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INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

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UNESCO, 25 June–3 July 2025

SUMMARY REPORT

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[Adopted Decisions and Recommendations](#)

The [annex](#) contains the original versions of the statements made by Member States and observers.

1. OPENING

1. After a technical preliminary introduction by the Secretariat, the Chair, Prof. Yutaka Michida, opened the first Assembly session of his term at 10:00 hrs on Wednesday 25 June 2025 in room II of UNESCO Headquarters, Paris.

2. For the first time at an Assembly, the IOC Executive Secretary, Mr Vidar Helgesen, briefly took the floor to welcome the delegations. He recalled that, in his views, the active participation of IOC Member States at the operational level to deliver the commission programme priorities distinguishes the IOC in many ways.

3. The Chair asked participants to stand for a minute of silence to honour distinguished individuals who had participated in the work of the Commission and have passed away during this intersessional period: Ass. Prof. Doğan Kalafat (1959–2024, Türkiye); Dr Haiqing Li (China, (1958–2025); Dr Kazuhiro Kitazawa (Japan, 1938–2024); Prof. Zulfigar Yasin (Malaysia, 1959–2025); Mr Alexander V. Klepikov (Russian Federation, 1956–2025); Prof. Arthur N. Chilingarov (Russian Federation, 1939–2024); and Ms Forest Collins (1970–2024, United States of America).

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

2.1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

4. The Chair reminded that the Executive Council, acting as the Steering Committee for this Assembly session, examined the revised provisional agenda for the session and noted there was no request for supplementary items (cf. [IOC/EC-58/SR](#)). The Executive Secretary informed that the Secretariat received two draft resolutions by the deadline of 20 June 2025: 'Report on the United Nations Ocean Decade (2021–2030) implementation plan and result of the mid-term evaluation' (agenda item 4.8) and 'Strengthening the IOCAFRICA Secretariat: a strategic imperative for advancing ocean science and governance in Africa' (agenda item 3.3.1). The draft Resolution on 'Governance, programming and budgeting matters' of the Commission (agenda item 5.4) was prepared during the session as per paragraph 16 of document [IOC/INF-1315](#).

5. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/2\(I\)](#).

2.2. DESIGNATION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

6. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-32/2\(II\)](#).

2.3. ESTABLISHMENT OF SESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

7. Referring to the recommendations made by the Executive Council (EC-58/Dec.3.1) on this item, acting as the steering committee for the present session, the Chair reminded of the mandate of the three statutory sessional committees, the open-ended composition thereof, and the working arrangements made for their meetings.

8. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/2\(III\)](#).

2.4. INTRODUCTION TO TIMETABLE, DOCUMENTATION AND IOC MEMORIAL LECTURES

9. The Executive Secretary introduced this item. He reminded the Assembly of the deadline for submitting nominations for the elections – 27 June, 18:00 Paris time. With regard to the organisation of the session, the Executive Secretary reminded delegates that the programme of parallel meetings to this session was available on the session's web page independently of the Assembly's official timetable. He thanked in advance the Member States and partner organizations for organizing side events and for offering Coffee/tea services during this session. The Executive Secretary informed the Member States that the Assembly would unfortunately

have to change its plenary room on 2 and 3 July in order to accommodate other events to be held at the same time as the Assembly. He pointed out the increasingly difficulty to organise meetings during the month of June, especially a two-week meeting such as the Assembly.

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

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

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

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

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

15. To conclude, the Executive Secretary recalled the recommendation of the Executive Council that preceded this Assembly to publish amendments to draft decisions on the Assembly's web page as soon as they were received, so that delegates would have time to read and discuss them well in advance of the plenary discussion. These new arrangements were applied during this session.

3. IOC MATTERS AND REPORTS

3.1. STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON

16. In accordance with rule of procedure 45.1(a), Chair Yutaka Michida delivered an oral statement on recent developments in the work of the Commission and developed on the perspectives and challenges for the coming year (cf. [IOC/A-33/3.1.Inf.1](#)).

17. On behalf of the Commission, the Chairperson welcomed Liberia, the 151st Member State of the IOC, and gave an overview of his activities representing the Commission and the IOC's presence on the international agenda during the intersessional period of the Assembly.

18. The representative of 3 Member State took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Liberia](#), [Russian Federation](#).

3.2. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ON THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED SINCE THE THIRTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

19. The Executive Secretary introduced this item.

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

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

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

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

24. The programmatic capacity development work of IOC, guided by the *IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030*, is complemented by the Ocean Decade Capacity Development Facility. The Facility aims to develop and deliver priority capacity development initiatives in the framework of the Ocean Decade, with a focus on SIDS, Least Developed Countries and Early Career Ocean Professionals. IOC regional subsidiary bodies continue their critically important work of catalysing engagement and impact on the ground.

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

26. He concluded by emphasizing that the dual objectives of knowledge generation and application are reflected in the *IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029)* and align with the ethos of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), which seeks to generate the science needed for supporting the decisions required for a sustainable ocean. The IOC-led programmes and projects that are being developed under the framework of the ‘Ocean Decade’ range from observations to research, to sustainable ocean planning. They are testbeds of transformative approaches to the generation of timely, relevant and co-designed knowledge that has direct applicability to decision-making. The diverse stakeholder communities evolving through the endorsed activities of the Ocean Decade will be important networks that the IOC can draw on in a post-Decade era to assist in the generation and delivery of knowledge as well as its application. The Ocean Decade provides opportunities for IOC programmes to work on emerging issues in new ways, with new partners, and thus build the foundation of a future IOC that is a legacy after the end of the Decade to meet the expectations of Member States.

27. The representatives of 40 Member States and 1 observer took the floor.

28. The Assembly started by warmly welcoming Liberia (14 May 2025) and Antigua and Barbuda (25 June 2025) as new members of the IOC family, now counting 152 countries.

29. Member States congratulated the IOC Executive Secretary’s for a comprehensive report on the IOC’s progress since the 32nd Session of IOC Assembly. The Assembly noted remarkable progress across its core functions and areas of competence areas since Mr Helgesen’s appointment on 1 March 2024, including the stewardship of the UN Ocean Decade and major contributions to the success of the 3rd United Nations Conference on Oceans in Nice. Efforts in ocean observation, ocean science, data integration, and capacity development were noted as essential, particularly as the demand for ocean-based knowledge increases within the context of pressing global challenges. The IOC was acknowledged as a major driving force in advancing ocean science.

30. Member States were concerned that the execution of IOC’s programme for 2025 is severely impacted by the disproportionate reduction of the IOC 2025 regular budget allotment in the context 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). The Assembly was unanimous in stressing the importance of complying with the decision by Member States at the 216th session of the UNESCO Executive Board, endorsed by the UNESCO General Conference in the 42 C/5 Appropriation Resolution, establishing a baseline of 3% for the IOC’s share of UNESCO’s regular budget.

31. Given the uncertainty regarding the 43 C/5 (2026–2027) budgetary scenarios, Member States suggested that IOC needs to approach the next biennium as a financially resilient organization. Key initiatives such as GOOS, IODE, and regional capacity-building efforts, especially those supporting Africa and SIDS, cannot be compromised by budget cuts or contingency measures. Member States expressed concern that financial risks—both immediate and mid-term—strongly affect the essential on-the-ground work conducted through regional subsidiary bodies, particularly within the context of understaffing and under-resourcing of secretariats. The Assembly welcomed the IOC Executive Secretary’s proposal for a better alignment of programmatic planning and budgeting cycles of subsidiary bodies with the overall IOC’s and UNESCO’s C/5 schedules.

32. The Assembly particularly appreciated the strategic focus of IOC Executive Secretary’s presentation and the inclusive and efficient consultations processes aimed at improving IOC governance and management processes (in compliance with its Statutes). The Assembly

highlighted that it is a sign of a strong and healthy organisation to undertake an evaluation of the organisation's relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

33. The Assembly also welcomed the findings of the external assessment of IOC governance and management and the alignment of its recommendations with Member State input to the IOC Intersessional Financial Advisory Group. The assessment was seen as key to improving the IOC's ability to deliver meaningful support to its Member States through the application of its Statutes. Member States were unanimous in reaffirming the importance of the IOC's mandate as the UN body responsible for coordinating global ocean science and delivering knowledge in support for ocean services. Upholding the IOC's functional autonomy status within UNESCO is essential to ensure the Commission's responsiveness, credibility, and efficiency.

34. Member States welcomed the alignment of the new IOC Results Framework 2026–2027 with the High-Level Objectives of the IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029), identifying that this supports a more effective assessment of the implementation of the Strategy. They also stressed the importance of the "IOC and the Future of the Ocean" Member State consultation and the focus on securing a lasting legacy from the Ocean Decade to further strengthen IOC's role and relevance, including IOC's contributions to other UN processes. This will help to maximize the return on countries' collective investments in observation, data sharing, and scientific knowledge.

35. The United States of America, while reaffirming its support for the critical, substantive work of the IOC, and the much-needed transparency and excellence in governance, expressed concerns with the widespread reaffirmation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as general references to climate change. USA encouraged IOC to continue focusing on specific environmental threats, such as ocean acidification and sea-level rise, and on enhancing resilience and disaster planning. In this spirit, and similarly to the approach taken in April at the UNESCO Executive Board, USA gave an overview of agenda items for which they would wish to propose edits to draft decisions and one item that would require a vote.

36. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Brazil](#), [Canada](#), [Chile](#), [China](#), [India](#), [Côte d'Ivoire](#), [Japan](#), [Mauritius](#), [Monaco](#), [Norway](#), [Panama](#), [Portugal](#), [Republic of Korea](#), [Russian Federation](#), [South Africa](#), [Spain](#), [Thailand](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#), [United States of America](#), [Viet Nam](#).

37. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/3.2](#).

3.3. REPORTS OF THE IOC SUB-COMMISSIONS AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES

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

38. The newly elected IOCAFRICA Chair, Amb. Hellen Gichuhi (Kenya), presented an overview of the activities implemented by the Sub-Commission during the intersessional period from 2023 to 2025 and reported on the major outcomes of the intergovernmental session, referring to the report of the 8th session of IOCAFRICA for detail.

39. Ambassador Monica Gichuhi's report on the intersectoral period covers several action areas contributing to the development of ocean science cooperation mechanisms, and several partnerships and platforms in ocean observations, ocean data and information, climate change impacts and related African coastal ecosystem vulnerability assessment, Marine Spatial Planning, and capacity development, showcasing best practices in co-design at the science-policy-society interface. The Sub-Commission deals with hard infrastructure, such as sensors and data hubs, but also diplomacy and narrative shaping, to establish Africa's Ocean agenda within global

frameworks such as UNFCCC, IPCC seventh Assessment Report, the African Union Blue Economy Strategy, SDG14 and UN Ocean Conference, and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030).

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

41. In the Chair's view, the challenge is to translate this orchestration into tangible benefits (access to data, training, best practices, improved coastal livelihoods) and measurable resilience and prosperity for the continent's 100+ million coastal citizens. To this end, Ambassador Gichuhi, called for the reinforcement of the Secretariat capacity and sustainable financing, detailed in [IOCAFRICA-VIII/3s](#).

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

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

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

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

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

47. The representatives of 15 Member States took the floor.

48. Several Member States reported on national programmes and collaborative efforts that complement IOCAFRICA’s objectives. These included long-standing initiatives focused on oceanographic data systems, ecological monitoring, blue economy development, and capacity-building ranging from the identification and management of invasive marine species to the development of open-access marine databases and participation in transboundary research platforms. Some countries reaffirmed their intention to migrate and maintain regional data tools and portals, further advancing marine science in service of the broader community.

49. A strong emphasis was placed on knowledge exchange and technical cooperation, with countries expressing interest in sharing experience in operational oceanography, early warning systems, ocean forecasting, and marine technology. The importance of joint training, technology transfer, and institutional twinning arrangements with African centres was frequently underscored, along with the need to accelerate the deployment of digital tools and climate adaptation strategies across the region.

50. Delegations also spoke to the vital role IOCAFRICA plays in supporting early career professionals, enhancing ocean literacy, and providing equitable access to learning and participation.

51. In their remarks, many Member States acknowledged the ongoing challenges related to staffing and budget limitations at the IOCAFRICA Secretariat. On this line, Kenya introduced the Draft Resolution proposed under this item entitled “*Strengthening the IOCAFRICA Secretariat: A Strategic Imperative for Advancing Ocean Science and Governance in Africa*” prior to its consideration by the Finance Committee and the Resolutions Committee.

52. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [China](#), [Côte d’Ivoire](#), [India](#), [Indonesia](#), [Russian Federation](#), [South Africa](#), [Spain](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#).

53. The Assembly adopted [IOC Decision A-33/3.3.1](#).

54. The Assembly also adopted [IOC Resolution A-33/1](#) “*Strengthening the IOCAFRICA Secretariat: A Strategic Imperative for Advancing Ocean Science and Governance in Africa*” submitted by Kenya, Benin, Comoros, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Guinea, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Mauritius, Monaco, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa, Togo.

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

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

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

57. Situated in a developing region known for the world’s richest marine biodiversity, and a dense population highly dependent on the ocean for development, the Sub-Commission continued to foster robust international cooperation mechanisms to enhance collaboration among Member States, as demonstrated by several key mechanisms such as *the Senior Government*

Officials Roundtable, the biennial WESTPAC Intergovernmental Session, and the triennial WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference. It also has operationalized a dynamic co-design and co-development process to stimulate international leadership and collective actions across the region, initiating and aligning international initiatives with priority issues, as well as bringing together experts from across the region to refine and advance these efforts.

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

59. Meanwhile, the Sub-Commission has been continuously advancing its initiated UN Ocean Decade Actions. The four Actions include: [UN21-Accelerate Marine Spatial Planning in the Western Pacific](#); [UN22-Stem the tide of Asia's riverine plastic emission into the ocean](#); [UN23-Accelerating capacity development transformations in the Western Pacific – Regional Network of Training and Research Centres](#) (RTRCs) on Marine Science, and [UN24-Second Cooperative Study of Kuroshio and Adjacent Regions](#). More recently, the Sub-Commission initiated a new UN Ocean Decade Action-[UN39: Ocean Solutions in the East Asian Seas](#), to advance multidisciplinary research on multiple stressors in coastal ecosystems, and officially registered its triennial WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference as a contribution (UN42) to the UN Ocean Decade.

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

61. The Sub-Commission contributes to the implementation of the *IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2023–2030)*, by co-designing and co-developing capacity development

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

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

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

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

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

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

Intersessional Task Force on Ocean Literacy to lead efforts in advancing ocean literacy in the region.

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

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

69. The Chair further informed that the Sub-Commission adopted its Programme and Budget (2026–2027), serving as a guide on the activities that Member States in the region would like to jointly promote and seek funding, either in cash or in kind, to support their implementation.

70. The WESTPAC Chair informed the Assembly that the Sub-Commission tentatively scheduled its next session of March–April 2027, and elected by acclamation, Aileen Tan Shau Hwai from Malaysia as Chairperson; Vyacheslav Lobanov from the Russian Federation, Sung Hyun Nam from the Republic of Korea, and Aletta Yñiguez from the Philippines as Vice-Chairpersons of the Sub-Commission for the next intersessional period.

71. He reported that the Sub-Commission expressed its deep concern at the critically limited human resources to the Secretariat Office, which currently has only one IOC professional post. In addition to its core role of advancing the IOC’s mandate and programmes in the region, the Office has been assuming the function of the Ocean Decade Coordination Office (DCO) for the Western Pacific and has been entrusted with a crucial role in facilitating ocean-related coordination among UN agencies at the regional level across Asia and the Pacific.

72. The representatives of 11 Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [China](#), [Indonesia](#), [Malaysia](#), [Republic of Korea](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Thailand](#).

73. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/3.3.2](#).

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

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

75. The Chair informed the Assembly that the Government of Antigua and Barbuda had expressed interest in joining UNESCO’s IOC and participating in IOCARIBE activities.

76. The Sub-Commission has strengthened regional ocean governance and science coordination by expanding the IOCARIBE-ANCA network on Harmful Algal Blooms, strengthening the relationship with the Caribbean Hub of the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON), enhancing integration of ocean data systems through IOCARIBE-GOOS and IODE, and building momentum for ocean literacy through the establishment of the IOCARIBE Ocean

Literacy Task Team and the rollout of the Caribe Blue Schools Network across the region. The Sub-Commission's priority areas of implementation include strengthening ocean observing systems for improved forecasting and resilience, supporting the expansion of multi-hazard early warning systems, promoting marine spatial planning in support of sustainable ocean management, advancing capacity development tailored to regional needs, and integrating ocean literacy into national education systems to foster a culture of ocean stewardship.

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

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

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

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

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

82. The representatives of 10 Member States took the floor.

83. Antigua and Barbuda was welcomed as the 152nd Member State of IOC and as a member of IOCARIBE. Several delegations referred to the critical role of IOCARIBE in advancing and coordinating ocean science, ocean services and early warning within the region, despite limited resources. Member States welcomed the operationalization of the Ocean Governance Coordination Mechanism for Wider Caribbean Region as a way to reduce fragmentation in ocean governance.

84. Emphasis was placed on the work of IOCARIBE in coastal resilience and adaptation through IOCARIBE-GOOS, as well as CoastPredict and ADAPT programmes. Strong support was presented for the Sub-Commission's work in capacity development, ocean literacy and blue schools programmes to ensure equity in access to ocean knowledge. The establishment and staffing of the Decade Coordination Office for the Tropical Atlantic and Caribbean Region (TAC-DCO) was welcomed as the channel through which Ocean Decade-endorsed projects would be accelerated.

85. Support was expressed for the efforts of IOCARIBE to integrate all Caribbean SIDS countries and other island regional States into the Ocean Decade and the Sub-Commission's core programmes, through a new Regional Decade Committee. The call for further support on Sargassum was emphasized, as a challenge that cuts across the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development in Caribbean countries.

86. Some Member States expressed concern about the extensive approved work programme of the Sub-Commission and recommended prioritization in the face of reductions in budget availability. There was a call to Member States to provide staff secondments to the Sub-Commission to advance the decisions approved.

87. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Brazil](#), [Colombia](#), [Kingdom of the Netherlands](#), [Panama](#).

88. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/3.3.3](#).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

95. The representatives of 11 Member States took the floor.

96. The Assembly widely celebrated the elevation of the regional committee to a Sub-Commission, viewing it as a historic milestone and a platform to address shared priorities such as hazards, ocean literacy, marine litter, sea-level rise, climate change, capacity development, and blue economy initiatives. Some Member States underscored the importance of strengthening the IOCINDIO Secretariat, ensuring regular budget allocations, aligning work with IOC-wide priorities and the UN Ocean Decade, and fostering collaboration with other regional bodies like IOGOOS, IOCAFRICA, IOC/WESTPAC, and IOTWMS.

97. Several Member States outlined specific commitments and proposals to advance the Sub-Commission's mandate. Indonesia pledged to host IOCINDIO-2 in 2026 and support joint capacity development projects; Kuwait, Mauritius, and Oman emphasised basin-wide observation systems, operational oceanography, and integrated marine management; the Russian Federation and Saudi Arabia called for thematic cooperation on pollution, biodiversity, and training.

98. Vice-Chair Dr Balakrishnan Nair welcomed the positive feedback, urged collaborative initiatives in ocean observation and climate resilience, and called for swift resolution of budget constraints to fully realise IOCINDIO's potential.

99. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [India](#), [Indonesia](#), [Kuwait](#), [Oman](#), [Russian Federation](#), [South Africa](#).

100. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/3.3.4](#).

3.4 REPORTS OF OTHER IOC SUBSIDIARY BODIES

3.4.1 Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards

3.4.1.1 *Regional Early Warning Services*

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

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

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

104. Ms Clouard also mentioned CARIBE WAVE 26 exercise, which will take place on Thursday 19 March 2026. CARIBE WAVE 26 will include two scenarios, namely tsunami generated from an earthquake in the vicinity of Cayman Island and from the Kick 'em Jenny Volcano. Member States are requested to consider conducting all or part of their exercise response activities during non-working hours, particularly at night, to be better prepared for tsunami events that are more likely to occur during non-working hours.

105. ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XVIII requested the ICG/CARIBE-EWS Steering Group to define the reporting mechanism for its Tsunami Service Providers, including the communication and dissemination of key performance indicators as part of a CARIBE EWS supplement to the Global Service Definition Document (GSDD), and to share it with CATAC and PTWC by 30 September 2025.

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

107. The ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XVIII noted with satisfaction the intention expressed by Barbados at its previous session and by Curaçao at the ICG/CARIBE EWS-XVIII to host the next session of the ICG/CARIBE-EWS in 2026 and invited both countries to send a formal invitation to the Secretariat to that effect by 15 June 2025. The Secretariat received an official letter from the Meteorology Department of Curaçao on 10 June 2025 regarding the hosting of ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XIX on 20-24 April 2026. ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XIX will mark the 20th anniversary of the first ICG/CARIBE-EWS Session, providing an important opportunity for raising awareness, ensuring tsunami resilience in the Caribbean and its Adjacent regions.

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

109. Mr Pattabhi Rama Rao Eluri, Chair of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the India Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/IOTWMS) presented the report of the 14th session of the group, 17–19 November 2024, Banten, Indonesia. Mr Rama Rao highlighted several significant events organised over the last year including the [Tsunami Capacity Assessment Validation Workshop for Indian and Pacific Oceans](#), Bangkok, 4–6 September 2024, 2nd UNESCO-IOC Global Tsunami Symposium “Two Decades After 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: Reflection and the Way Forward”, Banda Aceh, 11–14 November 2024, and the [IOTWMS-IOTIC Training Workshop on Tsunami Evacuation Maps, Plans and Procedures and UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme](#), Hyderabad, 15–23 April 2025.

110. He recognised the forty-eight (48) UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Communities in India and Indonesia and encouraged all Member States to implement the UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP) in vulnerable communities to meet the UN Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme goal of 100% at-risk communities resilient and prepared for

tsunamis. He highlighted the efforts in IOTWMS to develop products for non-seismic tsunamis and NAVAREA Maritime products, as well as densification of observing networks.

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

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

113. He highlighted the success of IOWave23 Tsunami Exercise organized in October 2023 with four scenarios including a non-seismic scenario which attracted participation from 20 Member States and 45,000 participants around the Indian Ocean. He announced that Exercise IOWave25 will be conducted from 25 September 2025 to November 2025 with four scenarios including a non-seismic scenario and a scenario for non-working hours.

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

115. Finally, Mr Eluri acknowledged with appreciation the valuable contribution and continued support of the Government of Australia for hosting the IOTWMS Secretariat and the support of the Government of Indonesia for hosting the Indian Ocean Tsunami Information Centre (IOTIC). Recognizing the immense contributions of Mr Ardito Kodijat, Head of IOTIC, he highlighted the request of the IOTWMS Steering Group to UNESCO-IOC to prioritise the recruitment process in view of Mr Kodijat's upcoming retirement. Mr Eluri also thanked the Government of India for hosting the TEMPP Workshop, UNESCAP and FUST for funding key projects, and IOTWMS Member States for their active engagement in the IOTWMS.

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

117. Dr Amato highlighted several events organised in 2024, including the *Tsunami Warning @Stromboli Island [workshop: Observations, Modelling, Hazard, Forecasting](#)*, organized by the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV) in Stromboli, Italy, from 5–7 October 2024 with 80 international experts to advance understanding of non-seismic tsunami sources and the need to enhance early warning systems for Stromboli-generated tsunamis. Recent meetings include the online situation briefing on the Santorini earthquakes in February 2025; the expert workshop held in March 2025 to assess seismic, volcanic, and landslide-related tsunami sources threatening NEAM region; and the ICG/NEAMTWS Steering Committee meeting, generously hosted by the Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Research Institute in Istanbul, Türkiye, in May 2025.

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

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

120. He reported on the newly recognized UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Communities in Egypt ([Alexandria](#)), France ([Cannes](#)), Greece ([Samos](#)), Italy ([Minturno](#)), Spain ([Chipiona](#)) and

Türkiye ([Büyükçekmece](#)) in 2024 and work in progress in Cyprus (Larnaca), Malta (Marsaxlokk) and Morocco (El Jadida).

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

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

123. He informed the Assembly of progress regarding submarine SMART Cables initiatives in particular the Portugal Atlantic Smart CAM, the planned deployment of two Ocean Bottom Pressure Sensors by INGV, Italy in the Ionian Sea in 2025, and .the new offshore module for tsunami monitoring at the Stromboli volcano Island.

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

125. He reported on the very good performance and coherence of three NEAM Tsunami Service Providers in issuing timely (5-6 minutes) information messages following the 5.9 magnitude earthquake near Crete, Greece, on 13 May 2025.

126. He concluded by announcing that the next NEAMWave exercise, NEAMWave26, would take place in March 2026.

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

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

129. He noted that within the ICG/PTWS, 23 communities from 8 Member States (of which 5 are SIDS) are now recognized as Tsunami Ready under UNESCO-IOC's Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP). Palau was the first UNESCO-IOC Pacific Member State and Small Island Developing State (SIDS) to achieve this recognition. At its 31st session, the ICG/PTWS provisionally approved the PTWS Tsunami Ready Equivalency Guidance, which will enable Member States to report on existing tsunami risk management strategies in a manner similar to the TRRP, in line with the second Objective of the UNESCO-IOC Ocean Decade

Tsunami Programme, namely that by 2030, 100% of communities at risk are prepared and resilient to tsunamis through efforts such as the UNESCO-IOC TRRP.

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

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

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

133. SCSTAC International Staff Programme continued successfully in 2023 and 2024. ITIC Training Programme-Hawaii (ITP-HAWAII) on Tsunami Early Warning Systems and the PTWC Enhanced Products, Tsunami Evacuation Planning and Tsunami Ready Programme was organized on 7–18 August 2023 in Hawaii, United States of America, and in Valparaíso, Chile, on 19–30 August 2024. Future trainings will be hosted in Hawaii, USA, on 15–21 September 2025 and in Valparaiso, Chile, in 2026.

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

135. The representatives of 22 Member States and WMO took the floor on both items under agenda item 3.4.1.

136. The Assembly emphasized the importance of the objectives of the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme, recognized the progress made in all ICGs in the implementation of the UNESCO-IOC's Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme with the support of partners, namely the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) and ESCAP, noted the importance of including children and people with disabilities in efforts related to coastal community tsunami resilience, appreciated the release of the OTGA online Tsunami Ready training modules, appreciated the provisional approval of the Tsunami Ready Equivalency Guidance by the ICG/PTWS, and greatly valued the UNESCAP-supported tsunami preparedness capacity assessments in the Indian Ocean and Pacific regions.

3.4.1.2 *Global Coordination of Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards*

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

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

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

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

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

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

143. The Assembly supported the approval of the Tsunami Ready Coalition Implementation Plan, stressed the importance of establishing 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 and developing SOPs for any volcanoes with a tsunamigenic potential affecting the Area of Service of TSPs within the ICGs.

144. The Assembly noted the need for enhanced monitoring capabilities for Tsunamis Generated by Volcanoes (TGVs) and expressed its satisfaction to the IOC for the organization of global webinars in addressing TGVs. The importance of prioritizing the installation of new tide gauges and ensuring the sustainability of the existing ones was noted as well as the progress in implementing the Science Monitoring And Reliable Telecommunications (SMART) Subsea Cables initiatives, in particular in Portugal which is expected to be operational in 2026.

145. China announced it will allocate more resources to advance the implementation of the UN Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme, the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme, and relevant initiatives. Argentina requested the ICG/PTWS, as well as the ICG/CARIBE-EWS, to invite Argentina 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.

146. The United States of America indicated its support to the adoption of the Tsunami Ready Coalition Implementation Plan, while dissociating from the first paragraph of section 1.2 of the Tsunami Ready Coalition Implementation Plan.

147. The following Member States and one observer chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on both items under agenda item 3.4.1 for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Argentina](#), [Chile](#), [China](#), [France](#), [India](#), [Indonesia](#), [Japan](#), [Malaysia](#), [Oman](#), [Portugal](#), [Republic of Korea](#), [Spain](#), [Türkiye](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#), [United States of America](#), and [WMO](#).

148. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/3.4.1](#).

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

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

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

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

152. The conference stressed the need for inclusive data collection approaches, incorporating local knowledge and regionally driven initiatives. Community-driven projects and mobile-based tools demonstrated how grassroots engagement can contribute to marine data repositories, enhancing global datasets while addressing local environmental and socioeconomic needs. Strengthening policy frameworks, improving regional monitoring, and fostering collaboration between scientific and local communities were identified as key priorities. Capacity-development efforts remain fundamental to ensuring equitable access to ocean data. Regional collaborations, such as those within Latin America and the Caribbean, aim to enhance data-sharing and accessibility across diverse stakeholder groups. Training programmes, mentorship initiatives, and the development of best practices support long-term sustainability in marine data management. Beyond technological advancements, IODC-3 recognized the indispensable role of people in ocean data collection, curation, and application. Volunteer networks, citizen science initiatives, and workforce training are crucial in sustaining high-quality marine biodiversity information. Ensuring sustainable funding and institutional support for these efforts is essential to maintaining the long-term integrity of ocean data systems. The conference reaffirmed the urgency of building a unified and inclusive digital ocean ecosystem where scientific, cultural, historical, and local knowledge converge. Achieving this vision requires sustained efforts in data harmonization, policy alignment, and international cooperation. By strengthening these foundations, the ocean science community moves closer to a future where ocean knowledge is accessible, actionable, and impactful for all.

153. A breakout session on the implementation of the Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) from a non-technical perspective made the following recommendations: (i) communicate what ocean data are useful to share; (ii) when the Ocean Decade Office for Ocean Data Sharing (DCO-ODS) are revising the *Data Publication Cookbook* later this year, make it clear that the recommendation is for open publication and open access; (iii) strengthen the National Oceanographic Data Centres, initially through raising the profile of their existence and their purpose and the importance of data management activities; (iv) as the IOC Data Architecture

develops (see item 3.4.3), incorporating ODIS, collaboration and communication with other intergovernmental organizations is recommended, using the collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization as an example; (v) DCO-ODS and ODIS should communicate closely on the issues that Decade Actions and other bodies are having with connecting to the ODIS federation to prioritize systems and process developments; (vi) DCO-ODS should prepare communications to raise the profile of the existence of and the purpose of the National Oceanographic Data Centres (NODCs); (vii) IODE Management Group to encourage the IOC regional offices to communicate with and meet with the NODCs; (viii) IODE Management Group to encourage the new chair of the IODE Quality Management Framework to remind NODCs that the accreditation process is part of strengthening the NODCs; and (ix) develop a “lessons learned” page for the ODIS book to help people understand the challenges others have faced in joining the ODIS federation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

160. Ms Lotta Fyrberg informed the Assembly that cooperation with other IOC programmes as well as other organizations has continued and expanded. These include cooperation on the

Harmful Algal Information System (HAIS), Global Ocean Oxygen Database and Atlas (GO2DAT), facilitation of the delivery of SDG 14.3.1 indicator data into a dedicated online portal, the UNESCO-IOC *Global Ocean Science Report* (GOSR), the *IOC State of the Ocean Report* (StOR), implementation with GOOS of the Ocean Best Practices System (OBPS), cooperation with all IOC programmes on the IOC Data Architecture, cooperation with the IOC Tsunami Resilience Section on the development of online learning materials through OTGA, cooperation with IOC Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section on development of a self-paced MSPglobal online training course under OTGA.

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

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

163. Regarding cooperation of IODE with the UN Ocean Decade, Ms Lotta Fyrberg reported that especially the collaboration with the Decade Coordination Office (DCO) for Ocean Data Sharing (ODS) has shown good progress: it was established in June 2023 and hosted by the IOC Project Office for IODE, the DCO-ODS acts as sub-unit of the central IOC Decade Coordination Unit to catalyse and coordinate Decade Actions falling under its scope, assist Decade actors with data and information challenges and opportunities, promote cooperation amongst UN and Member State partners, monitor progress, communicate on achievements and mobilise resources. Throughout the first-year initial assignment (June 2023–June 2024), the DCO-ODS played a central role in building and cementing community relations in the Decade Digital Ocean ecosystem, within and among Decade entities and with wider experts in the field. Through interactions with Decade Actions and a dedicated stakeholder survey, the DCU, IODE and the DCO-ODS gained a deeper understanding of the activities and needs of Decade Actions regarding data collection, managing and sharing, to inform future activities and actions. Due to funding issues the DCO-ODS had to pause its activities for approximately seven months. A detailed plan of work has been prepared for 2025–2026 that includes: (i) close collaboration with the IODE Project Office and the wider IODE community as the goals of both the DCO-ODS and IODE are common and complementary; (ii) the DCO-ODS will also work closely with other Decade Collaborative Centres and Coordination Offices, with reference to the DCO-Ocean Observing and DCC-Ocean Prediction, to further the shared vision of a Decade Digital Ocean ecosystem.

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

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

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

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

168. The representatives of 20 Member States took the floor.

169. The Assembly expressed broad and continued support for the IODE and its core components—OBIS, ODIS, and OTGA—recognizing IODE as a flagship IOC programme essential for global ocean data sharing, improved interoperability, and adherence to FAIR and CARE principles. The programme’s role in advancing ocean science, informing policy, and supporting the UN Ocean Decade was strongly emphasized.

170. There was widespread appreciation to the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) for hosting and supporting the IOC Project Office for IODE. The Assembly urged the renewal of the MOU with Flanders in 2026. Member State representatives paid tribute to Mr Peter Pissierssens for his outstanding leadership and longstanding service as Head of the IODE Office, with warm wishes for his retirement.

171. Several Member States reiterated their commitment to IODE through their NODCs, ADUs, OBIS nodes and OTGA regional centres, with some expressing intent to deepen their engagement.

172. Ocean data access was highlighted as a concern, particularly the imbalance between public and private sector data sharing. Member States supported efforts to address this issue through regulatory measures, while recognizing the complex legal and economic implications, including data rights and fair benefit distribution, meriting further study.

173. Member States identified the need to fill the posts of Head of the IOC Project Office for IODE and OBIS Data Manager (P-3) to ensure the programme’s continued effectiveness and strategic coordination.

174. Several interventions recognised the increased collaborations between IODE and GOOS, as well as the potential role of OBIS as a data platform for the BBNJ Agreement’s clearinghouse mechanism. Member States stressed the growing relevance of IODE in global ocean governance.

175. The Assembly welcomed the proposals for intersessional working groups, including a rapid response mechanism to address emerging ocean data issues, suggesting open calls for Member State participation via circular letter; and a working group on ocean data sharing within national jurisdictions, to explore practical and legal avenues for improving access.

176. The Russian Federation made the following statement: “In view of its national legislation, the Russian Federation will not adhere to paragraph 18 of Decision A-33/3.4.2.”

177. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Argentina](#), [Canada](#), [Chile](#), [China](#), [Colombia](#), [France](#), [India](#), [Japan](#), [Kingdom of the Netherlands](#), [Malaysia](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Spain](#), [Thailand](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#).

178. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/3.4.2](#).

3.4.3 IOC Data Architecture

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

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

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

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

183. The representatives of 6 Member States and 1 observer took the floor.

184. The Assembly welcomed the proposal to develop an integrated and federated IOC Data Architecture to strengthen the coordination and interoperability of ocean data. Member States endorsed the federated approach of the initiative, emphasizing the potential gains in efficiency

and coordination. The adherence to FAIR and CARE principles were appreciated. Moreover, Member States recognized that the IOC Data Architecture will provide significant benefits to other components of the IOC, including: ocean science; tsunami warning systems; supporting future work on Sustainable Ocean Management and Planning (SOPM); responding to the BBNJ Agreement and supporting the clearing house mechanism; as well as potential applications beyond the IOC, for example through the IHO.

185. The Assembly acknowledged and supported the strengthening of integration and collaboration between IODE and GOOS. Finally, Member States noted that NODCs and other national/regional data systems have expertise to offer and should also be a part of the consultation process, and requested that a detailed plan and cost for implementation of the initiative be developed. Several Member States offered support and requested that they be consulted for this planning phase.

186. Emma Heslop, Programme Specialist at GOOS IOC-UNESCO, responded to the interventions of Member States. She noted that during the following months the implementation plan and the corresponding cost model would be developed and is expected to be available for the IOC Executive Council in 2026. Moreover, she highlighted the upcoming consultation process aimed at gathering input from Member States, in response to the points raised. It was noted that with funding that should be available to the secretariat under the 42 C/5 Programme and Budget, this work could start immediately.

187. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Canada](#), [China](#), [India](#), [Japan](#), [Spain](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#).

188. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/3.4.3](#).

3.4.4 An IOC Ocean Best practices System (OBPS)

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

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

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

192. The representatives of 7 Member States took the floor.

193. Member States welcomed the initiative and recognized OBPS as a key mechanism to support standardization, interoperability, and reproducibility of ocean data and methodologies across research, operations, and services. The Assembly noted the value of OBPS in enhancing efficiency, supporting the implementation of the IOC Medium-Term Strategy, and contributing to initiatives such as the UN Decade of Ocean Science and the BBNJ. Member States encouraged further integration with existing regional and international standardization efforts (e.g. the North Pacific Marine Science Organisation (PICES)) and emphasized the importance of inclusive governance and transparent expert nomination processes.

194. Several Member States expressed their willingness to support the system, and others emphasized the importance of best practices for enhancing capacity in developing regions. India offered to contribute a documented best practice on its WAMAN buoy network, developed in collaboration with regional partners, to the OBPS repository.

195. While reaffirming their support to the work of the Ocean Best Practices System Steering Group, the United States of America, consistent with their initial national statement under agenda item 3.2, disassociated from paragraph 3 of the decision after its adoption.

196. Argentina disassociated from paragraph 3 of the decision, while affirming their support for the remainder of the text.

197. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [India](#), [Japan](#), [Spain](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#), [United States of America](#).

198. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/3.4.4](#).

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

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

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

holopelagic Sargassum spp. in the equatorial and subtropical Atlantic: recent scientific insights in their dynamics, as IOC Manuals and Guides, [96](#); and the advances in testing enhancement of HAB monitoring in Africa into early warning systems.

201. He then presented the 11 decisions adopted by IPHAB at its 17th session, most of which relate to the status of IPHAB Task Teams. These, in addition to presentation to the Assembly, will be submitted to the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI). Decisions concerned the Task Teams on the Early Detection, Warning and Forecasting of HAB Events, on the development of the Harmful Algal Information System and a periodic Global Harmful Algal Bloom Status Report, on Benthic Harmful Algae and their Toxin, on Harmful Algae and Desalination of Seawater, on Biotxin Monitoring, Management and Regulations, on Algal Taxonomy, on Fish Killing Microalgae and Ecosystem Effects; and on regional HAB programme development, HAB Communication. Decisions also were made on a new decadal plan for the IOC-SCOR GlobalHAB programme and on HAB training and capacity development initiatives with OTGA. This final decision also included securing the future of the International Phytoplankton Intercalibration exercise (IPI).

202. He then noted that Mr Philipp Hess (France) was re-elected as Chair and Dr Begoña Ben Gigirey (Spain) was elected as Vice-Chair at the 17th IPHAB session.

203. The representatives of 17 Member States and 1 observer took the floor.

204. The Assembly reiterated its warm welcome to FAO as a co-sponsor of IPHAB and underlined the importance of linking science on HABs with food safety, public health and livelihoods.

205. The Assembly referred to widespread concern at national level over the proliferation of HABs and the complex recurrent threat they pose for aquaculture, food safety and tourism. They also noted how this concern is reflected in national priorities for HAB management and mitigation in many Member States.

206. The Assembly expressed broad appreciation of the activities and achievements under IPHAB as well as of the proposed workplan for 2026–2027 including the new 10-year plan for IOC-SCOR GlobalHAB. The interventions from Member States in particular identified capacity development opportunities such as those associated with the development of early warning systems for HAB, mitigation and adaptive management approaches; understanding of courses and effects of HABs; regional cooperation to address the serious problem of Sargassum mass occurrences; understanding the role of climate change as a driver for proliferation of HABs; and regional collaboration in general. Furthermore, the Assembly pointed to that management and mitigation of HABs should be part of blue economy planning.

207. The Harmful Algal Information system, HAIS, combining OBIS with the IOC-ICES-PICES Harmful Algal Event Data Base HAEDAT (under IODE), was referred to as a global resource, and the continued delivery of a Global HAB Status Report as being valuable and important.

208. The Assembly highlighted with appreciation pilot projects on early warning systems for HAB in Africa developed and implemented in collaboration with FAO and expressed its gratitude to NORAD for the funding. The Assembly acknowledged how projects, such as these, have direct benefits for aquaculture, tourism and local fisheries.

209. PICES reconfirmed their desire to continue the longstanding collaboration with IOC and IPHAB on HAB, including the joint IOC-ICES-PICES Harmful Algal Event Database (HAEDAT). PICES noted that there is strong alignment between their activities with the objectives of three IPHAB Task Teams on benthic harmful algae and their toxins, algal taxonomy, and fish-killing microalgae and ecosystem effects.

210. Furthermore, PICES has continued a series of projects in collaboration with IOC/WESTPAC, to develop capacity in the Philippines and Indonesia as well as projects in Guatemala to foster early warning capability for HABS and to increase the sustainability of their fishing resources by providing them with HAB information.

211. The following Member States and one observer chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Chile](#), [China](#), [France](#), [India](#), [Japan](#), [Malaysia](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Spain](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#) and [PICES](#).

212. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/3.4.5](#).

3.5 IOC REPORT TO THE 43rd GENERAL CONFERENCE OF UNESCO

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

214. The representatives of 4 Member States took the floor.

215. The Assembly thanked the Secretariat for the quality of the proposed report. They reiterated that, given the importance of the ocean for humanity, the application of the IOC Statutes and the realisation of its functional autonomy are essential to improve IOC's functioning and the essential services it provides. To this end, and thanks to the proposal of the permanent delegation of Japan to UNESCO, the Assembly welcomed the 221st UNESCO Executive Board decision on the Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–2029 (Draft 43 C/5), recognising the functional autonomy of the IOC, and requested that its recommendations, based on IOC's objectives and priorities, be transmitted to the 43rd General Conference of UNESCO.

216. The following Member State chose to provide records of its plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#).

217. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/3.5](#).

2. PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENTS

4.1 DRAFT IOC-WIDE STRATEGY ON SUSTAINABLE OCEAN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

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

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

220. The representatives of 18 Member States took the floor.

221. The IOC-wide strategy 2025–2030 and Implementation Plan 2025–2027 were unanimously supported and considered as a very timely initiative and important step to guide Member States, given the increasing complexities of managing the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss, while simultaneously developing a sustainable blue economy.

222. The Assembly welcomed the Strategy’s structure and clarity regarding target audience, vision and mission, as well as the approach to SOPM to build upon, and expand, existing integrated ocean governance approaches, such as MSP and ICZM, that are already ongoing across Member States. It was emphasized that the IOC is the most suitable institution to advance this approach globally and expressed the hope that the work ahead will provide Member States with comprehensive guidance, including on climate change and biodiversity protection, and deliver tangible outcomes.

223. Member States also welcomed the clear scientific dimension of the strategy and emphasised that its mission must be firmly anchored at the highest levels of government in all Member States. Member States also emphasised the unique potential of the SOPM to transform ocean governance, the critical importance of cross-border and regional collaboration, and the need to give priority attention to SIDS and LDCs. The aim to build and connect with ‘the IOC and the Future of the Ocean’ consultations was also welcomed. Member States also emphasised the need to mobilise resources and work in collaborative partnerships, particularly at regional level, to ensure the effective implementation of the strategy.

224. Costa Rica proposed to serve as a first pilot for guidance to develop SOPM under the Strategy’s Implementation Plan.

225. Member States welcomed the new Terms of Reference for the SOPM Working Group and several Member States indicated their intention to engage actively and appoint representatives to join.

226. The Russian Federation formally dissociated from the consensus on the Strategy due to the inclusion of the BBNJ Agreement as one of its key implementation instruments—an agreement which the Russian Federation did not endorse.

227. The United States of America expressed concerns with the development of a Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management Strategy and did not support continuation of the Working Group. The United States of America therefore called for a vote by raise of hand on the adoption of the proposed draft decision. The vote resulted in 61 votes in favour of adoption and 2 votes against. The draft decision and annex were adopted without amendments.

228. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Brazil](#), [China](#), [Côte d’Ivoire](#),

[France](#), [Japan](#), [Malaysia](#), [Norway](#), [Republic of Korea](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Seychelles](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#), [United States of America](#).

229. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/4.1](#).

4.2 DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE IOC CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2023–2030

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

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

232. Dr El-Gharabawy reported to the Assembly on the outcomes of the sixth session of the IOC GE-CD, which was held at Ostend, Belgium on 22–24 October 2024. To deliver the tasks under the new TOR of the Group (Annex Decision EC-57/4.6), a Task Team on Needs Assessment and a Working Group on Implementation Plan were established to start developing a draft Implementation Plan for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 presented to the 33rd IOC Assembly session.

233. She outlined that since the adoption of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy in 2023, the IOC CD Secretariat has been working with the regional sub-commissions on mapping the priority needs of the regions. The Co-Chairs of the Task Team on Needs Assessment, Dr David O’Sullivan and Ms Laura Correa, convened the Task Team in 9 online meetings between November 2024 and January 2025 to develop a template and approach that could capture the inputs of the regional sub-commissions as discussed in the regional sessions and outcomes of the IOC CD biennial needs assessment surveys. The Co-Chairs of the Working Group on the Implementation Plan, Dr Rebecca Lahl and Dr Carlos Torres, convened the working group in 9 online meetings between November 2024 and April 2025, after initial discussions on the implementation plan at the sixth session of the GE-CD in October 2024. The GE-CD subsequently considered the results of the work of the Task Team and the Working Group drafting the decision for consideration by the Assembly.

234. In addition, she identified that IOCAFRICA and IOCARIBE contributed to the discussions of the sixth session of the GE-CD as members of the Task Team, with IOCINDIO joining the Task Team in January 2025 and providing inputs to the draft Implementation Plan.

235. Dr El-Gharabawy referred to Document IOC/A-33/4.2.Doc(1) ‘IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 Implementation Plan’ and identified that the plan aims to translate the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 into concrete, actionable steps that address the specific needs and challenges of regions and Member States, aligning with the objectives of the UN Decade of Ocean Science. Building on the strengths of the IOC, the plan closely links outcomes, activities, and actions to contribute to the implementation of the Strategy by ensuring cohesion, coordination and collaboration amongst efforts. It also articulates in greater detail how the Actions listed in the Strategy will be implemented and progress and effectiveness monitored.

236. Dr El-Gharabawy highlighted that the draft Implementation Plan puts forward 11 overarching recommendations to effectively implement the plan and maximize its impact: (i)

Leverage Existing Programmes; (ii) Improve implementation capacity; (iii) Strengthen Regional Implementation; (iv) Global Coordination; (v) Global Forum on Ocean Capacity Development; (vi) Strategic Partnerships; (vii) Strengthen Equity, Inclusion and Decolonialisation; (viii) Early Career Ocean Professionals as Change Makers; (ix) Enhanced Outreach and Communication; (x) Prioritization and Risk Management; and (xi) Monitor, Evaluate and Adapt. Dr El-Gharabawy concluded by highlighting that the successful implementation of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 hinges on effective coordination, innovative collaboration, and continuous performance monitoring and improvement. By maintaining a proactive and agile approach based on this implementation plan, the IOC can ensure the long-term sustainability and impact of a robust capacity development delivery in line with the legacy of IOC's works.

237. Dr El Gharabawy also noted that the draft IOC capacity development implementation plan was presented during a side event entitled "From Strategy to Action" held during the United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice in June 2025.

238. The representatives of 18 Member States and 1 observer took the floor.

239. The Assembly thanked Dr Suzan El-Gharabawy for her presentation and congratulated her leadership and the Group of Experts on Capacity Development for their work in drafting the implementation plan for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030.

240. Member States recognized the role of the Group of Experts on Capacity Development with a number of Member States expressing their support for its continuation and identifying their willingness to participate and engage with the Group of Experts. A number of Member States identified that the Implementation Plan provides for the delivery of capacity development in a way that is consistent with the IOC's priorities, mainstreams the IOC's action into the global agenda, promotes good governance of the IOC and Member States and supports collaboration between Member States. Member States highlighted their commitment and support to IOC Capacity Development providing examples of the alignment of their respective efforts and support for shared priorities in Africa and SIDS. Member States highlighted their contributions as regional training centres of the OceanTeacher Global Academy and expressed the need for a sustainability approach on the part of the Academy.

241. The Assembly requested the alignment of capacity development and ocean literacy to enhance coordination and collaboration and reflected these points in Decision A-33/4.2. They called for continuous support for IOC leadership in capacity development across its programmes and regional sub-commissions.

242. Consistent with their positions under agenda item 3.2, the United States disassociated from the references to the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, and climate change, in the Implementation Plan of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy.

243. The following Member States and one observer chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [China](#), [India](#), [Ireland](#), [Japan](#), [Republic of Korea](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Türkiye](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#), [United States of America](#), and [SCOR](#).

244. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/4.2](#).

4.3 GENERAL BATHYMETRIC CHART OF THE OCEANS (GEBCO) – REPORT AND FOLLOW UP ON THE GOVERNANCE REVIEW

245. Mr Evert Flier, the Chair of the GEBCO Guiding Committee (GGC), introduced this item. He provided an overview of GEBCO developments for the period 2024–2025 as well as the outcomes of the 41st Meeting of the GEBCO Guiding Committee (November 2022, Nadi, Fiji)). These include: (i) progress in raising the percentage of ocean floor mapped under GEBCO and

Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project, which has now reached 27.3%; (ii) update on the implementation of the GEBCO Strategy adopted in 2024; and (iii) progress of the work of the GEBCO Sub-Committees, namely SCUFN, SCRUM, and SCET.

246. Mr Sam Harper, IHO and GEBCO Technical Secretary, informed the Assembly about the process of addressing the findings of the GEBCO Governance Review which has been integrated in the development of a formal Strategy Implementation Plan led by the GEBCO Guiding Committee. A final version of the Implementation Plan will be transmitted to GEBCO Parent Organisations (IOC and IHO) after consideration by the 42nd meeting of the Guiding Committee.

247. The representatives of 17 Member States took the floor.

248. The Assembly expressed strong support for the work of GEBCO, and the mission of the Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 project aimed at mapping the entirety of the ocean floor by 2030. This objective is consistently referenced by several Member States as a driving force behind their participation and contributions. Several Member States emphasized the value of ocean mapping to support: sustainable development, disaster risk prevention, advancing marine scientific research, development of area-based management tools under BBNJ, the national submissions related to the delimitation of the continental shelf, and enhancing our understanding of ocean environments.

249. Several Member States described the nature of their contributions to GEBCO, namely by contributing data sets to the GEBCO grid, filling knowledge gaps by conducting bathymetric campaigns in unchartered waters, promoting open data policies to facilitate access to bathymetric data, the conduct of capacity building activities in ocean mapping, particularly for SIDS and LDCs. Some Member States called for increasing the resolution of GEBCO products to enhance relevance to the need of local users, as well as the development of products that address specific needs of ocean stakeholders (e.g. Marine Spatial Planning, ocean conservation, etc.).

250. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland highlighted that through the National Oceanography Centre, it has been a "longstanding supporter of GEBCO" and is currently hosting the GEBCO web site noting "more than 700,000 visits" in 2024, as well as hosting the Seabed 2030 Global Centre (GDACC), which is responsible for maintaining and delivering GEBCO's global bathymetric data sets and products.

251. Member States highlighted the importance of international cooperation, data sharing, and technical exchanges for the success of these global initiatives. Some Member States further encouraged GEBCO to develop innovative partnerships to harness the contribution of the private sector.

252. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Chile](#), [China](#), [Colombia](#), [Japan](#), [Portugal](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Spain](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#).

253. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/4.3](#).

4.4 IOC OCEAN LITERACY ACTION PLAN AND STRATEGY

254. Professor Ronaldo Christofolletti, Chair of the Ocean Literacy Group of Experts introduced this item. He recalled the main activities of the working group since its establishment including the convening of five dedicated working groups focusing on Advocacy, Communications, Education, Fundraising, and Ocean & Climate. The Group of Experts also contributed to the development of the new *Theory of Change for Ocean Decade Challenge 10 (2025–2030)* (ref.: IOC/2024/ODS/51.11).

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

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

257. The representatives of 16 Member States took the floor.

258. Member States thanked Mr Christofolletti for his presentation and many expressed strong support for the work of the IOC Ocean Literacy Group of Experts. Interventions broadly welcomed the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action 2026–2030 and requested that the Secretariat ensure strategic alignment of the Plan with the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2022–2029 and its cross-cutting relevance to climate action, education, and sustainable development.

259. Many delegations underscored the growing importance of ocean literacy as a tool for empowering communities and fostering a deeper cultural connection to the ocean. Member States highlighted the need for clear monitoring and evaluation and incorporation of regular review and adjustment of activities under the Plan of Action and noted the challenges in sustaining efforts and the importance of ensuring regional support and engagement. They noted the various networks already in existence across UNESCO that can support ocean literacy efforts were important in contributing to the implementation of the Plan of Action. Cooperation with different sectors of society was also underlined as a key element for ensuring the accessibility and inclusivity of Ocean Literacy initiatives.

260. Many Member States highlighted ongoing national efforts and events aligned with the goals of the Plan of Action, including the incorporation of ocean subjects into school curricula. They also mentioned the challenges related to scaling up initiatives, the need to improve access to resources, and to enhance the engagement of youth and media actors. There was broad appreciation for the participatory and inclusive approach taken by the Group of Experts and its contribution to Ocean Decade Challenge 10.

261. Several delegations explicitly supported the continuation of the Group in the future and identified that they would like to nominate experts to the group. The Chair thanked Member States for their ongoing support, noting their willingness to contribute and highlighting the importance of impact measurement. He also recognized the importance of the integration of STEM education and the need to involve different actors in Ocean Literacy, such as the private sector, media, and NGOs. The Chair welcomed the offer of a Member State to translate the Plan of Action into a broader number of languages, underlining the importance of inclusivity in IOC activities.

262. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Brazil](#), [Chile](#), [China](#), [France](#), [India](#), [Japan](#), [Malaysia](#), [Portugal](#), [Russian Federation](#), [South Africa](#), [Thailand](#).

263. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/4.4](#).

4.5 GLOBAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM

4.5.1 GOOS Governance

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

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

266. Activities in the second diamond, 2026 and beyond, will develop and deliver a reformed GOOS—the How. Depending on the outcomes from the first diamond, these activities will consider and evolve the revised GOOS delivery (mission, scope, structure, terms of reference, transparent processes, reporting and delivery mechanisms), a user and uptake strategy, development of a GOOS basic network, co-implementation across GOOS and IOC of the IOC Data Architecture, GOOS Communications Plan and, by 2029, a GOOS 2030+ revised strategy.

267. The representatives of 18 Member States and 2 observers took the floor.

268. Member States expressed appreciation for the progress achieved in reforming GOOS Governance, broad support was expressed for the double diamond approach and the expectation that a more modern and efficient governance model would be the result. Several Member States noted the importance of enhanced engagement of National Focal Points (NFPs) and many highlighted the importance of the GOOS Regional Alliances (GRAs).

269. Some Member States noted that the structure of ocean governance and information needs were different in each country and region, and that GOOS governance needs to be responsive to this and integrate global knowledge with local and regional expertise, recognising the needs for capacity development and data access. Several Member States also emphasized the importance of considering the value chain, and the need for ocean observations to meet societal needs, for example through links to early warning systems, weather forecasting, and other information and services, particularly important in areas where the ocean is undergoing change. Member States requested sustained engagement between the secretariat and Member States throughout the reform.

270. Several Member States noted their support for GOOS through regional deployments and participation in GOOS networks including Argo, drifting and moored buoys and voluntary observing ships, as well as active participation. Some Member States also recognised the importance of private sector engagement, including through the recently launched 10,000 ships initiative.

271. Many Member States and WMO expressed their support for GOOS as critical ocean infrastructure and noted the current frailty in funding sources and models. GOOS was urged to continue to advocate for ocean observing.

272. In response, Ms Joanna Post, Head of the Ocean Observations and Services Section, thanked Member states for their support and contributions to GOOS. She emphasized GOOS's recognition of its Sponsors IOC, WMO, UNEP, and ISC, noting their participation in GOOS existing governance and that they are naturally a part of the governance reform process. She reaffirmed that the reform process would not follow a top-down approach and would be informed by broad consultation with Member States, the GOOS Steering Committee, sponsors and other relevant experts. She highlighted the challenges imposed by resource constraints of starting this

process and the delay ensued. She also highlighted the invitation under Item 4.5.2 for Member States to consider hosting a future GOOS stakeholder consultation meeting to advance the reform process.

273. The following Member States and observers chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Côte d'Ivoire](#), [India](#), [Ireland](#), [Malaysia](#), [Colombia](#), [France](#), [Japan](#), [Russian Federation](#), [South Africa](#), [United States of America](#), [WMO](#) and [SOOS](#).

274. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/4.5.1](#).

4.5.2 GOOS Steering Committee Workplan

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

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

277. Current resource requirements do not enable GOOS to move at the pace needed and demanded by Member States, society or private-sector stakeholders. However, the Steering Committee also recognises that there is a need to implement and build clearer and more transparent management, stronger and focused collaboration and well-defined processes, as well as manage change (which is taking place under the GOOS governance reform process).

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

279. The co-chair explained that the SC-14 discussed priority topic areas to guide the subsequent GOOS Workplan 2025–2027. The Workplan has the following sections which respond to the GOOS 2030 Strategy: (i) coordination and management; (ii) Observation system integration, design, development and delivery; (iii) Maintain and strengthen data integration and delivery; (iv) System implementation: (a) at national and regional levels, and (b) and applications; (v) Outreach: projects, partners and communications; and (vi) GOOS Reform.

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

process (agenda item 4.5.1) and held a focused workshop at the SC-14 to steer the process moving forward.

281. The representatives of 7 Member States and 1 observer took the floor.

282. Member States broadly supported the GOOS Workplan 2025–2027, highlighting the essential role of coordination among diverse stakeholders and the need for stronger integration and collaboration with related organizations, such as IODE and WMO. Several emphasized the importance of stronger connection with GOOS Regional Alliances and National Focal Points, aligning with the needs of Member States, and adopting strategies that encompass societal and user needs. Several Member States emphasized the importance of application areas for ocean observations to support, these included climate and disaster risk reduction, early warning systems, and sustainable blue economy. There was strong support for an integrated, end-to-end observing system and recognition of OceanOPS for enabling real-time tracking and coordination.

283. Concerns over persistent resource gaps led some Member States to recommend that GOOS considers strategic partnership and diversified financing, including private sector engagement, philanthropy, and blended finance.

284. The current risk to the ocean observing system was acknowledged, and the need to carefully prioritise actions in the workplan was noted. Member States also noted that the IOC Data Architecture can help in making the benefits of GOOS data visible and equitably available to all.

285. Mr Nair welcomed the support expressed by the Member States for the GOOS Team and Steering Committee, and reiterated the Member State driven approach to ensuring that the global ocean observing system is recognised as critical infrastructure for nations. He stressed the need to deepen regional cooperation and deliver an end-to end system to ensure that ocean observations are benefiting Member States and supporting initiatives like Early Warning for All (UN EW4ALL), with a focus on products, services climate and the blue economy.

286. The following Member States and one observer chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Chile](#), [China](#), [France](#), [Japan](#) and [WMO](#).

287. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/4.5.2](#).

4.5.3 Report of the Intersessional Working Group on Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction

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

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

290. Dr El-Gharabawy highlighted key outcomes from the discussions and the potential actions identified as described in document IOC/A-33/4.5.3.Doc(1). She identified that further work addressing ocean observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction should be carried out

in accordance with the recommendations from the working group and concluded that the intersessional working group had completed its work.

291. The representatives of 14 Member States and 1 observer took the floor.

292. Member States welcomed the report of the Working Group on Ocean Observation in Areas under National Jurisdiction (WG-OONJ) and recognized the value of the work undertaken in identifying practical pathways to enhance coordination on ocean observations in areas under national jurisdiction. Member States stressed the importance of balancing the interests of coastal States with improving function of the global ocean observing system and its networks, in accordance and alignment with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

293. Member States welcomed the five actions proposed in the report as well as the identification of lessons learned on taking observations in national jurisdiction and identifying best practice. Several Member States expressed their willingness to support further work that will be implemented to respond to the actions proposed.

294. Several Member States recognised the challenges related to the procedural complexity for marine scientific research (MSR) clearance in national jurisdiction and urged harmonization of national processes for taking observations in support of GOOS. Transparency, equitable data sharing, and targeted capacity development, especially for developing countries, were repeatedly underscored, along with strong support for continued dialogue and guidance on this issue. WMO noted that the WMO Unified Data Policy has the GOOS physical EOVs and GCOS physical ECVs designated as 'core data' that should be shared by WMO members.

295. Ms El-Gharabawy thanked Member States and WMO for their contributions and emphasized that future coordination should continue between Member States, including with support by GOOS Regional Alliances and regional IOC subsidiary bodies, to support the taking of ocean observations in national jurisdiction. She also noted the action identified for Ship-of-Opportunity Programme (SOOP) guidance and encouraged further input by Member States on this matter as part of the evolution of this work.

296. The following Member States and one observer chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Argentina](#), [Brazil](#), [Chile](#), [China](#), [France](#), [Japan](#), [Malaysia](#), [Portugal](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Spain](#), [Türkiye](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#) and [WMO](#).

297. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/4.5.3](#).

4.6 JOINT WMO-IOC COLLABORATIVE BOARD (JCB) STRATEGIC ADVICE ON JOINT WORK TO ACHIEVE COMMON OBJECTIVES

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

299. Prof. Michida noted that the JCB has made significant progress (IOC/A-33/4.6.Doc(1)) over the last year. He presented the outcomes of the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board (JCB-3) meeting in September 2024 as well as joint activities since the meeting. The JCB has identified four initial priority areas: (i) Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) for the Ocean; (ii) Data management and interoperability; (iii) Coastal and maritime resilience; and (iv) Capacity Development. Actions include a subgroup on GBON and one on Data management and interoperability. For both subgroups the terms of reference have been agreed with the JCB co-chairs. On Coastal and maritime resilience, IOC and WMO experts contributed to the report *Metetsunamis: definition, detection and alerting services investigation* (IOC Technical Series

[200](#), 2025). With respect to capacity development, the IOC JCB representative formally joined the WMO Executive Council Capacity Development Panel. Prof. Michida elaborated on next steps including an invitation to Member States to provide input to the work and the intention for the JCB to report progress back to the next session of the IOC governing body.

300. Prof. Michida concluded by confirming that the IOC and WMO were firmly committed to supporting the JCB in fulfilling its mandate.

301. The representatives of 8 Member States and 1 observer took the floor.

302. Member States broadly welcomed the four priority focus areas identified by the JCB and appreciated the progress and success achieved in strengthening collaboration between the WMO and IOC through the work of the JCB. Member States highlighted the importance of having practical mechanisms to translate this cooperation at a global scale into concrete national and regional activities across the four priority areas.

303. Australia presented amendments to the proposed decision that reflected the WMO Executive Council consensus on this topic and brought the decision in the two bodies into alignment. Whilst WMO reiterated its support for the JCB's priority areas, some Member States stressed the importance of the upcoming Member State survey resulting from this decision in shaping the revised IOC-WMO collaborative strategy.

304. Prof. Michida thanked Member States for their strong support and reaffirmed IOCs commitment to deepening cooperation with WMO through the JCB and aligning ongoing efforts with Member State needs.

305. The following Member States and one observer chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Australia](#), [China](#), [Japan](#), [Republic of Korea](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Spain](#) and [WMO](#).

306. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/4.6](#).

4.7 IOC CONTRIBUTIONS TO UN GOVERNANCE PROCESSES

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

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

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

310. The Secretariat also actively engaged in the 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Cali, Colombia, 21 October–1 November 2024) in contribution to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework which identified 23 action-oriented global targets to curb biodiversity loss and restore ecosystem by 2050. The Executive

Secretary reported that several of the GBF targets relies on the provision and access to measurable data, making sustained ocean observations and accessible data vital for informed decision-making. GOOS and OBIS therefore play a pivotal role in supporting several GBF targets and indicators by providing essential ocean data, coordinated marine biological and ecosystem observations, structured around a set of Essential Ocean Variables (EOVs). Furthermore, OBIS was also added to the list of tools designed to help countries monitor biodiversity and track progress in ocean, species, and ecosystem protection. In this regard, *CBD COP16 Revised Guidance on needs related to implementing the monitoring framework of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* (CBD/COP/16/INF/4) make specific reference to GOOS and OBIS.

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

312. He recalled that the 1st meeting of the Preparatory Commission started to discuss the modalities for the Clearing House Mechanism and that there was broad recognition of the need for in-depth technical analysis and a proposal for establishing a technical expert group to be considered by the Preparatory Commission at its second meeting (18–29 August 2025).

313. The Executive Secretary further highlighted the contribution of IOC to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the World Ocean Assessment. Finally, he called for strengthening IOC delivery in areas of relevance to UN processes such as—Biodiversity, Climate Change, Coastal Resilience—by facilitating access to up-to-date, reliable data to and knowledge products to guide policy decisions, and focusing on enhancing technical capacity of Member States to implement national actions in support of GBF, UNFCCC, BBNJ—through IOC Capacity Development Strategy and specific package of assistance/support.

314. The representatives of 15 Member States and 1 observer (UN-DOALOS) took the floor.

315. Several Member States expressed support regarding the IOC's role in United Nations processes, including the UN Ocean Conference (UNOC), the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (related to CBD), and the UNFCCC, and commended the IOC Secretariat for its significant contributions to various United Nations governance processes, particularly in advancing ocean science and knowledge to achieve SDG 14 and the 2030 Agenda, as demonstrated recently during the UN Ocean Conference.

316. Some Member States acknowledged the important role played by IOC programmes such as GOOS, OBIS in providing sustained ocean observations and data, as well as the MSPGlobal programme, that support several targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, emphasizing their criticality for evidence-based decision-making and biodiversity monitoring. Recognizing the need for the effective implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, including its Clearing House Mechanism, several Member States affirmed that the continued engagement of IOC will be indispensable.

317. Some Member States pointed out a potential gap, suggesting a need for a deeper analysis of how effectively the IOC's scientific programmes address the demands of these global initiatives.

318. Member States further encouraged the Commission to contribute to three additional aspects of BBNJ, namely the Capacity Building and Transfer of Marine Technology (CB&MT) process, the organizing of the Scientific and Technical Body (STB) of BBNJ, and strengthening coordination among Member States through the IOC Subsidiary Bodies.

319. Chile proposed the creation of an ad hoc IOC working group to provide technical and scientific advice to the IOC on its engagement for supporting the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement.

320. Argentina decided to dissociate itself from para. 2 and 8 of the decision.

321. The United States of America stated its intent to dissociate itself from the decision.

322. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Argentina](#), [Belgium](#), [Chile](#), [China](#), [Japan](#), [Norway](#), [Republic of Korea](#), [Spain](#), [Türkiye](#), [United States of America](#).

323. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/4.7](#).

4.8 REPORT ON THE UNITED NATIONS OCEAN DECADE 2021–2030 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND RESULTS OF THE MID-TERM EVALUATION

324. This agenda item was introduced by the Executive Secretary who reminded Member States of the significant achievements of the Decade in its first five years of implementation. He emphasized that the achievements of the Decade to date have been possible due to the support of Member States and partners. He reminded Member States that the Decade is starting the second half of its implementation, and that following the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference, there is a need to re-focus activities, refine priorities and put in place the measures needed to consolidate and sustain impact. He informed Member States that new opportunities are emerging that could strengthen the impact of the Decade in its remaining five years and catalyse long-term, post-Decade initiatives to strengthen IOC's programmatic work.

325. He highlighted that the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Ocean Decade provides a roadmap for the way forward to and beyond 2030 to achieve the full potential of the Decade. However, he emphasized that the financial and in-kind support to the Decade from Member States has been decreasing and that the Secretariat does not have the resources needed to coordinate the Decade and implement the findings of the mid-term evaluation. He implored Member States to continue and increase their engagement in the Decade at the national level and to contribute to its coordination and delivery at regional and global levels.

326. Following the Executive Secretary's intervention, Mr Julian Barbière, as IOC Ocean Decade Coordinator, provided an update on the implementation of the Ocean Decade over the last period. Two key processes have, and will continue to, shape the work of the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU) namely, the priorities contained in *The Barcelona Statement* and the mid-term evaluation process. The four Calls for Decade Actions in the last period have brought the total number of Decade programmes to 60, with over 500 projects. Three new National Decade Committees (NDCs) have been created in Seychelles, Tanzania and the Kingdom of the Netherlands and new members of the Ocean Decade Alliance have been formalized. He highlighted the work of the Capacity Development Facility, supported by the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium), as a matchmaking tool for capacity development initiatives and the work on knowledge products around the benefits of investment in ocean science.

327. Mr Barbière reminded Member States of the rationale and process of the mid-term evaluation that was led by UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service (IOS). He highlighted several key recommendations of the report including: enhanced UN agency engagement; a strengthened strategic role for the Decade Advisory Board as reflected in the proposed revised terms of

reference for this group; stronger global, regional and national coordination; consolidation of the impact of Decade Actions; and the need for a consolidated resource mobilisation framework.

328. He also highlighted a final crucial recommendation of the Evaluation on the ways in which the Decade could contribute to stronger IOC post-2030. He noted that several processes including the mid-term evaluation, *The Barcelona Statement* priorities, the IOC Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management Strategy, the new Results Framework for the IOC Medium-Term Strategy, and ‘the IOC and the Future of the Ocean’ consultation process are generating options for the priority areas of intervention of IOC in the future. He also noted that there is alignment around a group of issues emerging through these processes, which could help guide future activities in the Ocean Decade.

329. Mr Barbière reemphasized the critical resource needs for coordination of the Decade, indicating that only 40 percent of financing needs had been secured for 2026 for staffing of the Decade Coordination Unit and that combined, the three Decade Coordination Offices (DCOs) in the IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies (RSBs) required an additional USD 530,000 per year to be fully operational.

330. He then introduced the information on the International Platform for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS) and indicated that the Secretariat had been engaging with the technical team leading IPOS development to determine the potential for IPOS to contribute to IOC and Ocean Decade mandates related to the science-policy interface. He reminded Member States of the three options identified by the Secretariat for a potential test phase of IPOS, led by the IOC, in the framework of the Decade.

331. Finally, he reminded Member States of the process for selection of a host of the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference and of the importance of this Conference to shape the remainder of the Decade and the post-Decade legacy. He then announced that Brazil had been selected as the host country for the Conference, which will take place in Rio de Janeiro. He congratulated and thanked Brazil for its commitment to the Decade and thanked the two other Member States that had submitted bids to host the Conference for the high quality of their proposals.

332. The representatives of 27 Member States and 2 observers took the floor.

333. Monaco introduced a draft resolution for this agenda item.

334. Member States congratulated Brazil for being selected to host the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference and expressed their strong ongoing support for the Ocean Decade. Many Member States highlighted the continuing need for and relevance of the Ocean Decade to enhance the use of science to inform policy and noted the alignment with the mandate of the IOC in this regard.

335. Numerous Member States provided information on the extensive and varied activities carried out at national level, in particular through National Decade Committees and through leadership or involvement in Decade Actions. Member States recognized the importance of the mid-term evaluation findings and recommendations and thanked UNESCO’s IOS for leading this process. Several interventions acknowledged the resource shortage that the IOC Secretariat is facing for coordination of the Decade and urged action by all Member States to allow full implementation of the mid-term evaluation recommendations thus ensuring an impactful second half of the Decade.

336. Questions were raised regarding the measures to increase UN agency engagement in the Decade, including the implementation of the recommendations contained in a previous, unpublished analysis of this issue. Questions were also raised about the ways in which the Decade will continue to measure the impact of the Decade Actions to inform policy and decision-making and the ways in which Decade processes can continue to be simplified and streamlined.

337. A number of Member States raised questions or expressed concerns in relation to IPOS and the related paragraphs in the proposed draft resolution. Specific issues were raised in relation to the duplication with IOC activities, the scope of the proposed test phase, and the resource implications for IOC. A drafting group was established, chaired by Germany, to discuss these specific paragraphs.

338. The Executive Secretary and Ms Alison Clausen provided the Secretariat's response to Member State interventions. They thanked Member States and partners for their support to the Decade and to the work of the Secretariat including through financial and in-kind resources to the DCU, DCOs and DCCs. They also thanked Member States for their continued engagement and activities at national level which provide the bedrock for the impact of the Decade. The Secretariat encouraged Member States who have not yet done so to establish National Decade Committees and welcome the imminent establishment of an Australian National Decade Committee.

339. They thanked Member States for their recognition that there is a need to continue support including resources for coordination by the Decade Coordination Unit and thematic and regional DCOs led by IOC including in its RSBs. They cited contributions to the work of the Capacity Development Facility as a mechanism for collective support from Member States and highlighted the importance of secondments and loans of personnel, as well as Junior Professional Officer positions.

340. In terms of increased UN agency engagement in the Decade, the Secretariat noted that due to delays in publishing of the previously referenced report as a standalone document, the recommendations from that analysis were rolled into the mid-term evaluation process and supplemented by additional and updated consultations. The Action Plan to be prepared by the Secretariat to implement the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation will contain specific actions related to UN agency engagement. This Action Plan will also address *inter alia* measures to increase accountability and reporting of Decade Actions and their impacts, particularly with regard to the use of science to inform decision-making.

341. The Secretariat noted the comments and views made by Member States in relation to IPOS particularly the concerns raised on the scope of the proposed test phase and the resource implications for the IOC. The Secretariat reminded Member States of the analyses contained in the documentation for this agenda item that identified potential options for IPOS to contribute to the mandates of the IOC and the Ocean Decade. The Secretariat referred to the work of the drafting group chaired by Germany devoted to this issue during the session.

342. In closing, the Secretariat joined Member States in reiterating its congratulations and thanks again to Brazil as the host of the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference and called on all Member States to engage in and support the Conference preparatory process.

343. The following Member States and two observers chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational: [Belgium](#), [Brazil](#), [Chile](#), [China](#), [Colombia](#), [India](#), [Japan](#), [Malaysia](#), [Monaco](#), [Norway](#), [Portugal](#), [Republic of Korea](#), [Russian Federation](#), [South Africa](#), [Spain](#), [Thailand](#), [Türkiye](#), [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#), [United States of America](#), [PICES](#) and [SCOR](#).

344. The Assembly adopted [IOC Resolution A-33/2](#) '*Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)*' submitted by Monaco, Morocco, Portugal, Spain.

5. GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING

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

345. The Executive Secretary introduced this item together with his report to the Assembly (see summary of the discussions in agenda item 3.2).

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

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

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

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

349. And giving priority to key action areas:

- (ii) Upscaling and sustaining the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) infrastructure to address user needs including Member States own needs and providing data and information to support implementation UN conventions and frameworks including in relation to climate, biodiversity and ocean health.
- (iii) Expanding the Ocean Data & Information System (ODIS) to achieve global coverage and operationalizing a coordinated IOC data architecture.
- (iv) Strengthened coordination in relation to marine biodiversity to better support Member States in fulfilling commitments in implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the BBNJ Agreement, as well as regional policy frameworks.
- (v) Advancing the Tsunami Programme ambition to achieve 100% of communities at risk to be Tsunami Ready and initiating planning and implementation of broader multi-hazard early warning systems to support climate resilience, sustainable biodiversity and ecosystem management, and food security.
- (vi) Supporting Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management including through strengthened regional delivery mechanisms and acting as global knowledge partner for Member States' commitments to develop and implement Sustainable Ocean Plans.
- (vii) Enhancing Member State's capacity to engage in and benefit from IOC programmes with a particular focus on Africa and SIDS.

- (viii) Enhancing delivery of the Ocean Decade to strengthen the collective impact of IOC-led and partner-led Decade programmes and projects to inform societal decision making at all scales and lay the foundation for the post-2030 legacy of the Decade.
- (ix) contributing to UNESCO Intersectoral Outputs on Environmental Education and Early Warning For All with focus on SIDS.

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

351. Regarding the Draft 43 C/5 budget, the Executive Secretary explained that UNESCO 43 C/5 regular budget proposal (Member States' assessed contributions), needs to accommodate additional fixed costs stemming from specific decisions by the UNESCO Executive Board and the General Conference, as well as inflationary adjustments, including staff cost increases. Considering these fixed costs and the UNESCO Executive Board's request for budget options, UNESCO presented three scenarios for its regular budget ceiling:

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

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

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

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

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

356. The Zero Real Growth scenario allows to keep those 'critically vulnerable' areas at the same budgetary level as in the 42 C/5 approved and to earmark some funding toward planning the design, development and implementation of IOC-coordinated multi-hazard warning systems

and of evolving the IOC Ocean Best Practices System from a GOOS-IODE project-based activity to a cross IOC programme.

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

358. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational: [Monaco](#), [Norway](#), [Portugal](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Spain](#), [Thailand](#).

359. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/5.1](#).

5.2 ASSESSMENT OF IOC'S GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

360. The Executive Secretary made a brief introduction to this item together with his report to the Assembly (see summary of the discussions in agenda item 3.2).

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

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

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

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

365. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: [Monaco](#), [Norway](#), [Portugal](#), [Spain](#), [Thailand](#).

366. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/5.2](#).

5.3 IOC AND THE FUTURE OF THE OCEAN CONSULTATION PROCESS

367. The Executive Secretary introduced this agenda item together with his report to the Assembly (see summary of the discussions in agenda item 3.2).

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

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

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

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

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

373. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: Ireland, [Monaco](#), [Norway](#), [Portugal](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Spain](#), [Thailand](#).

374. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/5.3](#).

5.4 REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE

375. The Chair of the Financial Committee, Vice-Chair of IOC Juan Forero Hauzeur (Colombia), reported to the Assembly on the results of the Committee's examination of the items entrusted to it by the plenary in addition to the ones foreseen in the Rule of Procedure 45.1(c). He introduced the Draft Resolution on 'Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission', which is the result of the work of the Financial Committee.

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

377. The Assembly adopted IOC Resolution A-33/3 'Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission' submitted by 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 of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

5.5 ELECTIONS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE COMMISSION AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

378. The Chair of the Nominations Committee, Ms Marie-Alexandrine Sicre (Vice-chair Groupe I), reported on this item.

379. The Nominations Committee met twice during the session on 27 June and 1 July 2025. Eighteen Member States attended the meetings of the Nominations Committee, representing all five IOC electoral groups.

5.5.1 Election of the Chairperson of the Commission

380. The Assembly noted that there was only one candidate for the position of Chairperson.

5.5.2 Election of the Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission

381. The Assembly noted that there was only one candidate for each of Electoral Groups I, II, III, IV and V for the positions of Vice-Chairperson.

5.5.3 Election of the Members of the Executive Council

382. The Assembly noted that there were 10 candidates for the remaining Member State seats on the Executive Council for Electoral Group I, and that the number of those remaining seats was 9, and consequently a ballot was needed for Electoral Group I.

383. The Assembly noted that there were 3 candidates for the remaining Member State seats on the Executive Council for Electoral Group II, whereas the maximum number of those seats was 2 and consequently a ballot was needed for Electoral Group II.

384. The Assembly noted that there were 8 candidates for the remaining Member State seats on the Executive Council for Electoral Group III, and that the number of those remaining seats was 8. The candidate Member States were therefore declared elected.

385. The Assembly noted that there were 8 candidates for the remaining Member State seats on the Executive Council for Electoral Group IV, and that the number of those remaining seats was 8. The candidate Member States were therefore declared elected.

386. The Assembly noted that there were 8 candidates for the remaining Member State seats on the Executive Council for Electoral Group V, and that the number of those remaining seats was 8. The candidate Member States were therefore declared elected.

387. After one ballot to elect the representatives to the Executive Council from Electoral Groups I and II, the membership of the Executive Council for the next intersessional period is given in in the decision below.

388. The following Member State chose to provide records of its plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: Côte d'Ivoire.

389. The Assembly adopted Decision A-33/5.5.3.

5.6 34th SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY AND 59TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

390. The Executive Secretary reminded the Assembly of the recommendations of the 58th session of the Executive Council, acting as the Steering Committee for this Assembly, on the dates and duration of the 59th session of the Council in 2026 over 3.5 days and duration of the 34th session of the Assembly in 2027 over 6.5 days (decision EC-58/4).

391. The Executive Secretary indicated that the Secretariat had made room reservations for these upcoming governing body sessions on this basis. The proposed dates were also chosen so as not to overlap with the dates of the WMO Executive Council in 2026.

392. Nevertheless, the Executive Secretary also recalled that in its draft resolution on budgetary matters, the Assembly requested him, in consultation with Member States, to review the working methods of the IOC governing bodies to gain effectiveness and to present concrete recommendations to the Executive Council in 2026 in view of their implementation at the Assembly in 2027. It is therefore possible that the dates and duration of the 34th Assembly may be revised following this inter-session exercise, which will be conducted by the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group.

393. Responding to a question, the Executive Secretary added that holding an Ocean Science Day during the next session of the Assembly would be part of IFAG's deliberations on the working methods of the governing bodies.

394. The representatives of 2 Member States took the floor.

395. The Assembly adopted Decision A-33/5.6.

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

396. The IOC Chairperson thanked the Rapporteur Mr Mitsutaku MAKINO (Japan) for his support to the work of the session.

397. The Executive Secretary indicated that the Secretariat had endeavoured to draft the narrative report of the discussions under each item during the session but had not been able to finalize with all care due to this task at this stage.

398. The Technical Secretary of the Resolutions Committee, Ms Alison Clausen, reported to the Assembly on the work of the Committee during the session on behalf of the Chairperson of the Committee, Mr Luís Menezes Pinheiro. The Committee met three times on 27 & 30 June, and 2 July and considered three draft resolutions on: 'Strengthening the IOCAFRICA Secretariat';

'Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)'; and 'Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission'.

399. The IOC Chairperson then invited the Assembly to adopt the draft resolutions on items 3.3.1, 4.8, and 5.4.

400. Prior to the examination of the draft resolution on the Ocean Decade, the representative of Germany, who chaired the drafting group on the paragraphs concerning cooperation between the IOC and IPOS, indicated that the group, which met twice, had decided not to propose any wording on this issue in the draft resolution. The paragraphs concerned were therefore deleted. France requested that its [statement](#) on IPOS be added to the report of this assembly.

401. On the same resolution and as mentioned in its initial statement to the Assembly under item 3.2, the [United States of America](#) expressed the wish to dissociate themselves from the language of paragraph 5 reaffirming the *Barcelona Statement* and paragraph 14 regarding the terms of reference of the Decade Advisory Board.

402. On the resolution on 'Strengthening the IOCAFRIKA Secretariat', the United States of America expressed the wish to dissociate themselves from the language of paragraph 3 recalling the 2030 Agenda and chose to provide record of their plenary intervention for the informational annex to the meeting report.

403. Soon after the closure of the Assembly, all adopted decisions and resolutions were published in a single document [IOC/A-33/Decisions](#) in the languages of the Commission.

404. The Assembly adopted [Decision A-33/6](#).

7. CLOSURE

405. In concluding the session, the Chair expressed appreciation to Member States for their support for his re-election as Chair and invited all newly elected Officers to work as one team. He also thanked the interpreters and all services working behind the scenes as well as the Executive Secretary and his staff.

406. The Executive Secretary called for even more effective collaboration in order to respond to the dramatic changes that are accelerating in the 95% of the biosphere which is the ocean. The IOC faces growing demand for ocean observations, data, equity, knowledge and preparedness for multiple ocean risks, all of which are part of its mandate and form a necessary basis for better policies, decisions and actions.

407. The Chair of the Commission, Professor Yutaka Michida, closed the 33rd session of the Assembly at 12:10 on Thursday 3 July 2025.

408. The Assembly met in plenary session during 6.5 days, including 1 Ocean Science Day from 25 June to 3 July, considered 32 items on its agenda and approved 28 decisions and 3 resolutions. The plenary meeting was supported by 4 preparatory meetings, 5 side events, 4 regional informational meetings and 15 meetings of sessional committees and drafting groups.

ANNEX

Record of interventions at the 33rd session of the IOC Assembly that were provided to the IOC Secretariat by Member States and observers. Interventions are reprinted without review or verification.

3.1 Statement of the Chairperson

Liberia

It is with profound gratitude and joy that I stand before you today on behalf of Liberia, to express our heartfelt appreciation for admitting our nation as the 151st member of this respected global community. This milestone marks a significant chapter in Liberia's journey toward contributing meaningfully to the sustenance and stewardship of our world's oceans. Your recognition of Liberia's commitment to oceanographic collaboration and conservation honors not only our aspirations but also our unwavering resolve to advance our shared goals.

The oceans are central to the survival and prosperity of all nations, and Liberia, with its rich maritime heritage, understands deeply the necessity of collective action in preserving these vital ecosystems. We believe that the work carried out by the IOC is indispensable, and we are eager to lend our voice and resources to its important mission. I am also pleased to inform this assembly that Liberia has ratified the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, underscoring our dedication to safeguarding biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. This act of ratification is a testament to Liberia's alignment with the principles of sustainable development and international cooperation. We recognize the agreement as a cornerstone in addressing the pressing challenges facing our oceans, and we reaffirm our commitment to implement its provisions with vigor and responsibility.

Liberia stands ready to support the work of the IOC, not merely as a member in name, but as an active participant in initiatives that promote scientific research, capacity building, and the sustainable management of marine resources. We pledge to bring our perspectives, energy, and collaboration to the table, assisting in the realization of the IOC's strategic objectives and driving forward the international agenda for ocean health and resilience.

Once again, allow me to convey Liberia's heartfelt thanks for this honor. We are proud to join this esteemed body and are determined to contribute to its legacy of excellence in oceanographic science and governance.

Russian Federation

Russian Federation approves the work of the IOC Chairman Dr. Yutaka Michida (Japan). We also stress that Russian Federation continuously supports all IOC flagship programs, including ocean observing systems, data management, tsunami warning, ocean mapping, training, capacity building and others.

We acknowledge the key role of the IOC regional subcommissions, specifically WESTPAC, IOCINDIO, IOCAFRICA, IOCARIBE, in the implementation of the Commission's programs and in the development and maintenance of scientific and technical infrastructure in coastal states. These are very formats and platforms where the long-term partnership is formed along with carrying ocean observations, transfer of technology and capacity building.

Information about the contribution to the main programs by Russia will be presented during the Assembly, and submitted in written form:

Specifically, these include:

- a) Development of observational scientific infrastructure in the Arctic Ocean (contribution to the Global Ocean Observing System, GOOS).
- b) Development of the marine observing systems in the Arctic (contribution to GOOS).
- c) Development of satellite observing systems in the Arctic (contribution to the GOOS space subsystem).
- d) Intensifying the Floating Universities program (contribution to capacity building).
- e) the status of implementation of international projects within the Decades in which the Russian Federation participates.
- e) Development of cooperation with Africa.
- g) Road map for the active participation in the WESTPAC, IOCINDIO, IOCAFRICA, NEARGOOS programs and other regional projects under the auspices of the IOC (contribution to GOOS, IODE and other programs).
- g) Training of foreign students in marine disciplines in Russian universities (contribution to capacity building).

3.2 Report of the Executive Secretary [include statements on items 5.1 (Draft C/5), 5.2 (assessment of governance and management & 5.3 (IOC and the Future of the Ocean)]

Brazil

We note with satisfaction the convergence between the work of the IOC and the objectives of the Decade of the Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The mid-term evaluation of the Decade, which we will discuss later, is fundamental to the achievement of its goals. Through the engagement of its government and society, Brazil continues to demonstrate the importance that it attaches to the Ocean Decade implementation, coordinated by the IOC.

With the support of the IOC, Brazil was the first country to officially make a commitment to include ocean literacy in school curricula. Also, we have the largest number of Blue Schools in the world, contributing to 25% of the network. This agenda is part of an important work by the Commission in ocean literacy and education. It makes sense to work on science and education at UNESCO, and it makes sense to explore synergies between the IOC and other sectors of this Organization. These possible connections are mirrored in the IOC's Medium-Term Strategy. It reflects UNESCO's global priorities, on Africa and Gender Equality, and the need for the IOC to cooperate with other UNESCO programmes. Work on these subjects converges with the priorities identified at the Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona, and with the Ocean Decade Implementation Plan, particularly on the importance of embracing local and indigenous knowledge, including both less developed and developed countries and striving for generational, gender and geographic diversity. In the light of that, we consider that some observations in the external assessment may not have captured the nature of IOC as a body of UNESCO. We understand this will be discussed in the Financial Committee.

All these themes contribute to stepping up our efforts to achieve the SDGs and fight climate change. For the COP30 this year, the Brazilian Presidency has created the role of a Special Envoy for the Ocean, which means that the ocean will be central to the debate. The IOC has been instrumental in generating knowledge to support decisions, and the Special Envoy herself will be attending this Assembly as part of the Brazilian Delegation.

The Commission also helps us to implement UNCLOS, which created an international regime for governing the maritime space, enshrining the concept of "common heritage of humankind" while respecting sovereignty. The IOC has had a key role in the consolidation of that regime and we all should be proud of that.

Canada

We appreciate the enhanced engagement of Member States through the various consultation processes that took place, providing meaningful opportunities for input into key aspects of the IOC's activities.

We look forward to continued productive work during the upcoming intersessional period. Canada suggests further emphasis on bridging the science – policy gap by further mainstreaming the use of ocean science data into actionable information to complete the value chain.

Chile

Para Chile, el océano es parte de nuestro ADN. Lo dejan claramente demostrado nuestros más de 4.000 km de costa; una presencia tricontinental que nos lleva a contar con la undécima Zona Económica Exclusiva más grande del mundo; y una vibrante economía oceánica.

Hoy, nos encontramos en un momento crítico para todos aquellos que habitamos este planeta; los océanos, que cubren más del 70% de la Tierra y por lo tanto albergan y promueven vida, están amenazados, debemos por lo tanto concretar medidas eficientes, realistas y aunar esfuerzos para movilizar recursos e implementar soluciones efectivas para protegerlo.

Chile ha consolidado una política de conservación y uso sostenible del océano como una Política de Estado, a través de la cual hemos llegado a declarar el 43% de nuestras aguas jurisdiccionales bajo alguna categoría de conservación, y hemos avanzado en el desarrollo de una pesca sostenible como base de nuestra actividad económica.

El trabajo de nuestra extensa red de monitoreo del océano y el de nuestros científicos ha sido reconocido internacionalmente y contribuye activamente a la búsqueda de soluciones a los problemas más acuciantes de nuestro tiempo. Nuestro país se enorgullece de contar con la presencia de destacadas y destacados investigadores en diversas instancias internacionales que contribuyen a una mejor comprensión del océano, como es el caso de la bióloga marina Pilar Muñoz, una de los 20 expertos mundiales del Grupo Internacional de Cultura Oceánica de COI-UNESCO.

Esta vocación la hemos proyectado en los diversos procesos multilaterales, posicionando un mensaje sobre la necesidad de avanzar en acciones concretas para asegurar la salud del océano a largo plazo. Ejemplos de esto son muchos, y me permito destacar solo dos, el primero es el rol de nuestro país en el marco de la Organización Marítima Internacional, en donde esperamos continuar aportando a través de nuestra membresía en el Consejo Ejecutivo. El segundo ejemplo, es el hecho que fuimos el segundo país del mundo en ratificar el Acuerdo de BBNJ, el cual representa una nueva era para la gobernanza oceánica global, y nuestro país está firmemente comprometido con su pronta entrada en vigor y efectiva implementación.

Chile ha propuesto a la ciudad de Valparaíso como sede de la Secretaría del Acuerdo BBNJ con la firme convicción que esta propuesta no es sólo un lugar físico, sino que también todo este capital científico extraordinario en nuestro país está al servicio del Acuerdo, proveyendo capacidades y soporte técnico de primer nivel a la futura Secretaría.

Nos anima el deseo de contribuir, desde el Sur Global, a una Secretaría inclusiva, transparente, con rendición de cuentas, eficiente y dirigida por los países, que nos permita construir una gobernanza oceánica global robusta.

Quisiera concluir destacando que nuestro país, junto a Corea del Sur, ambos con una importante vocación oceánica, hemos expresado nuestro interés para asumir como Co-presidentes de la Cuarta Conferencia de Naciones Unidas para el Océano (UNOC 4) en 2028. Ambos países, representando distintos hemisferios y culturas, pero unidos en una mirada de sostenibilidad, queremos liderar el trabajo necesario para el cumplimiento de las metas para el océano, en especial, para asegurar su buena salud a largo plazo.

China

China has always engaged in the most work of IOC, particularly, in IOC-WESTPAC, we sent a large and capable delegation to WESTPAC Intergovernmental Session, to share our views and insights on each topic with the Member States, as well as our proposal of establishing a new Working Group on Blue Carbon Ecosystem Restoration focusing on mangroves.

Thanks to the cooperation platforms and communication mechanisms that WESTPAC provided, Chinese institutions and universities have deeply engaged in several WESTPAC-led Ocean

Decade Actions, including “Accelerate MSP in the Westpac Region”, “Advancing the 2nd Cooperative Study of Kuroshio and its Adjacent Regions”, and “Stem the tide of Asia's riverine plastic emission into the ocean”. China now is hosting three Training and Research Centres (RTRCs) under the IOC/WESTPAC's Regional RTRC Network and host the several thematic training courses on a year basis as an essential endeavour to contribute to the implementation of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2023–2030).

Meanwhile, China actively participates in the UN Oceans Decade and plays a constructive role by establishment of one Decade Collaborative Centre on Ocean and Climate, 7 Decade Programs, 5 Decade Implementing Partners, 19 Decade Projects, which are led or co-developed by Chinese institutes and Universities. We sent a high-level delegation, led by Vice-Minister of Ministry of Natural Resources of China to attend the UN Ocean Decade International Conference in Barcelona, Spain last year (in 2024).

In recent years, tsunami early warning is also one of our priorities, China hosted the 31st Session of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the ICG/PTWS in Beijing in April this year, during which the expert from China was elected as the Chair of PTWS. We are strengthening our coordination with regional partners through South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Centre (SCSTAC) to provide with more and more public service and knowledge products for the countries in this region. Also, our experts made their due contribution in relevant process and programs of MSP, IPHAB, Capacity Development, Ocean Literacy, etc.

In terms of finance and human resource, China continuously gives support to IOC as much as we can. Although we are facing the pressure in domestic budget issue, we still contribute 100,000 US dollars annually in 2023 and 2024, and add 10,000 more US dollars this year, totalling 110,000 US dollars in 2025. We welcome the budget increase for IOC, while we encourage IOC also could strengthen its support to WESTPAC, and one of the most active regional subsidiary bodies of IOC. Another information we would like to share is that we are selecting our candidates of new IOC secondment expert, with the support of Ministry of Human Resources and Civil affairs of China, an extra budget for the program has been endorsed.

In general, China encourages and supports IOC to play its critical role in the process of international ocean governance. As we know, the international community is looking forward to our ideas, our contributions, and our leadership, IOC could not lag behind in this process, in which more and more emerging International Organizations and processes engaged.

Côte d'Ivoire

La Côte d'Ivoire a suivi avec beaucoup d'attention et d'intérêt le rapport du Secrétaire exécutif. En réalité, ce rapport n'est pas nouveau pour la Côte d'Ivoire car son représentant a eu l'occasion d'y réagir lors de la réunion d'information que le secrétaire exécutif a organisée il y a quelques semaines. Nous avons salué cette initiative unique prise, et noté que c'est une bonne pratique que le secrétaire exécutif a initié et souhaitons sa perpétuation.

Ayant pris la parole à l'occasion de l'assemblée, la Côte d'Ivoire, félicite de façon solennelle le Secrétaire exécutif pour sa position claire en faveur de la prise d'action concrète pour donner sens au slogan proclamé de tout temps à savoir : « accorder la priorité à l'AFRIQUE ». Car a-t-il indiqué à juste titre, l'Afrique souffre encore plus des changements globaux.

Au niveau du système d'observation des océans la Côte d'Ivoire se félicite de ce qu'une réforme a été proposée au niveau de la structure de gouvernance de GOOS-AFRICA pour mieux répondre aux attentes des Etats membres.

India

India has been a key partner to the IOC in the full spectrum of activities spanning the end-to-end ocean value chain of Ocean Observations; Ocean Data & Information Services; Ocean Modelling & Forecasting; Tsunami and other Ocean & Coastal Hazards; Capacity Building and will continue these important engagements with the other Member States. India, through its Decade Collaborative Centre for the IOR is glad to have associated with IOC in successfully conducting

many capacity building activities focusing Early Career Ocean Professionals, IOCCG's Summer Lecture series and IO-Predict 2024 in partnership with IOGOOS.

India compliments the IOC for its efforts in progressing the activities of the new IOCINDIO sub-commission and by holding the first session of IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO) at Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates during 21–23 May 2025, which was very fruitful.

India would like to appreciate IOC for supporting the capacity building activities to Member States with more focus on SIDS, LDCs and ECOPs. India specifically thank UNESCO and IOC for renewing the Category 2 Status of the centre. The International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography (ITCO-Ocean) organised 19 International and 21 national training courses of 1 to 2-weeks duration. About 1535 from 34 countries were trained during June 2023- June 2025.

India is happy to share that 26 villages from the state of Odisha, India were successfully recognized as Tsunami Ready communities and gearing towards covering another 17 villages from 6 coastal states of India. Thanks to IOC.

India appreciates and works towards IOC's Medium-Term Strategy that aligns with the objectives of United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030).

India wished to see increased engagement of IOC and its allied organizations with member states and playing a pivotal role in translational and operational oceanography for the benefit of member states.

Japan

As reported, achievements and efforts on ocean observation, data integration, and capacity development are essential as the demand for ocean-based knowledge grows alongside pressing global challenges. Japan has been contributed to IOC programs such as GOOS, OBIS, GEBCO, Regional Early Warning Systems, through in-kind contributions and sending experts to the programs as well as preparing data. These programs and activities are essential to support best decision making for tackling and solving emergent issues we are facing based on science, and to realize the ocean we want. Japan will continue the efforts with the collaboration of member states. At the same time, Japan acknowledges the challenging budgetary circumstances of the IOC and share the idea that IOC need to consider worst-case scenarios as financially resilient organization. It is crucial that freezing budgets do not compromise key initiatives such as GOOS, IODE, and regional capacity-building efforts, especially those supporting SIDS and Early Career Ocean Professionals. Japan expects and encourages the further efforts of IOC Secretariat's, with collaboration with member states, to mitigate the extent of budgetary reductions.

Japan echoes United Kingdom and reaffirms the significance of IOC's functional autonomy as defined in its Statutes. This autonomy has enabled the IOC to operate effectively as an intergovernmental body within UNESCO. The 221EX/20 decision adopted at UNESCO Executive Board Session in this April reaffirmed this principle, and Japan was pleased to support its inclusion. Upholding this autonomy is critical to ensuring the IOC's continued impact and credibility, the acceptance of independent voluntary contributions, and strategic planning such as IOC's High Level Objectives and Subobjectives.

Mauritius

As a Small Island Developing State, Mauritius remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing ocean science, regional cooperation, and sustainable marine governance.

We are pleased to announce our formal decision to join the IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean, IOCINDIO. This reflects our deepening engagement in regional ocean initiatives and our alignment with the goals of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

Mauritius also reaffirms its support for the Global Ocean Observing System. Hosting the 20th IOGOOS Annual Meeting this year marked a significant milestone. We thank the Government of

India and INCOIS for their invaluable support, including the deployment of a wave rider buoy in our port, strengthening the ocean monitoring capabilities for the whole Indian Ocean.

We further commend the IODE programme for its essential work in ocean data management. Following the re-establishment of our National Oceanographic Data Center, Mauritius stands ready to contribute meaningfully to global data-sharing and capacity-building efforts.

Additionally, we strongly support GEBCO and the Seabed 2030 initiative. We view enhanced seabed mapping as a vital enabler of Marine Spatial Planning and disaster risk reduction and look forward to formalizing our collaboration through an MoU.

Monaco

J'ai quelques questions sur la gouvernance financière de la Commission. En effet, même s'il y a 2 ans l'UNESCO a augmenté le budget dévolu à la COI, la Principauté note que de nombreux programmes restent fortement tributaires de contributions extraordinaires. Aussi - et je pense que d'autres de mes collègues sont dans les mêmes questionnements - il serait opportun de connaître le niveau d'impact des récentes mesures prises par l'UNESCO en matière de restrictions budgétaires ?

Dans ce contexte, quelle stratégie la COI envisage-t-elle pour renforcer ses financements récurrents et ainsi renforcer son autonomie financière ?

Vos réponses concernant la stratégie financière à long terme, serait très précieuse pour éclairer notre réflexion collective et ainsi lever nos préoccupations.

Vous le savez l'engagement de Monaco s'inscrit dans la durée :

- Premièrement, la Principauté finance le programme d'alerte précoce aux tsunamis, un soutien constant depuis de nombreuses années.
- Ensuite, Monaco, aux côtés de la France, soutient par l'intermédiaire de la Société des Explorations de Monaco, les Missions de coordination régionale de la COI en méditerranée qui concentre ses efforts autour de deux axes principaux :
 - Assurer la coordination et la gestion du programme international Argo
 - Représenter la COI/UNESCO pour la région Méditerranée et superviser les différents réseaux d'observation déployés dans le bassin méditerranéen
- Enfin Monaco s'est engagée, dès l'origine, dans la Décennie des Sciences océaniques pour le développement durable. À ce titre, cette année, la Principauté de Monaco soumet à votre approbation la résolution 4.8 qui a été distribuée vendredi dernier. Cette résolution arrive à mi-parcours de la décennie et permet de dresser un bilan et de se projeter avec un nouvel élan sur les 5 prochaines années

Enfin, je relaye les annonces formulées précédemment en vous invitant cordialement à participer à la projection du documentaire Ocean with David Attenborough qui aura lieu demain soir à 18h30, coorganisé par la Principauté de Monaco et la COI. Cette projection sera suivie d'une table ronde de personnalités scientifiques de renom - Dr Sylvie Tambutté, directrice scientifique du Centre Scientifique de Monaco, Dr Valérie Masson-Delmotte, paléoclimatologue française et directrice de recherche du laboratoire des sciences du climat et de l'environnement (LSCE) du Commissariat à l'énergie atomique et aux énergies alternatives (CEA) et Dr Rafael González-Quirós océanographe et directeur du Centro Oceanografico de Gijon, il seront aux côtés de M. Keith Scholey, réalisateur et producteur du film venu spécialement de Londres.

Norway

Norway commends the forward-looking and necessary initiatives being undertaken—particularly the “IOC and the Future of the Ocean” project, and the focus on securing a lasting legacy from the Ocean Decade to further strengthen IOC’s role and relevance.

Furthermore, we strongly support IOC's contributions to other UN processes, which help maximize the return on our collective investments in observation, data sharing, and scientific knowledge.

The budget documents clearly illustrate that the IOC is navigating challenging financial waters. While we certainly welcome the increased share of UNESCO's regular budget, this positive development may be overshadowed by changing circumstances.

We welcome the alignment of the IOC Results Framework with the High-Level Objectives of the Medium-Term Strategy, which facilitates a more effective assessment of its implementation.

Furthermore, the renewed focus on fully implementing the IOC Statutes - including the implications of the functional autonomy they describe - will help free up time, resources, and capacity to advance the High-Level Objectives of the Medium-Term Strategy.

Norway continues to view IOC as a trusted and essential partner—in advancing science, shaping policy, and promoting a sustainable ocean economy on a global scale, and we remain a steadfast supporter of the IOC.

Panama

Acogemos los avances significativos realizados desde la trigésima segunda reunión de esta Asamblea. Destacamos, en particular, la consolidación del Decenio de las Naciones Unidas de las Ciencias Oceánicas para el Desarrollo Sostenible (2021-2030) como una iniciativa mundial sin precedencia para lograr “la ciencia que necesitamos para el océano que queremos”.

Desde Panamá reafirmamos nuestro compromiso con la protección de los océanos y la promoción de la gestión sostenible del océano. Hemos implementado políticas innovadoras para reducir las emisiones de carbono y proteger nuestros ecosistemas marinos.

En 2023, albergamos la Conferencia Nuestros Océanos comprometiendo \$137 millones de dólares para proyectos de resiliencia marina. En este mismo año, establecimos nuestro Centro Nacional de Datos Oceanográficos (NODC), el cual ha sido incorporado oficialmente a la red IODE, convirtiéndose en un avance significativo para Panamá en su integración a los esfuerzos internacionales de gestión e intercambio de datos marinos.

Asimismo, hemos prohibido la utilización de plásticos de un solo uso para reducir la contaminación costera. Y través de nuestra Política Nacional de Océanos hemos logrado la protección de más del 54.33% de la superficie marina de nuestro país.

En este sentido, aplaudimos todos los esfuerzos de se llevan a cabo desde la COI, para la conservación, restauración y gestión sostenible de los ecosistemas costeros de carbono azul, los cuales son fundamentales para mitigar el cambio climático, proteger la biodiversidad y promover economías sostenibles.

Respaldamos la cooperación con organizaciones como la OMM, el PNUMA y el Consejo Internacional de Ciencias ya que son esenciales para potenciar y mejorar las actividades de la COI y valoramos el Sistema Mundial de Observación del Océano (GOOS) y el Sistema de Datos e Información Oceanográficos (ODIS) como pilares fundamentales de la infraestructura oceánica mundial.

Distinguidos Estados Miembros: La ciencia del océano nos da las respuestas, pero es nuestra voluntad colectiva la que marcará la diferencia. Panamá como líder azul y carbono cero negativos, reafirma su compromiso con los océanos y su voluntad de trabajar junto a la COI para garantizar que nuestros océanos sigan siendo una fuente de vida, prosperidad y bienestar para las presentes y generaciones futuras.

Portugal

IOC is a major driving force in advancing Ocean science, global ocean observation and early warning systems to protect coastal communities, fostering international cooperation and capacity building, and connecting science and policy. We also take also this opportunity to welcome Liberia to the IOC.

As concerns the future of the IOC, we wish to reaffirm the critical importance of the IOC's mandate as the UN body responsible for marine science and ocean services and for its key role in coordinating global ocean science. Its functional autonomy status within UNESCO is essential to ensure the Commission's responsiveness, credibility, and efficiency.

It is also fundamental to ensure that the IOC member states vision and priorities are adequately represented by their Executive Secretary at major international meetings, avoiding the absence of IOC representation at the adequate level. It should be stressed that IOC member states are not necessarily the same members as those of UNESCO.

It is therefore essential that proper credit is given to IOC actions, results and deliverables, including the coordination of the UN Ocean Decade, and that IOC's image is maintained with the integrity of the original IOC logo, which should be consistently used in all forms of documentation and materials, avoiding its adulteration observed in the past few years, without the consent of IOC member states.

We congratulate IOC for the coordination of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, to which Portugal is strongly committed. In this context, the Portuguese National Committee for the Ocean Decade is playing a key role in catalyzing national engagement, promoting research, innovation, ocean literacy and cooperation across all sectors, from universities and research centers and public administration, to civil society and the private sector.

We are also deeply committed to contribute to the IOC initiatives in capacity building, through our Ocean Teacher Global Academy Regional Training Center, that has been promoting courses directed to developing states. We are also contributing to IOC initiatives in Ocean literacy, in particular through the Blue Schools Program initiative first established in Portugal.

As a member of the Ocean Decade Alliance, our President of the republic being one of the Alliance patrons, Portugal is fully supports the Alliance's Call to Action on Deep-Sea Mapping presented in Nice. As a nation with one of the largest maritime zones in Europe, we understand the immense value of mapping the seabed, namely for climate research, habitat mapping and hazard monitoring and early warning.

Republic of Korea

Since the last session, Korea has remained fully engaged in international efforts aligned with the IOC's mission. A few weeks ago, Korea participated in the 2025 UN Ocean Conference and contributed to the global momentum for advancing the goals of the UN Ocean Decade.

Through both financial and personnel support to the IOC Ocean Science Section, Korea has contributed to the development and publication of the 2024 State of the Ocean Report. In line with our continued engagement with the UN Ocean Decade, Korea is pleased to contribute to the Decade's objectives, including through voluntary support and collaboration.

Following Korea's ratification of the BBNJ Agreement as the 21st country, we are actively participating in the Preparatory Commission and working to support its effective implementation.

Earlier this year, Korea successfully hosted the 10th Our Ocean Conference in Busan. It was a valuable opportunity to reflect on a decade of global ocean commitments and to launch new actions for the years ahead.

Looking ahead, we are pleased to announce that Korea and Chile are jointly proposing to co-host the 4th United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC4) in 2028. As the final UNOC before the 2030 SDG deadline, it will be a critical opportunity to take stock of global progress and shape the post-Decade agenda.

We look forward to working closely with the IOC and all Member States to ensure UNOC4 is a success and to continue advancing our shared vision for a sustainable and resilient ocean.

Russian Federation

We support the activities of the Secretariat in developing cooperation with UN structures, other international organizations and the private sector.

Given the declining stability of funding sources and the amount of available funds, it is extremely important to strengthen the institutional structure and financial capabilities of the IOC in order to keep IOC obligations to Member States continuously doable which is inline with the Statute of the Commission and the principles of functional autonomy within the UNESCO structure.

We stress that Regional Subcommissions form in fact the infrastructural skeleton of the IOC and stand as the main platform for implementing the initiatives of the Ocean Decade. Thus, insufficient funding of their functioning (as it is the case for the time being) puts the existing plans on risk.

We stress and want the Assembly to be aware about continuous support for the IOC flagship programmes by Russian Federation, including ocean observing systems, data management, tsunami warning systems, ocean mapping, training activities and capacity building.

Among the important contributions to GOOS, we particularly stress the development of the Arctic Ocean observational scientific infrastructure. This includes (while not limited to):

- the “North Pole” drifting station operating on board of a specially designed platform capable to operate in any ice conditions;
- deploying a network of 47 drifting buoys in the eastern Arctic Ocean;
- launching of the only in the World hydrometeorological spacecrafts Arktika-M – 1 and Arktika-M – 2 forming a dual system at highly elliptic orbit, thus providing now continuous observations across the pan-Arctic area north of 60° N.

Russia actively participates in the regional programmes such as WESTPAC and NEARGOOS and in investing in the IOC-related potential of developing countries. A large number of foreign students graduate from Russian universities, including also those funded by scholarships from the Russian Government. The Floating Universities program is successfully developing with a profound international participation.

IOC and the Future of the Ocean

Russia expresses its support for the actions of the IOC to improve the future of the ocean. We note the active participation of Russia in the relevant inter-sessional working groups of the IOC, in particular, the WG on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management.

Russia supports the current activities of the IOC to ensure a healthy and better future for the oceans, as well as proposals for the development of the IOC to maintain its position in the future, taking into account the emerging problems of ocean exploration and development. Here we would like to suggest a geological and geophysical area in which there is currently a gap in the activities of the IOC as a whole. In this regard, it is important to develop cooperation with experts from related bodies, such as the Ministry of Ecology, which are leading the way in providing background environmental assessments in areas of deep-sea exploration of mineral resources.

Russia also offers to organize consultations among young scientists to get their opinion and take their voice into account in the aspect of the "Future of the Ocean."

We would like to note once again that cooperation between the IOC regional sub-commissions is very important for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and this is important for the future of the IOC.

South Africa

We appreciate the proposed planning process that ensures that the programmes and priorities of the subsidiary bodies, particularly IOCAFRICA are aligned and can have a meaningful input towards the planning process of the IOC. South Africa appreciates the Executive Secretary's efforts to attend the IOCAFRICA 8th Session, this indicates the efforts to understand the achievements and challenges of the IOCAFRICA at first hand.

We believe that IOC's leadership in implementing and executing several long-term and short-term programmes such as Ocean Decade, UN Ocean Conference which was attended by South Africa's Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, demonstrates the IOC's ability to

carry its mandate of ocean science and governance, we believe this reflects well on the Secretariat's ability to deliver on desired outcomes.

Lastly, South Africa welcomes Liberia to the IOC family and by extension to IOCAFRICA, and looks forward to future engagements.

Spain

España agradece al Presidente y al Secretario Ejecutivo su excelente exposición y las memorias presentadas, que reflejan la importante e intensa labor desarrollada por el Secretariado durante estos dos años y un análisis de los retos e incertidumbres para el futuro a corto y medio plazo. Hacemos este agradecimiento extensivo a todos los vicepresidentes y sobre todo a toda la Secretaría de la COI. Damos también la bienvenida y más sincero agradecimiento a Liberia por su incorporación a la COI.

El número de asuntos incluidos en su intervención y más aún en los documentos que la acompañan es muy extenso y en estos 3 minutos es imposible responder a todos los asuntos tratados. Respalamos lo ya comentado por otros estados miembros sobre la importancia de GOOS, de la gestión y coordinación de datos y del desarrollo de capacidades en general, y solo nos centraremos en algunos otros que también consideramos más importantes o críticos.

1) Actividades de España

Comenzamos destacando el compromiso de España con esta comisión, con su mandato y su trabajo, y prueba de ello son la celebración de la Segunda Conferencia de la Década del Océano en Barcelona en 2024, la propuesta recientemente aprobada del Centro Colaborador de la Década sobre Economía Oceánica Sostenible en esta misma ciudad, nuestra continuada implicación en el Consejo Asesor del Informe sobre Estado del Océano, el Proyecto sobre el Gran Ecosistema Marino de la Corriente de Canarias financiado a través del Fondo Fiduciario de la Agencia Española de Cooperación al Desarrollo, por el reconocimiento de Chipiona como una ciudad Tsunami Ready y por el trabajo que estamos ya realizando de recopilación de datos para el Informe Mundial sobre las Ciencias Oceánicas, respaldando la llamada del Secretario Ejecutivo para que todos los países participemos en esta iniciativa.

2) Autonomía Funcional.

España quiere destacar la importancia de la autonomía funcional de la COI dentro de la UNESCO y sus importantes consecuencias sobre la toma de decisiones sobre las funciones y actividad de la COI, así como que la COI tenga la visibilidad y correcta identificación en difusión de las actividades que realiza.

3) Situación económica

España ve con preocupación la situación económica de bloqueo presupuestario debido a la incertidumbre sobre la posición de EEUU en la COI y en la UNESCO. España no está de acuerdo con que la Secretaría de UNESCO haya aplicado un porcentaje de bloqueo del presupuesto de la COI mayor al que le corresponde según su proporcionalidad en el presupuesto del total de la UNESCO. Agradecemos las gestiones de la Secretaria de la COI y a la Secretaría de la UNESCO para corregir esa situación e insistimos en que se siga avanzando para corregir o compensar ese desequilibrio. Nuestra mayor preocupación, sin embargo, está en las consecuencias que de esta situación tenga en las actividades de la COI, entre ellas la coordinación sobre los sistemas de observación del océano a los que EEUU contribuye de forma muy significativa y que queremos agradecer una vez más.

3) Importancia de Sección de Ciencia.

España celebra el reciente nombramiento de la nueva Jefa de la Sección de Ciencias del Océano, la Doctora Karen Evans, a quien damos nuestra más sincera enhorabuena y bienvenida. España considera que, tal como establece en el Artículo 2.1 de sus estatutos, las Ciencias del Océano son el eje fundamental del mandato de la COI. El extraordinario y sólido curriculum científico de la Doctora Evan es una garantía para consolidar y reforzar el trabajo de esta sección. Agradecer una vez más excelente trabajo realizado hasta ahora por el Señor Henrik

Enelvoldsen y de todo el personal de esta sección que han conseguido mantener la actividad a pesar de los continuados retrasos en la contratación de la jefatura de sección. Tal como ha destacado el Secretario Ejecutivo entender el funcionamiento de los ecosistemas marinos es determinante para definir las estrategias de observación del océano, identificar las variables oceanográficas esenciales, determinar los estándares de la calidad de los datos y en último término, abordar una Planificación Oceánica Sostenible, las actividades de gestión asociadas al Tratado sobre Biodiversidad en Aguas fuera de la Jurisdicción Nacional o para la generación de modelos y gemelos digitales. Los ecosistemas no se definen simplemente por el conjunto de variables independientes, del medio físico y químico y de las especies que los forman, sino que presentan propiedades emergentes de sus interrelaciones que es necesario entender, más aún en un contexto de profundos cambios forzados por el cambio climático. Esto requiere de una importante coordinación de los actuales programas de la Sección de Ciencia, identificar lagunas y establecer una estrategia flexible que se pueda adaptar a distintos escenarios presupuestarios.

Thailand

Thailand commends the Executive Secretary for the comprehensive report and the significant progress made across IOC's core functions. We particularly appreciate the attention given to ocean observing systems, data architecture, capacity development, and the Ocean Decade Programmes.

We are pleased to note the growing regional and global cooperation through IOC and its subsidiary bodies. Thailand continues to support the work of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific particularly in advancing ocean science, biodiversity monitoring, and early warning systems.

At the same time, we remain concerned about the resource constraints affecting regional subsidiary bodies. Ensuring predictable and sustainable funding is essential to maintaining momentum and achieving long-term impact.

Thailand reaffirms our commitment to the IOC and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for sustainable development, and looks forward to continued collaboration towards inclusive, science-based ocean governance.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

We note the significant portfolio of activities that have taken place over the past two years, and the significant progress made in establishing ways of working that will consolidate the role of the IOC into the future. We will make interventions on particular activities throughout this session, and how these have been funded as reflected in the 2024-25 budget implementation report (IOC/A-33/3.2.Doc(2)).

We note the critical need, in light of ongoing financial and resource constraints as well as a continued trend in a shortfall in voluntary contributions for the most part, with the exception of Function E where we note such funding supports the Decade mostly, to either harmonize, rationalize or even adapt IOCs services in support of its dual regime, namely to first promote and coordinate research, services and capacity development and, second, to apply that knowledge.

To this end the UK welcomes the consultation on the IOC and the Future of the Ocean, which we will discuss further under agenda item 5.3. Since the development of the Action Plan the UK has been consistent in voicing concerns in relation to any expansion of IOC activities at this time, always supporting the prioritisation of funds to first ensure a stabilization and firm foundation to deliver IOC core functions.

In parallel the United Kingdom also welcomes the findings of the external assessment of IOC governance and management, that we will discuss further under agenda item 5.2, where we believe a key component to improve the IOCs ability to deliver meaningful support to its Member States is through the application of its Statutes, in particular in implementing IOCs functional autonomy. It was encouraging to see the recommendations of this report reflecting a parallel info paper the UK presented, on behalf of Group 1, at the Intersession Finance Advisory Group (IFAG) in April 2025.

We note in the Executive Secretary's report the progress report presented to the 221st session of the UNESCO Executive Board. However as articulated in the info paper presented at the IFAG, such reporting was highlighted as being inconsistent with IOC's Statutes. We therefore welcome agenda item 3.5 on the report to be submitted to the UNESCO General Conference.

In light of the above, which will be discussed during this Assemblies Financial Committee, UK Delegation members will support efforts to bring about necessary changes required in IOC current practices to help improve efficiencies and more strategic planning to safeguard the IOC as a relevant, impactful and financially resilient organization.

United States of America

Promoting international cooperation and coordination in ocean research and services – IOC's mission since it was established in 1960 – allows us to leverage our strengths to protect lives, support economies, and increase maritime safety.

However, with urgent needs and limited resources, we cannot do it all. We must prioritize and focus on the areas that deliver concrete results.

Along these lines, the United States has concerns with the widespread reaffirmation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) throughout the IOC Assembly Action Paper and supporting documentation.

These are the same concerns that were voiced by the United States in April at the UNESCO Executive Board meeting.

That is, that the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs advance a program of soft global governance that is inconsistent with the principles of national sovereignty.

It is, therefore, the policy of the United States that we should focus on “responsible” and “long-term” development and we will no longer reaffirm Agenda 2030 and the SDGs as a matter of course.

Additionally, the United States as a matter of policy does not support general references to climate change, but rather encourages the IOC to utilize its remit as the world's leader in ocean science to focus on specific environmental threats, such as ocean acidification and sea-level rise, and on enhancing resilience and disaster planning.

Our statements and actions at this meeting will reflect these positions. At this time, we anticipate one vote will be necessary on agenda item 4.1 the Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management Strategy on Friday.

The United States asks, if the Chair deems that it would be useful, to provide a short primer on the IOC voting procedures.

At this time, we expect to have edits to the draft decision text for agenda items: 3.4.2, 3.4.4, 4.7, and 4.4. We have submitted these edits to the Secretariat.

The United States continues to support the critical, substantive work of the IOC, and the much-needed transparency and excellence in governance that we are all aiming to achieve.

We look forward to engaging constructively in this meeting, in line with overarching U.S. principles on safety, security, and prosperity, to ensure that the IOC delivers results that advance our shared priorities such as ocean observations, tsunami early warning services, respects sovereignty, and serves all our interests.

Viet Nam

My delegation concurs with the Executive Secretary that ocean has been getting higher on the agenda of the international community. International conferences had mentioned science extensively, particularly ocean science as a basis for policy and decision making. That in fact proves the indispensable role of the IOC in ocean governance for sustainable development.

We commend the IOC for actively coordinating important initiatives, particularly the Ocean Decade, the Ocean Literacy, Capacity Development Strategy, just to name a few. Viet Nam supports an enhanced role of IOC in promoting international cooperation in marine sciences, their advancement and application in ocean governance.

Viet Nam has been active in the IOC-WESTPAC activities. Projects we are leading - the WESTPAC Project on Marine Toxins and Seafood Safety; IOC Regional Training and Research Centre on Marine Toxin and Food Safety.

Viet Nam is intensifying its efforts in addressing ocean-based challenges and developing sustainable ocean economy. Recognizing the ocean-climate-biodiversity nexus, our National Strategy on Climate Change by 2050 emphasizes the need to further invest in ocean observation and ocean forecasting, enhance marine protected areas and promote research and develop ocean-based renewable energy. Our Strategy for the development of a Sustainable Ocean Economy also identified ocean science and international cooperation in this field as one of the key solutions to sustainable development.

We, like the IOC, are also facing shortage of human and financial resources. We count on the IOC for its leadership in coordinating international and regional projects of marine research and capacity building. Therefore, we call for stronger support for the IOC, further international cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination at all levels, taking into account the needs of developing countries, particularly the vulnerable coastal States.

3.3 Reports of the IOC Sub-Commissions and Regional Committees

United States of America

The Regional Sub-Commissions are vital to the success of the IOC, and we would like to commend the regional leadership for the significant amount of work that has taken place during this past inter-sessional period.

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

China

China always respects and pays high attention to the collaboration with IOCAFRICA and its Member States in terms of marine science and technology, blue economy and capacity development. A stable part of our contribution to IOC is allocated to promote the capacity development of IOCAFRICA. We work together with IOCAFRICA to hold the Sino-Africa Forum on Marine Science and Technology every two years since 2013. Based on the outcomes and consensus of this Forum, the China-Africa Cooperation Centre for Marine Science and Blue Economy was launched during the 5th China-Africa Forum held in Egypt last year.

Meanwhile, the training courses focusing on marine science and technology and marine integrated management hosted by China extend the invitations to African ECOPS and exerts. The Chinese Government Marine Scholarship Programme gave the priority to recruit the students from African countries.

China would like to continue and deepen the cooperation with IOCAFRICA and its Member States. Meanwhile, China would like to encourage IOCAFRICA, together with other IOC Subsidiary Bodies, particularly IOCWESTPAC to play more constructive and pragmatic roles to support the implementation of IOC's responsibility in global and regional level.

Côte d'Ivoire

La côte d'Ivoire a apprécié la présence du secrétaire Exécutif à l'assemblée de IOCAFRICA ce qui met en exergue son vœux de traduire en action la PRIORITE AFRIQUE plusieurs fois proclamé dans les instances de l'la COI et l'UNESCO

La Côte d'Ivoire fait partie des pays qui ont proposé la création de la sous-commission et par voie de conséquence soutient de façon continue les actions de IOCAFRICA. La Côte d'Ivoire se félicite de ce qu'un de ses ressortissants ait conduit avec succès les activités de IOCAFRICA les 4 dernières années et en particulier les activités qui conduisent à l'atteinte des résultats qui viennent d'être présentés au cours de cette assemblée.

Dans le rapport il a été mentionné qu'il y a eu un accroissement important du budget au cours du biennium dernier. Certes il y a eu une forte augmentation du budget. Mais si on omet de faire quelques précisions, l'assemblée risque de perdre la réalité des faits. En effet, il y a lieu de préciser que le budget de IOCAFRICA 7 adopté par l'assemblée de la COI en 2023 était 1.950 000 USD. Cependant après l'arbitrage du comité des finances le budget validé a été 1.094.500, soit presque une diminution de moitié du budget originel.

Nous devons aussi préciser les collaborations fructueuses que nous avons eue au cours de ce biennium avec certains pays tel que la Chine,

Malgré ses bons résultats la Côte d'Ivoire se doit de relever certaines faiblesses :

- Le temps trop long (presqu'une année) mis pour désigner le coordonnateur de IOCAFRICA devant succéder au coordonnateur sortant a été préjudiciable à IOCAFRICA.
- L'insuffisance de ressource humaine doit aussi être signalée.
- La faiblesse de la communication : aujourd'hui aucun membre de la sous commission ne parle couramment les deux langues de travail de l'UNESCO (l'anglais et le Français)

India

India appreciates the vibrant activities and plans of IOC-AFRICA. India also looks forward for increased collaboration and partnership with IOC-INDIO for the betterment of maritime member states.

India offer to share its best practices in translational and operational Oceanography for developing better practices and products for disaster risk reduction, blue economy and Ocean policy.

Indonesia

Indonesia has long enjoyed warm and cooperative relations with the Africa region, and we view the IOC of UNESCO as an important platform to deepen these ties and advance our shared goals. Through IOC Africa, Indonesia is keen to explore collaborative opportunities, particularly in ocean observation, tsunami mitigation, and early warning systems; to ensure mutual benefit and sustainable ocean governance.

We propose joint initiatives in capacity building, training, and technology transfer, empowering African nations with enhanced capabilities to address ocean-related challenges. By pooling our expertise and resources, we can foster resilient marine ecosystems, mitigate hazards, and cultivate a culture of shared knowledge and innovation. In these times of global economic uncertainty, South-South cooperation is more crucial than ever. Indonesia is ready to share our experience in ocean forecasting and tsunami early warning systems, building on our successful collaborations with Indian Ocean nations, including African coastal states. At the same time, we are eager to learn from Africa's leadership in marine biodiversity conservation, particularly in coral reef management and marine protected areas. Together, we can forge a sustainable future for our oceans; one that balances ecological preservation with socio-economic resilience. We firmly believe that collective action is the cornerstone of sustainable development. By uniting our strengths, we can mitigate ocean-related risks, safeguard marine ecosystems, and secure a prosperous future for generations to come. Indonesia looks forward to fruitful discussions and concrete collaborations with African partners through IOC Africa, ensuring that our shared waters remain a source of life, opportunity, and harmony.

Russian Federation

We note that cooperation between Russia and African countries in the area of education and science is getting stronger every year. The number of African students graduating in Russian universities is increasing, Russian language educational centers in African countries are growing up increasing their capacity, productive international and bi-lateral science cooperation international does not stop. About 35 thousand students are currently studying at Russian universities. Many are specialized in marine sciences and related areas - meteorology, natural resources, remote sensing of the Earth from space and others. Thus we are significantly contributing to the capacity building and literacy.

Since 2024, we launched cooperation with the University of Toliara and the Institute of Fisheries and Marine Sciences of the Republic of Madagascar. This cooperation is conducted within the framework of an interregional scientific project related to the assessment of greenhouse gas fluxes and their association with ecosystems and climate. We are also conducting a joint research with Cabo Verde within the framework of the project of the Decade of Ocean Science. Within the framework of the BRICS Working Group on Oceanic and Polar Research we established cooperation targeting key aspects of ocean science for sustainable development with South Africa, Egypt and other member-states of the African continent. Russian delegation supports the project solutions presented by the Chairman of the IOCAFRICA and is looking forward to further successful development of this sub-commission.

South Africa

Despite being understaffed, in fact having only one staff member IOCAFRICA has achieved majority of its activities with regards to ocean science and ocean governance. With in-kind resources provided by the Government of Kenya, the IOCAFRICA Secretariat managed to organise a successful 8th Session of IOC Subcommission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States. This Session was preceded by the first African Scientific Conference on Advancing the Blue Economy in Africa, which was also co-organised by the IOCAfrica Secretariat. The commitment from the IOCAFRICA Member States at the end of the 8th Session and Scientific Conference was to undertake initiatives in ensuring that priorities outlined on the Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap will be implemented.

South Africa would like to commend and thank the IOCAFRICA for their support in making the Capacity Development initiatives in African region a reality through providing resources to ECOPS to attend technical and scientific workshops towards enhancing skills in the different discipline ranging from Ocean science, data and information management and ocean governance.

South Africa would like to particularly thank the Subcommission for supporting one of the experts who is an IODE AfrOBIS Node and Data Manager to attend the 12th Session of the IODE Steering Committee of OBIS in Gunsan, South Korea in March 2024. Furthermore, the Subcommission in its intention to develop capacity and enhance skills to local technical personnel to be able to manage their data and information systems, a junior Database Administrator for South Africa's Marine Information Management System to a training workshop labelled "Implementation of FAIR Principles to African Marine and Coastal Data" co-hosted by the IOC and Ocean Teacher Global Academy (OTGA) and held in Mombasa, Kenya in September 2024.

Chair, lastly, the IOCAFRICA has recently supported two ECOPs and 1 Expert, to attend a "SeaMester, floating Class" onboard South Africa's SA Agulhas II research vessel. Although one ECOP could not attend due to unforeseen logistics challenges, the aim was to encourage collaboration, enhance skills as well as enhance Ocean Literacy in the African continent. The vessel is expected to dock in Cape Town tomorrow, 27 June 2025, with well-trained students and content experts.

Spain

España agradece los informes presentados por la Embajadora Hellen Gichuhi, Presidenta de la Subcomisión IOC-Africa y quisiera destacar su compromiso con la investigación oceánica y el

desarrollo de capacidades, particularmente en el Mediterráneo y la Corriente de Canarias. Durante más de 10 años, la Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID) financió una serie de proyectos implementados por la COI destinados a reforzar las capacidades en ciencias del océano en los países de la región del Gran Ecosistema Marino de la Corriente de Canarias (el CCLME). España está muy satisfecha con el trabajo realizada por la COI en el estos proyectos que nos han permitido incrementar la colaboración y coordinación científica en la zona.

El cuarto de esta serie de proyectos, que finalizó en enero de 2024, impulsó la cooperación de investigadores para la identificación y gestión de especies alóctonas invasoras.

A partir de las decisiones tomadas en 7 talleres, se preparó una base de datos georreferenciada de ocurrencias de especies alóctonas en el CCLME. El IEO contribuyó a este esfuerzo colectivo con el 80% de los registros de ocurrencias, las cuales fueron extraídas de la revisión de aproximadamente 140 publicaciones científicas y literatura gris. Esta base de datos se integró en una herramienta que fue diseñada siguiendo las recomendaciones de los expertos, e integrada en el CCLME Eco-GIS Viewer, visor dinámico hospedado en los servidores del IEO.

A pesar de la ausencia de financiación para el mantenimiento de los productos resultantes de esta colaboración, el Instituto Español de Oceanografía (IEO-CSIC) se compromete a migrar los dos portales desarrollados a sus nuevos servidores para el uso y beneficio de los científicos y estudiantes de la región.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

We also note the revised draft resolution to strengthen the IOCAFRICA Secretariat.

Reflecting on the comments by the delegate from Cote d'Ivoire, and recognising the increase in funding, as reflected by the distinguished presenter, IOCAFRICA, specifically, was identified as a priority area to receive such extra funding following the increase of IOCs Regular Programme allocation in 2023, as reflected in IOC Resolution A-32/4.

IOCAFRICA further benefits from the increase through a prioritisation of all regional offices.

Whilst being supportive of the ambitions of IOCAFRICA, the UK is mindful of the consequences on IOCs budget in implementing the draft Resolution as submitted by Kenya.

As a result, the budget consequences of the resolution must be considered by the Financial Committee, especially in the context of the wider budgetary situation of the IOC.

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

China

China would like to join the other Member States to express our appreciation and support to the IOC WESTPAC's great progress in last years, particularly the Fifteenth Intergovernmental Session in TOKYO in this March. The occasion of the session is really important, not only because it's just before the 33rd Session of IOC Assembly, but also the key time of preparation of UNOC3.

In its effective and efficient session, China worked with other WESTPAC Member States to summary the current work, strengthen the regional coordination in and beyond IOC framework, to push forward to the cooperation of ocean science and support to the global big agenda. The experts from China engaged the discussion and made their contributions in the agenda of Ocean Decade, BBNJ, RTRCs, Marine Spatial Planning, CSK-2, etc. We recommended our representatives to the Intersessional Task Force of BBNJ and Ocean Literacy. Also, one of new established Working Group, the Working Group on Blue Carbon Ecosystem Restoration with an initial focus on mangroves was proposed and lead by Chinese expert, Meanwhile, more programs and working group proposals are being prepared by our colleagues intersessionally. Although the financial pressure is huge, we tried our best to make our donation to IOC every year, a part of which was allocated to WESTPAC.

China shares the same views with other WESTPAC Member States, the IOC WESTPAC, strongly lead by our chairpersons and coordinated by Wenxi, is not only the important regional platform of ocean science cooperation, the important implementation vehicle of IOC mission in the rim of Pacific Ocean, but also the robust regime of pushing forward to the global ocean related agendas. Obviously, we would like to express our will to work with Member States in WESTPAC continuously. We appreciate the important views given by Executive Secretary yesterday to emphasize the key roles of regional Subsidiary Body, thus we also call on IOC and the Secretariat to enhance the financial and human resources support to WESTPAC regional office.

Indonesia

Under their guidance, WESTPAC has become an important platform for promoting the conservation and sustainable use of our shared ocean resources, in alignment with SDG 14 and the UN Ocean Decade objectives.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the outgoing leadership team: Chair Kentaro Ando from Japan, Vice-Chairs Aileen Tan Shau Hwai from Malaysia, and our own Faldi Syamsudin from Indonesia, for their tireless dedication. Their efforts have strengthened regional collaboration, including through Indonesia's active participation in initiatives such as the WESTPAC Ocean Decade Collaborative Center on Coral Reef Restoration and the Marine Biodiversity Observation Network.

We warmly congratulate the newly elected officers: Chairperson Aileen Tan Shau Hwai from Malaysia and Vice-Chairs Vyacheslav Lobanov from the Russian Federation, Sung Hyun Nam from the Republic of Korea, and Aletta Yñiguez from the Philippines.

Indonesia looks forward to deepening partnerships under their leadership, particularly in areas such as marine pollution mitigation, blue economy development, and capacity-building for small island developing states (SIDS); priorities that resonate with our national Ocean Policy 2021–2025.

Indonesia highly values WESTPAC's dual role as both the IOC's regional arm and the Ocean Decade Coordination Office (DCO) for the Western Pacific. Your work in harmonizing UN agency efforts; exemplified by the Regional Working Group on Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) and the Joint Cruise Program, has been critical.

However, we share concerns about the Office's limited capacity relative to its expanding mandate. Without adequate resources, UNESCO/IOC risks ceding its leadership in ocean science coordination, particularly as the UN Ocean Decade enters its implementation phase.

Despite challenge, funding constraints, and rising demands; Indonesia remains committed to supporting WESTPAC. As a regional hub for maritime cooperation, we stand ready to share expertise in mangrove restoration and marine spatial planning, and continue partnership with WESTPAC.

Indonesia takes pride in WESTPAC's achievements and reaffirms our partnership to preserve the Western Pacific's marine environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

Malaysia

We especially appreciate WESTPAC's continued commitment to capacity building through the Regional Training and Research Centres (RTRCs), which have greatly benefited young researchers, including from Malaysia.

However, Malaysia is concern with the reduction in funding support impacting the staffing. This will surely impact the execution of activities as well as sustaining engagement and communication with member states, mostly from the developing countries.

Malaysia also wishes to express sincere gratitude to fellow Member States for their support in the election of the Chairperson from Malaysia at the 15th Session of the Sub-Commission.

Republic of Korea

Korea has supported IOC/WESTPAC activities through existing and new programs, projects, working groups, WESTPAC-led UN Decade Actions, and regional GOOS alliances, all aimed at advancing ocean science and fostering international cooperation to address national and international challenges. We highly recognize the indispensable role of the WESTPAC Office, which also serves as the Decade Coordination Office. We also express deep concern at the critically limited human resources and budget available to manage WESTPAC's increasing activities.

In particular, Korea has been actively contributing to the 2nd Cooperative Study of Kuroshio and Adjacent Regions (CSK-2), recognizing the vital importance of long-term monitoring of the Kuroshio for enhancing regional climate prediction, sustainable fisheries, and marine ecosystem conservation. With strong backing from the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, Korean researchers from leading institutions—including KIOST, Seoul National University, Pusan National University, and Inha University—are collaborating closely with Japanese scientists on long-term observations in the East China Sea. This joint effort enhances scientific understanding of how Kuroshio variability impacts the marine environment around the Korean Peninsula. The Korean government allocates approximately 1.2 million dollars annually to CSK-2-related research, helping to ensure rapid and informed responses to ocean-related disasters and ecological crises. Korea firmly believes that CSK-2 will deliver critical scientific insights at both regional and global levels, and remains committed to its continued success.

Korea is more than willing to continuously provide professional support and advice for future WESTPAC activities, particularly in these areas:

- 1) Leveraging the power of Artificial Intelligence and standardized data networks for ocean research and sustainability.
- 2) Advancing marine spatial planning for sustainable use.
- 3) Supporting science-based governance.
- 4) Actively engaging relevant stakeholders in the development and implementation of tangible solutions in the region.

Russian Federation

We highly appreciate the proactive and successful actions undertaken by WESTPAC to achieve the main goals of the IOC. We would especially like to note the excellent work of WESTPAC for implementing all the Commission's flagship programs in the region, developing cooperation between regional subcommissions. It is particularly important that a lot of work is being done to support young researchers and develop regional training centers (RTCs).

We underline the active participation of the Russian delegation in all activities specified by the agenda of the Fifteenth Intergovernmental Session (WESTPAC-XV) from 11 to 13 March 2025. By courtesy of Russian initiative a new international multilateral project “Methane Fluxes and Their Impacts on Climate and Ecosystem in the Indo-Pacific Region (2025–2029)” has been established. This project already includes 10 IOC Member States. The design of the project has become a natural evolution of the previous WESTPAC Working Group on the Integrated Study on Gas Hydrates and Methane Fluxes in the Indo-Pacific Region. We invite Member States to participate in this project, that can become a remarkable example of successful cooperation between regional subcommissions. We have already conducted the first marine expedition under this project in the Japan, East China and South China Seas and we are planning a second international expedition at the end of this year, to be funded by Russian side. We welcome new leadership of WESTPAC and confirm our intention to actively participate in the upcoming events of the subcommission. We also thank Philippines for hosting the next WESTPAC conference and association session of the subcommission. We emphasize the need for further strengthening the human and financial resources of WESTPAC, as these contributions are critical for the activities of the Commission.

Thailand

We commend WESTPAC's continued leadership in promoting ocean science and regional cooperation. In particular, we appreciate its efforts to advance the science-policy interface, accelerate marine spatial planning, and support Member States in implementing the UN Ocean Decade. We also welcome its alignment with global frameworks such as the BBNJ Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The past intersessional period has seen notable progress—from the development of marine spatial planning frameworks to initiatives on biodiversity, plastic pollution, and blue carbon restoration. Thailand was honored to host the 2nd UN Ocean Decade Regional Conference and the 11th WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference in Bangkok in 2024, which brought together over 1,200 participants from 40 countries and generated renewed momentum for regional action.

We also recognize the expansion of WESTPAC-led Decade Actions and the continued development of Regional Training and Research Centers, which are vital for strengthening regional capacity, especially for developing countries. We appreciate WESTPAC's promotion of innovative tools such as eDNA and ocean forecasting, and its attention to emerging themes like blue carbon and ecosystem restoration.

At the same time, we acknowledge the increasing responsibilities entrusted to the WESTPAC Office and recognize the challenges posed by its limited human resources. To ensure the continued effectiveness and responsiveness of the Office, we kindly encourage all Member States and partners to consider enhancing their technical and financial support in a spirit of shared responsibility and regional solidarity.

Last but not least, we wish to express our sincere appreciation to Professor Kentaro Ando for his dedicated and thoughtful leadership as Chair of WESTPAC. We also extend our warm congratulations and a heartfelt welcome to Professor Aileen Tan Shau Hwai on her appointment as the new Chair. We look forward to working closely under her guidance in the years ahead.

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

Brazil

We join the chair in expressing our gratitude to Dr. John Cortinas from the United States for his dedicated service to the Board and for his lifelong career dedicated to our common ocean. His contributions to Ocean science and technology have had impact at the local, regional and global levels, saving lives, and making sure science is a welcoming space for the talent it needs to thrive.

We also take this opportunity to welcome Dr. Rahanna Juman from Trinidad and Tobago as a newly elected Vice-Chair. The value of her expertise for IOCARIBE is already showing in this time of need.

We were honoured to facilitate the hosting of the 18th Session of IOCARIBE at the UNESCO Offices in Brasilia. The change in previous arrangements for the hosting, required group thinking and open collaboration for finding a solution to having a meeting that proved extremely helpful in times of shifting conditions. It is a model for us moving forward. We thank the support of the UNESCO Brasilia office which did not hesitate to answer our call for having the meeting here.

We note with satisfaction the continued role of IOCARIBE in Regional Ocean Observations, Forecasting & Data Systems and Advance Sustainable Ocean Management & Integrated Governance, as well as the recent focus on Blue Carbon, Ocean Literacy and the Ocean Decade.

Among the direct results of the meeting, Brazil will work with IOCARIBE to explore opportunities for greater synergies and collaboration of its observation initiatives with IOCARIBE-GOOS.

Colombia

Así mismo, agradecer el informe presentado por la Presidencia de IOCARIBE y desea expresar su reconocimiento a los esfuerzos colectivos y el compromiso que los Estados miembro de la Subcomisión han demostrado en el avance de las ciencias oceánicas en nuestra región y en otras áreas clave, buscando que las iniciativas no sean aisladas. En la reunión No. 18 de la Subcomisión aprobamos decisiones para avanzar en la gestión sostenible del océano, alineándonos con las nuevas prioridades. Sin embargo, para fortalecer nuestros programas y proyectos, es fundamental que estas discusiones partan de una planificación amplia, abierta y oportuna para definir claramente los objetivos y las acciones a adelantar.

Estamos conscientes de que en el ámbito de IOCARIBE se requieren más y mayores esfuerzos para apoyar a los Estados miembro para abordar sus desafíos de desarrollo oceánico.

Colombia desea visibilizar el desarrollo del proyecto ADAPT adelantado a través del Sistema de Buenas Prácticas del Océano - OBPS (IODE/GOOS) como muestra de colaboración exitosa en torno a las necesidades de la región. De la misma forma, deseo agradecer la consideración de la ciudad de Cartagena como pilot site para la implementación de la iniciativa Coast Predict en el Caribe, como un marco de colaboración para mejorar la resiliencia costera, desarrollar soluciones científicas y tecnológicas innovadoras y facilitar estrategias de gestión multirriesgo para el océano. Colombia invita a los estados miembros a apoyar esta iniciativa.

Por último, en reconocimiento a la reducción presupuestaria que afecta sensiblemente a la COI y consecuentemente a sus Subcomisiones, Colombia reitera la invitación a los Estados miembro de IOCARIBE a considerar el apoyo con personal, como lo ha gestionado nuestro Gobierno a través del apoyo con dos oceanógrafos de la Armada Nacional, en la sede de la subcomisión, con el propósito de fortalecer su funcionamiento y mejorar la continuidad y el impacto de sus labores.

Kingdom of the Netherlands

We commend IOCARIBE's strong contributions to advancing ocean science, regional cooperation, and the implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science in the Tropical Americas and Caribbean region.

We particularly welcome the progress made in establishing the TAC Decade Coordination Office, the development of the TAC Roadmap, and the uptake of endorsed Decade Actions. The inclusive design of regional mechanisms, such as the Regional Decade Committee, reflects a strong commitment to the needs of Small Island Developing States.

As a Kingdom with both European and Caribbean parts, we value the integrative approach of IOCARIBE. We are pleased to highlight:

- The 2024 establishment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands National Decade Committee, bringing together all parts of the Kingdom for coordinated Decade action.
- The Chairmanship of IOCARIBE by Aruba, reinforcing our commitment to regional leadership.
- Joint efforts such as the Climate Atlas, developed with Dutch and island partners.
- Our continued support for initiatives like the Blue Schools Programme, including the appointment of a national coordinator in Aruba.

We reaffirm our strong support for IOCARIBE and urge the international community to sustain the Decade Coordination Office. We are also exploring the possibility of hosting the next IOCARIBE 2026 meeting in Aruba or Curaçao. Curaçao intends to host the next ICG-Tsunami meeting in 2026.

Panama

De igual manera, manifestamos nuestro agradecimiento a Brasil por su colaboración en la acogida la Decimoctava Reunión de la Subcomisión de la COI para el Caribe y Regiones Adyacentes y a Colombia por acoger la Secretaría de COI-CARIBE en Cartagena.

Como se refleja en este informe, el rol de la secretaria ha sido fundamental para promover la cooperación internacional en la investigación, los servicios y el desarrollo de capacidades oceánicas en nuestra región.

Panamá aplaude el fortalecimiento de la gobernanza regional de los océanos y la coordinación científica, a través de la expansión de la red COI-CARIBE-ANCA sobre Floraciones de Algas Nocivas. Así mismo, acogemos el impulso de la cultura oceánica mediante la creación del Equipo de Trabajo de Cultura Oceánica de COI-CARIBE y el despliegue de la Red COI-CARIBE de escuelas azules en toda la región.

Consideramos imperativo que abordemos con determinación los desafíos y oportunidades que se presentan en nuestra región, incluyendo el avance de la ciencia y la exploración de los fondos marinos, y el creciente llamado a la protección de nuestros océanos.

En este sentido, en septiembre de 2023, Panamá se convirtió en el primer país de América Latina y el Caribe, en adherirse a la Convención del agua, y en 2024 dio un paso trascendental al ratificar el Acuerdo en el Marco de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Derecho del Mar Relativo a la Conservación y el Uso Sostenible de la Diversidad Biológica Marina de las Zonas Situadas Fuera de la Jurisdicción Nacional.

También destacamos, la reciente ratificación del Acuerdo sobre Subvenciones a la Pesca de la Organización Mundial del Comercio, (Marrakech, 1994) uniéndose al esfuerzo global para enfrentar y eliminar la sobrepesca, la pesca ilegal y la pesca no declarada y no reglamentada.

Asimismo, Panamá propuso en la pasada Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Océanos (UNOC3), que se llevó a cabo en Niza, la creación de la primera reserva marina transnacional de alta mar, y una red latinoamericana que incluya a los jóvenes en la gobernanza y educación sobre los océanos.

Con estas acciones concretas, Panamá como líder azul, refirma su compromiso con la región de América Latina y el Caribe, y se suma a todos los esfuerzos globales para la conservación y uso sostenible de la biodiversidad marina.

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

India

India would like to thank IOC for its continuous support to IOCINDIO and congratulates the member states of IOCINDIO for successfully conducting the first session of IOCINDIO in conjunction with a Workshop on Strengthening Ocean Sustainability at UAE. India also congratulates the newly elected Chair Dr. Saif AIGHais and Vice-Chairs Dr. Maryam Ghaemi and Dr. Balakrishnan Nair TM of IOCINDIO and look forward to work together to plan and implement workplans in the region.

India expresses its gratitude to Rear Admiral Md Khurshed Alam, Bangladesh, Dr. M.A. Atamanand, India and Mr. Justin Ahanhanzo retiree IOC-UNESCO program specialist for their pivotal role towards the formation of sub-commission.

Mr. Chair, India supported the capacity building activities of IOCINDIO and played significant role in developing the coastal vulnerability methodologies and approaches through focussed training activities organised at ITCOOcean at INCOIS, India. India supported the workplan of IOCINDIO to organize a World Conference on Coastal Vulnerability and offered its support to be part of this and co-organize this with DCC-IOR and with Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) of India that was

not planned due to the uncertainties in transitional phase of IOCINDIO from Regional Committee to Sub-Commission. India would like to reiterate its support towards this activity.

Mr. Chair, India appreciates the discussions at IOCINDIO first session towards synergizing its activities through integration with other regional programmes, through appropriate collaborative mechanisms with IOC-GOOS through Indian Ocean GOOS; International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography (ITCOOcean) of UNESCO; IIOE-2, Indian Ocean Regional Panel, UN Ocean Decade Actions and programs, IOAFRICA, ICG/IOTWMS, etc. With the formulation of four sessional groups working towards development of workplans for next biennium 2026-2027, it is expected to bring out concrete plans towards development of the capacity in the region as well as improving the observations from the region.

Mr. Chair, it is a pertinent to note that the success is linked to the budget allocated to IOCINDIO and Secretariat strength and we look forward for the continuous support of IOC through dedicated regular budget towards the activities of IOCINDIO, as the case with other regional sub-commissions.

In Conclusion, Mr. Chair, India happy to extend its whole hearted support to the IOCINDIO activities in the region.

Indonesia

Indonesia is committed to being an active and collaborative member of IOC INDIO. We are eager to strengthen partnerships in oceanography with fellow Member States, and are pleased to offer our support in hosting the Second IOC INDIO Meeting and/or related activities in 2026. In addition, Indonesia expresses strong interest in hosting the Indian Ocean Decade Regional Conference in the same year — an initiative that would represent a significant milestone in our shared pursuit of sustainable ocean governance. The IOC INDIO is uniquely positioned with its expertise, institutional capacity, and marine infrastructure. We must harness these strengths to transform the Indian Ocean into a well-observed, predictable, safe, and sustainably managed ocean; aligned with the principles of the Blue Economy. To this end, we call for strategic collaboration among the training centers in this region hosted by India, Indonesia and Iran.

In this spirit, Indonesia suggests that IOC INDIO develop a joint proposal for capacity-building initiatives in the Indian Ocean; particularly for developing countries, small island developing states (SIDS), and least developed countries (LDCs). Through cooperation and synergy, we can realize our shared vision of a sustainable and prosperous Indian Ocean for all.

Moving forward, we support the initiative to conduct joint ocean observation cruise to utilize data collected for mutual benefits. Strengthening ocean observation networks and marine disaster mitigation remains a priority, and we view Indian Ocean nations as indispensable partners in this endeavor. Indonesia looks forward to deepening collaboration with IOC INDIO member states to advance our common goals in ocean science, management, and resilience.

Kuwait

Kuwait's Commitment to Ocean Sustainability: A Regional Hub for Marine Science and Collaboration

I would like to thank President and IOC executive secretary for their efforts towards the conservation and sustainability of oceans

Over the past three decades, Kuwait has sustained:

- Characterization of hydrographic variability, biogeochemical fluxes, and ecosystem trends
- Development of science-based marine management approaches
- Evaluation of environmental conditions in Kuwait's first Marine Protected Area

Our growing infrastructure includes:

- The R/V AlMostakshif, a modern, multidisciplinary 55 m oceanographic research vessel
- Advanced platforms supporting physical, chemical, and biological oceanography

KISR welcomes joint programs and partnerships with regional and international institutions, particularly in:

- Climate change and carbon cycle research
- Marine pollution assessment
- Plankton dynamics and (HABs)
- Biodiversity and habitat mapping
- Fishery stock assessment

Kuwait strongly supports the mission of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO). IOCINDIO's regional platform offers:

- Facilitation of regional coordination
- Promotion of data sharing and interoperability
- Strengthening of capacity building and training programs
- Advancing collective progress toward SDG-14 (Life Below Water)

Kuwait invites IOCINDIO and IOC-UNESCO member states to:

- Support regional scientific collaboration and joint cruises in the Persian /Arabian Gulf and Indian Ocean marginal seas
- Promote the exchange of marine data, best practices, and training opportunities
- Enhance the visibility of national contributions through IOC-endorsed research programs

Oman

The Sultanate of Oman welcomes the creation of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO) and fully supports its mission and workplan. We congratulate IOCINDIO on successfully holding its first session and thank the Government of the United Arab Emirates for hosting this important meeting.

We appreciate IOCINDIO's efforts to strengthen regional cooperation in ocean science, data sharing, and capacity building across the Central Indian Ocean.

Oman values the Sub-Commission's ambitious and well-structured workplan, especially its alignment with the goals of the UN Ocean Decade and IOC's Medium-Term Strategy. Its focus on capacity development, operational oceanography, and regional integration comes at the right time.

We believe that IOCINDIO represents a strong and Comprehensive platform to address regional ocean challenges, and Oman looks forward to active participation in its initiatives, including hosting a workshop or training course on ocean acidification in the Indian Ocean region.

Russian Federation

Russian Federation welcomes the establishment of the IOCINDIO subcommission and extends congratulations on the commencement of its work and thanks for the informative report. Russia has a long history of cooperation with the countries in this region on the study of the Indian Ocean and water resources, including also within the framework of the second International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE-2) under the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO.

In May of this year, the Russian delegation took an active part in the first session of the IOCINDIO. Within the remit of the working group "Ocean science, biodiversity, pollution, assessments and management", we proposed two new topics for multilateral research: "Macro and micro litter - harm to the ecosystems of the Central Indian Ocean» " and "Numerical modeling of ocean circulation of the Central Indian Ocean (including Persian Gulf)".

We thank the IOCINDIO for their support. In turn, we will participate in other new projects of the subcommission which reflect the priorities of international initiatives as part of the UN Ocean Decade.

We are ready to further develop cooperation with the IOCINDIO and be involved in program activities, including cooperation with WESTPAC. We wish the subcommission successful development and success.

South Africa

South Africa would like to commend the comprehensive report presented by the Vice Chair of IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO). South Africa joins other delegates in congratulating IOCINDIO for being a fully-fledged Subcommission within the IOC structure and for holding its first successful Session. This is indeed a remarkable milestone and we hope its establishment will assist in achieving its future plans and implementing the priority areas of the region as identified by the Member States of the IOCINDIO. South Africa also commends Mr Justin Ahanhanzo in doing the interim work to make the subcommittee into being converted into a full Subcommission.

3.4.1 Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards

Argentina

Argentina desea agradecer al Grupo Intergubernamental de Coordinación del Sistema de Alerta contra los Tsunamis y Atenuación de sus Efectos en el Pacífico por la invitación a participar como Estado observador durante su Trigésima Primera Reunión, celebrada en el mes de abril de este año. En especial, agradecer al Secretario Técnico del mencionado grupo, señor Ocal Necmioglu, por las gestiones y coordinaciones realizadas para la participación de nuestro país.

En concordancia con el informe de la referida reunión del PTWS, la República Argentina desea destacar que, como responsable del área de búsqueda y salvamento marítimo del océano Atlántico Sudoccidental y coordinador del NAVAREA VI para la seguridad náutica, participó de manera activa en el ejercicio PacWave24 y, en el futuro, desea poder mantener estas acciones con la presencia de sus representantes técnicos.

Con relación a lo establecido en el punto 7 del informe de la última reunión del PTWS, actualmente puesto a consideración de esta Asamblea, la República Argentina desea manifestar su especial interés en participar activamente en todas las instancias organizativas del taller científico que eventualmente se lleve a cabo para evaluar el potencial riesgo tsunamigénico del Arco de Scotia y su posible impacto en el Área de Cobertura del PTWS.

Este interés se fundamenta en que dicha región se encuentra comprendida dentro de las zonas de responsabilidad de la República Argentina en el marco del sistema SAR y de la NAVAREA VI. Asimismo, nuestro país cuenta con investigadores y capacidades técnicas que podrían aportar significativamente al desarrollo de estudios en la región.

Asimismo, la República Argentina considera pertinente que se extienda una invitación al Grupo Intergubernamental de Coordinación para el Sistema de Alerta contra los Tsunamis y otras Amenazas Costeras en el Caribe y Regiones Adyacentes, dado que el área en cuestión también se encuentra dentro de su ámbito de monitoreo, de acuerdo a lo establecido en el Tsunami Watch Operations, Global Service Definition Document 130, punto 6.1.

En consecuencia, la República Argentina desearía que en la decisión que se adopte para este punto de agenda se incluya una mención específica a ello. En este sentido, esta Delegación hizo llegar oportunamente a la Secretaría el proyecto de texto a ser incluido en la decisión.

Por último, la República Argentina desea igualmente expresar que comparte la preocupación por los riesgos que los eventos tsunamigénicos representan tanto para las poblaciones costeras como para las embarcaciones que operan en las regiones potencialmente afectadas. En este marco, destaca la importancia de contar con información temprana y confiable que permita advertir a los navegantes con la mayor antelación posible sobre la eventual ocurrencia de un tsunami, así como asegurar la oportuna difusión de dicha información en las áreas de interés.

El compromiso y la activa participación de la República Argentina en esta materia se evidencian en la vigilancia y el análisis constante que lleva adelante el Servicio de Hidrografía Naval, tal como ocurrió durante el evento sísmico registrado el pasado 2 de mayo en el Pasaje Drake, con una magnitud de 7,5 en la escala de Richter, el cual, si bien no generó un tsunami, fue monitoreado estrechamente desde el primer momento.

Chile

Chile, miembro permanente del TOWS, reafirma su compromiso con la seguridad de las comunidades costeras frente a los riesgos oceánicos. Durante años, hemos avanzado en la investigación, desarrollo e implementación de estrategias que optimizan la detección, el monitoreo y la respuesta ante eventos críticos. Además, promovemos la educación y la concientización de nuestras comunidades, dotándolas de las herramientas esenciales para el autocuidado y la preparación ante emergencias, en coordinación con instituciones locales e internacionales.

Como muestra de lo anterior, Chile albergó el Programa Internacional de Entrenamiento en Tsunamis (ITP) en 2024, reuniendo a representantes de 18 países para evaluar capacidades y capacitarse en tecnología y concientización contra tsunamis. La exitosa experiencia ha llevado a confirmar su realización nuevamente en 2026, evidenciando el excelente trabajo del sistema chileno en detección, respuesta, pronóstico y preparación. Paralelamente, anunciamos que se encuentra en etapa de evaluación la instalación de un cable submarino antártico en el cual se busca que este cuente con tecnología SMART, es decir, que integre sensores avanzados objeto optimizar la alerta temprana y la capacidad operativa frente a los fenómenos oceánicos.

China

In the recent decades, China attaches great importance to and engages into the relevant work of the Warning & Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards in IOC, particularly the process of PTWS. Since its full operation in 2019, the South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (SCSTAC) has provided timely and stable tsunami services with ongoing efforts to continuously enhance its service capabilities. As mentioned by Carlos, In March 2023, the Backup Center, operated by the Hong Kong Observatory, entered hot standby operational status, enabling seamless takeover of tsunami warning services at any time. Furthermore, the scientists from SCSTAC Member States, through International Staff Programme, were invited to work with their Chinese colleagues to operate the SCSTAC in Beijing in the past several years. China would like to reiterate our commitment to make more contribution to regional capacity development and human resources exchange through SCSTAC.

The 31st Session of ICG/PTWS was hosted by China in Beijing in this April, it is really our great honor to make our special contribution to the 60 anniversary of PTWS. During the session, Dr. Wang Dakui from the National Marine Environmental Forecasting Center of China was elected as the Chair of PTWS. China will provide full support to Dr to fulfill his responsibilities as the chair, and will work with all Member States to continuously improve work of the PTWS and collaboratively enhance the capacity to respond to tsunami risks.

China will allocate more resources to advance the implementation of the "UN Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme," the "Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme," and relevant initiatives. A training workshop related to the indicators in the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme is planned for the second half of 2025, aiming to facilitate greater participation and execution of the programme by the Member States of ICG/PTWS. More initiatives are being prepared by China, working with colleagues from other Member States.

Furthermore, China sent our experts to attend the 18th Session of TOWS-WG and the Tsunami Warning Operational Task Team (TT-TWO) meeting in Paris in this February. We acknowledge the releases of two Technical Series—No. 183 (Monitoring and Warning for Tsunamis Generated by Volcanoes) and No. 200 (Meteotsunamis: definition, detection and alerting services investigation), which offer the workable guidance for enhancing non-seismic tsunami warning operations. China commends the launch of the IOC Tsunami Awareness and Tsunami Ready Online Training by OTGA. We also express appreciation to the TT-TWO for including tsunamis generated by submarine and subaerial landslides into its work programme.

France

La France remercie les présidents des groupes intergouvernementaux de coordination des zones Nord-Atlantique-Méditerranée, Pacifique, océan Indien et Caraïbes ainsi que leurs régions

adjacentes, pour leurs rapports très complets, ainsi que pour les travaux des différents groupes de travail des GIC et apprécie le support du secrétariat de la Commission Océanographique Intergouvernementale de l'Unesco dans chacun des GIC.

La France a un centre d'alerte opérationnel pour l'alerte montante depuis 2012 pour l'Hexagone (le Cenalt), et participe aux efforts communs du GIC NEAM. La session XIX du GIC NEAM a également rappelé les engagements des collectivités pour obtenir les reconnaissances Tsunami Ready, comme ce fut le cas pour Cannes (Alpes-Maritimes) en 2024. La participation de la France (université de Montpellier) à la phase 2 du projet Coastwave coordonné par la COI est une opportunité qui devrait permettre d'accentuer ces efforts, et proposer d'autres candidatures.

La France remercie le GIC CARIBE-EWS pour son engagement dans la prise en compte des tsunamis non sismiques et les travaux en cours sur la mise en place de procédures opérationnelles pour les tsunamis volcaniques. La France apprécie l'engagement renouvelé lors du GIC CARIBE-EWS 2025 du Service National Météorologique des Etats-Unis de continuer la fourniture de services aux tsunamis à travers son Centre d'Alerte au Tsunami du Pacifique (PTWC) et son Centre International d'Information sur les Tsunamis (ITIC) pour l'ensemble des Etats Membres de la Caraïbe. La France remercie le GIC CARIBE-EWS de poursuivre ses efforts de préparation de l'ensemble des communautés à travers le travail de la Task Team Tsunami Ready et rappelle la reconnaissance Tsunami Ready de la commune de Deshayes (Guadeloupe) en 2023. D'autres communes des Antilles françaises se préparent à candidater. La France salue le travail constant du bureau caribéen de l'ITIC (ITIC-CAR), du PTWC et de la Task Team en charge de la préparation et l'organisation de l'exercice annuel CARIBE WAVE. Cet exercice est largement suivi dans les Antilles françaises et est devenu un outil primordial dans la préparation des communautés au risque tsunami.

La France remercie le GIC Pacifique d'avoir salué l'investissement national depuis 60 ans pour les activités tsunami dans la région, la France gérant un centre d'alerte en Polynésie française depuis 1965 (Centre Polynésien de Prévention des Tsunamis). La France remercie également l'ancien président Yuji Nishimae (Japon) pour ses actions pour le groupe et salue la nomination du nouveau président Dakui Wang (Chine). Pour les territoires français, la situation en Nouvelle-Calédonie est à considérer pour pouvoir poursuivre les efforts de préparation à la gestion de l'alerte tsunami. C'est précisément dans cette région que l'un des premiers SMART câbles va être déployé, le câble TAM TAM entre Vanuatu et la Nouvelle-Calédonie, coordonné par la France (Ifremer, Pacific Peering et ASN). Ce câble offre une perspective scientifique qui intéressera toutes les communautés des sciences océaniques, et sera essentiel pour les centres d'alerte tsunami en ajoutant de nouveaux points de mesures en temps réel.

La France souligne les travaux du groupe de travail mondial TOWS qui permet d'harmoniser les pratiques entre tous les bassins concernés par le risque tsunami, la France ayant des territoires dans les quatre bassins.

India

India would like to compliment and congratulate the Chairs of the ICGs of the IOTWMS, CARIBE-EWS, NEAMTWS, PTWS and the TOWS WG for providing reports of the excellent progress made during the intersessional period on the regional tsunami warning and mitigation systems spearheaded by the IOC.

India is an integral part of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Indian Ocean Tsunami warning and Mitigation System (ICG/IOTWMS) and continues to provide services to the region as one of the Tsunami Service Provider (TSP), together with Australia and Indonesia. During the inter-sessional period, India sustained its observational networks (Seismic, Tsunameter, Tide Gauges and GNSS networks), participated in 4 COMMS Tests, IOWave Exercises, conducted World Tsunami Awareness Day with various outreach activities and national tsunami mock exercise, conducted a Conclave on 20 years commemoration of 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. To witness the commemoration conclave and TR villages, India hosted the visit of UNESCO Press Team at INCOIS as well as to the Tsunami Ready Villages in Odisha. India's 3 Proposals (i) UK-India PCTWIN,(ii) INCOIS Submarine Cabled Multi-Parameter

Observatory (ISCO) and (iii) Tsunami Ready Odisha - Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme Implementation in Odisha were endorsed under ODTP programme. India actively engaged IOTWMS and in the PCTWIN meetings at Kochi. Indian scientists are making significant contributions in various capacities to the activities of ICG-IOTWMS including the contributions of Dr. Tummala Srinivasa Kumar from India as Head, ICG-IOTWMS Secretariat, Mr. E. Pattabhi Rama Rao as Chair of ICG-IOTWMS and others in its Working Groups and Task Teams.

India successfully hosted a training Workshop on Tsunami Evacuation Maps, Plans, and Procedures (TEMPP) and the UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP) for the Indian Ocean Member States” at ITCOOcean. India continued its efforts towards contributing to the ambitious goal of IOC to cover all at risk communities by 2030 through Tsunami Ready programme and 26 villages in the coastal state of Odisha, India have been recognized by IOC as Tsunami Ready Villages and in the next biennium it is planned to cover another 17 villages from 06 coastal states of India.

Mr. Chair, India supports the key decisions taken by ICG/IOTWMS, appreciates the support extended by IOTIC, IOTWMS Secretariat in coordinating key activities and TSPs for extending the services and requests IOC for prioritizing the recruitments to several critical posts dealing with Ocean Observations, ocean disasters, etc.

Mr. Chair, India is happy to inform that India is hosting the International Tsunami Symposium (ITS)-2025 at INCOIS, Hyderabad, India along with the First Conference of the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme (ODTP) with theme on “Building Resilient Coasts: Accelerating Actions to ODTP Challenge 6”. India is also offered to host the next Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Workshop and intersessional meetings in 2026 at INCOIS, Hyderabad.

Indonesia

Indonesia deeply commends the comprehensive progress of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/IOTWMS). We extend heartfelt appreciation to the outgoing leadership—Prof. Dwikorita Karnawati, Dr. Yuelong Miao, and Dr. Pattabi Rama Rao—whose tenure delivered significant results, including a regional capacity assessment framework adopted by the Pacific, and the recognition of 48 Tsunami Ready communities, half of the global total. Their efforts also advanced observation systems, private sector engagement, and strategic collaboration with UN ESCAP. We warmly welcome the new leadership of Dr. Pattabi Rama Rao, Dr. Harkunti Rahayu, and Dr. Yuelong Miao, fully supporting their vision for tsunami preparedness.

Our partnership with UNESCO-IOC is highly valued, particularly through hosting the Indian Ocean Tsunami Information Center (IOTIC) in Jakarta since 2017. Under Mr. Ardito Kodijat's leadership, IOTIC-BMKG has made crucial contributions to regional tsunami preparedness. As we approach this leadership transition, Indonesia proposes a strategic institutional strengthening by formally integrating IOTIC as a dedicated division within BMKG, with Indonesia assuming the leadership role. This model guarantees long-term funding, enhances institutional support and visibility, and strengthens regional leadership in tsunami information sharing.

We also appreciate the report from the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/PTWS). Given Indonesia's vulnerability to tsunamis, especially in Eastern Indonesia and the South China Sea, we propose ICG/PTWS collaborate with us to build tsunami preparedness capacity in coastal Papua to Papua New Guinea, and the South China Sea region.

Lastly, we are grateful to IOC UNESCO for entrusting Indonesia to host the 2nd Global Tsunami Symposium, hoping the Banda Aceh Statement will help achieve 100% Tsunami Ready Communities worldwide. We look forward to deepening our collaboration with ICG/IOTWMS, ICG/PTWS and UNESCO-IOC to strengthen the Indian Ocean's multi-hazard early warning capabilities.

Japan

First of all, Japan sincerely thanks the representatives of the four ICGs and TOWS-WG, for their comprehensive and informative presentations on activities and achievements regarding tsunami disaster risk reduction.

Firstly, Japan appreciates the PTWS Tsunami Ready Equivalency Guidance, provisionally approved at its 31st session, to further proceed Tsunami Preparedness Recognition Program. We hope the guidance will enable countries and communities with rich experience of tsunami preparedness, to be evaluated in an efficient manner, thereby advancing tsunami preparedness in the region.

Secondly, we greatly value the ESCAP-supported tsunami preparedness capacity assessment in the Pacific. It is crucial that the results of this survey will be effectively utilized to strengthen tsunami preparedness. Japan will provide strong support for this effort through the Northwest Pacific Tsunami Advisory Centre, as well as capacity-building through Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Thirdly, Japan would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center, PTWC, for preparing to provide tsunami advisories to NAVAREA coordinators in the Pacific. We respectfully request that the IOC continues its close coordination with the IHO and IMO to ensure the smooth initiation of the operation.

As for the reports by TOWS-Working Group, Japan expresses its profound appreciation for the publication of the technical document on Meteotsunamis, a collaborative effort between the IOC and WMO. We also support its findings, including the value of collaboration between National Meteorological and Hydrological Services and Tsunami authorities.

Japan would like to emphasize the importance of collaboration between volcano and tsunami authorities, to enhance monitoring and predicting capacities of tsunamis generated by volcanic eruption. In this context, we would like to express our gratitude to the IOC for organizing the webinar in this April that facilitated collaboration among those organizations and various experts.

Last but not least, Japan believes the great success of the first Ocean Decade Tsunami Program conference, to be held this November in India. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to India for hosting the event.

Malaysia

Malaysia is actively strengthening its early warning systems to address ocean hazards, especially tsunamis and sea-level rise.

Our National Tsunami Early Warning System (MNTEWS), managed by Malaysian Meteorological Department (MetMalaysia), integrates seismic sensors, tide gauges, and coastal surveillance cameras. It provides rapid alerts and is supported by regular public drills and awareness campaigns.

The National Water Research Institute (NAHRIM) projects a rise of 0.25 to 0.52 meters by 2100 in Peninsular Malaysia. Monitoring is led by the Department of Survey and Mapping Malaysia (DSMM) through tide gauges and satellite altimetry.

Malaysia has improved coordination across agencies through National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) and aligned its efforts with the National Policy on Climate Change 2.0, which emphasizes preparedness and risk reduction.

To support innovation, the government is working with universities to fund research on ocean monitoring, modelling, and local forecasting. Initiatives such as the UTM–MERCY Malaysia collaboration are helping build technical capacity and community resilience.

Moving forward, Malaysia will:

- Expand ocean and sea-level monitoring systems;
- Strengthen forecasting through research and innovation;

- Improve local early warning dissemination; and
- Enhance regional cooperation under IOC's IOTWMS and PTWS frameworks.

Oman

Oman, in collaboration with the (IOC) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), hosted the “Regional Training Workshop on Tsunami Inundation Modelling and Evacuation Planning for the North-West Indian Ocean Region, which was held in April 2024 in Muscat. The event brought together approximately 70 participants from regional and international institutions. AL Hail North (in Oman) was used as a pilot site for tsunami simulation and evacuation planning. The exercise aimed to support the development of tsunami inundation and evacuation maps.

Oman also continues to play an active role in regional coordination. We currently represent the North Indian Ocean on the Task Team for Tsunami Watch Operations and Serve as Vice-Chair of the ICG/IOTWMS Regional Working Group.

Additionally, Oman is actively involved in public awareness campaigns, and we regularly participate in initiatives like World Tsunami Awareness Day.

Finally, I'm pleased to share that the Government of Oman intends to host the 15th session of the ICG/IOTWMS in 2026. We look forward to welcoming you all then.

Portugal

Portugal considers of extreme importance the existence of Tsunami Early Warning Systems and has been actively involved in the implementation of the Tsunami Warning System for the NE Atlantic, Mediterranean and Connected Sea's region since the beginning. The Portuguese National Tsunami Warning Center, based at the Portuguese Institute for Sea and Atmosphere (IPMA), has been operating at national level since the end of 2017 and after 2019 as an accredited Tsunami Service Provider (TSP) at international/regional level.

This implementation has been conducted in close coordination with the National Emergency and Civil Protection Authority (ANEPC), which is a crucial entity in the process. We also highlight the contribution of several institutions, at national and international level, namely in the seismic and sea level data sharing process.

Following a decision of the Portuguese Government, we are preparing a major contribution to the monitoring system in the NE Atlantic, which is the implementation of the Atlantic SMART Cable (Telecommunication cable instrumented with sensors) in the Azores-Madeira-PT mainland region, that will improve the monitoring of ocean variables, and in particular the detection and early warning capability of earthquakes and tsunamis.

IP Telecom, the Portuguese public company, was given the mission to implement the infrastructure, with IPMA assisting in the Observer component of the cable. The monitoring infrastructure will comprise 20 nodes of sensors (measuring ground motion, pressure and temperature), and should be in operation in the first semester of 2027.

Due to the low frequency of tsunami events in the NEAM region, more and more exercises are essential for the preparation of the system, and we highlight initiatives as the NEAMWave exercises, now with NEAMwave26 in preparation, which are crucial to test and validate the operational procedures. Several outreach initiatives and local exercises, in coordination with civil authorities, have been regularly organized and are considered extremely useful for the success of the whole system.

To conclude, we also highlight the developments in terms of the Tsunami Ready programme, aiming the preparation of the coastal communities and noting the extensive work that is being done at national and international level. Portugal is now preparing the constitution of its Tsunami Ready National Board.

Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea expresses its appreciation and strong support for the continued efforts of IOC and regional ICGs to achieve the goals of the UN Ocean Decade Tsunami Program (ODTP) and to reduce the risks posed by tsunamis.

On 1 January 2024, the Republic of Korea experienced its first tsunami in 30 years. A maximum tsunami height of 82cm recorded along the eastern coastline, causing significant confusion and concern among coastal residents. In response, relevant government ministries have developed and are actively operating improved tsunami warning and monitoring systems.

We will continue to develop advanced technologies to improve the accuracy of tsunami predictions, and to provide timely information that will support effective responses and enhance the safety of coastal communities.

Spain

España apoya las actividades del Grupo de Coordinación Internacional del NEAMTWS, entre otras cosas a través del compromiso de Ignacio Aguirre como vicepresidente, y está haciendo un importante esfuerzo en el desarrollo de sistemas de alerta y en los protocolos de actuación. Los mejores ejemplos son el reconocimiento de Chipiona como ciudad Tsunami Ready y el trabajo de la ciudad de Cádiz para alcanzar pronto esa misma distinción. El pasado mes de mayo se organizó una reunión sobre Smart-Cables en Madrid junto con nuestros colegas portugueses, donde se pusieron de manifiesto las oportunidades que brinda este sistema de observación para los sistemas de alerta.

Türkiye

Tsunami Warning Systems are essential components of coastal community. We are honoured to host one of the North-Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (NEAM) Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (TWS) Tsunami Service Provider (TSP), namely the Regional Earthquake and Tsunami Monitoring Centre of Boğaziçi University-Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Research Institute, in Istanbul. This center provides 24 hours / 7 days tsunami warnings to Eastern Mediterranean, Aegean, Marmara and Black Seas since 2012.

As a result of Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme (TRRP) implementation efforts in Türkiye we are also honoured with the certificate of Büyükçekmece (İstanbul) as the second Tsunami Ready community in North-Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean region recognized by UNESCO-IOC in 2024. More others are on the preparation phase in different cities of Türkiye in line with the target of Ocean Decade in Mediterranean Sea.

Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Research Institute operates a sea level network of 24 stations in the Marmara Sea. At the national level, 20 tide-gauge radar type stations are operated by the General Directorate of Mapping.

One new tsunami early warning and sea level monitoring system was installed in Aegean Sea in February 2025. Ten new multi-operational tsunami early warning and sea level monitoring stations will be installed in the Aegean, Mediterranean, and Black Seas in this year.

It should be noted that Türkiye provides a significant in-kind contribution not only to the operation of the Centre but also for the development and maintenance of tide-gauges, including the transmission of sea-level data, which is vital for sustaining regional tsunami monitoring and early warning capabilities.

Tsunamis are transboundary events which makes the intergovernmental governance of relevant activities more important.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The UK delegation notes that within the ICG/CARIBE-EWS, a total of 23 communities are now recognized as Tsunami Ready under UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Program and the UK particularly acknowledges the funding of Anguilla's Tsunami Ready Recognition Project

by USAID and appreciates the ongoing support of Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre (PTWC) and International Tsunami Information Center (ITIC-CAR) to the UK Overseas Territories.

With regards to item 3.4.1.2, the UK supports the recommendation of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Working Group on Tsunamis and Other Hazards Related to Sea-Level Warning and Mitigation Systems (TOWS-WG-XVIII) to approve the Tsunami Ready Coalition Implementation Plan, which seeks to raise the profile of and to increase funding resources for the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme going forward.

We note the Request to prioritise the installation of tide gauges in regions under high tsunami risk where there are known coverage gaps. We also support the approval of the Task Teams on Tsunami Disaster Management and Preparedness, and the task team on Tsunami Watch Operations (TT-DMP and TT-TWO), as suggested in the draft Decision.

(We would also like to point out that in the interest of accuracy the numbering of the TOWS meetings in report IOC/TOWS-WG-XVIII appears inconsistent, sometimes referring to TOWS-WG 18 and other times referring to TOWS-WG 16)

United States of America

The United States is committed to providing timely and effective tsunami services for the protection of life, livelihoods, and economic prosperity in the United States and the Pacific and the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions, including through our continued participation in the PTWS and CARIBE EWS.

We generally support the recommendations and reports of the ICG/PTWS, ICG/CARIBE-EWS, and TOWS meetings. We also support the adoption of the Tsunami Ready Coalition Implementation Plan.

However, as referenced in our opening statement, the United States cannot reaffirm Agenda 2030 or the SDGs.

We therefore disassociate from the first paragraph of section 1.2 of the Implementation Plan that was just approved in decision 3.4.1.

WMO

WMO warmly welcomes the integration of the UN Secretary-General's "Early Warnings for All" initiative, aligning closely with our Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) framework. We are especially encouraged by the system-wide progress in tsunami preparedness and the decision to extend Tsunami Service Provider capabilities to include non-seismic and complex sources, a critical step in tackling emerging risks.

We also acknowledge with appreciation the growing focus on inclusive warning systems, particularly efforts targeting children and persons with disabilities. These approaches are vital to ensuring that early warnings reach everyone, especially the most vulnerable. WMO particularly welcomes the progress on the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) and appreciates the recognition of CAP as a key link between detection and effective warning dissemination. WMO is committed to collaboration with IOC on the development of a global CAP template for Tsunami Service Providers.

Furthermore, we support the call to strengthen coordination between Tsunami Warning Centres and National Meteorological and Hydrological Services, particularly in monitoring instruments, many of which serve multi-hazard needs, including meteorological and oceanographic applications.

We also draw attention to WMO's latest Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update, which highlights an 86% chance of global temperatures exceeding 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels for at least one year between 2025 and 2029. This reinforces the urgency of strengthening coastal risk preparedness, as climate-driven sea-level variability and warming oceans will increase the impact and frequency of compound hazards.

WMO stands ready to contribute to the implementation of the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme, particularly through collaboration on observing networks, data sharing protocols, and the use of emerging technologies, as well to contribute to capacity development, impact-based forecasting methodologies, and regional cooperation.

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

Argentina

En particular, la República Argentina desea enfatizar su compromiso con la participación en el Sistema de Datos e Información Oceanográficos (ODIS), entendiendo que la experiencia acumulada a través del Centro Argentino de Datos Oceanográficos, actualmente en un proceso de renovación y modernización, permitirá en el corto plazo el acceso a metadatos y realizar consultas a través de un sitio web dedicado específicamente a estas acciones.

Por su parte, vale destacar que desde el año 2020 funciona en la República Argentina un Centro Especializado del Ocean Teacher Global Academy, a través del cual se han impartido diversos cursos anuales bajo modalidad virtual en tres áreas de conocimiento: delimitación del límite exterior de la plataforma continental, observaciones de hielo marino y témpanos, y la geología marina e instrucción en temas de minería de fondos marinos. Ello ha capitalizado y difundido la experiencia argentina, contando con una gran concurrencia de participantes, provenientes de diversos países de Latinoamérica. Como parte de esta iniciativa, en agosto de este año, se realizará una edición presencial del curso de observador de hielo marino y témpanos, con el patrocinio de la Ocean Teacher Global Academy y para participantes de Latinoamérica.

En consecuencia, la República Argentina desea acompañar el Proyecto de Decisión propuesto bajo este punto de agenda, con las siguientes observaciones y sugerencias a los siguientes puntos del apartado III:

i. En el punto 15, se advierte que la redacción no especifica cómo se implementaría el intercambio de datos financiados privadamente, considerando que los IOC Data Policy and Terms of Use de 2023 no abordan expresamente esta situación. Por ello, se sugiere eliminar la referencia a “tanto con financiación pública como privada” para evitar ambigüedades en su interpretación y aplicación.

ii. El punto 16 no parece tener carácter dispositivo, sino preambular, al constituir una declaración que fundamenta las acciones propuestas en el proyecto de decisión, por lo que se sugiere trasladar el enunciado a las cláusulas preambulatorias del Proyecto de Decisión..

Asimismo, la República Argentina considera oportuno acotar el alcance del entendimiento expresado en dicho punto, destacando que el intercambio de datos contribuirá al fortalecimiento de las capacidades colectivas en relación con los objetivos del Decenio del Océano de las Naciones Unidas.

iii. En el punto 17 se propone reemplazar el verbo “insta” por “invita”.

iv. Del análisis del punto 18 se desprende que, al igual que el punto 16, tiene una naturaleza predominantemente preambular. En consecuencia, se sugiere sustituir el término “afirma” por “afirmando” y trasladar el enunciado a las cláusulas preambulatorias del Proyecto de Decisión.

Esta Delegación hizo llegar oportunamente a Secretaría las propuestas de modificaciones de texto mencionadas.

Finalmente, la República Argentina expresa especialmente su agradecimiento a la Oficina de Proyecto para el IODE y al Gobierno de Flandes, Reino de Bélgica, por el apoyo y gestiones en el mantenimiento de estas actividades.

Canada

Le Canada est encouragé par les progrès réalisés à la 28e session du Comité de la COI sur l'échange international de données et d'informations océanographiques et approuve le plan de travail 2025-2026.

Les domaines d'intérêt du plan de travail 2025-2026 s'harmonisent bien avec les priorités du Canada en matière d'océans, en particulier dans les domaines de la durabilité, de la prise de décisions fondées sur les données, l'inclusion du savoir autochtone, et la mise en œuvre collaborative.

Le Canada approuve également le mandat révisé du Système d'information sur les données océaniques (ODIS), du Groupe directeur de l'ODIS et du Groupe des opérations de l'ODIS. Le Canada remercie sincèrement le gouvernement de la Flandre d'avoir accueilli le Bureau de projet pour l'IODE en Belgique, et appuie pleinement sa poursuite.

Enfin, le Canada tient à remercier Peter Pissierseens, ancien chef du bureau de projet du CIO pour l'IODE, pour son importante contribution à l'avancement de ce travail et lui souhaite une très bonne retraite.

Chile

Chile reconoce la importancia del programa sobre Intercambio de Datos e Información Oceanográfica (IODE) de la COI y junto con agradecer el apoyo que el Gobierno de Flandes ha otorgado a la COI, quisiera también invitar a otros Estados Miembros que pudiesen estar en condiciones de sumarse en esta línea, lo hagan a fin de facilitar la participación de los países en desarrollo en los programas de la COI. La Oficina de proyectos IODE ha sido crucial para el crecimiento y éxito del programa.

Chile desea destacar el avance del “Sistema de Información de Biodiversidad del Océano (OBIS)” y en particular su recomendación sobre el uso del formato “Darwin Core” para el levantamiento de datos de biodiversidad. El Centro Nacional de Datos Hidrográficos y Oceanográficos de Chile (CENDHOC), se encuentra trabajando en la adopción de este estándar.

Finalmente, Chile quisiera aprovechar esta oportunidad para expresar gratitud y reconocimiento al Sr. Peter J. Pissierssens por su dedicada labor como Jefe de la Oficina de Proyectos de la COI para IODE y coordinador de Desarrollo de Capacidades de la COI desde el año 2007 y le desea el mayor de los éxitos en sus proyectos futuros.

China

China would like to congratulate IODE on the positive progress it has made over the past two years and expresses its appreciation for IODE's contribution in promoting the integration and sharing of global ocean data and information.

We support IODE's initiatives to promote the healthy and rapid development of ODIS and ocean data sharing for sustainable development in areas within national jurisdiction, and would like to actively participate in relevant projects and activities. China has been promoting the open sharing of ocean data within national jurisdiction. We have established a number of public data and information service platforms, such as the National Ocean Science Data Centre and the Marine Professional Knowledge Service System, and released the first batch of marine data open-sharing catalogues and the National Ocean Big Data Service (Ocean Cloud) in 2024.

China also actively advocates the participation of private sector data obtained through commercial activities in data sharing and trading flow, increasing the amount of data used for ocean observation, monitoring, understanding and modelling of the oceans. However, it should be noted that there are some legal and economic issues such as data rights confirmation and authorization, data trading and circulation, and benefit distribution, which still need to be further explored and studied. And we suggest that IOC also carry out in-depth studies in the process of promoting the sharing of ocean data within national jurisdiction.

Colombia

La delegación de Colombia agradece la información presentada, así como el honor de haber sido país anfitrión de la IODE-28, primera reunión del Comité celebrada en Latinoamérica, felicitamos a las delegaciones asistentes por sus valiosas contribuciones, que permitieron avanzar en orientaciones estratégicas para fortalecer el Programa.

Además, Colombia reitera su compromiso con la implementación de la Política de Datos y las condiciones de uso para el intercambio de datos de la COI impulsada por el IODE, dado que el Centro Nacional de Datos Oceanográficos (NODC), en colaboración con la Unidad de Datos Asociada (ADU), culminó el Plan de Apertura de Datos Oceanográficos y Marinos, desarrollado en los últimos cuatro años como contribución al Decenio de las Ciencias Oceánicas, con el respaldo de las entidades del Comité Técnico Nacional de Datos Oceánicos y universidades. Igualmente, el país ha establecido mecanismos para integrar al NODC los datos provenientes del sector privado, en beneficio de la investigación científica nacional.

Por otro lado, Colombia reitera su apoyo y se une a la comunidad IODE respecto a las siguientes inquietudes, en aras de solicitar a las instancias correspondientes garantizar el apoyo necesario para el desarrollo satisfactorio del IODE, como uno de los Programas más exitosos de la COI/UNESCO y goza de amplio reconocimiento en otros escenarios internacionales:

- i. continuar las gestiones para cubrir las posiciones sensibles responsables de IODE y OBIS
- ii. procurar la renovación del memorando de entendimiento entre Flandes y la COI para la Oficina de Proyectos de la COI para el IODE en Ostende (Bélgica) (diciembre de 2026).

France

La France souligne l'excellence de l'IODE et son impact dans la bonne gestion des données océanographiques et leur partage à l'échelle internationale.

L'existence du Project Office et son bon fonctionnement est essentiel à la dynamique insufflée par l'IODE auprès des Etats Membres dans la bonne gestion des données océanographiques et leur partage.

La France note que le Project Office fait face à des demandes croissantes et qu'en conséquence des difficultés ont été identifiées impactant le fonctionnement du Project Office.

India

India would like to compliment the Chairs, and host INVEMAR for the successful conduct of the 28th session of IODE at Santa Marta, Colombia during 12 – 14th March 2025. India understands and fully supports the importance of strengthening data infrastructure, improving accessibility, and fostering collaboration as underscored in the conference to ensure inclusive and equitable participation in the global digital ocean ecosystem.

The INCOIS under the Ministry of Earth Sciences of India is identified as NODC and CMLRE under the said Ministry is identified as ADU. Through these institutes, India is collaborating with other IOC programmes while keeping in mind the cross-cutting nature of ocean data and information management and sharing.

With regards to the Ocean Best Practices activity, India is happy to consider OBPS as an IOC-wide activity to co-fund OBPS with GOOS and IODE.

India has been involved in generating and disseminating data and information pertaining to Harmful Algal Information System (HAIS) since long. India is also a member of Global Ocean Oxygen Database and Atlas (GO2DAT), nominated member to be part of IOC State of the Ocean Report (StOR). India is also actively involved in implementation of GOOS of the Ocean Best Practices System (OBPS), cooperating with all IOC programmes on the IOC Data Architecture and conducted exclusive capacity development programs on Tsunami Resilience. India will be happy to cooperate with the IOC Tsunami Resilience Section on the development of online learning materials that can be made available through OTGA as a self-paced course.

India takes appreciates the excellent services of Mr Peter Pissierssens, as IODE chair. India became a part of the OIH/ODIS and it will continue to work with IODE at regional level through IOCINDIO as vice-chair of the sub-commission. Further, India will also extend cooperation to IODE for its association with the UN Ocean Decade as the Decade Collaborative Centre for the Indian Ocean.

Finally India is happy to collaborate in ODIS by sharing out ocean data and information with ODIS as per the guidelines prescribed by Govt. of India.

Japan

We also extend our appreciation to Mr. Peter Pissierssens, the former head of the IODE project office, for his many years of dedicated service upon his retirement.

Second, we recognize that the present proposal on ODIS is effective in enhancing the availability of ocean information through improved interoperability, accessibility, and reliability of ocean data.

Third, about the ocean data sharing on national jurisdiction, we, Japan Oceanographic Data Centre, has collected data from public institutions including Universities, research institutions, and fishery high schools, based on IOC data policy. It's a new challenge for us to collect the data obtained by private industry. We recognize that this proposal can contribute to SDG 14.

Kingdom of the Netherlands

We congratulate IODE on its long-standing success as one of the flagship programmes of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Peter Pissierssens, recently retired as Head of the IODE Project Office, for his incredible dedication and invaluable contributions to IODE and IOC over the past 36 years.

Since its inception in 1961, IODE has built a remarkable and collaborative network of nearly 100 National Oceanographic Data Centres (NODC) and Associate Data Units (ADU). Through its Programme Components—OBIS, ODIS, and OTGA—IODE continues to provide essential, globally recognized data and information services. These, closely linked, Programme Components not only serve the IOC family but are also relied upon by a wide range of partners and stakeholders across the global ocean science community.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands firmly believes that the achievements of IODE must be safeguarded and further strengthened. In particular, we wish to underscore the importance of promoting greater integration and synergy between IODE and the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), in order to enhance the delivery of end-to-end ocean data and knowledge systems.

We also take this opportunity to highlight the relevance of IODE's work in the context of emerging global ocean governance frameworks, in particular the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement. In this regard, we stress the imperative to maintain—and where possible, reinforce—the capacity of the IODE Project Office to ensure that Member States can fully benefit from the OBIS system as a key data platform for the BBNJ clearinghouse mechanism.

In support of these efforts, the Kingdom of the Netherlands calls upon the IOC Secretariat to ensure the timely filling of two critical positions: the Head of the IOC Project Office for IODE and the OBIS P3 post. Addressing these vacancies is essential to uphold the operational integrity and strategic direction of the programme.

Finally, we express our strong support for the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Flanders and IOC, which underpins the continued operation of the IOC Project Office for IODE in Oostende, Belgium.

We remain fully committed to supporting IODE and its vital role in the global ocean data ecosystem and thank all Member States and partners who continue to contribute to its success.

Malaysia

Malaysia acknowledges that oceanographic data is essential for evidence-based marine governance. Our active participation in IODE, through the Malaysia National Oceanographic Data Centre (MyNODC) and Malaysia Biodiversity Information System (MyBIS) reflects our commitment to the FAIR data principles.

As we transition toward a blue economy and advance Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) under the 12th Malaysia Plan, data collection and sharing have become top national priorities. Although Malaysia does not yet have a single agency mandated to collate all ocean data, inter-agency coordination is improving—particularly across fisheries, maritime, environment, and mapping sectors.

Several key national policies support this direction:

- The National Policy on Climate Change 2.0 calls for integrated data and knowledge management to support climate-resilient development, including ocean sectors.
- The National Biodiversity Policy 2022–2030 promotes data sharing and integration for marine conservation and spatial planning.
- The National Coastal Zone Physical Planning Framework (RFZPPN) incorporates spatial data layers to guide sustainable development and ecosystem protection.
- The upcoming National Marine Spatial Planning Framework, endorsed by the National Physical Planning Council, will rely heavily on multi-sectoral ocean datasets for implementation.

Through these policies, Malaysia is aligning ocean data governance with its commitments under the Ocean Decade, SDG 14, and the IOC-led Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS).

Moving forward, Malaysia will:

1. Expand national capacity in data management through IODE training and partnerships;
2. Harmonize datasets across agencies
3. Promote university-led research on marine data architecture and standards; and
4. Strengthen data accessibility to support MSP and the blue economy agenda.

Russian Federation

The Russian delegation requests that the following statement be included in the report of the thirty-third session of the IOC Assembly:

‘In view of its national legislation, the Russian Federation will not adhere to paragraph 18 of Decision A-33/3.4.2.’

Spain

España manifiesta su máximo agradecimiento por el extraordinario trabajo del Sr Peter Pissierssens como Jefe de Sección de IODE hasta su reciente jubilación y le transmitimos nuestros mejores deseos en esta nueva etapa.

El IEO, como Centro Nacional de Datos Oceanográficos (NODC), distribuye datos e información sobre el medio marino a través de distintas plataformas e iniciativas europeas, incluidas <http://seadatanet.org> y EMODNET. Actualmente, el IEO está trabajando en mejorar su Infraestructura de Datos Espaciales, con objeto de facilitar el acceso a esta información a través de un catálogo propio acorde con las necesidades actuales en este campo, facilitando conexiones “maquina-a-maquina” y actualizaciones semi-automáticas que favorezcan la integración de las arquitecturas de datos propuestas por el IODE y la contribución a un ecosistema global de datos oceánicos siguiendo principios FAIR y CARE. Subrayamos la importancia de asegurar la accesibilidad y preservación a largo plazo de los datos a través de repositorios con vocación de permanencia en el tiempo.

La gestión de datos es, y cada vez va a serlo más, una especialidad con un alto contenido técnico y tecnológico que avanza rápido a medida que las redes y las comunicaciones mejoran, a la par

de las capacidades de muestreo y mejoras instrumentales. Esto pide que los tiempos de respuesta cada vez sean menores y que las comunicaciones máquina-máquina funcionen con las últimas mejoras y avances del estado del arte. Las actividades de los NODCs responden a las necesidades de una gestión Científico-Técnica altamente especializada de los Datos Oceanográficos en el marco de las competencias propias de cada país. Esta especialización y necesidad debe ser reconocida.

España quiere reconocer la importancia para la comunidad internacional de los avances del Sistema de Información sobre Biodiversidad Oceánica (OBIS), el Sistema de Datos e Información Oceánica (ODIS) especialmente en relevante para algunas regiones del globo, que debe seguir fortaleciéndose para garantizar la equidad de acceso digital a datos e información relevante. Agradecemos también el trabajo y el esfuerzo de la Academia Global Ocean Teacher, resaltando la modalidad de autoaprendizaje y favoreciendo los cursos en varios idiomas, y el aumento significativo de su actividad, logrando un número importante de inscripciones. Esto apoya la Estrategia de Desarrollo de Capacidades del COI y contribuye a programas como la Resiliencia ante Tsunamis, Ciencia Oceánica y la Década del Océano, contaminación marina, planificación espacial marina y restauración de manglares.

Agradecemos muy sinceramente al Gobierno de Flandes por la financiación que permite sostener la oficina en Oostende sin la cual estas actividades no serían posibles.

España está de acuerdo con la necesidad de iniciar cuanto antes el proceso de selección de nuevo Jefe de la Sección de IODE, pero resaltando la necesidad de que se haga atendiendo a los estándares que requiere actualmente esta disciplina cada vez más compleja y que ya hemos mencionado.

Thailand

Thailand recognizes the vital role of the IODE in promoting ocean data and information exchange, contributing to scientific research, innovation, and informed decision-making. The equitable dissemination of knowledge through the IODE framework serves as a catalyst for international collaboration and accelerates progress in ocean science. We further commend the significant contributions of IODE's core programme components including OBIS, ODIS, and OTGA in supporting key global initiatives and frameworks.

Thailand has actively supported the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development through its engagement with the IODE, including contributions such as the provision of ocean acidification data to the IOC, reflecting its commitment to advancing global ocean knowledge and cooperation.

As a coastal state, Thailand faces ongoing challenges from climate-related hazards and anthropogenic pressures that jeopardize the sustainability of its marine and coastal resources. We underscore the importance of enhancing ocean data exchange as a foundation for achieving sustainable development and informed ocean governance. Thailand views strengthened engagement with the private sector as a promising avenue for improving the accuracy, resolution, and timeliness of ocean observations and forecasts—particularly to the benefit of vulnerable coastal States.

Nevertheless, Thailand expresses primary concern regarding the public sharing of the data collected within areas under national jurisdiction as such data may fall within the sovereign rights of the coastal State, in accordance with Section 8 of the IOC Data Policy and Terms of Use (2023). Thailand supports China's suggestion to undertaken further in-depth study on this matter.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

We would also like to thank Pieter Pissierssens for his leadership and energy to drive forward the work of IODE and more widely.

The 28th session of the IODE Committee was clearly a very productive meeting addressing a broad portfolio of data management topics. We note with satisfaction the wise move of streamlining IODE work into Programme Components, Programme Activities and Projects

enabling the importance of flagship components OBIS, OTGA, and ODIS to be highlighted and providing linkage with other parts of IODE. We would like to emphasise the cross-cutting nature of ocean data and information management and sharing, which has enabled IODE to successfully collaborate with the other IOC sections.

For IODE to reach its potential it is essential that the programme is suitable resourced and staffed, mindful of the current recruitment freeze and financial constraints. The UK is fully supportive of longer-term efforts to secure the right skills and appropriate resources needed to ensure the longevity and continued successes of IODE. We recognise the value of the contributions of member states in supporting the delivery of IODE ambitions, which can only be achieved through constructive, collaborative behaviors that reflect the IOC code of conduct.

The UK wishes to commend the contributions of the Government of Flanders in providing funding to the IODE Project Office for the last 20 years, during which time the Project Office has grown in responsibilities and activities. The UK would welcome the renewal of the MoU between the Government of Flanders and the IOC. We also recognise that there is a need to diversify income to compliment funding support provided by the Government of Flanders to meet increasing demands, which could include industry and philanthropic organisations.

3.4.3 IOC Data Architecture

Canada

Canada welcomes the report and supports the proposed the IOC Data Architecture concept noting, as Germany has mentioned, the need for further clarification on its implementation as the plan is developed. We look forward to learning how Canada can contribute or provide feedback into its implementation, including through our NODC.

Canada supports an interoperable, metadata-rich, and federated approach to system designs for ocean science data management, facilitating the implementation of the FAIR and CARE principles.

China

and a stable, comprehensive and efficient data collection, management and sharing system can support IOC's sustainable ocean planning and management strategy, help promote collaboration among IOC components and programmes, and provide timely and reliable data and information sources for IOC members in oceanographic research, ocean ecological protection, ocean resources utilization, and climate change adaptation.

The Chinese delegation supports the IOC decision on the development of a data architecture and is willing to contribute to its construction. China attaches great importance to international ocean data and information exchange and cooperation. We have been operating the National Oceanographic Data Centre through the National Marine Data and Information Service (NMDIS) since 1982. In 2008, under the joint guidance of the IOC Sub-Committee for the Western Pacific and the IODE Project Office, NMDIS started the building and running of the Ocean Data and Information Network for the Western Pacific region (ODINWESTPAC), and set up an ODIS node in 2023 to share China's ocean observation data and information products operationally.

China would like to further participate in the programs and actions related to the IOC data architecture. At the same time, we hope that IOC could provide further guidance to members on how to play a better role in this initiative.

India

India would like to compliment the representatives of GOOS and IODE for the IOC data architecture concept proposal.

India takes note that this proposal is mainly focused on enhancing collaboration between the IODE and the GOOS with a goal to enhance coordination and discuss an integrated and scalable

IOC digital architecture that would improve data sharing, management, and accessibility, across ocean systems.

India has been a key partner of IOGOOS collecting data pertaining to Essential Ocean Variables and is also acting as an NODC under the IODE. India reiterates that it is willing to embrace the FAIR and CARE principles for all the data being collected and archived at its data centers.

India strongly supports the proposed draft basic schema for the IOC Data Architecture, linking key IOC components into a holistic ecosystem that would provide a joint vision for an IOC Data Architecture.

Japan

We recognize that the proposal related to the IOC data architecture is effectively promoting the availability of ocean data and enhance the value of the data.

Spain

España manifiesta su máximo agradecimiento por el extraordinario trabajo del Sr Peter Pissierssens como Jefe de Sección de IODE hasta su reciente jubilación y le transmitimos nuestros mejores deseos en esta nueva etapa.

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Agradecemos muy sinceramente al Gobierno de Flandes por la financiación que permite sostener la oficina en Oostende sin la cual estas actividades no serían posibles.

España está de acuerdo con la necesidad de iniciar cuanto antes el proceso de selección de nuevo Jefe de la Sección de IODE, pero resaltando la necesidad de que se haga atendiendo a los estándares que requiere actualmente esta disciplina cada vez más compleja y que ya hemos mencionado

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Ocean data, and its sharing in a way that makes data accessible to all, is at the heart of ocean science that delivers to society.

The United Kingdom recognises, and applauds, the critical work of the IOC, and its bodies, in this area and welcome actions to strengthen the critical work being done to democratise data for the benefit of all.

We welcome the increasing cooperation between IODE and GOOS, and the IOC Data Architecture concept proposal. Setting up such an integrated and scalable IOC digital architecture/ecosystem will be beneficial to the IOC, decreasing duplication of effort and enabling efficiencies. Moreover, the federated approach to the IOC Data Architecture aligns with the UN Ocean Decade Data and Information Strategy. Such a system would improve access and discovery of IOC data and strengthen the delivery of ocean data to the wide range of stakeholders that need easy, efficient access to them.

In particular, the IOC Data Architecture will benefit other components of IOC. In addition, improving the coordination and increasing the connectivity between GOOS and IODE will facilitate support for BBNJ, including the requirements of the Clearing House Mechanism. Many of the building blocks for the suggested IOC Data Architecture already exist although joining them together will not be a simple task. We note that during the first year no additional IOC funds are requested, but we recommend that a costed proposal be developed for the next phase.

We further note that the IOC Data Architecture will interface with other systems (e.g. WMO's WIS 2.0, and UNEP's World Environment Situation Room (WESR)). We recommend that care is taken to ensure the IOC Data Architecture also aligns with the digital infrastructure of other key components of the Earth system as well as with socio-economic data systems.

It is important to ensure that IODE's network of NODCs and ADUs are fully on board and are provided with whatever assistance they need to participate, especially those with limited resources. We note that there is a planned consultation phase from July-December 2025 and recommend that NODCs and ADUs are actively consulted.

In summary, the UK is supportive of the IOC Data Architecture concept and are excited to see how it evolves.

3.4.4 An IOC Ocean Best practices System (OBPS)

India

OBSP is suggested to encourage and adopt best practises in the field of translational and operational oceanography. India is happy to share one of the best practices in community based operational multi-purpose/fit to purpose observation system named WAMAN buoys network being developed by India along with sister countries such as Mauritius, Seychelles immensively for operational ocean services and forecasting. The best practices are being published in BAMS (Bulletin of American Meteorological Society) next issue.

Japan

We appreciate the roll of Ocean Best Practices System that can contribute to the standardization and harmonization on oceanography.

Spain

España agradece la presentación de la Señora Emma Heslop y consideramos extraordinariamente importante esta iniciativa, ya que es básica para que posteriormente los datos que obtenemos sean interoperables. Así mismo, consideramos importante tener en cuenta y coordinar con otras iniciativas existentes como las que desarrollan ICES y PICES.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The UK appreciates any effort to incorporate best practices widely where they improve efficiency and effectiveness. In establishing the OBPS as an underpinning set of resources we see such an opportunity to foster an IOC-wide approach to increase productivity through sharing broadly adopted methods and approaches.

The UK looks forward to seeing the proposed vision and strategy, taking into account other best practice efforts, such as the formation of the EC-OBPS and Best Practices AISBL. It will be important that as the IOC develops its own best practices that it works closely with such initiatives to ensure broader coherence and sustainability of IOC OBPS.

Whilst the UK generally agrees with the proposed terms of reference for a new Steering Group in the draft Decision, we note the absence of nominations of Members of the Steering Group by way of Circular Letter to Member States. We will propose a minor edit to the draft Decision text when shown on the screen for consideration. Justification for change: to enable Member States to provide experts.

United States of America

The United States supports the work of the Ocean Best Practices System Steering Group. However, consistent with our national statement on Wednesday, the United States disassociates from paragraph 3 of the decision just adopted for agenda item 3.4.4.

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

Chile

Chile forma parte activa del Panel Intergubernamental de Floraciones de Algas Nocivas (IPHAB) desde el año 1992, además de integrar a nivel regional el grupo de Floraciones de Algas Nocivas de Sudamérica (FANSA), instancias que nos permiten enfrentar de manera coordinada todos los desafíos que emergen de las Floraciones de Algas Nocivas. Estos eventos al ser cada vez más frecuentes e intensos, requieren de una comprensión a cabalidad de los factores que los desencadenan con la finalidad de generar estrategias de alertas tempranas, pronósticos y mitigación en las regiones afectadas. Es por esto, que nuestro país apoya firmemente todas las decisiones y recomendaciones emanadas de la Décimoséptima reunión del Panel (IPHAB-XVII) realizada en marzo de 2025 y reafirma su compromiso en esta materia con la comunidad científica nacional e internacional, al albergar la Vigésima Conferencia Internacional de Algas Nocivas (ICHA 2025), actividad que se llevará a cabo entre el 19 y 24 de octubre de este año en la ciudad de Punta Arenas.

China

In China, we have conducted over 30 years of continuous HAB monitoring, achieving significant progress in detection and management, while establishing close collaborations with multiple countries. In October 2023, supported by China national HAB monitoring projects, the GeoHAB, the GlobalHAB programme, the PICES Ocean Monitoring Service Award (POMA) was awarded to China HAB research team – an immense encouragement to us. In December 2024, we organized the International Training Program on Prevention, Control and Mitigation of Harmful Algal Blooms. This training program gathered experts and researchers in marine science worldwide to address frontier scientific challenges in HAB management. It covered various aspects, including current status of harmful algal blooms worldwide, Algal taxonomy, early warning and monitoring, Algal toxin detection and economic impact.

The training program enhanced participants' understanding of harmful algal blooms and their prevention through multiple methods. Moreover, China participate in the IOC-led Harmful Algal Bloom Solutions (HAB-S) Programme. Moving forward, China will steadfastly fulfil its

responsibilities as an initiating country and dedicate full efforts to advancing the implementation of the Harmful Algal Bloom Solutions (HAB-S) Programme.

Finally, China would like to contribute to tasks outlined in IPHAB-2025, conduct comprehensive Biotxin Monitoring Management and Regulation, and enhance early detection, warning and forecasting of harmful algal events.

France

La France tient à remercier et féliciter le président de l'IPHAB et les membres du panel pour la présentation et les travaux accomplis sur les microalgues toxiques et nuisibles.

La France tient à souligner son engagement dans l'IPHAB, en continuant à assurer la présidence de ce panel d'experts pour une seconde période (2025-2027), avec le soutien de l'Espagne en co-présidence et en s'impliquant dans les différentes Task Team.

La France appuie la décision prise par l'IPHAB lors de la réunion de mars de mettre en place un nouveau programme de concertation scientifique décennal (GlobalHAB-2).

La France rappelle son soutien à la Décennie pour les sciences océaniques au service du développement durable et par conséquent, elle soutient le programme HAB-Solutions, qui a été labellisé Décennie pour les sciences océaniques, et qui vise à l'amélioration des connaissances et de la compréhension des causes et des effets des efflorescences de microalgues toxiques afin d'en réduire la fréquence, la gravité et à minimiser les effets néfastes. Nous souhaitons rappeler l'importance que les Etats membres soutiennent ce programme HAB-Solutions afin d'accélérer sa mise en œuvre et sa déclinaison régionale.

India

India would like to compliment the Chairs of the IPHAB for providing the report on its 17th session, excellent progress made, and decisions/recommendations made, especially towards enhancing the capacity in the region and developing a Harmful Algal Information system, etc.

India extends its appreciation to the IOC, particularly the Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms (IPHAB), for accepting the new national representative from India to contribute towards the work plan of Task Team on Early Detection, Warning, and Forecasting of HAB Events during its 17th session.

Mr. Chair, India would like to mention here that INCOIS, India has been providing the Algal Bloom Information Services (ABIS) for the Northern Indian Ocean region since Feb 2020. India's Algal Bloom Information Service (ABIS) provides near real time information on spatio-temporal existence and spread phytoplankton bloom over North Indian Ocean. India's representation in IPHAB work plans will enhance international collaboration and foster a synergistic approach in formulating strategies for the monitoring and mitigation of algal blooms, especially HABs, at national, regional and global levels.

Mr, Chair, India highly appreciates in bringing out HAB services to all the member states in the region. India reiterates its support to the activities and decisions of IPHAB and would like to contribute significantly through facilitating some of the capacity building initiatives under IPHAB through ITCOOcean (a UNESCO C2C) at INCOIS, India.

Japan

Japan reaffirms its strong commitment to supporting the activities of IPHAB, especially through the established framework of the IOC Sub-Commission WESTPAC. We recognize the critical role of IPHAB in advancing scientific understanding and regional cooperation to address the impacts of HABs on marine ecosystems, fishery and human health.

Japanese experts actively contributing as core members of the IPHAB Task Team and taking on leadership responsibilities in WESTPAC-HAB. Their expertise has been instrumental in deepening scientific knowledge and fostering collaboration among member states.

Japan has made substantive contributions to scientific research and capacity-building on HAB-related issues. This includes organizing and facilitating international training programs aimed at strengthening regional expertise and enhancing scientific exchanges. Recognizing the importance of knowledge-sharing, Japan remains dedicated to furthering these efforts.

Looking ahead, Japan is committed to contributing to the development of scientific knowledge and advancing strategies to mitigate the impacts of HABs, while ensuring alignment with its available resources. We stand ready to work closely with international partners to promote effective science-based policies and adaptive management approaches.

Furthermore, Japan will continue to articulate and reinforce this policy orientation in a constructive manner at IPHAB and WESTPAC-HAB, emphasizing the necessity of sustained global and regional cooperation to address the challenges posed by harmful algal blooms.

Malaysia

HABs pose recurrent threats to Malaysia's fisheries, aquaculture, public health, and coastal communities.

Malaysia has made measurable progress in early monitoring and response:

- The Department of Fisheries (DOF), working with universities is piloting an Early Warning System (EWS) featuring field-deployed sensor prototypes and a centralized dashboard to detect HAB events in near-real-time.
- National HAB monitoring combines laboratory testing, in-situ sensors, and satellite data, managed jointly by DOF, National Water Research Institute (NAHRIM), and university partners.
- Under the National Policy on Climate Change 2.0 and Blue Economy Strategy, Malaysia is funding university-led research to develop predictive HAB models and decision-support tools.

Malaysia also actively contributes to regional HAB information exchange—such as through WESTPAC—and promotes citizen science platforms like “MyRedTides” for community-level alert sharing.

Priorities for action:

1. Scale up sensor deployment and dashboard systems nationwide.
2. Enhance data integration and predictive capability using AI and remote sensing.
3. Strengthen multi-stakeholder coordination, linking fisheries, health, and environment sectors.
4. Contribute more actively to regional HAB networks and IOC-IP-HAB initiatives.

Malaysia is committed to active involvement in regional and global HAB programs through IOC WESTPAC HAB program and IPHAB, GlobalHAB program.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation actively participates in the work of the IOC-FAO Intergovernmental Working Group on Harmful Algal Blooms. Since 2021, two scientific programmes have been implemented in the northwestern Pacific region:

“Environmental Safety of Kamchatka: Research and Monitoring of Hazardous Natural Phenomena and Anthropogenic Impacts” (2021–2023), and

“Comprehensive Scientific Research Programme for the Kamchatka Peninsula and Adjacent Marine Areas” (2024–2026).

These programmes have revealed important patterns in the interaction of biological and abiotic factors, the specific combinations of which can trigger harmful algal blooms. The results are being shared through publications in international scientific journals.

We intend to continue joint practical activities on this topic, including the use of expedition-based monitoring data and satellite oceanography methods, and to expand training opportunities for young professionals in this field.

The Russian Federation supports the recommendations on the implementation of intersessional activities within the framework of the IOC work plan and budget for 2026–2027, and also expresses support for the continued work of the Intergovernmental Working Group.

Spain

España agradece la exposición y el informe presentado por el Dr Phillip Hess y queremos destacar nuestro compromiso activo en el Panel Intergubernamental de Floraciones de Algas Nocivas (IPHAB) desde su creación, y sigue apoyando las actividades del mismo a través de la participación de expertos nacionales en varios de sus Grupos de Trabajo. Este compromiso se ha visto reforzado recientemente, tal como ha expuesto el Dr Hess, con el nombramiento, durante 17ª sesión de IPHAB, de la Dra. Begoña Ben como vicepresidenta.

Las actividades de este panel son fundamentales para proteger la salud humana, para reducir las pérdidas económicas en un sector tan importante y en constante crecimiento como la acuicultura, y para comercializar productos pesqueros saludables.

En aguas españolas hemos detectado desde hace años la presencia de ciguatoxinas y sus microalgas productoras. Ante el escenario de cambio climático, es previsible que estos episodios serán más recurrentes, lo que representa un desafío significativo para nuestro país.

España cuenta con gran número de expertos con una sólida experiencia en este campo y la delegación española expresa su disposición a facilitar la identificación de expertos si se considera oportuno reforzar el Equipo de Trabajo 4 sobre Algas Nocivas Bentónicas y sus Toxinas, para así contribuir al cumplimiento de su mandato.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The UK would like to echo Australia's comments and acknowledge the strong and positive engagement of the FAO with IPHAB which is welcome.

Data contained in the harmful algal information system (HAIS) continues to be used as a global resource. With thanks to Norway, through NORAD funding, the UK welcomes the upgrades to improve data QC and ease of access. But the system requires onward investment to future proof such that the HAIS continues to be a global resource, alerting several sectors of HAB events.

The UK also acknowledges the importance of the Global HAB Status Report, and we welcome the Decision in Decision IPHAB-XVII.3 to focus the second Global HAB Status Report to identify priority drivers and associated relevant global datasets, ensuring broad stakeholder engagement.

Finally Mr Chair, mindful of the strong focus on early warning systems for HABs and HAB impacts which have had some success, options for mitigation of HAB impacts needs more work to reduce economic losses and protect human health.

North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES)

The member countries of the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES) have long been engaged in research related to the taxonomy, ecology, rapid detection, and monitoring of HABs and PICES was pleased to support a co-Chair of the dedicated expert group focused on HABs (Section-HAB) to participate in the IPHAB meeting earlier this year. Terms of Reference for the Section, which was set up over 20 years ago, include a comparative understanding of the similarities and differences in HAB events and their range expansion, contributing to the development of global HAB research activities, and continuing to ensure that PICES member country data is entered into the joint Harmful Algal Event Database (HAE-DAT). There is strong alignment between the objectives of three IPHAB Task Teams; on benthic harmful algae and their toxins, algal taxonomy, and fish-killing microalgae and ecosystem effects, with ongoing and planned activities within PICES.

Furthermore, PICES has continued a series of projects, since 2007, with funding from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan, involving project members from all PICES countries and collaboration with IOC WESTPAC, to develop capacity in the Philippines, Guatemala and Indonesia to foster early warning capability for HABs and to increase the sustainability of their

fishing resources by providing them with HAB information. The projects have provided training and citizen-science capacity to monitor for HABs and to develop and operate a phytoplankton-fishery observing program, and create valuable datasets for the study and detection of toxic benthic HAB species that can threaten tropical reefs and other coastal fisheries.

PICES will continue to support regional and global HAB efforts, including IPHAB.

3.5 IOC Report to the 43rd General Conference of UNESCO

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The UK would like to re-iterate our position that in order to improve IOC functioning and the services it provides we see the application of the IOC Statutes as critical, in particular in implementing its functional autonomy. The process of reporting to the UNESCO General Conference through the current C/5 reporting, which includes Results Framework and KPIs that are not always compatible with IOCs priorities and obligations, has for far too long been driven by the timing and priority needs of UNESCO above our very own obligations.

To this end, and with thanks to the Japan Delegation to UNESCO for proposing, we welcome the 221st UNESCO Executive Board Decision on the Draft Programme and Budget for 2026-2029 (43 C/5), where we note it recognises IOCs functional autonomy and requests that the recommendations of this Assembly, based on IOC objectives and priorities, be transmitted to the 43rd General Conference of UNESCO.

As such the United Kingdom welcomes the report as presented, but more importantly welcomes the process by which we inform the UNESCO General Conference.

4.1 Draft IOC-Wide Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management

Brazil

Let me begin by congratulating the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the SOPM working group for the impressive work in advancing the Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management. We fully support this initiative, which arrives at a critical time, as the ocean faces mounting pressures from climate change, biodiversity loss, and expanding economic demands.

We are also proud to share that Brazil has been developing Integrated Coastal Zone Management since 1988. Our ICZM framework has served as a foundation for building institutional capacity, fostering intersectoral coordination, and engaging stakeholders at all levels of governance.

More recently, Brazil has embarked on its journey towards Marine Spatial Planning, recognizing its essential role in organizing ocean uses, managing conflicts, and promoting sustainable economy pathways, resulting in the contracting of the first exercise for our South Region in 2022. This transition reflects our commitment to evolving from sectoral approaches toward integrated, knowledge-based ocean governance, aligned with the principles of SOPM. As part of this commitment, Brazil already protects more than 26% of our national waters through Marine Protected Areas, a milestone that underscores our dedication to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem resilience.

In fact, we see ICZM, MPAs and MSP not as isolated processes, but as pillars of a broader strategy, a Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management approach, grounded in science, inclusiveness, and equity, that is already taking root in our national policies. The IOC's SOPM Strategy provides timely and valuable guidance to deepen and align these efforts with global best practices and multilateral commitments, including the SDGs, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Paris Agreement.

Brazil also acknowledges the importance of regional collaboration. We are actively engaged in cooperation efforts and will continue to work closely with the IOC and its regional sub-

commissions to strengthen local capacity, share knowledge, and foster integrated and equitable ocean governance.

We thank the IOC for its leadership and reaffirm Brazil's support to the Strategy and its implementation. We are ready to contribute, collaborate, and move forward together for a healthy, productive, and just ocean future.

China

China would like to express the thanks to IOC for the excellent work in coordinating multiple outputs to produce this SOPM strategy. In the past four decades, China has charted the course of ocean-related planning and governance. We started Marine Spatial Planning in 1989, and till now we have implemented three rounds of MSP, establishing robust spatial planning systems at the national, provincial and municipal levels. We announced China Ocean Agenda 21 in 1996, which put forward a sustainable development strategy for China's marine programs, setting up a comprehensive marine management system. We also enact the supporting laws including Sea Use Law, The Marine Environmental Protection Law, and The Island Protection Law for sea use control, blue economy development and ecological conservation. In 2018, China established a new territorial spatial planning system, which increasingly focuses on land-sea coordination, Multiplan integration, regional coordination, multi-governance, and other new spatial governance requirements, so China has established a relatively comprehensive integrated management framework encompassing marine policies, laws, planning, and technical standards. Also, for the international level, we promote the spatial planning cooperation with Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission WESTPAC and more than 30 countries to move forward MSP. All these efforts and practices at different dimensions we have made greatly resonate with the values of SOPM.

From the joint formulation of MSPglobal 2030 initiative to the active engagement in the Ocean Decade Actions for MSP, China will continue to as always show support to the IOC's future work on SOPM, also we hope the necessary resources could be provided for the region Sub-Commissions and programmes to make it in the implementation in the region and local level. We look forward to seeing that strategy will bring some tangible benefits to the member states of data sharing, resources integration, capacities enhancement, and transboundary cooperation, thus further generating better ocean science and knowledge needed to serve the policy-making for adaptive and sustainable planning and management of ocean.

Côte d'Ivoire

La Côte d'Ivoire soutient cette initiative de la COI visant la gestion intégrée des océans. Ce qui a motivé La Côte d'Ivoire à participer à certaines des réunions en ligne.

Cette initiative M. Le Président, est d'autant plus importante que Les composantes marines (ressource vivante et non vivante) en particulier les poissons, les matières en suspension et les matières dissoutes ne se soumettent pas aux procédures de visa pour passer d'un pays à l'autre.

Aussi la question frontalière est-elle convoquée. C'est pourquoi la Côte d'Ivoire et le Ghana ont entrepris avec le soutien de l'Allemagne à définir en commun une zone de gestion intégrée de leur littoral frontalier.

La Côte d'Ivoire profite de cette tribune pour remercier l'Allemagne pour son soutien. Au total la Côte d'Ivoire se félicite que cette initiative soit portée par la COI.

France

La France tient à remercier les co-présidents du groupe de travail de la COI sur la planification et la gestion durables des océans pour leur travail. La France se réjouit de la stratégie présentée à l'horizon 2030, et de son plan d'action 2025-2027 ambitieux. Elle tient à souligner l'importance de la mise en place d'une telle stratégie à l'échelle intergouvernementale car cette initiative majeure et potentiellement transformatrice implique une observation et une gestion intégrée et coordonnée de l'océan au niveau mondial. Nous espérons que tous les États membres y adhéreront et y contribueront, ce qui sera un gage de succès.

Japan

Japan acknowledges the substantial progress that has been achieved in the development of the IOC Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management strategy and extends its gratitude to all those who have contributed. Japanese experts have actively contributed to the working groups shaping the SOPM, and we remain committed to supporting its implementation by dispatching experts as appropriate and feasible.

Recognizing the growing importance of ocean governance, Japan has taken decisive steps at the national level. The Government of Japan approved the Fourth Basic Plan on Ocean Policy, outlining fundamental principles to guide future ocean governance. This Plan builds upon the longstanding pillar of Comprehensive Maritime Security and introduces a new central pillar: Sustainable Use and Development of the Ocean.

Under this new approach, Japan prioritizes key areas, which are:

- Contribution to carbon neutrality,
- Conservation, maintenance, and restoration of marine environments,
- Appropriate management of fishery resources, and
- Advancement and utilization of scientific knowledge as a foundation for action.

Additionally, the Plan identifies seven priority initiatives spanning both pillars, which must be advanced systematically to ensure sustainable ocean management.

Given the scale and complexity of ocean challenges, strengthened international cooperation is more critical than ever. Japan firmly believes that several of its initiatives could serve as models applicable to other nations and is committed to sharing these approaches in relevant international forums.

Japan looks forward to continued collaboration with all stakeholders in advancing sustainable ocean management globally.

Malaysia

Malaysia supports IOC's efforts on sustainable ocean planning.

Malaysia is in the process of finalizing our National Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Framework, which will guide coordinated development and conservation across our marine and coastal zones.

This effort is aligned with:

- The 12th Malaysia Plan, promoting integrated coastal development;
- The National Policy on Climate Change 2.0, emphasizing ocean resilience;
- The Blue Economy Roadmap, linking MSP to sustainable growth.

Our approach integrates ecosystem data, stakeholder input, and spatial tools to support marine biodiversity, fisheries, tourism, and pollution control.

Going forward, Malaysia will:

1. Finalize and implement the national MSP framework;
2. Enhance cross-agency marine data integration;
3. Build capacity through national grants and regional collaboration;
4. Support IOC and Member States in knowledge exchange.

Norway

Norway welcomes the current draft of the Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management. The document has seen significant improvements, and we extend our sincere thanks to the Working Group and the Secretariat for their dedicated efforts.

This is an ambitious strategy that will draw upon much of IOC's ongoing work.

We appreciate that the strategy is well connected and builds on the important Marine Spatial Planning work that is already in place in many member states.

We continue to view the IOC as the most suitable UN body to host and advance this approach.

To ensure the success of the strategy, it is important that the science-policy dimension is strong. We believe that involvement in Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management should be firmly anchored at the highest levels within the member states. The Ocean Panel members could inspire other IOC member states with their dedicated approach injecting political energy in science-based sustainable Ocean planning.

It will also be essential to follow up on the outcomes of the IOC and the Future of the Ocean consultations, and to build on the partnerships and momentum generated by the corresponding Decade programme.

The strategy aligns well with both the IOC's Mid-Term Strategy and its statutes. Norway therefore endorses the draft as presented and will nominate a representative to the Working Group to be established.

Republic of Korea

We welcome the finalization of the IOC Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (IOC-SOPM) and would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Working Group for their dedicated efforts.

We hope that the IOC-SOPM Strategy will provide a solid foundation for strengthening knowledge-based ocean planning and management policies, thereby contributing to global efforts to address challenges such as climate change.

In this regard, the Republic of Korea is implementing a range of R&D and international cooperation projects aimed at advancing knowledge-based ocean planning and management. These include the establishment of an Integrated Management System for Ocean Climate Change Monitoring and Forecasting Information, and the development of an Integrated Disaster Management System that covers both coastal and terrestrial areas. These efforts will continue to be advanced and are expected to contribute to the effective implementation of the IOC-SOPM Strategy.

With the continuation of the Working Group, we look forward to seeing tangible outcomes under the 2025-2027 implementation plan, particularly in the integration of ocean data and knowledge, the advancement of science-based ocean management approaches, and improved responses to coastal resilience, through regular monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy's progress.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation reiterates its interest in international cooperation in the field of marine environmental protection and the sustainable use of marine resources.

We underscore the importance of adhering to the principle of sovereign equality of States in the governance of marine resources and biodiversity. We note that global ocean governance frameworks may, in some cases, lead to the inequitable distribution of resources.

We emphasize that any international agreements must fully respect the rights of coastal States.

We also draw attention to the pressing need for comprehensive scientific research aimed at assessing the state of marine ecosystems and their resources—there remains a considerable amount of work to be done in this area.

The Russian Federation did not support the 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 (BBNJ). This Agreement undermines the provisions of key existing international instruments, notably the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1995 Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. The designation of marine protected areas under the BBNJ framework may result in restrictions on the sovereign rights of coastal States to explore and exploit the natural resources of their continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles, as well as to carry out other lawful activities.

The provisions of the Agreement also permit interference with the mandates and competencies of relevant sectoral and regional international organizations, including regional fisheries management organizations.

In this context, the Russian Federation is unable to support the IOC Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management.

We hereby formally dissociate from the consensus on the Strategy due to the inclusion of the BBNJ Agreement as one of its key implementation instruments—an agreement which the Russian Federation does not endorse.

We support the continuation of the work of the IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management, under a revised and clearly defined mandate.

In the context of the Strategy's consideration, we stress the importance of ensuring an open, inclusive, and equitable process for the future implementation of any IOC-wide approach to sustainable ocean planning and management.

Seychelles

As a small island developing state, Seychelles is acutely aware of the ocean's role, not just as a resource, but as a lifeline. Our economy, culture, food security, and climate resilience are all inextricably linked to the health of our marine environment.

We welcome the IOC-wide strategy as a necessary and timely instrument to align scientific guidance with policy action, while strengthening multilateral cooperation in ocean governance. Seychelles particularly commends the strategy's emphasis on ecosystem-based management, marine spatial planning, and inclusive, science-driven decision-making.

Seychelles' journey reflects many of the strategy's core principles: inclusivity, science-based decision-making, and long-term stewardship. We were among the first countries globally to implement an integrated Marine Spatial Plan that covers our entire 1.35 million square kilometre of our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Through a transparent, stakeholder-driven process dating back to 2014, we have designated 30% of our EEZ as Marine Protected Areas, meeting global targets years ahead of schedule.

This achievement was not just technical; it was also financial and institutional. Our Marine Spatial Plan is underpinned by innovative mechanisms like the world's first sovereign Blue Bond, and a debt-for-nature swap that seeded the Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT). These tools fund marine protection, fisheries reform, and community-based resilience projects.

We are also proud to be an institutional member of the Ocean Decade Alliance, with President Wavel Ramkalawan serving as one of its global Patrons. This reflects our belief that ocean sustainability must be driven by strong political leadership, supported by science and community participation.

Seychelles' Ocean Decade National Committee, established in 2023, embodies that inclusive spirit, bringing together government, scientists, educators, fishers, youth, and civil society to align national actions with global goals.

However, the sustainability of these efforts is not guaranteed. Climate change, IUU fishing, and marine pollution continue to threaten both biodiversity and livelihoods. This is why we view the IOC strategy not just as a technical framework but as a call for solidarity, support, and shared stewardship.

We urge the IOC and its partners to further prioritize support for SIDS and coastal states, foster regional data-sharing platforms, and enhance the role of traditional knowledge alongside scientific expertise. We also encourage stronger engagement with financial institutions to help unlock the resources needed for implementation.

In closing, Seychelles stands ready to collaborate, share our experience, and learn from others as we work together towards a sustainable, equitable, and science-informed ocean future.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

We are pleased with the clarity emerging on the SOPM, with a clear focus on what the IOC can do in support of SOPM, who the target audience is and a Vision and Mission that are wholly aligned with what the IOC is able to support.

We note that the Implementation Plan draws heavily on existing IOC programme activities but will also need to source voluntary funding. Given the current funding situation the UK would strongly encourage the Secretariat to engage as best as possible with existing Sustainable Ocean Planning initiatives, working in partnership such that combined strengths of differing organisations can be put to best use in the support of IOC Member States SOPM ambitions.

United States of America

The United States has expressed concerns with the development of a Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management Strategy in previous Executive Council and Assembly meetings, as it is a strain on the IOC's finite resources, among other concerns. Additionally, the Strategy reinforces Agenda 2030 throughout the document, which is at odds with U.S. policies as referenced in our opening statement. The United States cannot support adoption of the Strategy, nor continuation of the Working Group. The United States, therefore, *will need to call for a vote on the decision text, by show of hands, after the Assembly has considered each paragraph, and before the decision is adopted.*

4.2 Draft Implementation Plan for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030

China

China appreciated the work of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development on the “Draft Implementation Plan for The IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023-2030”. Capacity development is an essential part of IOC's mission, enabling all Member States to participate in, and benefit from, ocean research and services. The Implementation Plan provides us with a comprehensive road map.

China recognizes that: 1. Capacity development would address the requirement of International Community to IOC, to mainstream the IOC's actions to the big global agenda, such as BBNJ. It means the work we are doing here would impact on the global agendas beyond IOC; 2. Capacity development plays a key role in promoting good ocean governance of IOC and its Member States, especially for developing Members States; 3. Capacity development is also a good vehicle to enhance the exchange and cooperation among different Member States.

Thus, we fully agree the recommendations proposed in the Draft Implementation Plan and encourage IOC and Member States to increase their input in Capacity development, particularly, taking use of the current mechanism, including OTGA and the platforms operated by Regional Subsidiary Bodies, such as RTRCs.

China would like to reiterate our will to contribute to and engage in various actions of capacity development in IOC, through making our voluntary donation, holding more workshops and training course, opening capacity development opportunities in other international framework to IOC Member States, funding the students of developing Member States to study for ocean-related Master and Doctoral degrees in China via Chinese Government Marine Scholarship Programme continuously etc.

India

India appreciates the capacity development strategy of IOC and formation of renewed Group of Experts on Capacity Development with 29 members. India also congratulates Dr Suzan El-Gharabawy and Dr Lina Eyouni for being elected as Co-Chairs of the IOC GE-CD.

India has realized the importance of capacity development long ago and set up an International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography (ITCOO) for imparting training in operational oceanography since 2013. This centre is acting as Regional Training Centre under OTGA and as

a Category 2 Centre under UNESCO. Through this centre India has been undertaking training programmes involving participants from Indian ocean rim countries, SIDS, LDCs and ECOPs. About 7400 trainees from 96 members countries were trained in various topics like Remote Sensing, Ocean Modelling, Data Management, QC and Visualization etc in this centre.

India has been actively involved in capacity development activities by partnering with OTGA, IOGOOS, POGO, RIMES, IORS etc. With the support of Ministry of External Affairs, Govt of. India has opened opportunities for training through the International Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) targeting the trainees from member state in the Indian Ocean.

By responding to the call for UNESCO-IOC Ocean Traineeship for 2024, India hosted a trainee from Sri Lanka and imparted training on machine learning for data and quality control procedures. India is willing to extend this support and responded to the call for this year too.

India participated in the sixth session of the IOC GE-CD, which was held at Ostend, Belgium on 22–24 October 2024 and contributed in the discussions to the development of an implementation plan for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy. Finally, we would like to reiterate that India is committed to the capacity development as per the Implementation Plan of regional sub-commission, based on the identified priority needs for the Indian Ocean region discussed in the regional sessions, and IOC CD biennial needs assessment surveys.

Ireland

Ireland has been very happy to engage in the development of the Implementation Plan through the Our Shared Ocean programme for Small Island Developing States.

Ireland supports the continuation of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development with revised terms of reference and looks forward to our continued constructive engagement on implementation of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy. Given that a larger part of the CD implementation involves leveraging and working with existing partners to build on existing programmes, Ireland will continue to prioritise our national commitment to Capacity Development for our ocean through our IOC engagement. Ireland's National Decade Committee will also seek to support and mentor nascent NDCs to achieve their own ambitions / priorities.

Japan

We warmly welcome the development of this Plan and reaffirm our strong support for IOC's capacity development efforts under its framework.

Japan emphasizes the value of establishing a cyclical process that regularly monitors implementation progress, allowing for the timely identification and resolution of potential obstacles. Ongoing evaluation and the ability to adapt will be key to the long-term success of the Plan.

Japan remains committed to participating in and supporting capacity development under this Strategy, and looks forward to working together with all partners to achieve lasting, sustainable results.

Malaysia

Malaysia would like to thank and appreciate the opportunity given to Malaysia to serve as one of the members of the previous IOC Group of Expert on Capacity Development.

Malaysia will continue to support and facilitate the implementation processes of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023-2030 Implementation Plan.

Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea recognizes the IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2023–2030) as a fundamental framework for inclusive growth in ocean science and for building sustainable ocean governance capacities across the international community. We would like to express our appreciation to the Group of Experts on Capacity Development (GE-CD) for their continued efforts.

The Korean government believes that capacity development should go beyond the simple transfer of technology. It should serve as a practical mechanism to support co-development and evidence-based policymaking. In this context, Korea has implemented a wide range of capacity development initiatives, and we hope these efforts can be further aligned with the IOC CD Strategy to generate mutual benefits and broader global impact.

As part of these efforts, Korea currently operates four regional cooperation centers across Asia and Latin America. Among them, the Korea–Indonesia Marine Technology Cooperation Research Center(MTCRC) plays a leading role in capacity development through joint research, field-based training, and science-policy interface in Southeast Asia. In particular, the Integrated Ocean Fisheries Technology Training Center (KIOTEC), officially established in Jakarta in 2023, provides structured graduate-level programs as well as hands-on technical training. Along with MTCRC's capacity development activities, this training center's activities have been officially endorsed as two Decade Actions under the UN Ocean Decade and is expected to function as a regional hub for international collaboration in capacity development.

Finally, the Republic of Korea hopes to further support the implementation of the IOC CD Strategy by facilitating the participation of national experts in relevant working groups such as the GE-CD. We look forward to Korea's official engagement being considered in future processes of expert group expansion and collaboration.

The Republic of Korea remains committed to being an active and inclusive partner in global efforts to advance ocean science, capacity development, and sustainable marine governance.

Russian Federation

We continue to actively contribute to the implementation of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030, placing particular emphasis on strengthening human resources and expertise in the field of ocean science.

Our work in this domain is being carried out within the framework of multilateral international programmes. In particular, joint oceanographic expeditions are being conducted in cooperation with African countries, focusing on the study of oceanographic conditions affecting the distribution of commercially important fish species along the coast of the African continent.

Additionally, a new high-resolution coupled ocean–atmosphere climate model is currently under development, with the integration of artificial intelligence components. Efforts are also underway to consolidate the resources of the national research fleet in order to implement interagency programmes related to the study of the ocean and marine resources.

The Russian Federation firmly believes that the development of human, scientific, and infrastructural capacity in ocean science is fundamental for the sustainable use of the resources of the World Ocean, as well as for effective responses to climate and environmental challenges.

Türkiye

We would like to highlight that rapid changes in the state of the ocean caused by accelerating pressures on oceans mean that the needs of Member States are evolving and diversifying.

Capacity Building activities are very significant since they not only increase the awareness but also support the establishment of oceanographic activities for coastal states to enhance the quality of existing capabilities.

Continuous investments in education and training are necessary so that we can continue to provide high quality products and services which satisfy the new and evolving demands of the Member States.

That is why we suggest that seeking new opportunities to increase the number of free capacity building activities is important so that no country is left behind.

Because of this, we would like to state that “The term of “One Ocean One Planet” is very crucial to understand the importance of that approach” and we strongly support IOCs role in this regard.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The development of the Implementation Plan is ambitious and will be key in demonstrating the value of Capacity Development efforts undertaken by the IOC, and the inclusion of a monitoring and evaluation framework will be critical in capturing these.

The issues identified, and solutions offered in other areas, for example the lack of global coordination, chime very much with discussions held at the recent UN Informal Consultative Process in New York. Whilst there is an absolute need to deliver Capacity Development in a manner that's consistent with IOC priorities as articulated in the IOC Capacity Development Strategy, it is however imperative that this does not take place in isolation. To this end we welcome the IOC exploring how we can help address the lack of coordination and collaboration that currently exists, with a variety of agencies undertaking Capacity Development and the Transfer of Marine Technology (CDTMT) in support of marine governance.

In the spirit of enhancing coordination and collaboration, we note the request under agenda item 4.4 on Ocean Literacy to form a permanent expert group of the Commission. In light of our position, where we believe closer working is key, we would suggest that the same applies to two complimentary areas of work within the IOC. To this end we have submitted suggest edits to Decision 4.2 and 4.4.

The UK strongly support a well-resourced, centralised IOC coordination function. IOC CD has made significant strides in recent years with the establishment of the IOC INFO HUB, IOC OCEAN CD-HUB, regular needs assessment, and buy-in by IOC Programmes and regional offices into coordinated delivery of Capacity Development as set by the IOC CD Strategy. Which all build on previous successes, such as the well-respected Ocean Teacher Global Academy (OTGA). As a core Purpose of the IOC, as articulated in the Statutes, and given the worldwide demand for Capacity Development, the IOC must demonstrate leadership in its delivery.

As such it is imperative that Capacity Development remains a priority for IOC and be supported with appropriate management, funding and resources. Mindful of the current financial pressures, we cannot abandon a key purpose of what the IOC was in fact established to do, so let's maintain the momentum and make sure that the IOC is a key contributor and partner in an area of great importance to so many.

United States of America

The United States appreciates the work of the Experts Group. Consistent with the positions referenced in our opening statement, the United States disassociates from the references to the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, and climate change, in the Implementation Plan of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy.

Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR)

The Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) appreciates IOC's leadership on making progress to improve global capacity to conduct ocean science.

SCOR advances capacity development, technology transfer, training, and networking by promoting broad participation in its ongoing scientific activities and by supporting individual and institutional human resource development. SCOR involves early-career and developing-country scientists in its projects and working groups, many of which conduct focused capacity development activities. In addition, SCOR supports Visiting Scholarships for conducting training in developing countries; a fellows programme jointly with POGO, the Partnership for the Observation of the Global Ocean; and grants for the participation of early-career scientists from developing countries in international scientific meetings and trainings. Over fifteen hundred individuals have been recipients across these programmes in the past 25 years. Retrospective analyses of these programmes have demonstrated their success at improving the research collaborations and career outcomes of participants—a challenge that SCOR will aim to address in partnerships with governmental and non-governmental actors at all levels.

4.3 General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) – Report and Follow Up on the Governance Review

Chile

Quisiera agradecer la informativa presentación entregada por los señores Flier y Harper. Chile continúa y continuará contribuyendo activamente con información batimétrica al proyecto Seabed 2030 y al Programa GEBCO, que buscan mapear la totalidad del fondo oceánico para el año 2030. La contribución que Chile hace a estas iniciativas, lo realiza directamente a GEBCO (GEBCO Data Contribution Form) con respaldo en IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry (DCDB). Chile está comprometido a proveer esta información para un mejor conocimiento del océano, particularmente de la región de Pacífico Sudeste y de la Antártica.

La reciente incorporación al servicio del Rompehielos “Almirante Viel”, construido en los Astilleros y Maestranzas de la Armada de Chile, ASMAR y que está convenientemente equipado para realizar investigación científica marina, contribuirá a mejorar el conocimiento del océano austral.

Adicionalmente, se estima importante mencionar una buena práctica que permitirá incrementar aún más el aporte a estos proyectos de exploración del fondo marino. En el mes de diciembre de 2022, bajo el marco del D.S. N° 711 (1975), el Estado de Chile dispuso que los datos batimétricos (sin procesar) obtenidos por investigaciones científicas y tecnológicas marinas, efectuadas por naves o entidades extranjeras, en la zona marítima de jurisdicción nacional, serán depositados en GEBCO, una vez finalizado su período de custodia de dos años.

China

China attaches great importance to the role of global bathymetric data in supporting the Sustainable Development Goals, advancing marine scientific research, and enhancing our understanding of ocean environments.

In 2024, China continued to actively participate in international cooperation on seafloor mapping, making progress particularly in polar regions. Chinese scientists contributed to the compilation of international bathymetric charts of the Southern and Arctic Oceans, further enriching the global foundational data of the deep sea.

In addition, China submitted eight newly discovered undersea feature name proposals to GEBCO, all of which were successfully approved. These names not only contribute to the scientific understanding of the relevant areas but also reflect China’s implementation and commitment to GEBCO’s naming standards.

China will continue to strengthen cooperation with GEBCO and its member states, actively promote data sharing, capacity building, and technical exchanges, and contribute to the goal of “mapping the entire seafloor for humanity.”

Colombia

Con el ánimo de fomentar la cooperación internacional, Colombia desea compartir que será el país anfitrión de la 42ª Reunión del Comité Directivo de GEBCO que se llevará a cabo en 2026, en línea con nuestro interés de fortalecer los conocimientos de los fondos oceánicos y en cumplimiento de los acuerdos con la Organización Hidrográfica Internacional (OHI).

Este escenario será clave para garantizar una navegación más segura, una planificación espacial marina más eficiente y una protección más efectiva de nuestros ecosistemas, por lo que esperamos contar con la participación activa de todos los Estados miembro, en aras de contribuir a encontrar soluciones comunes fundamentadas en el conocimiento científico sobre el océano.

En ese sentido y al asumir tan honrosa responsabilidad, Colombia reafirma su compromiso con la cooperación internacional en ciencia y tecnología, con levantamientos en áreas jurisdiccionales en el Caribe, el Pacífico y áreas de operación en la Península Antártica, promoviendo el intercambio de datos y capacidades para una mejor comprensión del océano.

Côte d'Ivoire

On ne dira pas assez de l'importance de la bathymétrie pour la connaissance du milieu marin. Pour l'Afrique, qu'il s'agisse de la Gestion durable des ressources marines, que de l'Aménagement du littoral (Protection contre l'érosion côtière entres autres), une bonne connaissance du relief sous-marin permet d'évaluer les dynamiques sédimentaires et de concevoir des mesures de protection efficaces à travers la mise en place de modèle mathématique et physique

La préoccupation de l'Afrique s'exprime surtout dans le domaine de la Délimitation des frontières maritimes et en particulier la demande d'extension des limites du plateau continental où une bathymétrie de grande précision est requise. La Côte d'Ivoire en a fait l'expérience lors de la soumission avec succès de son projet d'extension de son plateau continental

Puisse le GEBCO aider à lever ces types de cartographie haute précision pour les pays ayant peu de moyen. C'est le souhait de la Côte d'Ivoire.

Conscient que la formation demeure un point essentiel. La Côte d'Ivoire a inséré dans les programmes de formation dans les universités, les levées bathymétriques et leur traitement.

Pour l'Afrique, continent doté de vastes façades maritimes mais encore largement sous-cartographiées, la bathymétrie constitue un outil fondamental de développement bleu, de protection de l'environnement, et d'affirmation géopolitique. Toutefois, la Côte d'Ivoire souhaite que les cartes bathymétriques produite par GEBCO soient de haute précision.

Ireland

Ireland wishes to express our sincere thanks to Mr. Flier, Mr. Harper and the GEBCO team for their work over the intersessional period, and commends them for their leadership in highlighting the critical role hydrography plays in understanding and protecting our oceans. We very much welcome the update presented today. Ireland recognizes that seabed mapping is a fundamental foundation underpinning sustainable ocean action, planning and management.

At INFOMAR, Ireland's national and flagship seabed mapping programme, this mission is at the core of everything we do. From surveying shallow bays to charting deep offshore waters, we are working to produce high-resolution data that supports safe navigation, marine spatial planning, offshore renewable energy, environmental protection, and fisheries management.

Ireland is happy to share our experiences with GEBCO through engagement with the Sub-Committee on Regional Undersea Mapping. We can report that our technical expertise and capacity is also being shared under the auspices of the Our Shared Ocean programme for Small Island Developing States which was referenced in the Barcelona Statement. We recognize the important work being undertaken will have a role in our understanding of our ocean systems and in underpinning the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement. Ireland welcomes the Strategy Implementation Plan and encourages GEBCO to continue to evolve products, education and outreach communication tools to technical users and to engage with citizens to raise awareness of the Seabed 2030 targets. Ireland looks forward to continue our collaboration with GEBCO over the next period.

Japan

Japan appreciate the progress that has been made through the great collaboration of IHO and IOC. We are happy to maintain our good relationship with the Nippon Foundation to promote the project.

Portugal

Portugal congratulates the work that has being carried out by the GEBCO Guiding Committee and the GEBCO program, in particular the Nippon-Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 project that we consider a cornerstone of Ocean knowledge.

Portugal has been supportive to GEBCO initiatives.

We believe that Ocean Mapping plays a major role in the sustainable use of the sea by supporting research and promoting development.

Recognizing that the lack of detailed underwater topography (bathymetry and submarine relief data (meaning bathymetric data and undersea features)), constrains our ability to manage marine and maritime activities in a sustainable way, Portugal has focused its efforts on its Ocean Mapping program, namely the Seamap 2030 High Resolution Mapping of the Portuguese Sea project (aligned with Seabed2030) to collect high-resolution bathymetric data (now with 71% of our Exclusive Economic Zone covered), as well to promote the identification and submission of undersea features and to share data.

The data collected by Portugal is free available to everyone through a variable resolution data model and has been shared with the Seabed 2030 project, and in this context we have also been collaborating with Cape Vert in contributing with data of their continental shelf, having this an impact for the significantly increased mapped coverage area over the last 10 years.

Also, we are supportive of new data models and grid products that can emerge in compliance with the new IHO standard S-100.

Finally, Portugal expresses its commitment to fully map its EEZ by 2030 and continue to contribute for Seabed2030 project, as well as its appreciation for the recent Call to Action on Seabed Mapping announced in the last UNOC by the Ocean Decade Alliance, of which our President of the Republic is one of the patrons, asking for a stronger engagement from all to contribute to the goal of fully mapping the ocean floor by 2030.

Russian Federation

We acknowledge the significant progress achieved in the mapping of the World Ocean's seafloor. At the same time, we wish to emphasize that knowledge of the seafloor microtopography is equally important, as it enables improved forecasting of the condition and resource potential of both ecosystems and geosystems.

The origin and variability of seafloor relief forms are also influenced by deep geological processes, the intensification of which is currently being observed in various regions of the World Ocean. These processes may represent a valuable additional dimension to the work on ocean floor mapping.

In this context, and considering the potential expansion of the list of national agencies and institutions involved in the study of deep-seated geological processes shaping the seafloor and its microrelief, there may also be opportunities for increased financial support to reinforce the Commission's programme activities in this area.

Spain

España continúa contribuyendo al mapeado de los océanos a través de diferentes instituciones e iniciativas y su progresiva incorporación a bases de datos como EMODNET. Destacar que el Instituto Hidrografico de la Marina comenzó a colaborar en 2023 con el proyecto SEABED 2030 en la instalación de varios data loggers para la obtención de batimetría colaborativa en el Buque Escuela de la Armada Española Juan Sebastián El Cano y en otros buques de pesca, de recreo y mercantes. La información se remitirá a la oficina central de GEBCO y esperamos ir ampliando esta actividad en el futuro a un mayor número de buques. Además, en los próximos meses se unirán los datos del modelo batimétrico único, que se hará accesible al público en general.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The UK, through the National Oceanography Centre's British Oceanographic Data Centre (BODC), has been a longstanding supporter of the GEBCO, having hosted the GEBCO web site for several years, where we note in 2024 there were more than 700,000 visits. In recent years the NOC has also hosted the Seabed 2030 Global Centre (GDACC) which is responsible for maintaining and delivering GEBCO's global bathymetric data sets and products.

We would like to end by emphasising the importance of growing coverage of the seabed mapping and the foundational importance of bathymetry and we thank the numerous volunteers that enable the GEBCO to function.

4.4 IOC Ocean Literacy Action Plan and Strategy

Brazil

We are also thankful for the work of the IOC Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy, whose establishment as a permanent expert group in the Commission we support.

A clear message we took from the Side event "Blue Education for a Sustainable and Resilient Society", that we co-organized with UNESCO and others Member States during UNOC in Nice, was the importance of the involvement of policy and decision makers in Ocean Literacy actions. We are witnessing the growing importance of the ocean as part of the statements of heads of state and in climate related discussions. It makes it even more relevant to support informed policy development, enabling knowledge-driven actions for ocean sustainability and conservation. Further, for UNOC, our National Decade Committee crafted a message urging all relevant actors to "Continue supporting integrated curricula, Citizen Science, and an Ocean Culture that transcends literacy, recognizing diverse knowledge systems and connecting them to socio-environmental and technological demands."

Ocean Literacy is a cross-cutting and integral component of the Ocean Decade. As hosts of the next Ocean Decade Conference, we will work with the DCU to ensure that the design and implementation of the Conference benefit from the lessons of Ocean Literacy, aiming at translating science into accessible knowledge, sustainable action and governance for the ocean we need.

Holding a vision that Ocean Literacy can empower communities and contribute to the respect of the marine environment and ocean cultures, we invite interested stakeholders to join our Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation in signing the "OCEAN LITERACY CALL TO ACTION: from Venice to Nice to Belem". The call to action includes an invitation to commit with the Blue Curriculum development, for which we can collaborate.

The work on Ocean Literacy should strive for strengthening diversity, equity, and inclusion in the ocean community.

Chile

Desde 2022, Chile participa activamente en dicho Grupo de Expertos con la bióloga marina Pilar Muñoz y ha articulado su trabajo con el Grupo de Trabajo en Cultura Oceánica del Comité Oceanográfico Nacional (CONA), consolidando un marco nacional alineado con las prioridades de la COI. Esta coordinación ha facilitado la participación de Chile en instancias internacionales como el Foro CILAC, el Congreso Futuro y el Foro de Currículo Azul, y ha sido destacada en el State of the Ocean Report 2024.

Reiteramos nuestro compromiso con la cultura oceánica como herramienta clave para alcanzar los objetivos del Decenio del Océano, fortalecer la diplomacia oceánica y conectar ciencia, políticas y ciudadanía.

China

China appreciates the informative presentation and the continued work of the IOC under the guidance of the IOC Ocean Literacy Plans of Action and welcome the new Plan of Action 2026-2030. We value the publishing of Ocean Decade Vision 2030: A Theory of Change for the Ocean Decade (2025-2030) and Promoting Ocean Literacy-an Education Policy Brief and express our will to work with the Secretariat to translate them into Chinese, promoting the understanding of Chinese Scientists and people to Ocean Literacy.

Chinese experts have actively participated in relevant works in the IOC Ocean Literacy Group of Experts. Meanwhile, in the past years, China also has carried out a series of ocean literacy

activities in and beyond IOC. For instance, the “Blue Citizen” initiative is aimed to help people enhance their recognition of ocean, participate in actions for the sustainable development of the oceans and narrow the ocean-related knowledge gap among different regions, groups, and communities. Although China is not the member of Blue School programme, as what we said in the side event yesterday, we would like to encourage our experts to explore the potential cooperation between Blue Citizen initiative and Blue School programme.

We also applaud the contribution of IOCWESTPAC, which established a new Intersessional Task Force of Ocean Literacy in this March in Tokyo. We recommended our expert to this Task Force. We are delighted to see that the Task Force started their work efficiently in last week and encourage IOCWESTPAC and its Member States play more active role in the process of Ocean Literacy.

France

Mieux connaître l’océan, éduquer et sensibiliser sur les enjeux qui lui sont liés passe nécessairement par un développement des capacités et par une accélération des programmes de recherche, d’éducation à tous les niveaux ainsi que de sensibilisation du public et notamment des jeunes dans ce domaine.

À cet égard, les différents réseaux UNESCO et notamment les Centres de catégorie 2, les Chaires, Les Réserves de Biosphère marine, les Clubs et Écoles associées de l’UNESCO actifs dans le domaine de l’océan constituent un potentiel important pour accélérer le renforcement de ces capacités. Ils forment une Famille UNESCO de l’Océan, que la France souhaiterait voir se développer à l’instar de la Famille UNESCO de l’Eau.

La famille UNESCO de l’Océan France s’est quant à elle réunie pour la première fois à l’UNOC à Nice, le 7 juin 2025, lors d’un évènement organisé à la Baleine par la Commission nationale française auprès de l’UNESCO. Cet évènement a permis la mutualisation de modules éducatifs de qualité en ressources éducatives libres et l’identification de projets de coopération entre ces acteurs engagés.

India

India appreciate the progress of the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action (2018–2021), and the updated Ocean Literacy Plan of Action (2026–2030). Having realized the importance of Ocean Literacy, India had been involved in formulating and implementing various programs for integrating ocean knowledge with public action.

India has come up with a program named “Swatch Sagar Surakshit Sagar” meaning “Clean Ocean and Safe Ocean” and have been involving many stakeholders namely, students from schools and colleges, NGO, Govt. officials, common public and conducting ocean cleanliness drive along the coastline of India on 3rd Saturday of each year.

India has also adopted schools and regular sending, scientist involved in ocean related activities to raise awareness among the students. The knowledge of oceanography and importance of oceans and ocean decade gave been translated into local languages to make sure that it reaches the masses.

India is also involving ECOP and making use of their expertise to bring awareness among all on oceans and their importance. The ECOPs are also involved in preparing cartoon based youtube videos for effective reachability to parents and students.

Mr. Chair, India also have the opinion that the success of Ocean Literacy program depends upon how deep this program is alignment with local community issue and problems.

Finally, we would like to reiterate that India is committed to the ocean literacy plan of action devised for 2026 – 2030 would like to come up innovative program to make sure the literacy about ocean is enhanced among various stake holders.

Japan

Japan acknowledges the importance of expert contributions in advancing ocean literacy. However, regarding Draft Decision A-33/4.4, paragraph 6, Japan does not support the inclusion of the term “permanent” and considers it more appropriate to establish just “expert group” without permanent, allowing for its activities and effectiveness to be periodically reviewed and evaluated.

Recognizing the importance of public engagement, the Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC) has been promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics, so called STEAM - based ocean education and outreach activities to enhance awareness and encourage broader social participation in ocean-related issues.

Furthermore, Japan is pleased to highlight the upcoming Asia Marine Educators Association with ECOPs Ocean Literacy Conference 2025, scheduled for this August in Tokyo. Co-hosted by Ocean Policy Research Institute and other partners. This international event will bring together educators, researchers, and ECOP to foster interdisciplinary collaboration in support of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

Japan looks forward to continued engagement with regional and global partners to advance ocean literacy and ensure meaningful progress in empowering societies with the knowledge needed to sustain our ocean.

Malaysia

Malaysia acknowledges the leadership of Professor Ronaldo Christofolletti and appreciates the opportunity to serve as a member of the previous IOC Ocean Literacy Group of Experts.

A key milestone is the Ministry of Education’s integration of ocean topics into Malaysia’s new national curriculum, to be launched in 2027, which indirectly supports learning about ocean-related issues.

This ensures marine science, sustainability, and climate literacy are embedded across subjects and age groups.

Malaysia remains committed to advancing the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action 2026–2030 and looks forward to continued collaboration with IOC and Member States.

Portugal

We also fully support IOC’s continued engagement and commitment to Ocean Literacy, as outlined in its Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029).

Ocean literacy is one of the pillars of the UN Ocean Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. If we want to revert the present state of degradation of the Ocean and aim at a healthy Ocean that supports marine biodiversity, guaranteeing healthy ecosystems and services, as well as the development of a sustainable Ocean Economy, we need an informed and engaged society that understands the importance of the Ocean in sustaining life on Earth, but also its major role in creating global health, wealth and jobs. This can only be achieved through Ocean Literacy aimed at all sectors of society, promoting a transformative behavior change.

We especially wish to acknowledge the remarkable work carried out by Francesca Santoro and by the IOC Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy. Portugal strongly supports the formalization of this group as a permanent expert body under the Commission. We believe this is a critical step toward ensuring continuity, strengthening coordination, and scaling impact globally.

Ocean Literacy is not only a powerful tool to disseminate ocean science, but is also essential to reconnect people with the ocean, especially in this decisive moment of climate crisis. It fosters a culture of care, responsibility, and action, aligning science, education, and citizenship.

Portugal has been engaged in this work from the very beginning. We are proud to be the founding country of the Blue School concept, which inspires the Blue School global Network. We are also beginning the process of integrating the ocean more systematically into our national curriculum, ensuring that future generations grow up with ocean knowledge and ocean values.

Finally, Portugal fully supports the Venice Declaration and encourages all Member States to join efforts toward a more ocean-literate world.

Russian Federation

We consider it important to take into account the proposals made by Member States regarding the draft decision and its annex. In particular, we highlight the significance of the provision establishing an open composition of the group, based on nominations officially submitted by IOC Member States. We are convinced that such an approach will ensure broad, balanced, and inclusive participation of experts, reflecting the diversity of regional and national strategies in the field of ocean literacy.

In this context, the Russian Federation is pleased to nominate a national expert to take part in the work of the group.

We believe that addressing strategic challenges in the fields of ocean and climate science, as well as ensuring continuity and maintaining a high level of international scientific cooperation, requires the consistent development of a new generation of researchers.

In Russia, a successful model for training specialists has been developed and is being implemented through the Floating University programme, which involves a wide network of educational and research institutions across the country. A key component of this model is the Winter Scientific Schools initiative, aimed at the professional orientation of undergraduate students. Each year, approximately one thousand students participate in these schools, where they are introduced to contemporary fields of ocean science, receive intensive training, and are guided in choosing their research trajectory.

Following a competitive selection process, the most motivated participants are offered the opportunity to undergo practical training as part of multidisciplinary oceanographic expeditions in the Arctic and Far Eastern seas.

The overall objective of the programme is to establish a continuous scientific and educational pathway—from early school-level orientation to the training of PhD candidates who are fully prepared to work in academic and research institutions, including under demanding fieldwork conditions.

The Russian Federation stands ready to share its methodological approaches and practical experience within the framework of cooperation with the IOC and its Member States.

South Africa

South Africa welcomes the report by Prof Christofolletti the leader of the Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy. South Africa considers Ocean literacy, Advocacy, Education and awareness important for developing current and future human capacity for citizens of member states such as South Africa and has included ocean literacy and advocacy in national policy. South Africa's Ministry of Basic Education has officially included the subject "Marine Science" in the school syllabus. For the first time ever, a first batch of learners completed their final year of Secondary school with "Marine Science" as one of their core subjects in December 2025. We consider this a good progress.

Thailand

Thailand welcomes the Draft IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action 2026–2030 and its Addendum. We commend the Group of Experts for developing such a comprehensive and forward-looking framework.

Thailand recognizes that advancing ocean literacy is not only about educating the public—it is about transforming society's relationship with the ocean through inclusive, science-based, and culturally grounded actions. We particularly welcome the emphasis on integrating indigenous and local knowledge systems, fostering behavioral change, and strengthening cross-sectoral policy dialogues. These are critical to ensuring that ocean science leads to meaningful, sustainable outcomes.

As a nation with strong maritime traditions and coastal communities deeply connected to the ocean, Thailand has already begun implementing initiatives aligned with the Plan. These include integrating marine science into school curricula, supporting youth-led stewardship programmes, and strengthening the capacity of teachers and local leaders.

Nonetheless, we acknowledge ongoing challenges in sustaining and scaling these efforts.

We therefore echo the call for enhanced regional coordination and robust resource mobilisation. Crucially, we must also widen the circle of engaged stakeholders. This includes aligning ocean literacy with corporate sustainability through ESG frameworks, empowering the media sector to translate science into compelling public narratives, and supporting local governments and NGOs in embedding ocean literacy into coastal planning and citizen-science initiatives.

Thailand stands ready to collaborate further within the Ocean Literacy with all programme and contribute actively to regional knowledge-sharing platforms.

4.5.1 GOOS Governance

Colombia

Colombia desea destacar la valiosa participación de los Estados Miembro en el fortalecimiento del GOOS, en particular a través del rol de los Puntos Focales Nacionales (NFP). En este sentido, el país sugiere considerar mecanismos que permitan una mayor socialización e inclusión de los NFP en los procesos asociados al segundo diamante que se desarrollará en 2026, reconociendo sus aportes tanto a nivel nacional como regional en la implementación del GOOS, lo cual contribuiría a evolucionar la gobernanza de este Sistema de forma más representativa y colaborativa.

Côte d'Ivoire

Avant toute chose, nous tenons à exprimer notre regret de constater que, malgré les interpellations répétées des experts engagés dans les activités de GOOS AFRICA, des erreurs persistent sur le site de GOOS concernant les informations relatives à GOOS-AFRICA.

De manière plus générale, la Côte d'Ivoire est convaincue que, dans le contexte de l'évolution des efforts mondiaux en matière d'observation océanique, il est légitime et nécessaire de rechercher une meilleure coordination entre les différentes initiatives. Toutefois, toute tentative d'instaurer une gouvernance centralisée, quel qu'en soit l'organe, risquerait de nier les efforts déjà déployés aux niveaux national et régional, et pourrait être perçue comme une remise en cause des spécificités des États membres.

Nous appelons donc à une démarche fondée sur l'inclusion, le respect mutuel et l'équité, articulée autour des principes suivants :

1. Respect des souverainetés nationales et des priorités régionales

Les États côtiers sont porteurs de réalités géographiques, économiques et institutionnelles diverses. Une gouvernance uniforme qui ignorerait ces particularités ne saurait répondre de manière pertinente aux besoins d'observation marine.

2. Reconnaissance de la diversité des approches

Les systèmes d'observation s'appuient sur une pluralité de méthodes : savoirs scientifiques, innovations locales, connaissances autochtones. Cette diversité est une richesse qu'il convient de valoriser et non d'uniformiser.

3. Équité dans l'accès aux ressources et à la prise de décision

Il est impératif d'assurer une coordination juste et transparente, un dialogue effectif avec les Alliances régionales de GOOS, ainsi qu'une allocation budgétaire équitable en faveur de leurs actions.

4. Reconnaissance et renforcement des mécanismes de coordination existants

Plusieurs mécanismes de coordination régionaux ont démontré leur efficacité, souvent sans appui direct du Secrétariat. Ces efforts doivent être reconnus, renforcés et accompagnés, et non contournés.

5. Assurance d'une légitimité partagée et d'une opérationnalité réaliste

Une gouvernance robuste doit s'appuyer sur la confiance, l'expérience, les compétences reconnues et un véritable processus participatif, fidèle à l'esprit de coopération et de solidarité intellectuelle promu par l'UNESCO.

L'objectif commun d'amélioration des systèmes mondiaux d'observation océanique ne pourrait être atteint que par une gouvernance coopérative, participative, inclusive, équilibrée et transparente. Il s'agit de privilégier une approche fondée sur la complémentarité plutôt que sur l'uniformisation, la bureaucratie. Alors et alors seulement, nous aurons une gouvernance durable, équitable et adaptée aux enjeux planétaires en prenant en compte les réalités régionales.

France

Cette réforme est essentielle pour assurer la consolidation et le développement d'un système global d'observation de l'océan répondant aux attentes sociétales. L'approche proposée en deux phases est pertinente et doit permettre de faire ressortir les priorités pour la coordination du GOOS. Un point majeur est le lien avec les Etats Membres et le développement d'un plan d'implémentation du GOOS permettant de guider et d'aligner les contributions des Etats Membres.

India

India has been working with several other Member States for implementing key Ocean Observation networks in the Indian Ocean. In the past one year, India has deployed 48 Argo floats including 9 BGC floats, 09 Wave Drifters, 96 XBT profiles, 21 XCTD profiles, serviced 39 ADCPs, 05 GNSS Receivers collated with Tide Gauges, 16 Wave Rider Buoys redeployment, set up 2 coastal biogeochemical observatories, maintained 32 GNSS and 33 SMA stations, etc. A slocum glider was deployed to operate between Mauritius and Antarctica. India has been working closely with NOAA, USA for the maintenance of the OMNI/RAMA mooring array. India continued to support the Secretariat for IOGOOS. The last Annual meeting of these bodies was hosted by Mauritius in Port Louis. India through ITCOOcean, the UNESCO C2C centre at INCOIS, has also undertaken training programmes in partnership with IOC-GOOS and IOGOOS entitled "Empowering the Next Wave of Indian Ocean Prediction: IOPredict-2024" was hosted by India. Over 80 participants including students and young researchers from Brazil, India, Malaysia, and South Africa have participated in the workshop.

India would like to thank IOC for providing a strong support structure to the GOOS Regional Alliances and reinitiating the necessary budget allocations towards GRAs as well as putting efforts to connect the GRAs together.

India would like to highlight that co-support for several of these activities since 1998 came through the Perth Programme office until 2001, and there is a need to substitute this key support for effective implementation of regional GOOS initiatives.

India would like to reiterate that it is important for GOOS to place more focus on building end to end value chains to deliver operational services for various end users. This is where the benefit of ocean observing networks is most directly recognised.

India is happy to announce that we double the Ocean Observation systems in the Indian Ocean during 2026-2031. We seek active support from GOOS and IOC-INDIO for effective coordination of member states for establishing operational multipurpose observation systems in the Indian Ocean region and supporting the early warning systems, Blue Economy and Marine policy initiatives of the member states in the Indian Ocean.

India considers the Ocean observation as part of one of its national infrastructure.

Ireland

Ireland, the European Marine Board and relevant stakeholders are working to implement the European Ocean Observing System as a complementary element aligned with the GOOS strategic agenda.

We are acutely aware of changes in the global environment in which GOOS operates.

Ireland endorses the vision and approach set out by GOOS given the context. Ireland where appropriate, practical and possible, remains ready assist the evolution of GOOS to support this globally important infrastructure underpinning our understanding of the Ocean, a sustainable blue economy and the health of our citizens.

Japan

GOOS is one of the IOC's most important programs for establishing a sustainable ocean observation network. The development of GOOS governance, which is currently underway under the GOOS 2030 strategy, will lead to monitoring of the marine environment as well as adaptation and mitigation measures against climate change when combined with future projection models, which are also important for the future development of the Blue Economy. For these reasons, ocean observation is now one of the essential infrastructures.

Japan has been contributing to GOOS through various activities related to GOOS, such as GO-SHIP, Argo, GLOSS, DBCP, NEAR-GOOS, etc., and has recently been working with the UN Ocean Decade. For example, regarding Argo, Japan continuously deploys more than 30 floats each year, including Deep and Biogeochemical (BGC) floats, and operates more than 150 floats, as well as data management including quality control, and through these activities, Japan is contributing to the promotion of OneArgo, one of the projects of the UN Ocean Decade. In addition, as an activity related to CoastPredict, which held a side event with GOOS last week, research on ocean observation network optimization and ocean model data assimilation technology improvement is being promoted through SybObs (Synergistic Observing Network for Ocean Prediction), one of the projects of the UN Ocean Decade, with the Meteorological Research Institute of Japan serving as the focal point. Japan will continue to contribute to GOOS activities.

Malaysia

Malaysia acknowledges the vital role of the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) in supporting climate resilience, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable ocean management. We commend the continued efforts of the IOC in strengthening the GOOS governance and implementation mechanisms.

Regionally, Malaysia remains committed to contributing to SEAGOOS and IOGOOS. Through SEAGOOS, we value the collaborative work that enhances ocean observation across the Western Pacific, including regional initiatives that support marine spatial planning, plastic pollution monitoring, and biodiversity assessments.

In the Indian Ocean, Malaysia is pleased to engage with IOGOOS, particularly in joint efforts related to the Second International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE-2) and ocean climate observation.

Malaysia reaffirms our support for GOOS and encourage all Member States to strengthen regional cooperation to ensure ocean observations are fit-for-purpose in addressing today's pressing environmental and societal challenges.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation notes that, in light of the increasing demands on the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), the improvement of GOOS governance mechanisms with the participation of the IOC, WMO, and other co-sponsoring organizations is becoming increasingly relevant. This process must align with the needs and priorities of Member States.

One of the key objectives of GOOS is the development of the necessary ocean observing infrastructure at national, regional, and global levels, as well as the establishment of a data ecosystem that meets the requirements of end users. In this context, we emphasize the importance of strengthening support for regional GOOS alliances and enhancing cooperation with them.

At the regional level, the Russian Federation contributes to and remains committed to the further development of NEAR-GOOS.

We support the step-by-step action plan for improving GOOS governance, as proposed by the IOC Secretariat. This plan includes clarification of the system's mission, scope, structure, terms of reference, reporting mechanisms, data provision strategy, and the establishment of a GOOS core network.

South Africa

We believe the revitalisation of GOOS will enable it to fulfil its mandate of providing the much-needed ocean observation services. The improved GOOS 2.0 is vital for the success of, amongst others, UN Ocean Decade and the challenges it faces are unfortunate and every effort to mobilise resources should be made to enable its progress towards its reformation succeeds. As stated on the presentation that GOOS is a "Member States" driven body, we believe that the revitalisation process should be open to "customise" its approach depending on the needs of the Member States and stakeholders in specific regions, such as GOOS-AFRICA. GOOSAFRICA is also undergoing the process of revitalisation and we believe that GOOS and GOOS-AFRICA will share notes during this period.

United States of America

The United States welcomes progress by GOOS towards their Strategic Objectives, and we appreciate the IOC responding to the needs of Member States in order to ensure that GOOS governance is fit for purpose, and that it supports an efficient and effective ocean observing system. The United States remains committed to supporting the global GOOS ocean observing community as critical infrastructure, and we support the decision as drafted. We encourage GOOS and the IOC to embrace this opportunity to reform GOOS, to improve its governance and practices, to better advocate for, develop, and sustain critical ocean observations for the benefit of all.

Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS)

The Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS) is an independent, international initiative of the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) and the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) with the mission to facilitate the enhanced collection and delivery of essential observations from the Southern Ocean to all stakeholders. Acting as the Southern Ocean regional alliance, SOOS appreciates GOOS' efforts advocating for increased ocean observations to meet societal needs. There is a pressing societal requirement for ocean observations as recently made evident at the UN Ocean Conference and the statement from the Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean.

The Southern Ocean plays a critical role in the earth climate system, including driving global circulation, accounting for 50% of the oceanic uptake of CO₂ and 75% of excess heat. Yet, it is undergoing significant changes and we lack the sustained and coordinated observations required to understand the extent of these changes, to predict likely future states and the impact these changes are, and will continue to have.

No one nation alone can collect the observations required in the Southern Ocean, therefore coordination and collaboration is essential to understanding the Southern Ocean. SOOS is facilitating this coordination and collaboration through aligning international priorities, enhancing collaboration and capacities, enhancing data visibility and accessibility, and ensuring the knowledge gained is available to all stakeholders including policy.

SOOS has recently been successfully awarded a grant from the Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco which will deliver interactive maps of observational coverage and data for key Southern Ocean variables through our data discovery tool, SOOSmap. Further, SOOS will be using this tool to develop regular Status of the Southern Ocean report cards which will be made available to all stakeholders including policymakers.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

GOOS is critical infrastructure. From our perspective as a co-sponsor, it is a key Earth System domain contributor to the WMO Integrated Global Observing System. Much of the physical data from GOOS networks flows through the WMO Information System to prediction centers. The meteorological services and other weather, marine, and climate prediction centers that coordinate activities through WMO represent an important user of GOOS observations. These observations have long been recognized as important in climate prediction, and there is growing evidence of the positive impact of surface and subsurface ocean observations on weather prediction skill, including for tropical storms. We are aware of the fragility of funding arrangements that sustain many ocean observing networks, and will continue to build advocacy for these.

WMO's contribution to the GOOS programme comes in the WMO staff that are part of the GOOS Management Team including OceanOPS, with both WMO regular and extrabudgetary funding; as well as direct support through a UN2UN agreement.

An important emerging strategic orientation at WMO is technical assistance to developing country Members in their national implementation of infrastructure and early warning systems, including through development projects; there is potential to include parts of GOOS in this work.

We welcome the examination of GOOS governance and look forward to continued engagement in the process.

4.5.2 GOOS Steering Committee Workplan

Chile

Quisiera agradecer la confianza depositada en Chile, al haber designado a Matías Sifón del Servicio Hidrográfico y Oceanográfico de la Armada de Chile, para continuar sirviendo por un segundo periodo como miembro experto regional del Comité Directivo de GOOS por el Grupo Electoral III de Estados Miembros, para los años 2026-2027.

China

In February 2025, China sent representative, as the core member, to attend the 14th meeting of the GOOS Steering committee (SC) to discuss the priorities of GOOS for the next three years, and also to participate in the group discussion on GOOS Reform. On April, the representative participated in the online discussion of the draft work plan for three years (from 2025 to 2027) of GOOS. So, in response to this issue, our position on the GOOS work plan is positive and open.

In addition, focusing on the realization of the objectives of the 2030 strategy, the three years plan has designed reasonable and operable tasks and related timelines. It includes coordination, management, observing network, capacity construction, data integration and delivery, even GOOS Reform. In general, we agree to the work plan.

Meanwhile, as many other member states, the ocean observing activities in China involve different level stakeholders, including Ministries, local governments, institutes, universities, even private sectors. Etc. The internal coordination among above-mentioned stakeholders needs more time. We always strive to coordinate and integrate them with international standards. Next step, we would gradually select appropriate marine stations to participate in the pilot application of the ocean indicators, and can engage deeply as a collaborator in the construction of the GOOS basic network. On the other hand, we hope that more Chinese private sectors or institutions can participate in the joint development of carbon observation sensors and the joint development of operational BGC products, serves and technologies, which is conducive to the practices of Blue Carbon Observation programs in ocean communities.

France

La France note que le système global d'observation de l'Océan est dans une situation inédite de risque que ce soit pour le système lui-même que pour sa coordination par la COI. La France remercie la COI pour sa proposition d'un plan de travail ambitieux dans ce contexte. Ce plan de travail répond aux attentes de la France vis-à-vis de l'évolution du GOOS et de sa réforme. Il sera nécessaire de définir des priorités parmi les actions proposées.

Japan

To advance the governance of GOOS, it is crucial to enhance the coordination and management capabilities of GOOS.

Furthermore, collaboration with other organizations, such as IODE, WMO and JCB, is necessary, including IOC data architecture and Ocean Best Practices System (OBPS), both of which were on the agenda last week.

In addition to strengthening cooperation not only among international organizations, but also with GOOS Regional Alliances (GRA) and national focal points (NFPs) mentioned in the workplan, we need to further promote strategies that address societal needs and encourage sustainable economic development through ETOOFS and EW4All, etc.

Finally, Japan would like to wish the newly appointed regional members all the best in their future endeavors.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

I will take the opportunity to highlight the numerous areas where WMO has particular interest in the GOOS workplan. These include in:

- defining the basic essential observations from the ocean for different applications for IOC and for WMO, including for the Global Basic Observing Network GBON, enhancing the potential for development funding, as well as the area of data integration and delivery – work that will take place under the umbrella of the Joint Collaborative Board,
- defining and shaping the Expert Team on Operational Ocean Forecasting Services ETOOFS as a body that can serve both IOC and WMO objectives through GOOS,
- leveraging the work on indicators and their potential in assessments,
- aligning plans for atmospheric and ocean greenhouse gas infrastructure, and
- regular reporting on the status of GOOS, building on the work of OceanOPS.

We'd also like to highlight the recent launch at UNOC by WMO, IOC and IMO of the “10 000 ships for the ocean” initiative, building an ambitious public-private partnership with industry to expand ship-based observations, which we hope will bring a strong contribution to the development of GOOS.

4.5.3 Report of the Intersessional Working Group on Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction

Argentina

La República Argentina agradece la presentación realizada y la labor desarrollada por el Grupo de Trabajo reconociendo el esfuerzo sostenido en el análisis del tema, incluso en situaciones en las que no se contó con información completa o con los aportes de todos los actores potencialmente involucrados.

Además, reafirma que cualquier labor en este ámbito debe ajustarse a las disposiciones de la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Derecho del Mar (CONVEMAR).

La República Argentina cuenta con un procedimiento estandarizado de autorización para la realización de actividades de investigación científica marina, el cual es coordinado por el

Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Comercio Internacional y Culto. Todas las solicitudes recibidas son tramitadas por el Estado argentino dentro del plazo previsto en el artículo 248 de la CONVEMAR. No obstante, se considera fundamental que las solicitudes de autorización sean presentadas con la debida antelación, a fin de permitir la intervención de todos los organismos nacionales competentes y garantizar así el adecuado funcionamiento del procedimiento.

Por otra parte, la República Argentina desea recordar la importancia del estricto cumplimiento de lo dispuesto en el artículo 249 de la CONVEMAR, en lo que respecta a la obligación de remitir al Estado ribereño los datos y muestras obtenidos durante la campaña, así como los informes preliminares y el informe final con los resultados y conclusiones correspondientes. En particular, se subraya lo establecido en el párrafo 2 del mencionado artículo, que exige el consentimiento previo del Estado ribereño para la difusión internacional de los resultados de investigaciones que revistan importancia directa para la exploración y explotación de recursos naturales.

Finalmente, la República Argentina desea poner de relieve el valor que tiene para el Estado ribereño la posibilidad de embarcar un observador nacional a bordo del buque, conforme a lo previsto en el artículo 249, párrafo 1, inciso a), de la CONVEMAR.

En cuanto al Proyecto de Decisión A-33/4.5.3, la República Argentina desea formular las siguientes observaciones:

i. No resulta del todo clara la extensión ni el alcance concreto de las actividades implicadas en la función de los "intermediarios", contenida en el párrafo 7. Cabe señalar que, conforme al régimen jurídico aplicable, las solicitudes de autorización para realizar investigaciones científicas marinas son tramitadas directamente entre el Estado que promueve la investigación y el Estado ribereño, sin que exista, en el marco de la CONVEMAR, un reconocimiento formal de funciones de intermediación a organismos regionales. Por consiguiente, esta Delegación agradecería que se precise con mayor claridad el alcance, carácter y límites de dicha función.

ii. A su vez, en cuanto a la frase "...así como coordinando los esfuerzos para agilizar los procedimientos entre los países con características regionales similares", se requeriría de mayores precisiones respecto de quiénes serían los responsables de realizar dichos esfuerzos y en qué consistiría exactamente la labor de coordinación mencionada.

Brazil

Brazil considers ocean observations crucial to the advancement of ocean science and the knowledge related to the ocean, as well as to the sustainable use of the sea and its resources and to the development of our societies.

The ocean is directly linked to SDG 14, and also connected to other goals established in the Agenda 2030, including the fight against poverty and the reduction of inequalities, while contributing to enhance climate action. All those objectives are very much in line with the right of every society to manage its own resources, in order to pursue its legitimate aspirations towards a better future. That is why we have always underlined the importance of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which is the fundamental instrument that guides us while considering the subject of ocean observations.

Brazil acknowledges the important efforts of the Intersessional Working Group to advance the subject of ocean observations in areas under national jurisdiction and would like to thank the co-chairs from Egypt and Argentina for their dedication and conduction of the task. We hope we are on the way to clarify this subject.

Chile

Las materias e inquietudes tratadas y planteadas durante las sesiones del Grupo de Trabajo Intersesional sobre Observaciones Oceánicas en Zonas bajo Jurisdicción Nacional, dejaron de manifiesto que los procesos implementados desde 1975 por parte de Chile (Decreto Supremo N° 711), cumplen cabalmente con las disposiciones establecidas en la CONVEMAR para el desarrollo de este tipo de investigaciones, estableciendo claramente los plazos para gestionar

los permisos y las condiciones para que este se otorgado, por lo que generalmente no se plantean mayores problemas al respecto.

Chile agradece la oportunidad de participación en un Grupo de Trabajo de este nivel, a través del cual ha sido posible no solo conocer distintas realidades con respecto a la obtención de datos oceánicos, sino que también permitir buscar solución a algunas de las problemáticas, de manera de armonizar nuestros requerimientos con las necesidades globales en dicha materia.

China

China consistently attaches great importance to international cooperation in ocean governance and fully recognizes its key role in promoting the development of sustained ocean observation. We appreciate the work of the Intersessional Working Group on Ocean Observations in Areas under National Jurisdiction (OONJ) over the past nearly two years and the dedication of expert members of the Group.

We thank IOC and GOOS for their great support. These contributions make it possible to identify challenges to ocean observations in areas under national jurisdiction and to provide possible ways forward. Experts from China are actively involved in the Working Group. China recognizes the contribution of enhanced implementation of ocean observations within national jurisdiction to the marine scientific research in many fields.

China notes that it is significant to conduct studies and provide recommendations within the balance of rights and obligations between coastal States and user States under the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Simultaneously, the consensus of States should be fully reflected so as to respond to the concerns of all parties to the greatest extent and solve the problem effectively. China stands ready to continue to engage with and support the further work together with other States.

France

La France remercie le groupe de travail sur les observations océaniques dans les zones sous juridiction nationale pour les travaux menés. Elle note que c'est un sujet complexe qui devra être régulièrement discuté au cas par cas suivant les besoins des différents réseaux du GOOS. La France valide les recommandations du groupe de travail. Elle considère que les solutions mises en place par la COI pour le programme Argo pourraient potentiellement s'appliquer aux autres réseaux GOOS pertinents, comme le SOOP.

Japan

Japan recognizes the need for a sustainable expansion of the global ocean observation network and the importance of promoting Marine Scientific Research based on UNCLOS. When conducting MSR in waters under the jurisdiction of another country, Japan strictly follows the prior consent application procedure in accordance with UNCLOS, regardless of the platform used. The exception is for an Argo float drifting in waters under the jurisdiction of a coastal state that has established a National Focal Point in accordance with the Argo Guidelines. Observations with Argo floats under the establishment of the Argo Guidelines have brought about great advances in marine science which are essential for monitoring the present status of oceans and forecasting the future.

Japan recognizes the importance of smooth MSR consent applications and reviews within national jurisdictions. Japan took note of the challenges, identified by the intersessional working group, for GOOS networks, in particular those for the Ship-of-Opportunity Programme. Japan looks forward to receiving a draft proposal from the GOOS Steering Committee on the actions that IOC could take to address these challenges within the frame of UNCLOS.

Malaysia

As a megadiverse maritime nation, Malaysia recognizes the importance of the BBNJ Agreement in safeguarding marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, which comprise nearly half of the Earth's surface.

Malaysia supports the core pillars of the BBNJ Agreement, particularly the establishment of area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from marine genetic resources, and the robust application of environmental impact assessments for activities with potential transboundary impacts.

These elements align with our national priorities under the National Policy on Biological Diversity and the soon-to-be-updated National Ocean Policy.

While Malaysia has yet to sign the Agreement, the process is actively under inter-agency consultation. As we move forward, our focus will be on strengthening institutional coordination, updating legal frameworks, and ensuring inclusive participation from scientific, legal, and Indigenous knowledge communities.

We also see the BBNJ framework as a catalyst to further build our national capacity in marine science, taxonomy, deep-sea biodiversity research, and digital sequence information governance.

Regionally, Malaysia is committed to fostering cooperation within ASEAN. We believe the BBNJ Agreement offers an opportunity to advance collective stewardship over shared marine ecosystems and migratory species.

Malaysia is ready to work with our neighbours to promote knowledge sharing, joint research, and equitable technology transfer under the framework of South-South cooperation.

In closing, Malaysia affirms the importance of a fair, inclusive, and science-driven implementation of the BBNJ Agreement.

We thank the IOC and its member states for facilitating this shared vision for the ocean's future.

Malaysia looks forward to contributing meaningfully to the post-ratification phase, not only as a beneficiary, but also as a partner in advancing the ocean science agenda for the benefit of all humanity.

Portugal

Portugal would like to thank and congratulate our colleague Suzan El-Garabawi for the comprehensive summary report, as well as for the excellent work carried out by the working group, on this topic of high relevance, namely by identifying and further exploring the major issues that may hinder sustained global ocean observations. We also acknowledge with appreciation the identification of best practices reported to this assembly.

Portugal firmly believes that ocean observations in areas of national jurisdiction require clearance from the coastal states within the UNCLOS framework, but we maintain that most of the issues identified by the Working Group, including those considering timeframes for application and simplification of procedures for asking for permits from the coastal states, can be addressed and overcome through bilateral, multilateral and regional agreements.

ARGO is a good example on how similar difficulties can be addressed and solved.

Russian Federation

We believe that the main current problem is the lack of clarity, awareness or understanding of the application processes for marine scientific research, which often differ between countries. In addition, the organization of marine scientific research is further complicated by illegal sanctions against research vessels of the Russian Federation imposed by a number of Western countries.

We would also like to reiterate the information voiced by colleagues from the IWG that during consultations with the networks, no evidence was provided of the existence of alleged data deficiencies from areas under national jurisdiction, or of tangible impacts of these data deficiencies on GOOS services or products. We therefore support the proposal for further consideration of this issue by the GOOS Steering Committee to submit a report to the 59th session of the IOC Executive Council in 2026.

We would like to emphasize once again that the collection of any scientific data on the marine environment is an element of marine scientific research within the meaning of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982. Accordingly, its implementation in the EEZ and territorial sea of coastal states requires their consent. In this regard, the entry of autonomous surveillance equipment into the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation is impossible without sending the appropriate official notification. At the same time, the Russian Federation reserves the right to prevent their entry into maritime spaces under national jurisdiction.

Spain

España muestra su máximo agradecimiento a los miembros de trabajo sobre las observaciones en aguas de jurisdicción nacional y a Susan Alguerabau por excelente trabajo y el informe realizado.

España está de acuerdo con la resolución propuesta y con la necesidad de incrementar los esfuerzos de GOOS para dar una mayor difusión y clarificación del proceso de Solicitud de Consentimiento para la Investigación Marina, así como en evaluar la necesidad de revisar la Guía DOALOS 2010 sobre la investigación marina e informar a la trigésima cuarta asamblea de la COI. Algunas de las mejoras podrían ir encaminadas, por ejemplo, a, adaptar el proceso de solicitud y los requerimientos según la tipología de las variables y las tecnologías de observación.

Türkiye

Ocean Observation is defined as one of the High-Level Objectives of Turkish Marine Research Strategy Document.

We make efforts to increase the capacity of ocean data collection, exchange, archive and management in the Aegean Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea in accordance with the IOC perspective.

Also, many studies and projects on the Marine Protected Areas have been carried out in Türkiye. Many academic events have comprehensively addressed the Marine Protected Areas.

In order to increase the coordination on marine scientific research at a national level, we organize an annual Marine Research Cruise Plan Meeting with participation from ministries, institutions and universities. After that meeting, an annual plan is prepared and published to optimize efforts and increase interoperability.

For international level, we would like to highlight that we agree with the statement that IOC Member States should promote collaboration and the dialogue between Member States should be strengthened.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The UK would like to acknowledge the recommendations in the report, and the important work done to unlock the barriers to ocean observing in Areas within National Jurisdiction. We particularly welcome the move to educating the GOOS networks on the Marine Scientific Research requirements in UNCLOS, and to act as a convenor to support research communities through regional groups.

Whilst the report highlights some key areas for improvement, we note the effort required, including resource within the Secretariat, to come to this conclusion and the missed opportunities at an early stage, prior to this working group, to engage Member States. It was only through this working group's consultation with Member States that clarity was achieved.

Given the sensitivities relating to this subject and the need to be more efficient with use of Secretariat resources we hope that the lessons learnt from this experience will help inform future approaches to interacting with Member States on items of critical importance to them, and guide future reviews, ensuring Member States views are taken into account throughout.

We would encourage the GOOS Steering Committee to adopt this approach as it looks to address making the Ship of Opportunity Programme work within the framework of UNCLOS as well as meeting Member State interests and, reflecting back on the previous agenda item on GOOS

reform, use that as a pilot for better incorporating Member State and the wider international governance framework in GOOS activities.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

The WMO Unified Data Policy adopted in 2021 identifies physical EOVS and ECVs from the ocean, made as part of a GOOS observational network, programme, or project, as core data – the data necessary for the provision of services in support of the protection of life and property and for the well-being of all nations. Members are asked to provide free and unrestricted access to core data, while respecting the provisions of UNCLOS.

This identification reflects the importance of this data for weather and climate prediction and early warnings, and comes from a consideration of the data's impact and value to society and to economies. Proving this value, and extending the capacity to exploit this data in all nations through capacity development are two important actions to build national understanding of the importance of sharing of ocean data from the entire ocean.

Our joint centre OceanOPS plays an important role in the Argo notification scheme, and we would encourage IOC to build upon this capacity and experience to operationalize Marine Scientific Research clearance processes and to further reduce barriers to reinforcing public good ocean observations in areas under national jurisdiction, as appropriate and as agreed by IOC Member States. WMO will follow IOC's further activity in this area with interest.

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

Australia

In lieu of amendments by WMO's Executive Council on the aligned decision on the JCB at the 79th session of WMO Executive Council last week, Australia proposes the following amendments to the IOC decision (in red) in order to ensure both bodies are adopting the same decision.

China

WMO and IOC have a long history of cooperation in jointly promoting ocean and climate monitoring, advancing scientific research, technological development and data sharing, and have achieved fruitful results.

China expresses its appreciation for the significant progress made by the JCB over the past year and is willing to contribute to JCB's promotion of the four priority areas and the implementation of related actions. China has participated in multiple projects jointly initiated by WMO and IOC, established the WMO-IOC Centre for Marine-Meteorological and Oceanographic Climate Data in Tianjin, China (CMOC/China) and the Regional Marine Instrument Center for the Asia-Pacific Region (RMIC/AP).

China is committed to promoting oceanographic and meteorological research and cooperation, and has carried out rich cooperation with international counterparts in fields such as climate change, ocean ecological protection, marine disaster prevention and mitigation, and data sharing.

China will, as always, support the JCB in fulfilling its duties and actively participate in the new plans and actions initiated by the JCB. Meanwhile, it is hoped that JCB would provide further guidance to the existing cooperation projects, enabling them to play their roles effectively and provide better services for IOC and WMO members.

Japan

The collaboration between the IOC and the WMO has been effective in addressing various issues such as strengthening ocean observation, forecasting systems and capacity building, etc. Japan welcomes the continued work of the JCB, including the promotion of the Global Ocean Basic Observing networks (GBON) for Ocean and data management activities for which subgroups

have been established, as well as its active contribution to the UN Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative.

Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea expresses its appreciation for the efforts of the JCB in strengthening collaboration between the meteorological and oceanographic communities, and supports the extension of the WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy through 2027. The Korea Meteorological Administration (KMA) is sharing ocean observation data through the Global Ocean Observation System (GOOS) and the WMO Information System 2.0(WIS2.0). KMA is also developing and operating numerical prediction-based technologies to respond to hazardous weather events in the seas surrounding the Korean Peninsula. We will actively contribute to the four key work areas identified by the JCB.

Russian Federation

We believe that the developed Joint Cooperation Strategy for 2022-2025 covers the most important areas of cooperation in research, observations, data, modeling, services and capacity development and can be extended until 2027 in its current form.

We support the medium-term priority areas of work outlined by the Council.

In terms of creation of the Global Basic Ocean Observing Network that will include additional ocean variables, we consider it necessary to note that the creation of the GBON will contribute to making observing systems more sustainable and to the gradual transition to the real time use of ocean data.

In addition, we consider it important to gradually improve compatibility and expand data exchange between the WMO Information System and the Ocean Data Information System, as well as to develop a structured approach to marine climate data systems.

We see high potential for further joint efforts to develop capacity to expand opportunities in both oceanography and meteorology, including through the unification of training calendars and the creation of joint training centres and resources between WMO and IOC. In this regard, we believe it is necessary to intensify the efforts of the Joint Council to implement specific actions within the framework of the activity areas, primarily the implementation of joint events, programmes and projects.

Spain

España coincide con la relevancia de los temas prioritarios presentados, especialmente la Red Básica Mundial de Observación (GBON) y la Gestión de datos e interoperabilidad. Respecto GBON, dado el interés y necesidad de cubrir procesos de escala climática, dicha red no debería limitarse únicamente a los datos de redes de observación operacionales en tiempo real, sino extenderse también a otras redes que proporcionan datos de alta calidad en lo que se conoce como 'delayed mode'. Sería interesante también que en la implementación de GBON se contemplara el establecimiento de una red de estaciones de referencia en el océano reconocidas por GBON de modo similar a la Reference Upper-Air Network del Global Climate Observation System (GCOS), red conocida como GRUAN por su acrónimo en inglés.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

WMO remains committed to focusing the JCB on key, tractable issues that deliver to both IOC and WMO – and are encouraged by the identification of the four initial priority areas for JCB efforts. Their development over the coming year will be important in proving the value of the JCB and should both reflect and influence joint efforts between oceanography and meteorology at the national level, the subject of the consultation with Member States.

Argentina

Agradecemos la propuesta y las aclaraciones realizadas por la Delegación de Chile y solicitamos que los comentarios provistos por esta Delegación sean registrados en el informe final. Sin perjuicio de tales comentarios, nos comprometemos a participar constructivamente en el Grupo de Trabajo.

El proyecto de enmienda presentado por la Delegación de Chile contiene una propuesta de incluir una modificación de fondo que va más allá de la mera enmienda al texto de la decisión. Se considera que dicha propuesta debiera haberse remitido con la anticipación suficiente, en línea con lo dispuesto por las Guías Revisadas para la Preparación y Consideración de Borradores de Resolución, como para permitir evaluar a nivel interno la propuesta y todas sus implicancias.

Asimismo, toda vez que el Acuerdo BBNJ aún no ha entrado en vigor y recién se han comenzado a discutir sus modalidades y su institucionalidad, entre ellas, las modalidades de funcionamiento del "Clearing House Mechanism", en el marco de las reuniones de la Comisión Preparatoria del Acuerdo, se considera que un grupo de trabajo con un mandato como el que se propone en el marco de la COI, resulta prematuro.

Se considera que el mandato que se pretende conferir al Grupo de Trabajo resulta extremadamente amplio, abarcando incluso cuestiones que deben ser discutidas en el marco del Acuerdo BBNJ, y otras que deben ser resueltas por los Estados Miembros o que son propias de la COI. Ello podría derivar en una superposición o duplicación de tareas con respecto a las cuestiones que aún se están discutiendo en el marco del Acuerdo BBNJ.

En efecto, el párrafo 2(ii) de los TdR refiere a la función de "promover el rol y las contribuciones de la COI en el establecimiento y funcionamiento del futuro "Clearing House Mechanism", lo cual es en realidad una cuestión que debe ser debatida y acordada por los Estados en el marco de la negociación del Acuerdo BBNJ.

A su vez, el párrafo 2(v) de los TdR reza "Propose strategies and mechanisms for enhancing data sharing and cooperation across national and regional institutions, including through IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies", no obstante tratarse de una actividad que corresponde al mandato de la COI.

Por su parte, en el párrafo 2(vi) de los TdR se establece la función de "proponer mecanismos de cooperación entre la COI y el Acuerdo BBNJ", lo cual resulta difícil de determinar toda vez que el Acuerdo BBNJ aún no definió cómo se dará esa relación de cooperación con otros marcos y acuerdos.

Cabe destacar, además, que la COI tuvo ya participación en el proceso de negociación del Acuerdo de BBNJ a través de su Secretaría, formulando sus aportes. También los Estados Partes hicieron comentarios respecto de las actividades de la COI durante dicho proceso de negociación, en línea con numerosas decisiones de la COI que así lo recomendaban.

Belgium

Belgium welcomes the proposal by Chili to establish an ad-hoc working group on BBNJ in the IOC. We thank Chili for this initiative and give it our full support.

Belgium also agrees with China, the UK, Colombia, Spain, and Poland on the potential and the importance of this ad-hoc working group, in which we intend to participate and co-operate.

Chile

La exitosa UNOC3 organizada en conjunto por Francia y Costa Rica permitió dar una mayor visibilidad a la necesidad de proteger al océano, lo cual se vio reflejado en los medios de comunicación y redes sociales de todo el mundo y de manera transversal. A nivel gubernamental no fue distinto, viéndose en el importante aumento de los países que han ratificado el acuerdo del BBNJ, faltando menos de una decena para llegar al anhelado número 60.

Como organización, es el momento de comenzar a prepararnos para la puesta en marcha del Acuerdo, debiendo tener la Comisión Oceanográfica Intergubernamental un papel protagónico,

el que le corresponde al ser el equipo técnico de las Naciones Unidas encargado de promover la cooperación internacional en materias del océano, como lo señala el Estatuto de la Comisión, y también siguiendo nuestros objetivos de alto nivel, indicados en la estrategia de mediano plazo 2022-2029.

En ese sentido, Chile propone a esta Asamblea la creación de un grupo de trabajo ad-hoc, que pueda entregar al Consejo Ejecutivo de la COI y a la Conferencia de las Partes asesoría técnica y científica para apoyar la implementación del Acuerdo del BBNJ, en especial para el mecanismo de intercambio de información, señalado en el artículo 51, así como otras áreas, todo lo anterior siempre dentro del mandato de la COI.

En la propuesta que fue remitida con la respectiva antelación a todas las estimadas delegaciones, se encuentran los términos de referencia del grupo de trabajo, con el objetivo de éste y su composición.

Los términos de referencia clarifican los resultados esperados de este grupo de trabajo ad hoc en 5 áreas específicas: 1) rol de la COI en la puesta en práctica del acuerdo; 2) contribuciones para el mecanismo de intercambio de información; 3) análisis de los desarrollos científicos de BBNJ relevantes para la COI; 4) modalidades para apoyar a los Estados Miembros, propuestas de estrategias para el intercambio de datos y 5) la colaboración entre la COI y BBNJ. También consideramos muy importante la participación de DOALOS en este proceso de análisis.

Esperamos contar con su apoyo y que durante el camino que nos queda por recorrer hasta la implementación del acuerdo del BBNJ, contemos con un productivo trabajo, donde estén representadas todas las regiones.

China

China would like to join other Member States to appreciate the informative presentation by Vidar and highly commend the contributions to UN governance processes made by IOC in the latest years. Due to the importance of global ocean-related issues are rising, the expectation of international communities to IOC is also increasing. China believes and supports IOC, which is the most important platform in the UN framework to push forward to the ocean science cooperation, to play more active role in relevant processes including Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), BBNJ, World Ocean Assessment, UNFCCC, mentioned by Vidar and beyond in the presentations.

Regarding the IOC's functions in the process of BBNJ, besides the Clearing-House Mechanism, mentioned by the presentation and many Member States, we also encourage IOC to make its own contribution to three other items, firstly, the Capacity Building and the Transfer of Marine Technology (CB&MT) process and the possible commission; secondly, the organizing of Scientific and Technical Body (STB) of BBNJ; thirdly, strengthening the coordination among Member States through IOC Subsidiary Bodies and relevant bodies.

China also applauds to the IOC's engagement in the UNOC3 in Nice. As other Member States, China actively participated in the UN Ocean Conference. We sent our high-level delegation, led by Vice President and successfully hosted or co-hosted four side events, meanwhile involved in many other side events, with releasing several public products, signing multiple bilateral agreements, and making lots of voluntary commitments. The UNOC has become one of the most important UN ocean-related processes since 2017, in which the contribution of IOC is indispensable.

Japan

Japan commends the IOC Secretariat for its significant contributions to various United Nations governance processes, particularly in advancing ocean science and knowledge as a foundation for achieving SDG 14 and the 2030 Agenda.

We also wish to highlight the success of the Third United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice, marked by the adoption of the Nice Ocean Action Plan and strong international engagement.

Japan appreciates the Governments of France and Costa Rica to host the conference. Also IOC secretaries for tremendous efforts in advance and during the conference and side events.

Following the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement, Japan recognizes the need for its effective implementation, including the Clearing House Mechanism, and affirms that the continued engagement of the IOC will be indispensable.

We also acknowledge the important role played by GOOS and OBIS in providing sustained ocean observations and data, structured around Essential Ocean Variables, which support several targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. These systems are critical for evidence-based decision-making and biodiversity monitoring, especially in marine ecosystems.

Lastly, we express our sincere hope for the successful advancement of the IOC's planned development of a system-wide approach to marine biodiversity. We believe this initiative will play a pivotal role in strengthening coordinated international action for the conservation and sustainable use of marine ecosystems.

Norway

Norway welcomes the document on IOC Contributions to UN Governance Processes. Synergies among global processes is a priority for Norway, for instance between the new BBNJ Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. We would also like to point out the pivotal role the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy plays. Norway has ratified the BBNJ Agreement. It is now vital that the Agreement reaches the necessary sixty ratification to allow it to enter into force and that we collectively work for its effective implementation. The Agreement provides for increased cooperation between states and strengthening and enhancing cooperation between relevant frameworks. IOC's involvement is important. The construction of the BBNJ Clearing House should continue to benefit from the active involvement of IOC.

Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea warmly welcomes the continued and strengthened role of the IOC in contributing to key UN governance processes, and we commend the efforts of the Secretariat in this regard.

We especially acknowledge the IOC's critical engagement with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the BBNJ Agreement, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, in connecting ocean science with global policy.

Regarding biodiversity, we commend the IOC's contribution to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Through platforms such as OBIS, GOOS, and ODIS, the IOC provides data, indicators, and technical support vital to tracking and achieving biodiversity targets. These contributions not only support global assessments, but also help enhance national capacity for monitoring and reporting.

On the BBNJ Agreement, Korea is pleased to report that we became the 21st country to ratify the treaty. We officially deposited our instrument of ratification with the United Nations on March 19, demonstrating Korea's responsible and proactive leadership on ocean issues. We are actively participating in the Preparatory Commission.

We believe the IOC can play a vital role in supporting the BBNJ Agreement's four pillars marine genetic resources, area-based management tools, environmental impact assessments, and capacity building and technology transfer through its robust scientific platforms and tools.

On climate action, we commend the IOC's active engagement with the UNFCCC process, including contributions to the Ocean and Climate Dialogue and the Global Goal on Adaptation. The IOC's observation systems and data networks help integrate the ocean dimension into climate planning and national contributions.

Looking ahead, Korea is pleased to announce our intention to co-host the Fourth United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC4) in 2028, together with the Republic of Chile. As the final UNOC

before the 2030 SDG deadline, we believe this will be a key milestone to assess progress and shape the post-Decade Ocean agenda.

The Republic of Korea reaffirms its commitment to multilateral cooperation through the IOC, and we look forward to working together to strengthen science-based ocean governance, while continuing to support developing countries and SIDS through knowledge sharing and technical cooperation.

Spain

La labor de la COI de transferir el mejor conocimiento científico para la toma de decisiones en los procesos que se desarrollan bajo el paraguas de Naciones Unidas es una de las actividades más importantes de su mandato y donde la coordinación que la COI realiza sobre el esfuerzo colectivo de los Estados Miembros adquiere su máxima relevancia por su impacto a escala global.

España agradece los informes presentado en el que se destaca la importancia de las actividades que se llevan a cabo bajo los programas de GOOS, de los datos e información disponibles a través de IODE o OBIS y de su uso para la Planificación Espacial Marina para alcanzar objetivos y compromisos bajo la Convención de Diversidad Biológica, el Tratado de Biodiversidad en Áreas Fuera de la Jurisdicción Nacional o la Convención Marco de Cambio Climático de Naciones Unidas. Aunque en la resolución se citan las ciencias oceánicas y algunos de los programas relacionados con la acidificación, echamos en falta un análisis sobre la capacidad del conjunto de programas de conocimiento científico de la COI para responden adecuadamente a la demanda de estos procesos e iniciativas internacionales.

Los ecosistemas no se definen simplemente por el conjunto de variables independientes, del medio físico y químico y de las especies que los forman, sino que presentan propiedades emergentes de sus interrelaciones que es necesario entender, más aún en un contexto de profundos cambios forzados por el cambio climático. El conocimiento sobre el funcionamiento de los ecosistemas, más allá de la caracterización de sus componentes, es fundamental para implementar y gestionar Áreas Marinas Protegidas, evaluar el impacto del cambio climático o para establecer estrategias de mitigación de este proceso y de sus efectos. Este conocimiento científico es además esencial para definir las estrategias y los sistemas de observación, elegir indicadores como las variables oceánicas esenciales y garantizar la calidad y estandarización de los datos.

Türkiye

We would kindly propose the following text to Paragraph 188 of the Provisional Action Paper as follows:

"Within the framework of the Agreement under United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation ... " instead of the current text which reads:

"Within the framework of the UNCLOS Treaty on the conservation...".

This edit is being proposed for clarification.

United States of America

However, following extensive informal consultations with other delegations, we realize that the amendments we submitted will not have the support of the room. In the interest of not holding up the agenda, we withdraw all of our proposed amendments.

The United States supports the IOC Secretariat representing the IOC at other meetings and processes, and agrees with the need for strengthened IOC delivery, as relevant, to other bodies and processes.

However, we will disassociate from all paragraphs of the decision. We will do so after the decision is adopted.

The United States thanks Chile for offering these amendments and for providing their response. However, we agree with the intervention by Argentina.

In addition to the points made by Argentina, we do not view the establishment of a BBNJ Working Group at the IOC as being necessary at this stage, since the BBNJ Prep Comm has established an experts group in which the IOC will engage.

We are also concerned it will be a strain on finite resources of both the IOC Secretariat and IOC Member States. We therefore cannot support Chile's amendments. Thank you.

The United States disassociates from the entire decision as amended in line with U.S. policy positions laid out in our opening statement intervention last Wednesday, and our earlier statement today.

4.8 Report on the United Nations Ocean Decade 2021–2030 Implementation Plan and Results of the Mid-Term Evaluation

Belgium

Belgium continues to consider that the Decade is an excellent opportunity to make visible, to the whole of our societies, the value of ocean sciences.

The Decade is now at mid-term, and we need to look forward to ensuring that as much as possible of its value materializes, and that, where new capabilities have been developed, these are properly institutionally embedded so that, at the end of this large endeavour, IOC also comes out strengthened and ready for the future, across the entire range of value chains and services that the IOC programmes sustain.

We thus welcome that it is stated in document 4.8 doc(1) that “there is a significant potential for the IOC contribution to the Decade to reinforce IOC's core programmatic work, regional and thematic leadership, and human resources.”

As its initial donor, Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) hence is pleased that “The Capacity Development Facility has been reinvigorated with additional human resources and will provide real-time matchmaking services to meet capacity development needs with a focus on SIDS, LDCs and Early Career Ocean Professionals.” This Facility works hand in hand with the existing IOC CD capabilities, and we encourage all further strengthening and streamlining of the CD processes across IOC, in line with the ‘central’ position of the ‘Function F’, the position of IOC's Capacity Development.

We eagerly look forward to the launch, in September of this year, of the actual Matchmaking Platform where the Decade CD needs can be logged and where also offers and opportunities can meet those who can benefit from them.

Brazil

Brazil receives from this Commission the task of hosting the next Conference of the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development with great joy. It is a huge responsibility, but as our Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation said, Brazil is firmly committed to the Decade.

It is significant that the next Conference will take place in the global South. One of the objectives of the Decade is to promote a diversified and inclusive science, whose benefits are shared among all. This contributes to the development of humankind and to scientific advancement itself. It also converges with our efforts to strengthen the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone as an area of cooperation and sustainable development. We are ready to receive, in Rio, in 2027, governments, scientists, civil society, indigenous peoples, coastal groups and the entire world community of actors linked to the ocean.

As we reach the mid-point of the Decade Implementation, we congratulate the Decade Advisory Board, the Decade Coordinating Unit and the governance structures for understating and supporting the dynamic nature of the Decade, as one of its greatest strengths.

The exchange of experiences with other National Decade Committees has proved to be both enriching and a motivating element for our own NDC. As part of an exercise we helped to facilitate during UNOC, together with the IOC, Germany and New Zealand, our NDC outlined its current focus on strengthening science, training, and research with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. This includes revising the National Plan, improving multisectoral coordination, ensuring funding, aligning with global policies to promote sustainability, equity and climate justice and to continue supporting integrated curricula, Citizen Science, and Ocean Culture that transcends literacy, recognizing multiple knowledge systems and connecting it to socio-environmental and technological demands.

We note already concerns about the post Decade. We see them as a sign of the success of Decade thus far. As we together sail towards the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference and beyond, we should have plenty of opportunity to shape its legacy and the central role the IOC and its Regional Subsidiary Bodies should have in it, always striving to make it a truly global movement.

Chile

Inicialmente, nos sumamos a las felicitaciones a la delegación de Brasil, por la excelente noticia entregada el viernes pasado, con la organización de la conferencia de la década que se efectuará en Río de Janeiro el próximo 2027. Esto será un catalizador para todo el planeta, pero en especial para la región sudamericana.

La Delegación de Chile agradece al Secretario Ejecutivo y al señor Julian Barbière por el Informe presentado sobre el actual grado de progreso del Decenio y quisiera aprovechar esta tribuna para compartir con esta Asamblea que todas las instituciones nacionales vinculadas a las Ciencias del Océano de Chile y que integran el Comité Oceanográfico Nacional – CONA - han seguido utilizando como hoja de ruta, el Plan Oceanográfico Nacional 2021 - 2030, que contempla objetivos específicos nacionales y líneas de acción, en función de los desafíos y objetivos del Decenio de las Ciencias Oceánicas para el Desarrollo Sostenible. En este contexto, el CONA ha apoyado y coordinado el desarrollo de proyectos y diversas actividades acometidas por la comunidad científica nacional; ha promovido de manera activa la difusión de los distintos llamados a la acción y fomentado una participación constante en instancias de carácter global. En la actualidad, se ha refrendado un total de 07 proyectos nacionales por la COI como acciones concretas contribuyentes al Decenio, además, de numerosas actividades de corto periodo realizadas en el país.

Sr. Presidente, hoy nos encontramos a medio camino en esta Década, si bien hemos avanzado mucho, aún nos queda mucho por hacer, es por eso que la Delegación de Chile renueva su compromiso con este trabajo, y nos permitimos hacer un llamado a todos los miembros de la COI a reforzar los esfuerzos. Como ya lo hemos mencionado, Chile y la República de Corea seremos los co-host de la Cuarta Conferencia de Naciones Unidas para el Océano en 2028, y creemos que será un hito importante para resaltar los resultados de nuestro trabajo; esperamos que la ciencia y el desarrollo científico sean temas centrales en dicha instancia e instamos a la COI y sus Estados Miembros a aportar en esto.

China

China would like to congratulate IOC on the great progress and key achievements of the Ocean Decade. Also, we would like to congratulate Brazil host the next UN Ocean Decade conference in 2027.

Towards the end of the first half of the Ocean Decade, China has made prominent efforts and contributions to its process. We established the National Decade Committee and produced the National Framework Action Plan of the Ocean Decade in the year of 2022 to overall promote the implementation of the Ocean Decade in China, we have been endorsed one Collaborative Center, 7 Programmes, 5 Decade Implementing Partners, 19 Projects, and co-developed 4 Decade Actions with the IOC/WESTPAC. In particular, the Ocean Decade Collaborative Centre on Ocean-Climate Nexus (DCC-OCC), which is hosted by the First Institute of Oceanography of the Ministry of Natural Resources of China, has played an active and important role in coordinating

Decade Actions, integrating national social forces to engage in the Decade, developing capacity, and advocating best practices.

Till to now, We have carried out pragmatic cooperation with 243 institutions from 113 countries, establishing a solid international cooperation network embracing the Ocean Decade, have hosted nearly 50 capacity-building activities and more than 70 conferences focusing on the ocean literacy, sustainable marine development, ecosystem conservation and regional ocean governance, and released 9 public products, covering marine disaster prevention and mitigation, science education and decision support. We have conducted a series of activities of Ocean Decade on Campus aiming to enhance ocean literacy, and facilitate more engagement of young generation in the Ocean Decade. Besides, we organize Annual symposiums on Promoting the Implementation of the Ocean Decade in China on a regular basis to review progress and design future plans of the Decade Actions, identify challenges, co-design new actions, mobilize more resources, and develop cooperation. All these Decade outcomes of China till now have made exactly embody the firm commitments to this grand initiative.

In the future, China will still act as an active supporter and contributor to the Ocean Decade.

Colombia

Colombia desea iniciar esta intervención felicitando a Brasil por haber sido seleccionada como sede de la próxima conferencia del Decenio de las Ciencias Oceánicas para el Desarrollo Sostenible y augura los mejores éxitos en desarrollo de tan importante evento de trascendencia global.

Celebramos de igual manera la presentación de la resolución por parte del Principado de Mónaco, que reitera su compromiso con las ciencias oceánicas como fundamento para el océano que queremos.

Nuestra delegación, agradece el extensivo reporte presentado y celebra los avances de los diferentes actores frente al Decenio de las Ciencias Oceánicas, en línea con los resultados de la evaluación de mediano plazo. De la misma forma, el país considera fundamental promover el intercambio de experiencias entre los distintos niveles de gobernanza del Decenio, permitiendo orientar mejor la labor de los Comités Técnicos Nacionales y garantizar su armonización con las nuevas dinámicas globales derivadas de la Declaración de Barcelona.

Lo anterior, a fin de garantizar el fortalecimiento de la gobernanza para aumentar la participación internacional, nacional y regional expuesta por el Coordinación global del Decenio.

Por ello, Colombia desea poner en conocimiento que está en proceso de ajuste y definición de una nueva orientación nacional para el Decenio, incluyendo la reformulación de su Plan Nacional de Contribución, en donde el apoyo de la COI/UNESCO en este proceso de actualización es fundamental.

India

India is proud to be associated with the Ocean Decade program. We wish to emphasize that India was one among the countries who have responded to the call of the ocean decade and formed its National Decade Committee with stakeholders involved in oceanography in February 2021. After couple of meetings, the committee was restructured to imbibe ocean decade spirit by inclusion of further diverse stakeholders.

Upon restructuring the NDC committee provided valuable guidance and way forward for successful implementation of the ocean decade. As per the suggestion of the NDC, sub-committee were formed with member nominated from organization represented by NDC members to handle various challenges envisaged under the ocean decade. These sub-committees have come up with implementation plans for productive outcomes related to ocean decade.

India has submitted a proposal for regional Decade Collaborative Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (DCC-IOR) and was immediately recognized by the UNESCO which was signed on 27 June 2023 during IOC Assembly in Paris.

With this recognition as a DCC-IOR, India aims to

- Assist with Scientific Coordination and Planning,
- Identification of Collaboration Opportunities and Communications
- Awareness raising and stakeholder engagement
- Enhance technical and scientific capacities to support Decade Actions
- Organising an annual regional training programme & a workshop to enhance technical & scientific capacities in the Indian Ocean Region
- Assisting the Decade Advisory Board in review processes of proposals for actions and progress of actions of the UN decade
- Provide advice to Decade Coordination Unit (DCU)

India has formed a diversified and vibrant Governing Board for DCC-IOR involving representatives from Ministry, Head of centres, NGOs, experts from DCU, ECOPs, IOR experts and members of DCC.

The DCC-IOR has been regularly participating in DCU meetings, conducting webinars, capacity building and training programs, ECOP sessions, Ocean Literacy programs. The DCC is also collaborating with other thematic DCC like, Ocean Predict DCC, Coastal Resilience DCC and also involved in White Paper preparation submitted to Ocean Decade. The DCC-IOR in collaboration with IOCCG conducted two week long training program on Ocean Colour. It also extended support to members of other NDC by sharing the best practices being followed. It also provisioned berths in Ocean Research Vessel to members from Bangladesh to gain insights into ocean data collection and processing.

The DCC-IOR collaborated with other partners like POGO, ITEC, OTGA for effectively holding various training programs in operational oceanography.

Finally, we would like to reiterate that mid-term review of decadal ocean activities is prerequisite as we are mid-way for achieving Ocean decade goals. India is committed to the ocean decade program till 2030 and beyond for its successful achievements of intended objectives.

Japan

The Ocean Decade represents an irreplaceable opportunity to align science, policy, and society for sustainable ecosystem and development, and to realize the ocean we want. At this midpoint of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, Japan reaffirms its lasting commitment to advancing ocean science for a more sustainable and resilient future.

We sincerely thank UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service for the mid-term evaluation and commend the Decade Coordination Unit, Advisory Board, and all partners whose efforts have translated shared aspirations into global progress. Japan congratulates Brazil to host the next Ocean Decade Conference in 2027.

Japan has contributed actively through the Japan Funds-in-Trust (JFIT), supporting both global efforts at IOC Headquarters and regional initiatives through IOC-WESTPAC. We will continue this support as the Decade advances into its next phase. Domestically, our National Decade Committee—established in 2021—convenes experts across disciplines. Its sixth meeting, held this March, focused on emerging trends and knowledge sharing. In May, Japan hosted a special UN Ocean Decade session at the Japan Geoscience Union Conference, showcasing how co-designed science can generate real-world solutions—reflecting our commitment to inclusive, impact-driven research.

Looking forward, Japan supports the evaluation's emphasis on deeper coordination, broader stakeholder inclusion—especially from SIDS and LDCs—and better integration of Decade Actions into governance. We will continue promoting inclusive partnerships, open science, and capacity-building that empowers communities.

Japan recognizes the concept of IPOS as a global demand-driven platform that connects ocean knowledge, policy, and society. The proposed delivery of scientific knowledge and the linking scientific knowledge with policy and society are essential to reach the goal of UN Ocean Decade. It is anticipated that having IPOS would be beneficial in light of the challenging funding situation

and limited human resources of IOC. Simultaneously, Japan concerns on the redundancy between the Decade Coordination Unit and IPOS. Also, Japan perceives uncertainty regarding the implementation plan and methodology of the IPOS, as well as the financing necessary to execute the planned activities. The other issue raised is securing the human resources necessary to fulfill the significant and ambitious objectives of the IPOS, particularly in the regional nodes that are planned for development. Japan anticipates that the IPOS will develop a more comprehensive implementation plan in collaboration with the Decade Advisory Board, the DCU, and the member states.

Malaysia

Malaysia remains strongly committed to the Ocean Decade through the Ocean Decade@Malaysia initiative, coordinated by the Ministry of Natural Environment Sustainability (NRES).

Our focus is on inclusive, science-based action that supports national priorities and regional collaboration.

We are advancing this through:

- The ECOP Malaysia Node, connecting early-career professionals from academia, industry, and government;
- Citizen science and ocean literacy campaigns;
- Capacity building with WESTPAC, and regional partners.

Malaysia also addresses Decade Challenge 1: Marine Pollution through the National Marine Litter Policy and Action Plan 2021–2030, which promotes source-to-sea governance and data-driven solutions.

This is reinforced by our high-profile partnership with The Ocean Cleanup, deploying advanced technologies to intercept plastic waste.

Monaco

La Principauté de Monaco soumet à votre approbation le projet de résolution concernant la mise en œuvre de la Décennie des Nations Unies pour les sciences océaniques au service du développement durable (2021–2030).

Cette résolution vise à renforcer la gouvernance, la planification stratégique et les capacités opérationnelles de la Décennie.

Vous le savez, nous sommes à un mi-parcours de celle-ci et donc à un moment clé de sa réalisation. Aussi, est-il plus que jamais nécessaire de nous appuyer sur les enseignements tirés de notre expérience passée et prévoir la suite sans fléchir.

La résolution proposée, invite les États membres à prendre acte des conclusions de l'évaluation à mi-parcours de la Décennie, et d'établir une feuille de route claire et ambitieuse jusqu'en 2030. La coordination est essentielle mais souffre encore malheureusement de besoins financiers.

Les objectifs de la résolution sont notamment :

- De renforcer la Décennie au sein de la famille onusienne ;
- D'accroître son rôle pour aider à la prise de décision ;
- Et enfin de construire dès à présent l'héritage de la Décennie.

Pour ce faire, la résolution prévoit le renouvellement du Comité consultatif (Decade Advisory Board) pour la période 2026–2027. Ce comité, composé de 15 experts issus de divers horizons géographiques et disciplinaires, joue un rôle stratégique en fournissant des conseils sur l'orientation de la Décennie et en évaluant les actions entreprises. Le renouvellement de ses membres garantira la continuité et l'efficacité de ses travaux.

La résolution propose enfin la mise en place d'une phase pilote du International PLATFORM for ocean sustainability (IPOS) et ce, jusqu'en juin 2027, sous réserve de la mobilisation de financements extrabudgétaires.

Cette phase pilote permettra de tester et d'affiner les mécanismes de coordination et de collecte de données océaniques. Elle fera également l'objet d'un rapport sur ses avancées lors de la 59^{ème} session du Conseil exécutif.

Ainsi ce projet bénéficiera du temps nécessaire pour arriver à maturation et pour que nous puissions prendre une décision éclairée.

En conclusion, cette résolution vise à renforcer la structure et l'efficacité de la Décennie des Nations Unies pour les sciences océaniques, en s'appuyant sur des évaluations rigoureuses, une gouvernance renouvelée et des initiatives pilotes innovantes. Nous invitons les États membres à soutenir celle-ci pour assurer le succès continu de la Décennie et la réalisation de ses objectifs ambitieux.

Norway

We found the mid-term evaluation both insightful and well-presented. We are pleased to note that we recognize and support its findings.

Norway shares the view expressed by the Executive Secretary in his introduction, emphasizing the importance of increasing investment and engagement in the UN Ocean Decade as it enters its final five years. To fully realize the potential built up so far, we all need to invest time and resources in the Decade.

The evaluation highlights that the Ocean Decade has made significant progress in its first half, building a solid foundation to deliver its outcomes. We now need to move forwards into a more action-oriented phase together.

While the recommendations do not explicitly call for financial contributions from member states, we believe that strengthening the secretariat will make it better equipped to implement several of the recommendations effectively.

The Ocean Decade is of course not a financing mechanism in itself. We would like to underscore the importance of making use of other relevant mechanisms. Horizon Europe is one such example; Belmont Forum is another. Norway has contributed to Belmont Forum's Oceans 2 Call – and there is still an opportunity for partners to provide financial support to this initiative.

Norway has a large private ocean sector, yet few companies are currently engaged in the Ocean Decade. Many Norwegian ocean businesses perceive the Decade as not directly relevant to them and find the process of engagement challenging and time-consuming. Enhancing private sector involvement could be a key next step.

Finally, we view the Ocean Decade as a platform for upholding the values of free and independent research. With academic freedom under increasing pressure globally, the Ocean Decade may have a vital role to play.

Portugal

Portugal thanks Julian Barbière for the comprehensive report presented on achievements and future vision of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, activities, and congratulates the IOC, and in particular the Ocean Decade coordination unit and bodies, for the outstanding leadership of this initiative. It has proven to be the largest initiative ever undertaken concerning the Ocean, 50 years after the most successful Decade of Ocean Exploration. We also appreciate the way the mid-term evaluation was carried out as well as its recommendations.

Portugal is fully committed to the Ocean Decade, through its National Ocean Decade Committee that is promoting and coordinating the participation and contributions from all sectors of society, namely through its forum of stakeholders with more than 60 entities.

As concerns the Draft Resolution proposed by Monaco, we believe that the possible integration of IPOS within IOC needs to be properly discussed and assessed, including its administrative and financial implications for the future, in case specific extra-budget funding for this purpose is made available.

We would also like to inform that we will be promoting in December this year an international 2 day meeting on Ocean and Human Health for which we would like to invite other national decade committees to join and therefore all of those interested in joining this venture and participating are most welcome.

Finally, we would like to thank Brasil for hosting the next Ocean Decade Conference in Rio de Janeiro, which I am sure will be a success.

Republic of Korea

Republic of Korea sincerely congratulate Brazil on hosting the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference.

Korea has been actively supporting the UN Ocean Decade from the planning stage, utilizing the UN Ocean Decade Special Account and UNESCO Funds-in-Trust. Since 2021, Korea has been actively participating as a member of the UN Ocean Decade Alliance as well.

To systematically contribute to the implementation of the Decade, Korea established its National Decade Committee (NDC) at an early stage. The Committee consists of 14 experts from diverse backgrounds, offering strategic advice on Korea's Ocean Decade actions and ensuring alignment with the Decade's global vision.

As of 2025, eight Korean-led Decade Projects have received official endorsement and are currently under implementation. We continue to promote active participation by Korean marine scientists and academic institutions in Decade-related research and programmes. The republic of Korea remains committed to further advancing the goals of the Ocean Decade in close cooperation with the IOC and the international community.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation notes and approves the progress report on the implementation of the Ocean Decade. Russia operates a national committee that coordinates the execution of projects and participation in Decade programmes, and interacts with other national committees of Member States.

We inform the meeting participants about the successful implementation of the national plan, "Goals and Key Directions of Action for the Ocean Decade in the Russian Federation," in accordance with which we provide annual reports, publish scientific, popular, and other materials, and conduct international marine expeditions.

We have established the platform "Marine Scientific Research" (<https://ocean-and-we.ru>), which hosts the dedicated portal "UN Decade of Ocean Science", featuring information and updates on the Decade's progress both globally and within the Russian Federation. Furthermore, a section dedicated to the Russian National Committee for the Ocean Decade is maintained on the international Decade Forum platform (<https://forum.oceandecade.org/topics/36411/home>), serving as a tool for sharing national activities and fostering international dialogue and collaboration.

We wish to inform you that, during 2024-2025, the Russian Federation is conducting joint research with Morocco, Mauritania, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique on the oceanographic conditions of fish habitats off the coast of Africa. This project marks a historic first and has yielded highly interesting results. We invite representatives of scientists from other countries in the region to cooperate.

We also report the successful hosting of the annual scientific and practical conference with international participation, "Russia in the UN Decade of Ocean Sciences: Resources and Knowledge," held in November 2024 in Moscow. The conference also discussed issues related to the "Vision 2030" process as applied to the conditions of the Russian Federation.

Currently, preparations are underway for the next conference, scheduled for November 2025 in Moscow, with the option of online participation. We invite all interested Member States to participate and plan to take part in the activities of our colleagues. We particularly welcome and congratulate everyone on the upcoming Ocean Decade conference in Brazil in 2027.

South Africa

South Africa wishes to join other delegates in commending MR Julian Barbieri for the presentation on the achievements of the mid-term report of the Ocean Decade. The manner in which it has implemented its plans is commendable, we believe that the future plans will be executed in a similar manner. To achieve its future plans the Ocean Decade will require the support of all Member States and partners, and South Africa affirms its support in this regard. South Africa wishes to highlight that the IOCAFRICA's secretariat also serves as the Ocean Decade's Regional Coordination Office for the Africa region which includes the Adjacent Island States, South Africa appreciates the efforts undertaken to ensure that the IOCAFRICA Secretariat is appropriately staffed to ensure the success of implementation of the Ocean Decade and the Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap. South Africa wishes to congratulate Brazil as a host for the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference and believes that they will host a successful conference.

Spain

En primer lugar, nuestra más sincera enhorabuena a Brasil y a la ciudad de Río de Janeiro por haber sido seleccionados para albergar la próxima Conferencia de la Década.

Agradecemos sinceramente la presentación y el informe presentados por el Señor Julian Barbieri y España desea destacar su firme compromiso con Década de los Océanos y subrayar el papel activo que nuestro país en la implementación de actividades e iniciativas. De entre todas ellas queremos destacar, como ya hemos mencionado, la Conferencia del Decenio del Océano 2024 celebrada en Barcelona, que reunió a más de 2,600 participantes provenientes de 124 países. Tal como ya mencionamos en el Consejo Ejecutivo, expresar nuevamente nuestra máxima satisfacción por haber tenido la oportunidad de colaborar estrechamente con la Unidad de Coordinación de la Década y con la Secretaría de la COI en la organización de esta conferencia. Este foro internacional constituyó el corazón del debate científico y permitió definir prioridades globales en ciencia oceánica a través de los 10 libros blancos y la Declaración de Barcelona.

La propuesta recientemente aprobada del Centro Colaborador de la Década sobre Economía Oceánica Sostenible en esta misma ciudad, es a su vez nuestro compromiso más firme con el futuro de la Década, y nos satisface haber recibido durante esta asamblea el interés de varias delegaciones en colaborar con este CCD. Agradecemos al Ayuntamiento y al Puerto de Barcelona como patronos de la iniciativa, a la Fundación Barcelona Capital Náutica como oficina para el desarrollo del Centro Colaborador de la Década, así como reiterar el compromiso del Gobierno de España que ya manifestó nuestra Ministra de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades durante la inauguración de la Conferencia del Decenio.

Recibimos con satisfacción el informe de evaluación sobre las actividades del Decenio, que contiene numerosos elementos importantes sobre los que podemos mejorar para que el legado de la Década se vea reforzado. Por ejemplo, la necesidad de una mayor implicación de otras organizaciones de Naciones Unidas y de articular mecanismos de coordinación y de estructuración de las acciones y programas aprobados hasta la fecha, entendiendo que los Centro Colaborativos de la Década y las Oficinas de Coordinación de la Década han de ser los principales mecanismos para articular ese objetivo.

España coincide con Alemania en la necesidad de tener más detalles sobre la iniciativa IPOS y las potenciales consecuencias sobre la actividad de la COI, y agradece el establecimiento de un grupo de trabajo.

España reitera su voluntad de seguir colaborando activamente en el impulso, organización y ejecución de acciones de la Década que contribuyan al desarrollo sostenido de la ciencia oceánica, convencida de que solo a través del compromiso conjunto lograremos construir un legado duradero para las generaciones presentes y futuras.

Thailand

Thailand welcomes the report on the UN Ocean Decade, and commends the Executive Secretary, IOC Secretariat, Decade Coordination Unit, and Advisory Board for their leadership and the inclusive mid-term review process.

We join previous Member states to congratulate Brazil as the host of the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference.

Thailand has contributed to the Decade through the IOC and its Regional Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific. We appreciate the continued support from both the IOC and WESTPAC, especially their recent collaboration in organizing Thailand's side event at UNOC3.

At national level, Thailand has established a National Decade Committee, which—although still in its early stages—serves as a valuable coordination platform.

Just last week, we co-organized the National Marine Science Conference with strong support from academia, the Marine Science Association of Thailand, the private sector, and local partners.

The event successfully served as a platform for inclusive engagement across generations and disciplines—bringing together scientists, students, policymakers, and practitioners to exchange knowledge and ideas.

Thailand supports the recommendations to promote inclusivity, strengthen the science-policy interface, and ensure balanced regional participation.

We emphasize the urgency of enhancing the WESTPAC Office, which also serves as the Decade Coordination Office for the Western Pacific, to ensure this dual role becomes fully operational and responsive to regional needs.

Thailand reaffirms its strong commitment to the Decade's vision and remain ready to work with all partners to achieve lasting and meaningful impact.

Türkiye

We want to congratulate Brazil for hosting the Ocean Decade Conference in 2027.

We believe that the National Decade Committee is one of the key elements for the Ocean Decade. Our National Decade Committee is drawn from universities, ministries, non-governmental organizations and it takes the lead in motivating and engaging experts.

Last two years remarkable efforts and accomplishments are recorded, we coordinated and attended many activities, workshops, capacity building activities regarding Ocean Decade.

The first point we would like to make is that an international conference on “Türkiye's Contributions to UN Decade of Ocean Science” that was hosted by Middle East Technical University in September 2023 was a critical moment in the implementation of Ocean Decade to reach the broader social community.

Secondly, our existing national strategy document was updated with respect to new terms and approaches of blue economy, ocean decade aims and marine pollution.

We organized a painting competition at three categories in primary, middle, and high schools. For ocean observations and ocean monitoring, the Integrated Marine Pollution Monitoring Program has been carried out and this program consists of large monitoring network of 425 (four hundred twenty-five) stations covering Marmara Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Aegean Sea, and Black Sea.

We also would like to mention the proposal for the International Platform for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS) and Options for Future Role Of IOC. We appreciate efforts related to ocean science. However, we would like to point out that unfortunately we did not have enough time to examine this proposal with all the details.

The dedicated working group is still working on the draft resolution. We are waiting for the results of that working group. Our suggestion is that to get good reasonable results, we should do feasibility studies and then take a further step on that.

Lastly, for international level, we would like to highlight that IOC Member States should continue to promote collaboration for projects and activities.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

We would also like to thank Brazil for hosting the next UN Decade Conference, and we look forward to participating.

The UK are significant partners in many UN Decade activities, and the successes and many positives of the UN Decade for Ocean Science have been well-articulated in the mid-term review. The profile of the Decade has escalated ocean science beyond where it was before and has created an energy and momentum that is great to see. That energy and momentum, however, come with challenges as the Decade has grown.

We welcome the mid-term evaluation which, as one would expect, highlighted some issues. Some of these were also identified by the IOS Evaluation in 2022 and remain unresolved. In particular, the UK has long advocated for greater inclusion of other UN Agencies than present. We welcome the words from Monaco around the wider involvement of other UN Agencies.

We note, a report into this issue that was commissioned by the DCU and due to be completed initially by Q2 of 2023, then postponed until Q2 of 2024, but has not yet been released.

Mindful of the proposal to include more UN Agencies on the Decade Advisory Board, we would once again like to re-iterate that inclusion of other UN agencies in the delivery of Decade Programmes and Projects is the key to delivering an impactful Ocean Decade.

Furthermore, the UK welcomes the DCUs acceptance that more needs to be done to recognise the benefits and value of the Ocean Decade through a robust monitoring and evaluation framework. The UK recalls how, even during the development of the Implementation Plan, we advocated that the need to be able to capture the benefits of Decade activities would be essential in not only promoting its success but also in attracting key stakeholders. So, we look forward to seeing how improved monitoring, evaluation and learning will help deliver these key success indicators over the second half of the Decade.

On the subject of IPOS, and the IOC role in a future IPOS, the UK has some concerns, namely:

- The Towards IPOS scoping has raised expectations, which potentially poses a risk to the IOC reputation if delivery is perceived to fall short due to resourcing challenges and the necessary narrowing of the scope for a test phase;
- Notwithstanding ring-fenced funding, there is a risk of resource challenges for other IOC activities that must engage with the test phase to avoid duplication.
- We would welcome greater clarity of what the test phase under the Decade would do or deliver, and therefore what the implications for the IOC and its member states are, both for the test phase and in the longer term.

United States of America

The United States would like to join you and other delegations in recognizing our Canadian neighbors to our north on - today - their national holiday. The United States also congratulates Brazil for hosting the next Decade Conference, and we thank Monaco for offering the draft Resolution for the Assembly's consideration. The United States has similar views as others have stated regarding the Resolution text, in particular regarding IPOS. We welcome the progress we have been making in the drafting group, and look forward to finalizing those discussions. Given that the drafting group continues its work on the IPOS-related paragraphs, the United States would like to make two comments on other aspects of the Resolution. Regarding paragraph 5, the United States is unable to reaffirm the Barcelona Statement, consistent with our opening statement. Regarding paragraph 13, the United States is unable to agree to adopt the revised

Terms of Reference for the Decade Advisory Board. We will therefore disassociate from both paragraphs after the Resolution is adopted.

North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES)

The North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES) reiterates its commitment to the Ocean Decade, utilizing its infrastructure in support, with a dedicated UNDOS Advisory Panel to oversee a growing number of endorsed Decade actions by PICES and through collaboration with other organizations (including BECI and SmartNet). PICES also has a dedicated Advisory Panel on ECOP which works with the Global-ECOP Programme and among their goals is addressing some of the cross-cutting challenges of UNDOS. In addition, PICES members contributed to the Vision 2030 White Papers on Ocean Decade Challenges 2, 5 and 7.

SmartNet, jointly managed by ICES and PICES, is part of a Community of Practice with other Ocean Decade Programs around the climate-biodiversity-fisheries nexus and now has several endorsed projects under its umbrella. They have had another busy and productive year with too many activities to list here, however we will mention recent highlights:

A global public survey sponsored by SmartNet was launched at the Barcelona Conference side-event on “The Ocean We Want”. Surveys have now been completed in five countries (US, France, Australia, Japan, Indonesia), with results, describing public perceptions of critical ocean issues, recently presented at the One Ocean Science Congress in Nice.

SmartNet has also published three manuscripts this year:

On the ‘Ocean We Want’ survey results from Indonesia;

On knowledge sharing and capacity development in coordination with ECOPs in SIDS;

On the capacity and gaps within the ‘climate-biodiversity-fisheries nexus’ in the Ocean Decade.

And continues to build knowledge networks by organizing Workshops at international fora, including the ICES and PICES Annual Meetings.

Themes have included:

‘Exploring international knowledge co-production at the science-policy interface’;

‘Climate-ready fisheries management’;

‘Engaging with local and traditional knowledge holders to co-design ocean science in Pacific SIDS’.

The BECI project, with initial funding from Canada, has developed a Science Plan and is working on the Implementation Plan for a ‘North Pacific Ocean Climate Knowledge Network’ to support climate-informed decisions for the management of North Pacific marine ecosystems.

Support for UNDOS continues to be an area requiring emphasis both within and outside of the PICES North Pacific region. PICES and ICES members will enhance our capacity development actions with an emphasis on SIDS. We will also continue to build our Ocean Decade Networks around the ‘climate-biodiversity-fisheries’ nexus, including through a monthly webinar series.

PICES looks forward to supporting the next phase of the Ocean Decade and contributing to its success.

Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR)

The Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) appreciates IOC’s leadership on making progress to improve global capacity to conduct ocean science.

SCOR advances capacity development, technology transfer, training, and networking by promoting broad participation in its ongoing scientific activities and by supporting individual and institutional human resource development. SCOR involves early-career and developing-country scientists in its projects and working groups, many of which conduct focused capacity development activities. In addition, SCOR supports Visiting Scholarships for conducting training in developing countries; a fellows programme jointly with POGO, the Partnership for the Observation of the Global Ocean; and grants for the participation of early-career scientists from developing countries in international scientific meetings and trainings. Over fifteen hundred

individuals have been recipients across these programmes in the past 25 years. Retrospective analyses of these programmes have demonstrated their success at improving the research collaborations and career outcomes of participants—a challenge that SCOR will aim to address in partnerships with governmental and nongovernmental actors at all levels.

5.1 Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–2029 (Draft 43 C/5, First Biennium of the 2026–2029 Quadrennium)

Russian Federation

THESIS 1. The general approach. The delegation of the Russian Federation prioritizes the sustainability, autonomy and balanced financing of UNESCO IOC programs in the context of achieving High-Level strategic Objectives, implementing the IOC Medium-term Strategy for the period 2022-2029, fulfilling the mandate of the Commission on Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (United Nations Decade for Ocean Science 2021-2030) and accomplishing the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

THESIS 2 We want transparency and fairness in the allocation of funds. The increase of the IOC's share in the UNESCO budget from 2% to 3% at the request of the Member States and the resumption of payments by the United States upon their return to UNESCO was supposed to strengthen and increase the effectiveness of the IOC programs.

However, due to the lack of time, the allocation of additional funds took place without the direct participation of the Executive Council and the IOC Assembly. There were also no consultations with the Member States to reflect their position on the priorities for allocating additional funds.

THESIS 3. Proposals for a balanced approach. Within the proposed document IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc (1) we support the budget option based on the ZRG (Zero Real Growth) scenario, as this is the most realistic in the face of inflationary pressures and rising fixed costs.

We propose that the program part of the budget is reduced by 4.5% compared to 42 C/5 (according to the ZRG scenario), which requires compensation mechanisms through voluntary contributions and partnership agreements.

At the same time, we strongly point out the need to reallocate expenditures in favor of the program part of the budget, especially in terms of supporting the flagship programs of the IOC and enabling the work of regional subcommissions.

We note that it is unacceptable to reduce the share of expenditures allocated to Capacity development activities.

We suggest that new projects should not be launched if this causes inability to complete those that have already been started.

We note the appropriateness of using the reserves of the Special Account to cover the critical needs of the IOC flagship programs.

THESIS 4. Development of a new performance assessment system (Results Framework). We support the initiative to create a new IOC performance assessment system (see Draft IOC Results Framework 2026-2027 in IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc (1) Rev), which reflects quantitative as well as qualitative indicators of the impact of IOC programs at the national level.

We point out the need to take into account the regional context when developing performance indicators and evaluating programs and to ensure the representation of Member States in this process. In particular, we suggest taking into account the specifics of countries with Arctic and subarctic seas when forming these indicators.

THESIS 5. Support of the IOC regional subcommissions (IOCAFRICA, WESTPAC, IOCINDIO, etc.). The Russian Federation expresses concern about the ability to maintain the activities of the IOC regional subcommissions, which are integral elements of the global architecture of marine science, especially considering the implementation of the IOC Medium-term Strategy for the period 2022-2029 and the United Nations Decade for Ocean Science for Sustainable

Development. Insufficient provision for these subcommissions may lead to failure to achieve the stated goals.

In this regard, we consider it necessary to prioritize the allocation of targeted funding from the regular budget for the institutional strengthening and administrative support of these subcommissions.

We also propose to allocate at least 20% of voluntary contributions to the support of infrastructure and employees of regional units.

Thesis 6. On the autonomous functionality of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. We believe it is advisable to develop administrative procedures in such a way that the IOC can independently plan its personnel policy and distribute incoming voluntary contributions within the framework of the Charter.

Russian Federation is ready to work constructively with partners to ensure the effective implementation of the IOC's mandate in all areas of the World Ocean.

5.6 34th Session of the Assembly and 59th Session of the Executive Council

Australia

Please be aware of and avoid the following dates agreed by the 79th Executive Council of WMO last week when considering scheduling of the next IOC sessions:

WMO EC-80 & Finance Committee: 18-26 June 2026

WMO Cg-20, Finance Committee and EC-81: 29 April to 19 May 2027

6. Adoption of Resolutions and Modalities for the Finalisation of the Report

France

La France souhaite rappeler son soutien à la mention de la Plateforme internationale pour la durabilité des océans (IPOS) qui figurait dans le texte initial de la décision. Cette plateforme internationale se veut être une réponse au besoin de renforcer l'interface science-politique sur l'océan. Elle permettra de répondre aux priorités identifiées par les États qui en expriment le besoin en leur apportant les options d'actions politiques sur mesure afin de les aider à atteindre leurs engagements concernant l'ODD 14 pour les écosystèmes marins et côtiers.

La France se félicite en outre de la résolution A/79/... de l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies sur la déclaration intitulée : « Notre Océan, Notre Avenir : unis pour une action urgente » qui préconise une interface science-politiques solide pour fournir en temps voulu des informations scientifiques et socio-économiques crédibles et saillantes pour éclairer les politiques et les actions et qui prend note de la proposition de création d'une plateforme internationale pour la durabilité des océans.

La France remercie vivement les États qui ont apporté leur soutien politique à cette initiative. Forte de l'appui de ces États, la France est heureuse de rappeler qu'elle apportera une contribution financière de plusieurs centaines de milliers d'euros pour l'IPOS. Enfin, nous renouvelons le souhait de voir l'IPOS venir en soutien de la Décennie des sciences océaniques de la COI et de ses États membres. A cet égard, nous espérons qu'une collaboration fructueuse pourra être développée.

United States of America

The United States thanks the sponsors of the Resolution and appreciates the constructive dialogue held within the Finance Committee as a means to refine this document. We remain supportive of the IOC's work to strengthen the Regional Sub-commissions and to enhance their capacity to carry out Member State priorities. However, as mentioned earlier this week, and in line with our opening statement, the United States disassociates from the language in paragraph 3 recalling the 2030 Agenda.