



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
COMMISSION Océanographique Intergouvernementale
COMISIÓN OCEANOGRÁFICA INTERGUBERNAMENTAL
МЕЖПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВЕННАЯ ОКЕАНОГРАФИЧЕСКАЯ КОМИССИЯ

اللجنة الدولية الحكومية لعلوم المحيطات

政府间海洋学委员会

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IOC Circular Letter No 2813
(Available in French, Spanish, Russian)

IOC/VR/AT/pbo
22 October 2020

To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for Liaison with the IOC in States Members
of the IOC Executive Council

cc. : Other IOC Member States
The Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Commission
Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
National Commissions for UNESCO of IOC Member States
Officers of Major IOC Subsidiary Bodies (Scientific, Technical and Regional)
Executive Heads of Organizations part of UN-Oceans
Executive Heads of Intergovernmental and Non-governmental Organizations
cooperating with the IOC

**Subject: Proposed arrangements for the 53rd Session
of the IOC Executive Council**

As a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, Member States of the IOC Executive Council were consulted (cf. IOC [Circular Letter 2799](#) of April 3, 2020) and agreed to postpone its 53rd session initially scheduled at UNESCO Headquarters from 30 June to 3rd July 2020. Unfortunately, the pandemic continues unabated around the world. Related containment measures are in place in many countries including France, and international travel is heavily affected. While continuing progress of the Commission requires guidance by Member States, the current situation makes conducting an *in praesentia* session of the Executive Council virtually impossible.

The purpose of this letter is therefore to consult you on the possibility to hold the 53rd session of the IOC Executive Council in an *online* modality, with an *agenda limited to essential issues* requiring guidance or decisions prior to the 31st IOC Assembly, currently planned for June 2021.

The IOC Officers, together with the Executive Secretary and his management team, held an online meeting on 30 September 2020 and reviewed the situation in the light of our commitments, reporting, planning and budgeting deadlines and regulatory obligations, and also taking into account the principle of dual governance and functional autonomy of the Commission within UNESCO. There is a consensus amongst the Officers to recommend the attached shortened draft agenda for an **online five-day plenary session from 3 to 9 February 2021**, preceded by online meetings of the Officers on February, 1st and of the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group on February, 2nd. The daily three-

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hours sessions would take place at midday Paris time so as to facilitate, as much as possible, participation from various time zones.

Careful preparation will be undertaken to ensure the quality of the debate and allow an inclusive, transparent, and efficient decision-making process. The Secretariat is currently exploring technical means to hold the session with full interpretation and in the most efficient way, in keeping with the IOC Rule of Procedure n° 33.2 and based on the emerging best practices of UNESCO and the entire UN system and in consultation with the UNESCO Legal Advisor.

Should we obtain consensus on this proposed arrangement, the updated documentation for the online EC-53 session will be made available on a dedicated webpage at <https://oceanexpert.org/event/2805>. All documents prepared for the initially planned and postponed session remain available at <http://ioc-unesco.org/ec53>. A major effort will be made by the Secretariat to prepare information and presentations well in advance of the session in the four official languages of the Commission and to facilitate discussion on the draft resolutions, decisions and recommendations through an updated Action Paper, within statutory deadlines. Detailed technical guidelines will be provided well ahead of the session and your remarks and thoughts on those will be sought to guide the efforts of the Officers and the Secretariat. I would also encourage you to actively take part in the work of the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group led by IOC Vice-chair Karim Hilmi in order to prepare our discussions on the Draft IOC Medium Strategy 2022–2029 (Draft 41 C/4) and Draft Programme and Budget 2022–2025 (Draft 41 C/5).

Under the current circumstances the working conditions for effectively exercising our governance are particularly challenging, and I have full confidence that with your understanding, commitment and collaboration we will jointly overcome these difficulties.

In the spirit of the IOC Rule of Procedure n° 23, I would like to seek consensus on the IOC Officers' proposal to hold the EC-53 session online as outlined in this letter. I urge each Member State of the Executive Council to respond to this letter **by 20 November 2020** and thank you in advance for your understanding and support.

Yours sincerely,



Ariel Hernan Troisi
Chairperson

Enclosures: (2)

- Third revised provisional agenda (IOC/EC-53/2.1.Doc Rev.3)
- Second revised provisional timetable (IOC/EC-53/2.1Doc Add.Rev.2)



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

Fifty-third Session of the Executive Council
UNESCO, Paris, [Online session: 3-9 February 2021]

THIRD REVISED PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. OPENING

Oral Statement of the Chair

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

2.1 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

IOC/EC-53/2.1.Doc Rev.3	Third Revised Provisional Agenda
IOC/EC-53/2.1.Doc Add. Rev.2	Second Revised Provisional Timetable
IOC/EC-53/AP Rev.2	Second Revised Provisional Action Paper

2.2 DESIGNATION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

2.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF SESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2.4 INTRODUCTION OF TIMETABLE AND DOCUMENTATION

IOC/EC-53/DocList	Provisional List of Documents
IOC/EC-53/2.4.Inf.	Working arrangements for the session

3. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ON THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED SINCE THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY AND ON BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION
[Rule of Procedure 49.1]

IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(1) Rev.	Updated Report of the IOC Executive Secretary on the work accomplished since the Thirtieth session of the Assembly
IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(2)	Report on Budget Execution 2018–2019 and outline of 2020–2021 budget
IOC/INF-1393	Concept Proposal for a “State of the Ocean Report”
IOC/EC-53/3.1.Inf(1)	Draft Memorandum of Understanding between the IOC of UNESCO and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)
IOC/EC-53/3.1.Inf(2)	Draft Memorandum of Understanding between the IOC of UNESCO and the Pacific Community (SPC)

4. PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENTS

- 4.1 REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECADE ROADMAP AND DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF OCEAN SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
[39 C/Resolution 25; Res. XXIX-1, XXX-1]

IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(1)	Progress on the implementation of the Decade Roadmap of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development including results of the review of the zero draft Implementation Plan
IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(1) Add.	Report on the outcome of the consultation process during the development of the Implementation Plan of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable development before its presentation to the UN General Assembly at its 75 th session
IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(1) Add.2	Synthesis Report of Regional Decade Consultation workshops (2019–2020)
IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(3)	Revised Terms of Reference of the Decade Executive Planning Group to act as interim Decade Advisory Board in 2021
<i>UNGA Document to supersede IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(2)</i>	Implementation Plan for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development
IOC/INF-1383	IOC's programmatic contribution to the Decade, 2021–2030

- 4.2 STATUS OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL INDIAN OCEAN (IOCINDIO)
[Dec. IOC-XXX/3.3.4]

IOC/EC-53/4.6.Doc	The Case for a new governance for IOCINDIO: A proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO in a Sub-Commission of IOC for the Indian Ocean (IOCIO)
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5. GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING

- 5.1 DRAFT IOC MEDIUM TERM STRATEGY FOR 2022–2029 (41 C/4) AND DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2022–2025 (41 C/5)
[Resolution XXX-3]

IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(1)	Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029
IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(2)	Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025
IOC/INF-1383	IOC's programmatic contribution to the Decade, 2021–2030

- 5.2 REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE
[Resolution XXX-3]

6. NEXT SESSIONS OF IOC GOVERNING BODIES

[Statutes Art. 7.C.8; Rule of Procedure 8.3 & 21.2(c); Rule of Procedure 19.2]

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

8. CLOSURE



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)
Fifty-third Session of the Executive Council
Paris, 3–9 February 2021

IOC/EC-53/2.1 Doc Add.
Paris, 22 October 2020
English only

SECOND REVISED PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

Time	Monday 1 st Feb.	Tuesday 2 nd Feb.	Wednesday 3 rd Feb.	Thursday 4 th Feb.	Friday 5 th Feb.	Monday 8 th Feb.	Tuesday 9 th Feb.	
12.00 – 13.00				<i>Financial Committee (I)</i>		<i>Financial Committee (optional)</i>		
13.00 – 13.30	OFFICERS MEETING	INTERSESSIONAL FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE	1. Opening 2. Organization of the Session (2.1 – 2.4)	3. & 5. (Cont'd) <i>Replies of the Executive Secretary to the debate</i>	<u>4.1</u> (Decade Cont'd)	<i>Resolutions Committee</i>	6. Next Sessions of IOC Governing Bodies	
13.30 – 14.30			3. Report of the Executive Secretary on the work accomplished since IOC-30 Assembly (short introduction)		<u>4.2</u> Status of IOCINDIO			5. Governance, Programming and Budgeting
14.30 – 16.00			5. Governance, Programming and Budgeting (introduction) <u>5.1</u> Draft MTS / Programme & Budget 3. & 5..(Debate) <i>Replies of the Executive Secretary to the debate</i>	4. Programmatic Developments <u>4.1</u> UN Decade Roadmap & Implementation Plan	<i>Financial Committee (II)</i>	<u>5.2</u> Report by the Chair of the Financial Committee		
16.00 – 17.00								