the IOC Assembly urges Member States to collaborate with industry, research and other data infrastructure stakeholders to standardize ocean data sharing practices through the establishment of national data-sharing policies, regulations and permissions for all ocean-related activities conducted within their territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones, including through the inclusion of the provisions of the IOC Data Policy and Terms of Use in licensing and permitting within their jurisdictions.

By enhancing greater collaboration between the private sector, scientific community and other stakeholders in the marine environment, this decision supports the broader goals of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021–2030.

In addition, Decision A-33/3.4.2 establishes an IODE (International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange) intersessional working group to facilitate and promote implementation of this decision. This working group will engage with Member States to provide best practices and share examples of data sharing that have an impact in national jurisdictions. It will report progress to the IOC Executive Council at its the 59th session (2026) and then at the 29th session of the IODE Intergovernmental Committee.

The IOC Secretariat therefore invites Member States to kindly nominate experts to the IODE Inter-sessional Working Group on Advancing Ocean Data Sharing for Sustainable Development in areas within national jurisdiction (IWG-DSNJ) using the nomination form attached to this letter. Participation in this working group is voluntary and Member States are not obliged to be represented.

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Preferred profile of experts to be nominated:

1. Knowledge of the ocean data management and data sharing context within the Member State;
2. Knowledge of interactions between the private and public sectors with respect to ocean data management and sharing within the Member State;
3. Knowledge of the regional or global international ocean data sharing context and the Member State's contributions.

Nominations will be limited to one expert per Member State. Any additional nominations submitted by a Member State will not be considered, which is why coordination across national agencies is encouraged.

In forming the IODE Inter-sessional Working Group, consideration will also be given to geographical, cultural and gender balance and diversity of expertise.

The Secretariat would appreciate receiving nominations before Friday 19 September 2025 by email to Madina Begmatova at email m.begmatova@unesco.org, with a copy to Peter Burger at email p.burger@unesco.org.

Any questions can be addressed to Peter Burger.

With the assurances of my highest consideration, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

[signature]

Vidar Helgesen
Executive Secretary

Enclosures: 1/ Terms of Reference for the IODE Inter-sessional Working Group on Advancing Ocean Data Sharing for Sustainable Development in areas within national jurisdiction (IWG-DSNJ)
2/ Nomination form for Inter-sessional Working Group membership

1/ Terms of Reference for the IODE Inter-sessional Working Group on Advancing Ocean Data Sharing for Sustainable Development in areas within national jurisdiction (IWG-DSNJ)

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 59th 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.

2/ Nomination form for Inter-sessional Working Group membership

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

Member State:

Candidate's name:

Position:

Institution:

Tel:

Email:

Postal Address:

Relevant experience:

Additional comments:

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Nomination submitted by:

Signature:

Position

Government Department/Agency:

Date:

Nomination Forms duly completed and signed should be sent by **Friday 19 September 2025** to the IOC Secretariat by email Madina Begmatova (m.begmatova@unesco.org), with a copy to Peter Burger (p.burger@unesco.org) through one of the following channels:

1. The national coordinating body for liaison with IOC (see the [list](#))
2. The Head of the National Commission for UNESCO
3. The Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Note Nominations will be limited to one expert per Member State. Any additional nominations submitted by a Member State will not be considered, which is why coordination across national agencies is encouraged. Any questions can be addressed to Peter Burger (p.burger@unesco.org).