



unesco

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

Fifty-seventh Session of the Executive Council
UNESCO, Paris, 25–28 June 2024

Item 3.1 of the Provisional Agenda

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ON THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED
SINCE THE THIRTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY (June 2023–May 2024)**

Summary

The report starts with an introduction by the IOC Executive Secretary.

It is followed by the highlights of programme implementation and the assessment of progress under the IOC results framework for 2022–2023 against approved performance indicators and targets.

A separate Addendum to this document provides a detailed update of the work accomplished over the period from June 2023 to May 2024 by IOC functions and in English only.

In addition, the 'Report on 2022–2023 (41 C/5) Budget Implementation as at 31 December 2023' (IOC/EC-57/3.1.Doc(2)) and the 'Report on the Financial Situation of the IOC Special Account at year end 2023 and forecast for 2024–2025' (IOC/EC-57/3.1.Doc(3)) complete the documentation in support of the oral presentation of the Executive Secretary to the plenary session of the Executive Council.

Decision proposed: The Executive Council is invited to take note of this report and consider the draft decision referenced as Dec. EC-57/3.1 in the Provisional Action Paper (document IOC/EC-57/AP).

Introduction by the IOC Executive Secretary

1. Year 2024 opens a new chapter for our Commission. IOC programmes will be able to step up delivery across all functions and value chains, with particular focus on long-term sustained observations and data and information management, as well as regional subsidiary bodies and activities and Member States' capacity building. This is a result of the increased budget for 2024–2025 approved thanks to IOC Member States's ownership and support.
2. This progress notwithstanding, much remains to be done to fill our collective knowledge gaps about the ocean—both in terms of the knowledge we have never had, and in terms of the new knowledge needed as a result of the dramatic changes unfolding in ocean ecosystems. There is a need to build, expand and sustain the infrastructure for ocean observations and data, and for structural and systemic changes to the way we finance it. This will be key to sustainable ocean management at national level and for effective implementation of international agreements such as the BBNJ treaty. Given the significance of the ocean in economic and societal terms, as well as the implications at planetary scale of the changes rapidly unfolding in the ocean, ocean observations and data should be considered on a par with critical infrastructure.
3. This was one of the key takeaways from deliberations at the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona (10–12 April). The conference brought together the global ocean community to present achievements made over the last three years, take stock and set a collective vision towards 2030. Over 1,500 in-person participants from 124 countries and over 3,000 virtual participants participated in this milestone event and identified priorities for the Ocean Decade in coming years that are documented in [*The Barcelona Statement*](#).
4. These new directions for the Ocean Decade will provide a major contribution for the 2025 UN Ocean Conference, hosted by France and Costa Rica, and will highlight where further national and international efforts will be required to achieve SDG14.
5. The Barcelona Conference demonstrated how the Ocean Decade, with its purpose of supporting sustainable development and its mobilisation of actors across science, government, industry, and philanthropy, can inspire efforts to strengthen the IOC's ability long term to deliver on its full purpose, including the application of knowledge to improving management, sustainable development, the protection of the marine environment and decision-making processes. In this context, the timely decision made by the Assembly last year to begin the new phase of the 'IOC and the Future of the Ocean' consultation process will be an important exercise to be properly launched at the Executive Council.
6. Document IOC-EC/57.3.1.Doc(4), presented to the Executive Council, outlines the proposed three-step consultation process. With a wide thematic scope and covering national, regional and global levels, it will allow for in-depth and broad engagement of Member State stakeholders, including by systematically taking advantage of regional and global gatherings for the organization of consultation meetings.
7. The consultation process will ultimately prepare the basis for the decisions at the IOC Assembly in 2025 and 2027, as well as Executive Council's guidance in the intervening years. Ending just before the Ocean Decade and the SDG 2030 finishing line, our next four-year programme 2026–2029 will need to be co-designed with clear programmatic focus and solid monitoring and evaluation mechanism and lay the foundations of our next Medium-Term Strategy for 2030 onwards.

Highlights of Programme Implementation (June 2023–May 2024)

8. Coordinated by IOC since 2021, the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), the largest global ocean science initiative ever undertaken, currently counts 52 endorsed global Decade programmes and over 300 Decade projects led by partners in over 60 countries, and close to 100 in-kind and financial contributions. Twelve regional and thematic decentralised coordination structures are hosted by partners, and 39 countries have established National Decade Committees. Over 150 experts were involved in the Working Groups that led development of the Vision 2030 White Papers and which formed the basis of the *Vision 2030 Outcomes Report* that was central to the discussions at the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference.

9. This was achieved through an unprecedented mobilization of the IOC Secretariat and its partners over these past three years. With Member States' support, the following key achievements were realised in 2023–2024:

- The IOC *State of the Ocean Report 2024*, was published in June 2024. The StOR presents the results of ocean-related scientific activities and analyses to describe the current and future state of the ocean, addressing physical, chemical, ecological, socioeconomic and governance aspects, focusing on the seven Outcomes of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.
- During the United Nations Climate Conference (COP28) in December 2023, IOC championed the crucial role of ocean science as the basis for ocean and climate action. Ocean issues made important headway within the first-ever '[Global Stocktake](#) of the Paris Agreement', with an unprecedented recognition of the need to consider the ocean when acting on climate change and strengthen ocean action based on the best available ocean science.
- IOC's data submission towards SDG 14.3.1 'Average marine acidity (pH) measured at agreed suite of representative sampling stations' collected inputs from an increased number of countries and stations (178 stations in 2021; 308 stations in 2022; 539 stations in 2023; 638 in 2024).
- IOC-coordinated global expert network on ocean acidification now counts more than 1,150 members from 115 countries (22 in Africa, 23 SIDS) and continues to grow.
- The International Partnership for Blue Carbon (IPBC) grew to 57 Partners, of which 18 are IOC Member States. Together with Australia and France, IOC co-hosted the 2023 IPBC Dialogue at UNESCO HQ.
- The Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) now has more than 8,700 ocean observing platforms across 13 global ocean observing networks, run by 84 Member States (10 in Africa, 9 SIDS). Over 100,000 ocean observations are tracked every day through the IOC-WMO Operational Centre (OceanOPS). This information is presented in the annual GOOS *Ocean Observing System Report Card*.
- Recognizing that Joint programmes between IOC, United Nations and other international organizations are important ways to leverage and enhance IOC activities to best serve society and that these programmes must be underpinned by timely and relevant agreements, a revised four-year Memorandum of Understanding for the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) was negotiated with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Science Council (ISC);

- The Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board self-review of performance was completed.
- The Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) started building a sustainable, interoperable, and inclusive digital ecosystem for all ocean stakeholders, aiming to link thousands of online data systems into an “internet of ocean data”.
- OBIS continued to grow, receiving more than one new dataset per day and over a million records per month.
- As a joint effort between the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and the IODE/Ocean Biodiversity Information System (OBIS) information was collected from 638 long-term active biological monitoring programmes and integrated into an online metadata platform (BioEco portal) which will be connected to ODIS, and become the infrastructure to monitor the status of the marine biological component of GOOS. OBIS continues to play a key role in this by also hosting and providing an integrated, standardised and quality controlled access point to the actual biological and ecosystem observations required to feed into ecosystem models, early-warning systems and indicator and assessment frameworks.
- The Flanders-funded Environmental DNA Expeditions project in Marine World Heritage Sites, implemented jointly by IOC and the World Heritage Centre, is now concluding with the analysis of over 400 samples from 20 sites. A summary for policymakers will be published in June 2024. It will illustrate the biodiversity richness and unique discoveries witnessed through eDNA sampling involving over 200 school children (citizen scientists) and highlight its vulnerability to global warming under climate change and the need to upscale observations and data sharing to support conservation efforts.
- Tsunami programme kept its strong capacity development focus in all ocean basins. With active support by Member States as indicated by the renewal of agreements with:
 - the Agency for Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics of the Republic of Indonesia hosting the Indian Ocean Tsunami Information Centre (IOTIC) 2023–2027,
 - the Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU) of Barbados hosting the Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre (CTIC) 2024–2029, and
 - the Bureau of Meteorology (Bureau) of Australia hosting the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation (IOTWMS) Office in Perth, Australia 2023–2027.

IOC Technical Series No. 183 was published on *Monitoring and Warning for Tsunamis Generated by Volcanoes*. The Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme continued to expand, with over 50 communities now recognized in 24 Member States.

- As joint effort by GlobalHAB and GESAMP a whitepaper on *Sargassum* was published in June 2023. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed April 2024 between IOC-UNESCO and FAO to formalise close ongoing cooperation on early warning systems for HAB's and on global data compilation and sharing. A collaborative global effort under the lead of IPHAB entitled HAB Solutions (HAB-S) was endorsed as a Decade programme early 2024.
- In June 2023, IOC adopted its 2023–2030 Capacity Development Strategy. The Ocean Teacher Global Academy continued to grow, with now 17 Training Centres established. With its ISO 29990 certification, IOC certifies hundreds of training participants every year. The Ocean CD-Hub has been further developed as a component of the CHM/TMT (Clearing-House mechanism for the Transfer of Marine Technology).
- With the IOC capacity development effort bolstered by NORAD funding, five activities were launched in 2024, co-designed with regional and technical subsidiary bodies: (i)

Establishing Early Warning Systems for Harmful Algae Blooms in Africa; (ii) GLOSS Africa (Phase 1–North Africa); (iii) Support for strategic planning and capacity development for ocean observations under the auspices of GOOS-Africa; (iv) Biodiversity Data Hub for the High Seas; and (v) OceanTraining internships to enhance global human capacity related to the IOC mandate.

- The programmatic capacity development work of IOC is complemented by the Ocean Decade Capacity Development Facility that aims to develop and deliver priority capacity development initiatives in the framework of the Ocean Decade, with a focus on SIDS, Least Developed Countries and Early Career Ocean Professionals.
- Ensuring alignment with evolving national and regional priorities and strategies is paramount for the success of our action for Global Priority Africa. The Africa Ocean Decade Task Force oversees and promotes the implementation of the *Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap* including through the development and launch of a new Decade programme on sustainable ocean management in Africa.
- In the WESTPAC region, a milestone was achieved with organization of the 2nd UN Ocean Decade Regional Conference and 11th WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference (22–25 April 2024) which brought together over 1,000 stakeholders to discuss the current status of ocean knowledge, take stock of the first three years' achievements of the Ocean Decade Actions in the region and identify future priorities, building on the outputs of the Vision 2030 process.
- As a contribution to the UNESCO operational strategy on SIDS, IOC is leading one of six intersectoral Accelerator programme—ACE#2: Strengthen Sustainable Ocean Knowledge, Spatial Planning and Water Management capacities of SIDS in support of the growth of their blue economies. Increased engagement with SIDS in the Ocean Decade was supported through the establishment of a decentralized coordination hub for the Pacific Islands Region, hosted by The Pacific Community, and the establishment of a taskforce for the Tropical Americas and Caribbean Region to oversee implementation of the Ocean Decade in the region.
- IOC stepped up its efforts in Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and launched in 2022 an updated joint MSProadmap with the European Commission, then resumed the MSPglobal project in July 2023 with regional focus on building technical capacities in West and Central Africa as well as the Western Pacific region. Besides, the project is developing further knowledge, tools and a new online training on OceanTeacher Global Academy to support all Member States to advance their MSP processes. In total, the activities of the MSPglobal 2.0 involved 867 participants from 100 countries (32 Africa, 12 SIDS) by mid-April 2024. These included mainly and MSPforum for Africa, trainings for representatives of national authorities and global workshops to co-develop MSP tools with experts from all continents and oceans. IOC experience on MSP has inspired and provided inputs to establish a new Decade Programme on Sustainable Ocean Planning supported by a set of international partners, which was launched at the Barcelona Conference.
- In the content of the IOC Sea Beyond project, funded by Prada Group, over 600 students from 20 countries have been trained on ocean literacy, with training resources available in English, French and Spanish. Different stakeholder groups—journalists, architects and urban planners, and finance experts—were trained on ocean literacy through Ocean Teacher Global Academy e-learning courses. the development of e-learning courses in collaboration with Ocean Teacher Global Academy.

Assessment of Progress against Approved Results Framework

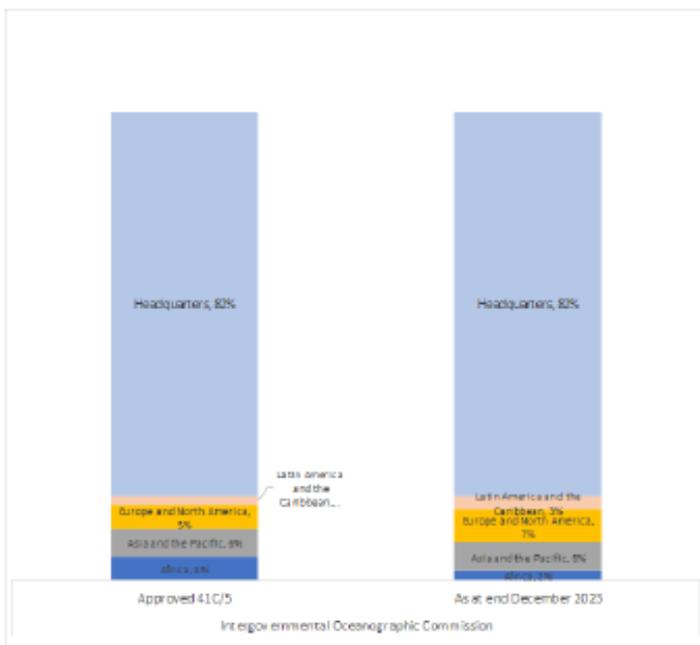
(Excerpts from. [219 EX/4.INF](#))

PROGRAMME BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE BY OUTPUT FOR 2022-2023 (41 C/5) AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

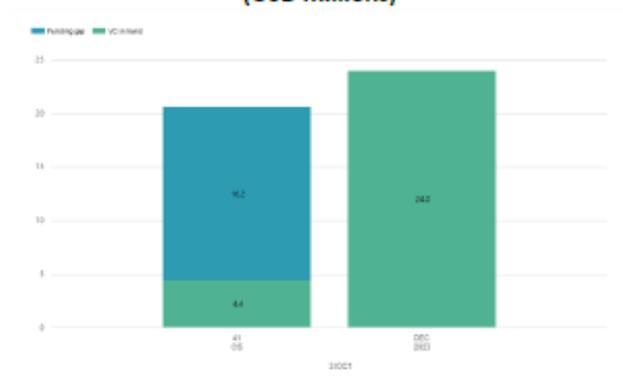
In USD '000 41 C/5 PART	Regular Budget		Voluntary Contribution		Total IBF				
	Adjusted Budget	Expenditure	Total Voluntary Contribution Approved	Expenditure	Adjusted Budget	Expenditure			
Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission 3. IOC1 - Member States critically supported in strengthening their capacity to conduct marine scientific research, generate knowledge, and develop and implement science-based tools, services, and policies in order to reverse the decline in ocean health and accelerate the transition towards sustainable management of ocean-related risks and opportunities	11,218	10,759	96%	20,579	15,111	73%	31,797	25,870	81%
Total	11,218	10,759	96%	20,579	15,111	73%	31,797	25,870	81%

* This report provides figures for outputs related to Part II-A of the UNESCO budget at UNORE
 * All figures are subject to audit as of the date of publication of the table/chart

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES: WEIGHT BY REGION FOR 2022-2023 (41 C/5) AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023



STATUS OF THE FILLING OF THE GAP BY OUTPUT FOR 2022-2023 (41 C/5) AS AT DECEMBER 2023 (USD millions)



3.IOC1 – Member States critically supported in strengthening their capacity to conduct marine scientific research, generate knowledge, and develop and implement science-based tools, services, and policies in order to reverse the decline in ocean health and accelerate the transition towards sustainable management of ocean-related risks and opportunities

Note: ■ Not achieved; ▲ Partially achieved; ● Achieved.

Summary of progress

- IOC was highly visible in many international convenings to foster alliances and address global challenges: at the 'One Ocean Summit' in Brest (February 2022) with major commitments in the context of the Ocean Decade in the areas of ocean mapping and ocean literacy; at 'Our Ocean' Conferences in Palau (April 2022) and Panama (March 2023) and at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon (June 2022) that gathered 24 Heads of State and Government and over 6,500 participants and adopted the Lisbon Declaration recognizing the importance of the Ocean Decade and of the role of the IOC of UNESCO in its coordination.
- As the custodian agency for SDG Indicator 14.3.1 on ocean acidification, IOC actively supported its Member States, with progress summarized in the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022. The adoption of the legally binding UN Treaty on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) created new opportunities for managing the ocean sustainably. With its globally coordinated ocean observations and data management systems coupled with experience in Marine Spatial Planning, IOC's potential role in the new treaty's clearing-house mechanism is specifically mentioned. Several targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework are directly relevant to the work of IOC and the Ocean Decade, and the UNFCCC multilateral process now includes an annual ocean and climate change dialogue which the IOC has supported.
- New cooperation with UN /DESA in the framework of the SIDS Coalition for Nature and the Ocean Decade Alliance has been initiated through a Statement of Collaboration and Joint Action Framework to harness opportunities for accelerated action in SIDS through ocean knowledge, outreach, and capacity development, launched during the 2023 SDG Summit (September 2023).
- The Ocean Decade's solid portfolio of activities now counts close to 50 global programmes - a number of those led by or involving IOC programmes - and over 280 projects. The Vision 2030 process is identifying a strategic and measurable ambition for each of the 10 Ocean Decade Challenges to be discussed at the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference (10-12 April 2024, Barcelona) and inform the discussion on the global ocean science priorities at the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference (June 2025, Nice). With the pool of dedicated resources increased by funding from NORAD, the Ocean Teacher Global Academy platform delivered e-learning courses, primarily focusing on African countries. Implementation of the Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap has accelerated under the strategic guidance of the Africa Ocean Decade Taskforce and a regional sustainable ocean management programme is being developed for Africa. Another major area of focus was on building resilience to ocean-related hazards in SIDS of the Caribbean and Pacific regions.

Performance Indicators (PI) and Targets (T)	Assessment of Progress against Target as at 31/12/2023	Level of target achievement	Explanatory elements (main factors driving performance or underperformance)
PI: Number of Member States with experts actively engaged in the design and implementation of ocean research, generating knowledge to address key sustainability issues T 2022-2023: (i) Experts from 60 Member States, of which 15 in Africa and 10 SIDS (45% women) (ii) 40 Member States, of which 8 in Africa and 3 SIDS	(i) 98 (Africa 22, SIDS 19, 45% women among experts) (ii) SDG 14.3.1: 42 (Africa 7, SIDS 3)	Achieved	The level of voluntary contributions has allowed additional outreach and engagement. The interest and support from Member States has exceeded expectations, driven by the Ocean Decade as a coherent enabling framework of action.
PI: Number of Member States engaged in advancing ocean observation and data management through the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and IOC Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) delivering key information for science-informed solutions T 2022-2023: (i) 25 Member States of which 5 SIDS, (incl. 2 SIDS in Africa), (40% women among experts) (ii) 70 Member States, of which 13 from Africa and 10 SIDS, (40% women amongst experts)	ODIS: (i) ODIS/OIH: 25 partners (Africa 2, SIDS 5) (ii) ODIS/OBIS: 61 (Africa 16, SIDS 21) GOOS: (i) contributing to global networks: 84 (Africa 8, SIDS 8) (ii) actively monitoring ocean biological variables: 62 (Africa 5, SIDS 12)	Achieved	Targets were achieved despite limited resources available. Targets could have been set higher with a more predictable and sustainable resource base.

Performance Indicators (PI) and Targets (T)	Assessment of Progress against Target as at 31/12/2023	Level of target achievement	Explanatory elements (main factors driving performance or underperformance)
<p>PI: Number of Member States with strengthened capacities to develop and implement early warning systems and increase preparedness for and resilience to the risks of tsunamis and other ocean-related hazards T 2022-2023: 142 Member States, of which 12 from Africa and 29 SIDS</p>	<p>(i) Tsunami Warning Focal Points: 142 (Africa 12, SIDS 35) (ii) National Tsunami Ready Board (NTRB) and at least 1 Tsunami Ready Community: 22 NTRBs (Africa 0, SIDS 11) and 48 Tsunami Ready recognized communities ((Africa 0, SIDS 11).</p>	<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Pacific SIDS have engaged increasingly with the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System. The official endorsement of the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme by IOC (2022) boosted interest and funding from Member States and donors, enabling a higher than expected performance.</p>
<p>PI: No of supported Member States that contribute data and information to assessment, global repositories, science /policy interface underpinning sustainable ocean management and decision-making T 2022-2023: 70 Member States, of which 10 from Africa, 8 from SIDS</p>	<p>62 (Africa 10, SIDS 8).</p>	<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Since the launch of the SDG 14.3.1 data portal in December 2019, an increasing number of ocean acidification observations have been reported to IOC and are included in the annual 14.3.1 assessment (308 stations in 35 countries reported in 2022 to 539 stations in 41 countries in 2023). The WOA third cycle is picking up momentum with now experts from 50 countries represented on the Pool of Expert.</p>
<p>PI: Number of Member States supported in the implementation of science-based ocean management plans and transformative solutions for sustainable development T 2022-2023: (i) 80 Member States, 15 Africa, 10 SIDS (ii) 100 Member States, 16 Africa, 14 SIDS</p>	<p>(i) Ocean Decade: 68 (Africa 18, SIDS 11) (ii) MSPRoadmap: 97 (Africa 31, SIDS 10).</p>	<p>Achieved</p>	<p>(i) Increased efforts to engage SIDS and Africa partners including through strategic partnerships and establishment of decentralized coordination structures and regional taskforces. Slower increase that projected in Member State engagement as lead partners of Decade Actions but growing diversity in implementation areas of Decade Actions. (ii) Global online activities with interpretation (EN, FR and ES) and disseminated to a specific database of MSP stakeholders with more than 6,000 contacts. In-person activity jointly with regional organizations targeting and sponsoring most coastal African countries.</p>
<p>PI: Number of Member States supported in strengthening their capacity in marine scientific research and biodiversity, observations and services, through the IOC Capacity Development T 2022-2023: (i) 58 Member States, 15 Africa, 5 SIDS (ii) 38 in Africa, 30 in LAC, 22 in Western Pacific region, 16 in Indian Ocean/Gulf region; 15 SIDS (5 in Africa). GE target: 40% gender balance</p>	<p>(i) GOSR: 53 (Africa 13, SIDS 4) (ii) CD OTGA: 87 (Africa 30, SIDS 15).</p>	<p>Partially achieved</p>	<p>(i) For many Member States this was the First occasion to collect nationally the type of data requested for the GOSR (national capacities in ocean Science), thus all did not make it in time (ii) Underperformance in Africa due to lack of RP funds required to integrate CD in ocean science, observation activities, and support training participation.</p>
<p>PI: Number of Member States provided with access to multi-languages ocean literacy resources and training programmes T 2022-2023: 80 Member States, of which 8 in Africa and 10 SIDS</p>	<p>90 (Africa 16, SIDS 10).</p>	<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Ocean Literacy is becoming more visible, and this is also thanks to the role it plays in the UN Ocean Decade. Furthermore, the IOC is partnering with several ocean literacy networks, and institutions from all over the world, and several ocean literacy resources were made available in different languages. Lastly, in the context of the Swedish Government contribution it was possible to organize the first ocean literacy event in Africa in November 2023. This was instrumental in</p>

Performance Indicators (PI) and Targets (T)	Assessment of Progress against Target as at 31/12/2023	Level of target achievement	Explanatory elements (main factors driving performance or underperformance)
			reaching more countries from the continent.

Challenges and risks in implementation and remedial actions

Key challenges	Remedial actions
Mobilization of resources for the Decade, in addition to the implementation of core IOC programmes remained a key challenge during the transition from the Decade planning to the action phase.	Recognizing that such an unprecedented global endeavour requires adequate and more stable resources and in line with Member States' decisions, the revised 42 C/5 includes a strategic increase in the regular budget allocation for the IOC that will allow the Commission to consolidate its key functions and significantly reinforce its delivery in several critical areas of its mandate. The IOS Evaluation of the IOC's strategic positioning and the related Action Plan and the paper on the "Sustainable delivery and expansion of IOC activities will help guide future efforts in resource mobilization, including with regard to securing more stable 'core' voluntary contributions.

Contribution of key partners

<p>Active cooperation with UN partners continued within and beyond the context of the Ocean Decade. IOC and DOALOS co-organized the International Symposium of the Regular Process on Strengthening the Ocean Science-Policy Interface (UNESCO HQ, December 2023). New cooperation with UN/DESA in the framework of the SIDS Coalition for Nature and the Ocean Decade Alliance has been initiated through a Statement of Collaboration and Joint Action Framework to harness opportunities for accelerated action in SIDS through ocean knowledge, outreach, and capacity development, launched during the SDG Summit. GEBCO (IHO-IOC) and Nippon Foundation Seabed 2030 Project resulted in 25% of the ocean floor now mapped in high resolution. The EU-IOC MSPGlobal 2.0 project started with focus on transboundary cooperation in West Africa, WESTPAC region and the development of marine spatial planning guidance on climate change, biodiversity conservation and indigenous and local knowledge systems in cooperation with UNESCO LINKS programme. In cooperation with the UNEP Regional Seas Conventions and funded by Sweden, the first MSPGlobal Regional Forum for Africa took place in Tanzania. Under the 5th Phase of the GEF IW:LEARN project, IOC hosted the 21st Large Marine Ecosystems Consultation meeting in July 2023. In close collaboration with UNDP and the Sargasso Sea Commission, IOC is working on the first ever Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis for a high sea ecosystem for future stewardship of the Sargasso Sea. Plans for the UN Ocean Conference 2025 are advancing with IOC joining the organizing committee of the Scientific segment of the Conference to be hosted by France and Costa Rica, in Nice, June 2025. IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies continued to serve as key vehicles for the work on the ground with WESTPAC capitalizing on co-design and ownership by Member States of the region, IOCINDIO's Training Through Research approach supported by two active Category 2 Centres in India and Iran and IOCARIBE initiating its regional CD workplan. To further bolster delivery, partnership agreements have been signed with the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the Pacific Community (SPC) to boost ocean science collaboration. SPC now hosts the South Pacific regional coordination hub for the Ocean Decade Engagement of civil society stakeholders continued, with the IMOCA sailing class deploying oceanographic equipment in remote areas and using international race events to communicate about the importance of ocean observations in generating data and science for sustainable development. With the support of the European Commission (DG MARE), and in the context of the Youth4Ocean Forum, one winter school and one summer school were organized in Venice (Italy) and in Matosinhos (Portugal) to expand PhD and Master degree students' knowledge on ocean literacy and develop new skills in multi-cultural collaboration for ocean sustainability. It is encouraging that financial contributions to the IOC were provided not only by traditional donor countries but also from foundations, the private sector and research institutes, attesting the growing interest of various stakeholders in ocean-related issues. Specific partnership agreements have been signed with the Velux Foundation, Ocean X foundation, and Prada Group, in support of Decade actions led by IOC. Among Innovative initiatives, the 3rd edition of the Ocean Decade Foundations' Dialogue resulted in a Monaco Statement from over 24 major philanthropic foundations, amplifying the role of the philanthropic community in global ocean action as part of the Ocean Decade. The statement was launched on the sidelines of the SDG Summit 2023 in New York. And the Corporate Data Group, co-chaired by the IOC Executive Secretary and the Fugro CEO and consisting, to date, of 10 companies, started its work on solutions to overcome data sharing barriers and develop strategies and guidelines for industry to make their ocean data publicly accessible in support of ocean science.</p>
