



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

Thirty-first Session of the Assembly
UNESCO, 14–25 June 2021 (online)

Covers all items of the Revised Provisional Agenda

SECOND REVISED ACTION PAPER

The Action Paper provides the information necessary for effective participation in the discussion of the agenda items. This information includes: (i) identification of relevant documentation; (ii) identification, under each substantive agenda item, of the issue before the Assembly and the expected decision or draft resolution when available to date; (iii) background information (if the relevant background includes a separate document, it is issued as a working document).

The Action Paper also provides the basis of the draft summary report of the session. It is written in past tense to streamline the reporting process. A summary of the discussion that led to decisions under each agenda item will be prepared by the Secretariat and the Rapporteur and will be included in the draft summary report. Draft decisions and resolutions are proposed in the document in order to focus on decisions during the discussion of each agenda item without prejudice to the prerogatives of any Member State, partner organization, Officer or the Executive Secretary.

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1. OPENING

1. The Chair, Mr Ariel Hernan Troisi, opened the online session at ___ on 14 June 2021, right after the closure of 54th session of the IOC Executive Council, which acted as the steering committee of this Assembly session.
2. 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 the short intersessional period between the 53rd session of the Executive Council and the current Assembly: Dr John Bemiasa (Madagascar, –2021), Prof. José Stuardo (Chile, 1929–2021) and Prof. Keisuke Taira (Japan, 1941–2021)
3. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

2.1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA [Rule of Procedure, 8, 11]

<i>Working documents:</i>	IOC/A-31/2.1.Doc Prov.	Provisional Agenda
	IOC/A-31/2.1.Doc Add. Prov. Rev.	Revised Provisional Timetable
	IOC/A-31/AP Rev 2	Second Revised Provisional Action Paper (<i>this document</i>)
<i>Report:</i>	IOC/EC-54/SR Prov.	Provisional Executive Summary Report of the 54th Session of the IOC Executive Council, online, 14 June 2021

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.

Dec. A-31/2(I)

The Assembly,

I. Agenda

1. Adopts the agenda and the timetable of work as set out in documents IOC/A-31/2.1.Doc Prov. and Add. Rev. [with the following additional modifications:]

5. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

2.2. DESIGNATION OF THE RAPPORTEUR
[Rule of Procedure 25.4]

Dec. A-31/2(II)

The Assembly,

II. Rapporteur

2. On a proposal of [country], seconded by [countries],
3. Designates _____ of [country] Rapporteur for its present session to assist the Chairperson and the Executive Secretary in the preparation of the draft provisional report of the Session;

6. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

2.3. ESTABLISHMENT OF SESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS
[Rule of Procedure 12]

Report:

[IOC/EC-54/SR Prov.](#)

Provisional Executive Summary Report of the 54th Session of the IOC Executive Council, online, 14 June 2021

7. Referring to the recommendations made by the Executive Council (EC-54/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, their open-ended composition, and the working arrangements agreed for their meetings.

Dec. A-31/2(III)

The Assembly,

III. Sessional Committees and Working Groups

4. Establishes the following sessional open-ended committees and refers to them the following agenda items and responsibilities:

Financial Committee: to examine the documentation and prepare a resolution under items 3.1 (budget implementation and financial report), 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3; under the chairship of Dr Karim Hilmi (Morocco, Vice-chair) with the following Member States participating: _____. Ms Ksenia Yvinec provided the Secretariat support to the Financial Committee.

Resolutions Committee: to report on all draft resolutions duly presented for consideration at the session; under the chairship of [name (country)] with the following Member States participating: _____. Mr Julian Barbière provided the Secretariat support to the Resolutions Committee.

Nominations Committee (to examine all proposals of candidates for the elections to the chair, vice-chairs and to the Executive Council at the present session, and to

report on them – item 4.5): under the chairship of [name] (country) with the following Member States participating: _____. Dr Salvatore Aricò provided the Secretariat support to the Nominations Committee.

8. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

2.4. INTRODUCTION TO TIMETABLE and DOCUMENTATION [Rule of Procedure 11]

<u>Working documents:</u>	IOC/A-31/2.1.Doc Prov.	Provisional Agenda
	IOC/A-31/2.1.Doc Add. Prov.	Provisional Timetable
	IOC/A-31/DocList Prov.	Provisional List of Documents
	IOC/A-31/AP Rev 2	Second Revised Provisional Action Paper (<i>this document</i>)

<u>Information:</u>	IOC/A-31/2.4.Inf.1	Working Arrangements for the session
	IOC/A-31/2.4.Inf.1 Add.	Template for submission of written records to the Assembly summary report

9. The Executive Secretary introduced this item.

No decision is proposed under this item. [Any changes to the timetable would be reflected in DecA-31/2].

10. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3. IOC MATTERS AND REPORTS

3.1. STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON [Rule of Procedure 8.1(a)]

<u>Information:</u>	IOC/A-31/3.1.Inf	Statement from the IOC Chairperson on the Occasion of the 31 st Session of the Assembly, online, 14–25 June 2021 [<i>to be published during the session</i>]
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11. In accordance with [rule of procedure 8.1\(a\)](#), Chair Ariel H. Troisi delivered an oral statement on recent developments in the work of the Commission and perspectives for the coming years (Annex ____).

12. The Assembly thanked the Chair for his remarks and leadership

No decision is proposed under this item.

13. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.2. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ON THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED SINCE THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY AND ON BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION

[Rule of Procedure 8.1(b) and (c); Rule of Procedure 49.1; IOC-XXX/Dec.10.2]

<i>Working documents:</i>	IOC/A-31/3.2.Doc(1) & Addendum	Report of the IOC Executive Secretary on the work accomplished since the Thirtieth Session of the Assembly
	IOC/A-31/3.2.Doc(2)	Report on 2020–2021 (40 C/5) budget implementation as at 31 December 2020
	IOC/A-31/3.2.Doc(3)	Financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2020 and Forecast for 2021
<i>Information:</i>	IOC/INF-1401	Update on IOC Custodianship Role in relation to SDG 14 Indicators, 2021
	IOC/INF-1402	Update on IOC co-sponsorship of World Climate Research Programme (WCRP), 2021
	IOC/INF-1405	IOC Commitments in International and UN Processes (BBNJ, CBD, WOA-III, UNFCCC)
	IOC/INF-1406	Report of the Chair of the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) Guiding Committee, 2021
	IOC/INF-1351	The Second International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE-2), update on activities 2017, part 4: update on activities, 2020
	IOC/INF-1397	Reports of Category 2 centre and institutes of UNESCO related to Oceanography, 2020–2021
	IOC/INF-1407	Progress in the implementation of the Integrated Coastal Area Management (ICAM) Strategy, including Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), Sustainable Blue Economy and Large Marine Ecosystems
	IOC/INF-1393 Rev.	Revised Concept proposal for an 'IOC-coordinated State of the Ocean Report' (IOC StOR)
	IOC/INF-1408	New IOC Communication Plan 2021
	IOC/INF-1400	Information note on the Strategic Evaluation of the IOC
<i>References:</i>	IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(1)	Report of the IOC Executive Secretary on the work accomplished since the Thirtieth Session of the Assembly
	IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(1) Part2	Brief update by 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

14. The Executive Secretary introduced this item using a PowerPoint presentation.
15. He recalled that a key focus of the Commission over the past two years was on the preparation of the Implementation Plan for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021–2030. IOC spared no effort in engaging all Member States, United Nations partners and key civil society stakeholders in regional and global consultations to seize this once-in-a-life-time opportunity to harness advances in ocean science to achieve a better understanding of the ocean system and deliver science-based solutions to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Effective use of UN-Oceans consultations reinforced the collaborative approach to ensure a meaningful division of labour among the IOC's partners in the United Nations system.
16. He highlighted the efforts deployed in all regions in order to make the most of the opportunity that the Decade represents for all Member States, and in particular for Africa, LDCs (least developed countries) and SIDS (Small Island Developing States), leaving no one behind. IOC's regional subsidiary bodies continue to play a critical role in this regard. Specific attention was given to SIDS, as well as to the youth involvement and the value of indigenous knowledge. The 2nd International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE-2) has engaged in various Indian Ocean related Ocean Decade planning meetings, aiming to ensure that the IIOE-2 is well positioned to make a tangible contribution to the Decade's implementation.
17. The Ocean Decade represents a tremendous opportunity for African countries to strengthen their capacities in ocean research in support of the sustainable ocean economy. IOC partnered with the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association and the secretariat of the Nairobi Convention (UN Environment) to organize "the Regional Consultation workshop for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021–2030 for Africa and the Adjacent Islands States", which was hosted by the Government of Kenya from 27 to 29 January 2020 in Nairobi. The workshop, as well as the webinar on "Co-designing the Ocean Science we need for Africa" (3 November 2020), offered an opportunity to identify regional needs and priorities in terms of transforming knowledge systems, accelerating transfer of marine technology, enabling training and education, fostering science-policy dialogues and building capacities, in alignment with the African Union's initiatives. IOC assisted in holding at the UNESCO Headquarters and online the first part of the 2021 African week, which was organized by group of African representatives with UNESCO. With the support of the Government of Egypt, IOC is now preparing a Decade kick-off conference on ocean science in support of Africa's sustainable development to take place in the second half of 2021.
18. The Ocean Decade Implementation Plan gives specific attention to SIDS and youth involvement, as well as to the value of indigenous knowledge, based on numerous regional consultations (with South Pacific SIDS in Noumea in July 2019, Caribbean and Western Indian Ocean SIDS in, respectively, Mexico and Kenya, in early 2020. The performance-based community recognition programme "Tsunami Ready" was piloted in three regions (Caribbean, Pacific and Indian Ocean). Ten SIDS communities were recognized before the end of 2020.
19. The Executive Secretary presented Member States with a non-exhaustive list of programmatic milestones, as well as an update on the highlights of each of the six IOC functions, from research to observations and data management, ocean services, assessments, governance and capacity development including the work of the regional and technical subsidiary bodies of the Commission. He recalled informative webinars organized by the Secretariat prior to the Assembly.
20. The IOC work includes supporting Member States' implementation of and reporting on the two SDG target indicators 14.3.1 and 14.a.1, for which the IOC has been assigned the custodian role. The 2nd edition of the *Global Ocean Science Report* (GOSR) was launched on the occasion of the IOC's 60th anniversary celebration, on 14 December 2020. The main impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was on the IOC's operational activities – the Global Ocean

Observing System and the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange. Some activities, particularly those linked to research vessel operations and the servicing of moorings, surface CO₂ measurements, and the deployment of autonomous platforms like Argo floats and surface drifters, remained restricted – with the implementing community slowly adapting, finding new ways of cooperating, and operating under new conditions. IOC conducted a number of surveys and will continue to work closely with its partners in the relevant communities to assess the complete impact through 2021 and beyond, including any impact on investment through GOSR Data Portal. As regards capacity building, the OceanTeacher Global Academy e-learning platform allowed a quick re-orientation and organization on on-line courses as from June 2020. The IOC-affiliated UNESCO Category 2 Centres have been very active and their work is very successful.

21. Dr Ryabinin also elaborated on the concept for the State of the Ocean Report (StOR), of which the idea was already presented to the IOC Executive Council at 53rd session. The report is intended to present a summary of key changes in the ocean state, in terms of its physical, biogeochemical, biological and ecological variables, supplemented by a strategic assessment of developments with regard to integrated ocean management, such as percentage of area covered by area management tools, observations, etc. StOR would be one contribution of IOC to the Decade and would facilitate understanding of the urgent need to address issues related to ocean management towards sustainability and measure progress in that direction. A circular letter was sent to Member States asking their views on the spatial and temporal scope of the report, focus areas, and styles of presentation. An informal expert consultation involving 16 independent experts reflecting all IOC Functions and geographically and gender balanced was held on 28 May 2021. The outputs of the survey to Member States and the expert consultation have informed the revised version of [IOC/INF-1393](#). The Secretariat will therefore undertake a pilot State of the Ocean Report, for presentation at the 55th session of the IOC Executive Council in 2022.
22. The Executive Secretary informed the Executive Council of the active part taken by IOC's leadership in the negotiation process on an International Legally Binding Instrument (ILBI) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ).
23. The Executive Secretary explained that due to the cancellation or postponement of many important events because of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the "2020 UN Ocean Conference", the Secretariat had to explore alternative approaches to the launch of both the Draft Implementation Plan for the Decade and the 2nd edition of the Global Ocean Science Report. In this context, he also presented the main initiatives of the Secretariat to assess the influence of the pandemic on IOC's areas of competence: surveys and assessments of impact on ocean observation and tsunami warning services, as well as the longer-term effect on investment in ocean sciences and Member States capacities to achieve the SDG target 14.a, to be measured through GOSR.
24. With regard to the Commission's financial situation, he confirmed that the Secretariat implemented 2018–2019 workplans in accordance with the budgetary allocations and resource mobilization targets approved by the IOC Executive Council's [Resolution EC-LI.2](#) and developed 2020–2021 workplans in accordance with [Resolution XXX-3](#), as presented in document [IOC/EC-53/3.1\(2\)](#).
25. The Executive Secretary thanked Member States and partners having provided voluntary contributions to the Commission's budget and reported on new partnerships and main outreach and engagement initiatives. He stressed that civil society partners are key in raising the awareness of the socio-economic value of the ocean and IOC's efforts in supporting the sustainable ocean economy and addressing major challenges and opportunities from the ocean. The Executive Secretary informed the Assembly of a joint initiative with EurOcean and Portugal to establish the Mário Ruivo Memorial Lecture. This

Memorial Lecture would be in homage to and recognition of 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. The Lecture would be delivered at the IOC Assembly by Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs) selected on a competitive basis. It would focus on the priorities of the Ocean Decade in the spirit of the commitment of Professor Ruivo to solutions-oriented ocean research. The Ocean Decade Informal Working Group for ECOPs has been involved in initial discussions on the initiative and would be engaged in the design and scoping of the Memorial Lecture and in the selection of the candidates for its presentation. The Memorial Lecture would be anchored within the Early Career Ocean Professional Programme that has recently been endorsed as a flagship action of the Ocean Decade.

26. The Executive Secretary also expressed concern that IOC programme delivery continues, to a large extent, on an unsustainable basis, with chronic understaffing and shortage of resources. He highlighted the main challenge for the Commission's small Secretariat presented by the dual task to raise not only extrabudgetary resources necessary to maintain its core operational programmes but also significant additional resources to lead and coordinate the Ocean Decade. A new approach to fund-raising and communication and outreach is implemented, based on highlighting the societal benefits of IOC's work and demonstrating the return on investment in ocean science and observation.
27. The external evaluation of the IOC strategic positioning, launched in cooperation with the Internal Oversight Service and supported by OpenCities Ltd, will inform IOC Governing Bodies' decision-making and planning for the next programmatic cycle.

Dec. A-31/3.2

Report of the Executive Secretary

The Assembly,

1. Having examined documents
2. Thanks the Executive Secretary for a very comprehensive report;
3. Takes note of the information provided, welcoming significant advances in many programmatic areas.

28. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.3. REPORTS OF THE IOC SUB-COMMISSIONS AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES
[Rule of Procedure 48.3]

**3.3.1. IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States:
6th Session of IOCAFRICA, online, 13–16 April 2021**

Report

[IOC/SC-IOCAFRICA-VI/3s](#)

Executive Summary Report of the 6th Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, online, 13–16 April 2021

29. The IOCAFRICA Chair, Prof Mohamed Said, presented an overview of the activities implemented by the Sub-Commission during the intersessional period 2019–2020, and the major outcomes of the sixth session of the IOCAFRICA.
30. IOCAFRICA made good progress in the implementation of its ambitious work plan adopted by its fifth session meeting from 25–27 March 2019, Nairobi, Kenya. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some events were held online and others postponed to the second half of 2021. The activities implemented covered all priorities areas identified by the Sub-Commission.
31. A regional training course on marine GIS was hosted by the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute in Mombasa from 28 October to 1 November 2019 and attended by 22 trainees from Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and Tanzania. Regional Training Centres for the new phase of the Ocean Teacher Academy programme were designated at the University of Ghana (Accra, Ghana), the Eduardo Mondlane University (Maputo, Mozambique) and the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (Mombasa, Kenya). A joint workshop on Environmental Data Analysis planned for the FAO/NANSEN programme was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The preparation of materials to be used for online training is ongoing.
32. IOCAFRICA organized an online regional workshop on “Mapping the Sea Floor around Africa” jointly with the Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed2030 project on 10 and 24 February 2021. The webinars, attended by more than 100 participants from 25 countries provided an opportunity to review the current status of mapping in the region, identify and discuss the needs of stakeholders, and explore opportunities for collaboratively advancing seabed mapping to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.
33. A series of national marine spatial planning workshops (including environmental pressures that impact on MSP and decision support tools) were organized with support from the Government of Sweden in the following countries in 2020: Cameroun, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique and Tanzania. A regional workshop was also organized for the Gulf of Guinea region. IOCAFRICA is working with the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute on a publication on “Marine Spatial Planning and the Blue Economy in Kenya”.
34. In the context of the institutional Integrated Coastal Area Management Strategy, having received financial support from Sweden which was available for 2019, IOCAFRICA and IOC Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section, with the support of the Central African Countries, organized a technical workshop on coastal vulnerability in Libreville, Gabon (5–7 November 2019) with the participation of national experts from Angola, Cameroon, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sao Tome and Principe. A coastal vulnerability project is being considered at present by these countries, reflecting their needs for sustainable coastal zone management.
35. The development of the regional node for the Ocean Information Hub commenced with the organization of an online stakeholders meeting in June 2020, followed by bilateral consultations with partners, including IUCN, CORDIO, UNEP (Abidjan and Nairobi Convention secretariats), and WIOMSA on developing interoperability projects. Two virtual meetings on the seaweed Sargassum for Atlantic region organized in 2020, in collaboration with UNEP and IOC’s Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent regions, agreed on working together on development of Sargassum Information Hub. IOCAFRICA is preparing four policy briefs on climate change adaptation in coastal zones of Africa focusing on: (i) Sea Level Rise and Implications for Low-Lying Islands, Coasts and Communities; (ii) Changing Oceans, Marine Ecosystems and Dependent Communities; (iii) Extremes, Abrupt Changes and Managing Risks; and (iv) Climate Change & Ocean Economy.

36. IOC is implementing a project, funded by the Spanish International Technical Cooperation Agency, aimed at furthering the scientific knowledge and capacity basis in the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME). The project focuses on assessing the effects of climate change and ocean stressors on the natural dynamics of the Canary Current through a collaborative approach involving scientists, with a focus on female and early career ocean scientists, from Cabo Verde, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal and Spain (Canary Islands). The results of the project have contributed to informing science-based management of the CCLME. As part of this initiative a workshop was organized in St Vicente, Cabo Verde from 10–13 March 2020.
37. IOCAFRICA organized an online regional tsunami awareness event with the UNDRR, and a national event for Nigeria with the Nigerian Institute of Ocean and Marine Research (NIOMR) and the National Commission for UNESCO on 5 November 2020. IOC also worked on the publication of a tsunami awareness manual in Swahili with UNDRR. An ongoing survey of the status of ocean observations along the African coastline will inform the preparation of a proposal for the development of a comprehensive African Ocean Observing System.
38. Prof. Said expressed sincere appreciation to Member States that had supported the development and implementation of programmes of the Sub-Commission during the inter-sessional period, and especially the Governments of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium), China, Norway, Spain and Sweden.
39. Prof Said informed the Assembly that the Sixth Session of IOC's Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States (IOCAFRICA-VI) was held online from 13–15 April 2021, and attended by more than 75 delegates from 23 Member States and partner organizations. The session adopted four Recommendations on: (i) Establishment of a Regional Planning Group for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development; (ii) Extension of the mandate of the IOCAFRICA Strategic Planning Group; and (iii) Strengthening Collaboration with the African Union Commission; and (iv) IOCAFRICA Programme of Work for 2021–2023 focussing on Ocean Observations and Data and Information Management, Capacity Development for Marine Science and Technology and Ocean Literacy, and Ocean Sciences and its Application to Management. The Sub-Commission had stressed the importance of aligning its programmes to frameworks adopted by the African Union Commission such as the Agenda 2063, the 2050 Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy, the African Blue Economy Strategy, as well as the Implementation Plan for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.
40. Prof. Said further informed the Assembly that the session supported the establishment of the IOCINDIO Sub-Commission comprising the current Member States of the Regional Committee for IOCINDIO. The Sub-Commission further proposed the establishment of an Inter-regional Committee bringing together IOCAFRICA, WESTPAC and IOCINDIO, which will act as a mechanism to develop and coordinate the implementation of basin-wide programmes for the Indian Ocean.
41. Prof. Said noted that the Sub-Commission was not able to elect new IOCAFRICA Officers at its Sixth session due to: (i) lack of nominations from Member States for the positions of IOCAFRICA Chair and Vice-Chairs at the close of the deadline for nominations; and (ii) the challenges of holding online elections by secret ballot. The Sub-Commission requested the secretariat to send a fresh call for candidates and explore the possibility of holding elections during the 31st session of the IOC Assembly in June 2021. The Sub-Commission thanked the outgoing IOCAFRICA Officers for accepting to stay in Office in the interim till the elections are held. The Sub-Commission congratulated them on the excellent work they had implemented, especially in the light of the challenging COVID-19 pandemic situation.

Dec. A-31/3.3.1

IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the Executive Summary report of the 6th session of the IOC's Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, online, 13–16 April 2021 (IOC/SC-IOCAFRICA-VI/3s),
2. Takes note of the progress made in the implementation of the IOCAFRICA work programme 2019–2021;
3. Thanks the Member States who have provided support for the development and implementation of programmes of the sub-commission, and especially the Governments of Belgium, China, Norway, Spain, and Sweden;
4. Accepts the report of IOCAFRICA-VI and the recommendations therein, including the work programme for the sub-commission for 2021–2023;
5. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4].

42. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

**3.3.2. IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific:
13th Intergovernmental Session of WESTPAC, online, 27–29 April 2021**

Report

[IOC/SC-WESTPAC-
XIII/3s](#)

Executive Summary Report of the 13th Intergovernmental Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC), 27–29 April 2021 (online)

43. Dr Vo Si Tuan, Chair of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC) was invited to present the key achievements over the last intersessional period and key results of the 13th WESTPAC Intergovernmental Session (online, 27–29 April 2021).
44. He highlighted that, notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic, the Sub-Commission has been making tremendous efforts in concerting joint actions of research and policy communities to address critical challenges for ocean sustainability in the region. Since the last session (WESTPAC-XII, 2–5 April 2019, Manila, the Philippines), a number of workshops, trainings, field surveys, and demonstration activities had been carried out in the field until the pandemic broke out in early 2020, and more than 100 virtual consultations/meetings were organized since early 2020.
45. He reported that the Sub-Commission has been co-designing, and co-implementing its various programmes and activities with Member States to address the IOC High Level Objectives and common ocean priorities of the region, namely: ocean and climate; marine biodiversity, seafood safety and security; and ocean ecosystem health. The main thrust of the

Sub-Commission includes two regional GOOS groupings (NEAR-GOOS and SEAGOOS); one regional network of training and Research centers on marine science (RTRCs); and 16 programmes/working groups, respectively focusing on monsoon onset, air-sea interactions in the Kuroshio extension, Asian marginal seas, ocean acidification, ocean deoxygenation, feasibility study on the Second Cooperative Study of the Kuroshio and Adjacent Regions (CSK-2), coastal upwelling studies, fluvial sediment to the South China Sea, coral reef restoration and conservation, harmful algal blooms, endangered megafauna, remote sensing for coastal habitat mapping, marine toxins and seafood safety, marine microplastics, harmful jellyfish, and ocean forecasting system development and application.

46. The WESTPAC Chair emphasized the great importance that the Sub-Commission has been attaching over the last intersessional period to the development and delivery of needed knowledge and services for Member States to serve their needs. Significant progress could be demonstrated by: (i) the development of operational ocean forecasting services to support coral reef conservation; (ii) the monitoring of ocean acidification and research on its impact; (iii) the establishment of an Ocean Oxygen Research and Monitoring Network to spearhead the studies of various aspects of hypoxia and help inform policymakers; (iv) increased Member States' research capacity for combating marine plastic pollution; (v) the transfer and application of remote sensing techniques for marine protected area management in three selected MPA sites: Li-bong and Pha-ngan Islands in Thailand and Con Dao in Viet Nam; and (vi) the delivery of knowledge and outreach services on harmful jellyfish for public health, with a Field Guide to the Jellyfish of Western Pacific published, and a number of outreach and awareness activities conducted locally on harmful jellyfish and emergency response for hoteliers, coastal government authorities and school students.
47. The Sub-Commission also took a lead in the preparations and mobilizing actions for the UN Ocean Decade in the region. Key efforts over the last intersessional period include: (i) leading the organization of the Decade Regional Planning Workshop (31 July–2 August 2019, Japan) together with the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES); (ii) motivating stakeholders in the region into the development process of the Decade Implementation Plan; (iii) developing and organizing the Decade Regional Dialogue on Co-designing the Ocean Science We Need for the Ocean We Want (10 November 2020, virtual); (iv) developing potential proposals for Decade Actions for further inputs, engagement and commitment, while capitalizing on existing programmes and networks; (v) providing strategic and technical support to Member States in the region for their decade related activities at both regional and national level; and (vi) catalyzing partnerships and initiating co-design of transformative solutions amongst diverse stakeholder groups in the region by planning for and organizing a Decade Regional Kickoff Conference (24–25 August 2021, Virtual) and the Decade Regional Conference Series in 2022, 2025, 2028, and 2031, respectively.
48. Dr Vo Si Tuan informed the Assembly that the Sub-Commission has been continuously implementing the IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2015–2021), and fulfilling its voluntary commitment to the UN Ocean Conference—“Develop research capacity and transfer of marine technology through the UNESCO/IOC Regional Network of Training and Research Centres (RTRCs) on Marine Science”. Main activities over the last intersessional period include: (i) the Regional Training and Research Centre on Ocean Dynamics and Climate (RTRC-ODC) and Regional Training and Research Centre on Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health (RTRC-MarBEST) have been operating smoothly with annual trainings organized in 2019 and 2020 in a hybrid mode, based on the pressing needs of early career ocean scientists; (ii) three new RTRCs, respectively on Reef Management and Restoration (the University of the Philippines), Marine Toxin and Food Safety (Institute of Oceanography, Viet Nam), and Marine Plastic Debris and Microplastics (East China Normal University of China) are well prepared to receive young scientists from within and outside region as soon as the pandemic ends; (iii) the implementation of the third phase of a UNESCO/Korean Funds-in-Trust project “Enhance the Capacity for Species Identification and Genetic Analysis on Marine Organisms in the Coral Reef Ecosystems in the Western Pacific”, and the UNESCO/Japanese Funds-in-Trust project

aiming to accelerate the transfer of marine technology for marine biodiversity conservation. Furthermore, the Sub-Commission demonstrated its unique value for IOC in addressing Member States' specific needs directly. For instance, WESTPAC has been assisting Viet Nam and Thailand, over the last intersessional period, to enhance its research capacity for ocean acidification and molecular techniques.

49. He reported on the major results of the Thirteenth Intergovernmental Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC-XIII, 27–29 April 2021). He extended his deep appreciation to Member States for their overwhelming support expressed throughout the session, for the continued efforts of the Sub-Commission in assisting Member States to address their development challenges, and a leading role that the Sub-Commission has been taking in promoting and mobilizing actions in the region for the UN Ocean Decade. To serve the needs of its Member States, the Sub-Commission further decided to establish two new programmes on the Second Cooperative Study of the Kuroshio and its Adjacent Regions (CSK-2), and Changing Asian Marginal Seas and their Response to Climate Change, respectively; and three new Working Groups on Gas Hydrates and Methane Fluxes in the Indo-Pacific; Rapid Detection Technology for Harmful Algal Blooms, and Integrated Investigation in the Indo-Pacific Convergent Center: Marine Ecosystem and Biodiversity, respectively.
50. In view of the high level of support of Member States in the region for the leading role of Sub-Commission in preparing and mobilizing actions for the UN Ocean Decade in the region, the WESTPAC Chair drew attention of the Assembly to the suggestion that Member States made at the WESTPAC-XIII that a certain level of authority, for instance the endorsement of Decade activities which are to be conducted in the region, be delegated to the Sub-Commission to ensure the timely conduct of Decade activities and the ownership of Member States over the Decade. The Sub-Commission further requested IOC Executive Secretary to consider supporting the role of the Sub-Commission in the Decade.
51. He informed the Assembly that, in a “co-designed, solution-oriented” approach and capitalizing on the existing networks and resources, the Sub-Commission has been developing pipeline proposals for UN Ocean Decade Actions. The Sub-Commission emphasized the importance of capacity development and transfer of marine technology as integral part of its Decade Actions, and further reaffirmed its commitment to stepping up its efforts in this regard. Furthermore, The Sub-Commission welcomed the kind offer of the Government of Thailand to host: (i) a Decade Coordination Office, as an extension of the current WESTPAC Office, with a mandate to develop, coordinate and implement Decade Actions in the region; and (ii) the Decade Regional Kickoff Conference (24–25 August 2021, online), and the first Decade Regional Conference in conjunction with the 11th WESTPAC International Marine Science Conference which was scheduled for August 2022.
52. He finally expressed his sincere thanks to the Government of Indonesia for its kind offer to host the next intergovernmental session of the Sub-Commission in early 2023, and informed the Assembly that the Sub-Commission elected by acclamation Fangli Qiao from China and Kentaro Ando from Japan as Co-Chairpersons; and Aileen Tan Shau Hwai from Malaysia as Vice-Chairperson of the Sub-Commission for the next intersessional period.

Dec. A-31/3.3.2

IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific

The Assembly,

1. Having considered the executive summary report of the 13th Intergovernmental Session of the IOC Sub- Commission for the Western Pacific (online, 27–29 April 2021) (IOC/WESTPAC-XIII/3s),
2. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4].

53. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.3.3. IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions: 16th Session of IOCARIBE, online, 3–6 May 2021

Report

[IOC/SC-IOCARIBE-
XVI/3s](#)

Executive Summary Report of the 15th Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (IOCARIBE), online, 3–6 May 2021

54. The IOCARIBE Chair of the IOC (of UNESCO) Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (IOCARIBE) Mr Arnulfo Sanchez (Panama), reported on the progress achieved in IOCARIBE during the last intersessional period. He referred to the programme progress and to the implementation of decisions and recommendations during the period 2019–2021, particularly those made at the online Session Sixteenth Session of the Sub-Commission held on 3–6 May 2021.

55. In particular he mentioned those initiatives for Disaster Risk Reduction and Ecosystem-based management, including: (i) IOCARIBE-GOOS establishment of a pilot project on Improvement of Hurricane Observing Forecasting Capacity; (ii) development of an operational region-wide information and forecasting system for sargassum and oil spills; and (iii) development of a guide on best management practices for sargassum events in the coastal environment; (iv) HAB-ANCA initiative in the IOCARIBE Region to implement the IOC Ciguatera Strategy. IOCARIBE Member States, expert networks, and education and research institutions are focusing on their contribution to the UN Decade, and to the SDG 14 implementation progress and challenges.

56. He referred to The UN Decade of Ocean Science Regional virtual Workshop for the Western Tropical Atlantic (WTA), 28–29 April 2020, that provided a regional contribution to the UN Decade with a focus on IOCARIBE countries' and territories' needs and priorities in terms of transforming knowledge systems; accelerating transfer of technology; enabling training and education; fostering science-policy dialogues, and enabling scientific solutions to the Region's socio-economic challenges.

57. IOCARIBE, as the WTA Ocean Decade Coordination mechanism has the overall responsibility for formulation of principles and strategy, and for planning and coordination of the Ocean Decade in the Western Tropical Atlantic region in consultation with the many leading UN, NGO, science, regional organisations, private sector, indigenous and local communities and other stakeholders of the region.

58. He reported that IOCARIBE established on October 2020 a Regional Planning Group (WTA RPG) for the WTA-Ocean Decade to advance and coordinate strategic partnerships and actions for Western Tropical Atlantic engagement in the UN Decade of Ocean Science for

Sustainable Development (2021–2030). The WTA RPG established eight Working Groups to promote multi-disciplinary and inclusive co-design and implementation partnerships to achieve each societal outcome and Capacity Development, recognizing the importance of the work of the Working Groups as the core of its strategy for advancing the Decade in the Western Tropical Atlantic Region. Mr Sanchez informed the Assembly that the Decade Regional Kickoff Conference is planned to be held online in October 2021.

59. The IOCARIBE Chair highlighted key achievements, including the progress made in the development of an operational region-wide information and forecasting system for sargassum and oil spills; where IOCARIBE, GEO Blue Planet, AIR Centre, AtlantOS and other partners developed a Tropical Atlantic Sargassum Information Hub to improve communication among stakeholders, and increase visibility of sargassum activities. The Sargassum Information Hub was launched on July 2020 (sargassumhub.org). A Regional Pilot Programme for Satellite Oil Spill monitoring for the wider Caribbean region is the first step for the development of a coordinated region-wide monitoring and forecasting system that started in March 2021 with the contribution of NOAA (USA). Trinidad and Tobago has been selected as a test area given its abundance of oil facilities and monitoring needs. Member States and Partners aimed to consolidate the Caribbean Marine Atlas sustainability, ensuring continuity and upgrading of the CMA2 by hosting, operating, and maintaining the CMA2 at INVEMAR (Colombia) facilities; they strengthen links and develop synergies with projects and programmes. Particularly, with CMA – CLME+ project; IHO Meso-American Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission (MACHC), IOCARIBE contribution to the SeaBed 2030 programme; (iii) the Sargassum Information and Forecasting System; and (iv) with the newly started IOC of UNESCO Ocean InfoHub project. He highlighted the significant contribution of the OTGA Regional Training Centre established at INVEMAR (Colombia) to the capacity development of Member States in ocean sciences.
60. The IOCARIBE Chair acknowledged the successful implementation to date of the CLME+ Project “Catalyzing implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Sustainable Management of Shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems,” and invited countries and organizations from the region to continuing their efforts to mobilize renewed funding from the GEF to support the implementation of the CLME+ SAP and the operationalization of the “Ocean Coordination Mechanism,” through the proposed new UNDP/GEF Project Concept “PROCARIBE+: Protecting and Restoring the Ocean’s Natural Capital, Building Resilience and Supporting Region-wide Investments for Sustainable Blue Socio-Economic Development.”
61. He mentioned that as part of IOCARIBE efforts and partnerships with CLME+, UN and Regional organizations and national agencies, the Sub-commission developed in cooperation with University of Ghent (Belgium) the CLME+ Training and Capacity Development (TCD) Portal that was launched 15th December 2020 to bridge the information gap between “those (marine practitioners) in search of training opportunities” and “those providing training and capacity building initiatives” (clmeplus.mainetraining.org).
62. He also stressed the importance of the IOCARIBE and IHO Meso-American and Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission – MACHC partnership. IOCARIBE and MACHC Member States developed a joint strategy (January 2021) to complete baseline seabed map of the MACHC-IOCARIBE Region by 2030 that informs the sustainable, multi-purpose use of this region of the Ocean, as a contribution to the Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project and the Ocean Decade. IOCARIBE and MACHC have identified respective capacity development training offerings for 2020 and 2021 and considered co-sponsoring those of common interest to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize impact. In 2020 they agreed on a MACHC-IOCARIBE Seabed 2030 Work Plan for 2021; and as a part of their contribution to Seabed 2030, they will be sharing, delivery and management of marine spatial data holdings through pilot projects with partners such as the IOC/IODE and the IOCARIBE Caribbean Marine Atlas.

63. As well, the Chair reported how IOCARIBE is developing jointly with Member States national agencies and institutions, the LAC Regional Node for the IOC Ocean Information Hub (LAC OceanInfo Hub) with the technical support of IODE and the financial support of the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium).
64. He referred to the Sub-commission's financial situation and confirmed that the IOCARIBE Secretariat has been implementing the work plans in accordance with the budgetary allocations. He commented on the current financial situation for UNESCO, IOC and its subsidiary bodies including IOCARIBE and highlighted the work achieved by the Sub-commission despite financial difficulties and constraints. He also mentioned the financial and planning impact of COVID-19 on the IOCARIBE activities development and implementation and stressed that the staffing situation at the Secretariat remains critical.
65. Mr Sanchez thanked Member States for their continuous support to the activities of the Sub-Commission Particularly. He gave special thanks to Colombia for hosting the Secretariat since its initial establishment in 1986, and for seconding two professionals who are working at the Secretariat. He also highlighted the contributions from Barbados, the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium), Mexico, Panama, Republic of Korea, the EU, and USA. He also recalled that the Sub-Commission will celebrate its 40th Anniversary in 2022.
66. The IOCARIBE Chair highlighted the importance of co-operation and partnerships with other UN Agencies and Programmes such as WMO, UNEP, UN-ISDR, UNDP, UNOPS, IAEA, GEF, International, regional organizations (GOs and NGOs), and the work with national agencies for programme and project implementation and financial support and urged Member States to keep constant communication with their UNESCO National Commissions, who are critical in budget discussions at UNESCO governing bodies.
67. Mr Sanchez finally informed the Assembly that the Sub-Commission elected by acclamation Mr Leo Brewster (Barbados), Ms Claudia Alves De Magalhaes (Brazil), and Mr John Cortina (USA) as Vice-Chairpersons of the Sub-Commission for the next intersessional period. Following Mr Sanchez's agreement to serve a second term as IOCARIBE Chair, he was re-elected for the next intersessional period, also by acclamation.

Dec. A-31/3.3.3

IOC Sub-commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions

The Assembly,

1. Having considered the Executive Summary Report of the 16th session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Region (IOCARIBE), online, 3–6 May 2021,
2. Takes note of the progress made in the implementation of the IOCARIBE work programme 2019–2021;
3. Thanks the Member States who have provided support for the development and implementation of programmes of the Sub-commission, and especially the Governments of Colombia, the Government of Flanders (The Kingdom of Belgium), Barbados, Mexico, Panama, Korea, the EU, and USA;
4. Accepts the report of IOCARIBE-XVI and the Recommendations therein, including the Work Programme for the Sub-commission for 2021–2023;
5. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission -

A-31/[4.4].

68. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.3.4. IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean: 8th Session of IOCINDIO, online, 17–19 May 2021

Report[IOCINDIO-VIII/3s](#)

Executive Summary Report of the 8th Session of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean, 17–19 May 2021 (online)

69. The IOCINDIO Chair, Rear Admiral Kushed Alam (Retd) Md, elected at the 8th session of the IOCINDIO, 17–19 May 2021, presented an overview of the activities by the regional committee in the intersessional period (2019–2020), and the major outcomes of the 8th session of IOCINDIO.
70. The Chair stressed that the IOCINDIO remains the sole IOC intergovernmental body for the Central Indian Ocean but also for its northern part including the ROPME Sea Area. It is in that context that IOCINDIO organized at its campus in Chennai in India on 8–10 January, 2020, the Regional Planning workshop of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) for the Northern and Central Indian Ocean countries as well as ROPME Sea Area upon the kind invitation of the Government of India through the Secretary of Earth Science and related national competent ocean institutes and centres, notably; the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT). The Ocean Decade workshop was preceded at the same venue (6–7 January 2020) by the IOCINDIO Leadership workshop for developing the IOCINDIO Regional Framework for Coastal Vulnerability towards the Safety, Security and Sustainable Development of Member States in the Indian Ocean.
71. Major outputs of the Regional Planning workshop of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) for the Northern and Central Indian Ocean countries as well as ROPME Sea area include proposals for the following flagship activities: (i) Regional Framework for Coastal Vulnerability towards the Safety, Security and Sustainable Development of Member States in the Indian Ocean leading to the development of the Coastal Vulnerability guidelines and maps implemented in the region; (ii) monitoring and Management of Marine litter and research on micro plastics under development; (iii) Reinforcement of the Tsunami Early Warning in the Indian Ocean; (iv) inventory with knowledge gaps in existing programmes, studies and researches maximizing their wide and equitable usage towards the Ocean Decade success; (v) identification of partnerships with funding sources and institutions (public/private) in the region to support the UN Decade Action Plan in the Indian Ocean Region; (vi) established Indian Ocean Youth Leadership Network of Ocean, Climate and Atmospheric Sciences; (vii) established Indian Ocean Leadership Mentoring Network; (viii) established Follow-up Coordinating Experts Group composed of Chairs and Rapporteurs of the Working Group; (IX) reinforced IOCINDIO-IOCAFRICA cooperation with Joint IOCINDIO/IOCAFRICA Experts Team with the view to develop joint cooperative programme on coastal vulnerability capacity building with the potential support of Kuwait, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia and India in partnership with related African initiatives; (X) IOCINDIO participation in the Regional Ocean Decade planning workshop for Africa and Adjacent Islands, Nairobi, 27–29 January 2020; (XI) progress review follow-up of the recommendations at the IIOE-2/2020 in GOA-India, 16–26 March 2020 (online). The report of the regional workshop including the recommendations is available at the IOC Secretariat.

72. During the extended COVID-19 pandemic, following the above successful activities and despite the exceptional sanitary impacts on the region and its populations; the IOCINDIO Officers met regularly through teleconferences leading to the development of the proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO containing the mission, the objectives, terms of references, budgetary implications, secretarial arrangements and other necessary provisions that was submitted to the Executive Secretary of the IOC, based on Decision IOC-XXX/3.3.4 of 30th session of the Assembly. The second half of 2020 was mainly devoted to the joint review of the proposal by the IOC Secretariat, the IOC Chair and Officers, and the IOCINDIO Officers.
73. The IOCINDIO Chair informed the Assembly that on the 16th February 2021; IOCINDIO organised an online consultation meeting on the potential transformation of the Regional Committee into an IOC Sub-Commission, bringing together the IOC Member States representatives and partners beyond the Indian Ocean region.
74. The Rear Admiral Kushed Alam (Retd) Md informed the Assembly that in pursuing the implementation of the IOCINDIO Work plan, on 6 May 2021, the Committee organized the innovative IOCINDIO Blue Economy Summit in the Indian Ocean Towards the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), which attracted participants from all IOC regions including beyond the Indian Ocean region.
75. The IOCINDIO Chair reported to the Assembly that the session reviewed and amended the IOCINDIO Work Plan for the period, 2022–2023 including a contribution to the joint IOCINDIO-IEEE activity in 2022, engagement with the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) and resources mobilization including the Ocean Decade regional enabling activities sponsored by the Government of Norway.
76. He informed the Assembly that the IOCINDIO-VIII Session also elected by acclamation two Vice-Chairs: Dr Maryam Ghaemi (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Dr Saif Mohammed AlGhais (United Arab Emirates).
77. He also referred to the adopted IOCINDIO-VIII decision and recommendation on the IOCINDIO status, to be discussed by the Assembly under item 3.5.6.

Dec. A-31/3.3.4

IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the Executive Summary report of the 8th session of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean, online, 17–19 May 2021 (IOC/SC-IOCINDIO-VIII/3s),
2. Takes note of the progress made in the implementation of the IOCINDIO work programme 2019–2021;
3. Thanks the IOC Member States and partners for their support to the reactivation of the Committee and the implementation of its work programme and for their sustained efforts for its transformation into an IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean, in particular, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia;
4. Takes note the report of IOCINDIO-VIII and the recommendations therein, including the work programme for the period 2021–2023 under item 3.5.6;
5. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the

Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4].

78. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.4 REPORTS OF OTHER IOC SUBSIDIARY BODIES

3.4.1 Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards

[Rule of Procedure 48.3]

3.4.1.1 *Regional Early Warning Services*

<u>Report</u>	ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XV/3	Report of the 15th Session of the IOC Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (ICG/CARIBE EWS-XIV), 27–29 April 2021 (online)
	ICG/NEAMTWS-XVI/3	Report of the 16th Session 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-XVI), Cannes, France, 2–4 December 2019
<u>Information:</u>	IOC/TOWS-WG-XIV/3	Working Group on Tsunamis and other Hazards related to Sea-level Warning and Mitigation Systems (TOWS-WG), 14th meeting, online, 25–26 February 2021

79. Dr Silvia Chacon, Chair of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (ICG/CARIBE-EWS), introduced the report of ICG/CARIBE-EWS. She highlighted the results of the CARIBE WAVE 2020 and CARIBE WAVE 2021 exercises that mobilized 400,000 people in total on 19 March 2020 and 11 March 2021, despite the pandemic, with all due consideration to sanitary measures.

80. Dr Chacon reported on other results of the ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XV, 27–29 April 2021 (online), including the planning of the CARIBE WAVE 2022 exercise for Thursday 10 March 2022, which will consist of the following three scenarios: (i) a tsunamigenic earthquake along the Muertos Trough south of Dominican Republic; (ii) a flank collapse of the Cumbre Vieja Volcano (La Palma, Canary Island); and (iii) an off shore event north of Panama along the Northern Panama Deformed Belt.

81. Due to the current state of the sea level monitoring network and the recent volcanic activity at the Lesser Antilles, ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XV recommended to Member States to maintain their sea-level stations to an operational standard, to produce an assessment of potential impacts from local tsunamis for decision making and to educate at-risk populations on the natural tsunami warning signs for their respective sources.

82. Member States were also encouraged to diversify their means of communication, to commemorate World Tsunami Awareness Day on November 5th and to engage and

contribute to the co-design and co-delivery of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme.

83. Prof. Maria Ana Baptista, recently elected Chair of the ICG/NEAMTWS, presented the report of the ICG/NEAMTWS. She informed that the 16th session of the ICG/NEAMTWS was held in Cannes, France, 2–4 December 2019.
84. The Instituto Português do Mar e da Atmosfera (IPMA, Portugal) has gone through the ICG/NEAMTWS accreditation process and has met the requirements to be a Tsunami Service Provider, becoming the fifth in NEAM region.
85. Prof. Baptista highlighted the continued national efforts, particularly in France, Greece, Israel, Italy and Turkey to increase awareness on tsunami hazards and preparedness in line with and as contributions to the World Tsunami Awareness Day, 5 November 2019.
86. She reported on the progress regarding the continued development of a new ICG/NEAMTWS 2030 Strategy. A final draft strategy will be presented at the ICG/NEAMTWS session in November 2021.
87. There continues to be gaps in the seismic and sea level network notably in North Africa. Some countries have difficulties sharing observations due to national policy. The implication is sub-optimal performance of the regional tsunami warning systems.
88. She noted that Member States are considering the possibility of implementing pilot community preparedness and recognition programmes such as Tsunami Ready.
89. Finally, Prof. Maria Ana Baptista informed the Assembly that the fourth regional tsunami exercise (NEAMWave21) was conducted on 8-10 March 2021.

3.4.1.2 Global Coordination of Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards

<i>Working document:</i>	IOC/A-31/3.4.1.Doc	Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards: Towards an Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme
<i>Report</i>	IOC/TOWS-WG-XIV/3	Working Group on Tsunamis and other Hazards related to Sea-level Warning and Mitigation Systems (TOWS-WG), 14th meeting, online, 25–26 February 2021
	IOC/TOWS-WG-XIII/3	Working Group on Tsunamis and other Hazards related to Sea-level Warning and Mitigation Systems (TOWS-WG), 13th meeting, Paris, 20–21 February 2020
<i>References:</i>	IOC/2020/TS/143	Capacity Assessment of Tsunami Preparedness in the Indian Ocean: Status Report, 2018
	IOC/BRO/2020/1	Summary Statement from the International Symposium on lessons learnt of the 2018 Tsunamis in Palu and Sunda Strait, Jakarta, Indonesia, 26–28 September 2019
	IOC/2020/MG/82	Preparing for Community Tsunami Evacuations: from inundation to evacuation maps, response plans and exercises

90. Dr Alexander Frolov, Chair of the Working Group on Tsunamis and Other Hazards Related to Sea-Level Warning and Mitigation Systems (TOWS-WG), introduced this item. He informed the Assembly about recent developments in Tsunami Warning and Mitigation

Systems and reported on the decisions and recommendations of TOWS-WG at its 13th and 14th meetings.

91. He noted that this activity is based on a multiscale digital coastal mapping, high density coastal observation networks, and sophisticated numerical simulations of the complex nonlinear transformation of a tsunami wave incident on the coast. At the same time, there remains a fundamental capability gap when it comes to providing accurate, actionable tsunami forecasts to the most at-risk coastal communities.
92. The TOWS-WG recognized that the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address and potentially fill this gap by leveraging novel sensing platforms, techniques and/or infrastructures in order to quickly detect and measure tsunamis the near-instant they form. As a result, the TOWS-WG proposed the establishment of an Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme in support of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and presented it to the Assembly for approval.
93. The Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme (the programme) will achieve transformational advances in tsunami warnings to enhance the coastal community responses. The programme will contribute to achieving the societal Ocean Decade outcome of 'A Safe Ocean' with the aim of making 100% of communities at risk of tsunami prepared for and resilient to tsunamis by 2030 through the implementation of the UNESCO/IOC Tsunami Ready Programme and other initiatives.
94. Dr Alexander Frolov also informed about the proposals of the TOWS-WG on the programme governance structure, including the establishment of a Scientific Committee that will be in charge of drafting a 10-Year Research, Development and Implementation Programme, and a special Coalition for Tsunami Ready.
95. He informed further about outcomes of the International Symposium on lessons learnt from the 2018 Tsunamis in Palu and Sunda Strait (Jakarta, Indonesia, 26–28 September 2019), which was held in respect to Decision [IOC-XXX/8.2](#) of the IOC Assembly at its 30th session (26 June–4 July 2019, Paris).
96. He also noted that Member States will greatly benefit from the recently published IOC guide entitled *Preparing for Community Tsunami Evacuations: from inundation to evacuation maps, response plans and exercises* ([Manuals and Guides, 82](#), 2020). The guide is based on best practice papers and presentations prepared for a programme of training workshops on how communities and governments can work together to create reliable and practical tsunami evacuation maps.

Dec. A-31/3.4.1

Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the executive summary reports of the recent sessions of the Tsunami and other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XV), the North-Eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/NEAMTWS-XVI), and the reports of the Working Group on Tsunamis and Other Hazards Related to Sea-Level Warning and Mitigation Systems (IOC/TOWS-WG-XIII and XIV),

2. Accepts the reports by the IOC/ICGs and TOWS-WG;
3. Notes with satisfaction the progress made during the intersessional period, including:
 - Instituto Português do Mar e da Atmosfera (IPMA, Portugal) accredited as a Tsunami Service Provider in NEAMTWS;
 - five exercises carried out (CARIBE WAVE 20, PacWave20, IOWave20, CARIBE WAVE 21 and NEAMWave21) including testing plans for tsunami response in backdrop of a pandemic, and regular communication tests performed;
 - timely issued Best Practice documents and Guidelines for Tsunami Warning Services, Evacuation and Sheltering during COVID-19;
 - IOTWMS Capacity Assessment of Tsunami Preparedness in the Indian Ocean – Status Report 2018 ([IOC/2020/TS/143](#)) published based on results of an online survey responded by 21 Member States;
 - published Summary Statement ([IOC/BRO/2020/1](#)) of the International Symposium on lessons learnt from the 2018 tsunamis in Palu and Sunda Strait organized by UNESCO-IOC during 26–28 September 2019;
 - publication of the IOC Manuals and guides 82 "Preparing for community tsunami evacuations: from inundation to evacuation maps, response plans and exercises" ([IOC/2020/MG/82](#));
 - four communities in the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (St. John's City, Antigua and Barbuda; Shermans, St. Lucy to Mullins, St. Peter, Barbados; Union Island, St. Vincent and the Grenadines; and Carenage, Trinidad and Tobago), two communities in the Pacific Ocean (Samara and Tamarindo, Costa Rica), and two communities in the Indian Ocean (Venkatraipur and Noliasahi, Odisha province, India) achieved UNESCO/IOC Tsunami Ready recognition, and growing interest for piloting Tsunami Ready expressed in NEAMTWS;
 - successful and widely attended UNDRR IOC World Tsunami Awareness Day (WTAD) 2020 campaign consisting of high-level events, regional webinars, social media visuals, videos, and eyewitness accounts, as well as the creation of 15 videos highlighting countries joining the global Tsunami Ready community;
 - designation of ITIC and the Indonesia BMKG as Ocean Teacher Global Academy Specialized Training Centres (OTGA STC) in 2020;
 - Progress by Indonesia in their application for ISO certification of a Community Based Early Warning System;
 - European Commission's support to the 3-year project project "Strengthening the Resilience of Coastal Communities in the North East Atlantic, Mediterranean Region to the Impact of Tsunamis and Other Sea Level-Related Coastal Hazards" contributing to NEAMTWS, UNESCAP funding for the project "Strengthening Tsunami Early Warning in the North West Indian Ocean Region", and renewal for XX years of the support provided by the Government of Australia to the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (IOTWMS) Secretariat Office, hosted by the Bureau of Meteorology.
4. Welcomes the appointment of the new ICG/NEAMTWS officers for the biennium 2020–2021.

I.

Tsunami and other Coastal Hazards Warning System

for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (CARIBE-EWS)

5. Notes the successful conduct of the CARIBE WAVE 20 and CARIBE WAVE 21 exercises with the participation of 98 percent of the Member States and Territories and almost 400,000 people in total despite the COVID-19 pandemic,
6. Welcomes the decision of organising CARIBE WAVE 22 with 3 scenarios that include (1) a tsunamigenic earthquake along the Muertos Trough south of Dominican Republic, (2) a flank collapse of the Cumbre Vieja Volcano (La Palma, Canary Island), and (3) an off shore event north of Panama along the Northern Panama Deformed Belt,
7. Recommends that ICG/CARIBE-EWS communities prone to tsunami risk, aspire to become Tsunami Ready, as this recognition includes many aspects of preparedness essential for an effective local tsunami response.

II.

Tsunami Early Warning and Mitigation System in the North-Eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean and Connected Seas

8. Endorses the accreditation of the Instituto Português do Mar e da Atmosfera (Portugal) as a fifth Tsunami Service Provider (TSP) in the NEAM region;
9. Encourages Member States to explore the adaptation of community preparedness and recognition programmes such as Tsunami Ready for the NEAM region, including Tsunami Hazard and Tsunami Evacuation Maps, Plans, and Procedures (TEMPP);
10. Further encourages Member States to increase the number of seismic and sea-level stations available in North Africa and to share data using bilateral agreements whenever possible;

III.

Working Group on Tsunamis and Other Hazards Related to Sea-Level Warning and Mitigation Systems (TOWS-WG)

11. Reiterates that the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address and potentially fill capability gaps by leveraging novel sensing platforms, techniques and/or infrastructures in order to more quickly detect, measure, forecast and warn for tsunamis, even from the near-instant they form, and to enhance the preparedness of coastal communities for tsunamis through the UNESCO/IOC Tsunami Ready Programme;
12. Approves the establishment of the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme (the programme) and a Scientific Committee to prepare the Draft 10-Year Research, Development and Implementation Plan for this programme with Terms of Reference included as Annex 1;
13. Approves also the following governance structure for the UN Decade Tsunami Programme:
 - (i) the TOWS-WG will perform Global Steering Committee functions for the programme;
 - (ii) a Scientific Committee with an advisory role for the duration of the programme

will be established;

- (iii) the Scientific Committee will be tasked to develop a Draft 10-Year Research, Development and Implementation Plan for the programme for endorsement by the TOWS-WG at its next meeting;
- (iv) the four Intergovernmental Coordination Groups (ICGs) will perform regional Steering Committee functions, including implementing coordinating roles for the regional aspects of the programme;
- (v) a special Coalition for Tsunami Ready will be established in collaboration with other critical stakeholders across the UN structure as well as national civil protection agencies and will report to the TOWS-WG on Tsunami Ready aspects of the programme;

14. Decides that the Draft 10-Year Research, Development and Implementation Plan for the UN Decade Tsunami Programme is dedicated to achieving transformational advances in tsunami detection, measurement and forecasting, including tsunamis generated by non-seismic sources. The programme includes the following focus areas related to tsunami warning capabilities:

- expansion of existing observational systems including seismometers, coastal tide gauges, and deep ocean tsunameters to fill identified gaps;
- deploy new technologies to address observational gaps that cannot be covered by existing networks embracing. This would include the widespread implementation of scientific instrumentation on deep-ocean telecommunications cables as developed by the ITU/WMO/UNESCO-IOC Joint Task Force (JTF) SMART Subsea Cables effort; and submission of a Programme to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development;
- wide expansion of data access and availability and development of capability for real-time and near-real time sea level, seismic and GNSS-derived land motion data at an appropriate sampling rate and relevant tools to forecast tsunamis from all sources;
- increase access and regularly update the collection of coastal topographic and bathymetric data, in collaboration with the Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 project, as well as high performance computational capabilities to enable more timely, accurate and comprehensive tsunami and other coastal hazard forecasts to better advise community response;
- ensure all National Tsunami Warning Centres have access to data, tools and communication platforms, protocols and training to timely and effectively warn coastal and maritime communities threatened by tsunamis and other coastal hazards and are integrated into a multi hazard framework;

15. Further decides that the Draft 10-Year Research, Development and Implementation Plan for the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme contribute to achieving the societal outcome 'A Safe Ocean' of the Ocean Decade with the aim of making 100% of communities at risk of tsunami prepared for and resilient to tsunamis by 2030 through the implementation of the UNESCO/IOC Tsunami Ready Programme and other initiatives to include, but not limited to:

- the adoption and continued implementation of the UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Guidelines and Indicators as the international standard for evidence-based community preparedness for tsunamis;
- enhanced access and capacity development for high-resolution near shore bathymetric and topographic data and identification of potential tsunami sources

for accurate and improved inundation modelling and evacuation mapping and planning in support of Tsunami Ready communities;

- enhanced integration to minimize tsunami disaster impacts and to enable rapid restoration of socio-economic activities and critical infrastructure services post tsunami impacts;

16. Encourages Member States to:

- (i) provide voluntary financial contributions to the IOC special account and in-kind contributions to support the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme;
- (ii) densify sea level networks capable of Tsunami detection as well as seismic network particularly nearby tsunamigenic sources;
- (iii) implement a sample rate of 1 sample/sec. or higher on sea level gauges in order to record and transmit tsunami wave-form data from all seismic and non-seismic sources;
- (iv) register National Tsunami Warning Centres (NTWCs) and Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFPs) as alerting authorities in the “WMO Alerting Authority Register” via the WMO National Permanent Representative and in follow-up to WMO circular letters;
- (v) use best practices in engineering design and construction of evacuation shelters, especially where local tsunami hazards exist;
- (vi) include the IOTIC compilation of school Disaster Risk Reduction and preparedness materials as a resource, and especially as part of Tsunami Ready pilots that include schools;

17. Instructs the regional Intergovernmental Coordination Groups (ICGs) to:

- (i) continue the strong collaboration between the IOC and UNDRR for World Tsunami Awareness Day (5 November), noting that the 2021 WTAD will highlight Target F of the Sendai Framework on international cooperation to developing countries through support to the implementation of their national and local strategies for disaster risk reduction;
- (ii) urgently complete the IOC Manual & Guides 74 on the guidelines for the Tsunami Ready recognition programme for widespread distribution to Member States;
- (iii) include local source tsunami Standard Operating Procedures as an important component of the UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready programme;
- (iv) develop standardized trainings that can be delivered online or in person, in particular through the Ocean Teacher Global Academy (OTGA);
- (v) with regard to the next Tsunami Symposium, incorporate more diversity in the organizing committee by inclusion of all regions; consider a venue that can accommodate a hybrid meeting that would enable the most people to successfully participate and engage; and explore funding opportunities;

18. Accepts the reports from the Task Teams on Disaster Management and Preparedness and Watch Operations and instructs them to continue efforts for monitoring and responding to tsunamis generated by non-seismic sources and possible integration into tsunami watch operations;

19. Extends the tenure of the Working Group on Tsunamis and Other Hazards related to Sea-Level Warning and Mitigation Systems and its Task Teams on: (i) Disaster

Management & Preparedness (TTDMP), and (ii) Tsunami Watch Operations (TTTWO), with terms of reference as given in IOC Resolution XXIV-14 [for TOWS-WG], report IOC/TOWS-WG-VI/3, Annex II [for TTDMP] and report IOC/TOWS-WG-X/3, Annex II (Appendix 1) [for TTTWO].

20. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4].

Annex to Dec. A-31/3.4.1

**Terms of reference
of the Scientific Committee for the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme**

The Scientific Committee has an advisory role for the duration of the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme (referred to as the programme).

Membership:

- Four (4) members nominated by the each of the TOWS-WG Task Teams;
- Three (3) members nominated by the TOWS-WG on the basis of their scientific expertise;
- All members will serve for a period of two years and would be eligible for renewal once.

The Scientific Committee will:

- (i) Develop a Draft 10-Year Research, Development and Implementation Plan for the Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme based on the concept paper “Protecting Communities from the World’s Most Dangerous Waves: A Framework for Action under the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development”;
- (ii) Identify and address gaps in global tsunami hazard assessment as follows:
 - a. comprehensive assessment to include all potential tsunamis, anywhere in the world, regardless of their source,
 - b. identify strategies to validate historical tsunami sources, through the application of paleotsunami techniques and historical seismology [edits suggested by CARIBE EWS-XV]
- (iii) Identify gaps in tsunami detection, measurement, forecasting, with a special emphasis on tsunamis generated close to populated coastlines;
- (iv) Propose to enhance sensing and analysis strategies to enable the rapid characterization of tsunami sources through the combined use of land-based seismic and geodetic sensors, GNSS terminals, coastal sea level gauges, deep-ocean tsunameters, SMART repeaters on deep-ocean fiber-optic cables and satellite-based observations;
- (v) Propose a roadmap for collaboration with the ITU/WMO/IOC SMART Joint Task Force cable initiative to fully explore the feasibility of widespread deployment of scientific instrumentation on deep-ocean fiber-optic cables to improve capability to

- rapidly detect and characterize tsunami sources as well as propagating tsunami wave fields;
- (vi) Consider and propose strategies, programmes and content to enhance societal resilience for tsunami and other ocean hazards;
 - a. build the framework needed to ensure the training and development of the next generation of technical-scientific expertise,
 - b. identify strategies that allow to characterize structural and social vulnerability in tsunami hazard zones [edits suggested by CARIBE EWS-XV]
- (vii) Overview the consolidation of inputs received to IOC [Circular Letter 2825](#) on Inventory of actions being considered under the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) in the field of Tsunamis and Other Sea-Level Related Hazards warning and mitigation;
- (viii) Submit a Draft 10-Year Research, Development and Implementation Plan for endorsement by the TOWS-WG at its 15th meeting.

97. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

**3.4.2 International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange:
26th Session of IODE, 20–23 April 2021**
[Rule of Procedure 48.3]

<i>Working documents:</i>	IOC/A-31/3.4.2.Doc(1)	Proposal to establish the IOC Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS)
	IOC/A-31/3.4.2.Doc(2)	Proposed Arrangements to Revise the IOC Oceanographic Data Exchange Policy
	IOC/A-31/3.4.2.Doc(3)	Proposal to renew the MoU between the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) and the IOC regarding the IOC Project Office for IODE
<i>Report</i>	IOC/IODE-XXVI/3s	Executive Summary Report of the 26 th session of the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange Committee, online, 20–23 April 2021

98. Dr Sergey Belov/Mr Taco De Bruin, IODE Co-Chair, introduced this item and informed the Assembly on the outcome of the 26th session of the IODE Committee that was held as a shortened online session because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Only key issues were discussed. Reporting on the work of the IODE NODCs and ADUs was made available online through a dedicated webpage (<https://surveys.iode.org/2019-2020-nodc-and-adu/>). The IODE session was attended by 155 participants from 65 IOC Member States and 9 organizations.

99. The Committee focused its attention on the following key issues: (i) review of NODC health status within the IODE network; (ii) IODE project and activity performance evaluation methodology; (iii) future of the IODE Ocean Data and Information Networks (ODINs); (iv) establishment of the ODIS project and associated partnership centre; (v) contribution of IODE to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development; (vi) revision of the IOC

strategic plan for data and information management (2022–2025); (vii) revision of the IOC oceanographic data exchange policy; (viii) performance review of the IOC Project Office for IODE; (ix) (first) international ocean data conference (November 2021); and (x) work plan and budget for 2021–2022.

100. IODE has over the years established six regional Ocean Data and Information Networks to support the strengthening of capacities for ocean data and information management and encourage the development of data and information products as well as collaboration within the regions. The Committee while noting the limited and declining financial resources available from UNESCO Regular Budget to fund each ODIN decided to continue ODINs as projects. It decided to link the ODINs more closely to IOC regional subsidiary bodies in an effort to strengthen the regional implementation of IODE projects. In addition, an inter-ODIN forum will be established to provide closer connections between ODINs and other global IOC programmes and facilitate the sharing of best practices.
101. In 2019, the IOC Assembly, through [Decision IOC-XXX/7.2.2](#) (Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS)), endorsed the ODIS Concept, Implementation Plan and Cost Benefit Analysis and invited the IODE Committee to prepare a fully detailed and costed project proposal for the IOC Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) for submission to the IOC Executive Council at its 53rd session in 2020 which was postponed. Document IOC/A-31/3.4.2.Doc(1) provides the fully detailed and costed project proposal for ODIS. The Committee noted that, as a first step towards the development of ODIS, the Ocean InfoHub (OIH) project was being implemented since April 2020 with funding by the Government of Flanders, Kingdom of Belgium: it is a new initiative to streamline access to ocean science data and information for management and sustainable development. In addition, the Committee decided that the efforts of the Partnership Centre for IODE Ocean Data Portal, hosted by RIHMI-WDC of Roshydromet (Obninsk, Russian Federation) should be concentrated now on OIH/ODIS rather than standalone tools only as it was before, and revised the terms of reference of the Centre accordingly.
102. At its previous session, the IODE Committee established an inter-sessional working group to propose an Ocean Data and Information Stewardship Strategy for the UN Ocean Decade (IWG-SODIS). Two online workshops in 2020 were organized to: (i) familiarize UN agencies with IODE projects and activities; and (ii) to promote enhance collaboration on ocean data sharing under the Ocean Decade umbrella. In addition, the (First) International Ocean Data Conference is planned to take place November 2021 (Sopot, Poland) as a direct contribution to the Ocean Decade. In this regard, the Committee decided to consider a name change of the Conference to reflect the strong association with the Ocean Decade.
103. The Committee welcomed the invitation extended to IODE to collaborate in several projects: Evolving ocean observing for a sustainable future; Observing and Predicting the Global Coastal Ocean; A Global Integrated Marine Biodiversity Information Management and Forecasting System for Sustainable Development and Conservation; and the Biomolecular Ocean Observing Network, and called for further cooperation with projects which objectives are close to those of ODIS. The Committee invited the IODE Co-Chairs to explore with the leads of Ocean Decade Actions to what extent the IODE programme could add value to Decade Actions beyond the proposals where IODE is already engaged. The IODE Co-chairs will regularly report on progress to the IODE Management Group. In addition, the Committee decided to establish an IODE Intersessional Working Group to develop an inventory of IODE data and information management assets and tools that could help serving the Ocean Decade data and information needs.
104. Regarding the [IOC Oceanographic Data Exchange Policy](#) that was adopted in 2003 and slightly updated in 2019, the Committee agreed that there are enough elements that warrant a revision of the IOC data policy. The result should be an ambitious new data policy that further promotes and supports free and open exchange of data and better alignment with

data policies at national, regional and international levels as well as with those existing in other sectors. The new policy should also reflect current international principles, which did not exist 20 years ago.

105. The Committee recalled that in 2019 it had decided to review the IOC Project Office for IODE (Ostend, Belgium) activities. The objectives of the review were to (i) evaluate the IODE project Office activities and (ii) consider the question of renewing the current Memorandum of Understanding between IOC and the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ). The review was carried out by Mr Loic Petit de la Villéon (France) and Mr Adam Leadbetter (Ireland) free of charge to IODE. Their overall recommendation is to renew the MoU between IOC and VLIZ on hosting the IOC Project Office for IODE in Ostend, Belgium. The Committee expressed its great appreciation to the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) and 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 activities in general.
106. The Committee welcomed the continued and expanding cooperation of IODE with other IOC programmes and partners through projects like the Harmful Algal Information System and the Global HAB Status Report and activities in relation to ocean acidification. IODE experts and IODE data centres are urged to actively participate in these activities.
107. Regarding IODE staffing, the Committee expressed concern over the considerable dependency on extra-budgetary funding. The Committee, while noting the difficulty to establish new regular positions within IOC and similar needs of other programmes within IOC, called on the Executive Secretary to consider the long-term sustainability of the IODE programme when preparing the IOC staffing plan for the next biennia. The Committee called on Member States to consider offering secondments (on site or through teleworking) to strengthen the IODE Secretariat. The Committee thanked the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) for continuing to provide three full-time staff members to the IOC Project Office for IODE. The Committee welcomed the support of the Flanders-UNESCO Trust Fund for Science (2020–2022) for IOC Ocean InfoHub, OceanTeacher Global Academy Phase II, and PacMAN; and the Government of Norway for its support to three new projects focusing on Africa and closely related to the IOC Ocean InfoHub.
108. To conclude, the IODE Co-chair conveyed the concern of the Committee about the continued decline in UNESCO Regular Programme funds made available to IODE. The Committee stated that the current amount available will bring IODE at a critical level, unable to implement its work plan and maintain the global network of data and information centres built over the past six decades. The current level of funding does no longer allow capacity development at the regional level through the regional Ocean Data and Information Networks (ODINs) with adverse consequences on the equitable participation of all Member States in IODE and the level of data and information management activities that is necessary to beneficially contribute to the Ocean Decade.

Dec. A-31/3.4.2

International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange

The Assembly,

I – 26th Session of IODE, 20–23 April 2021

1. Having examined the Executive Summary Report of the 26th session of the IOC Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE-XXVI, 20–23 April 2021) ([IOC/IODE-XXVI/3s](#)),

2. Endorses the report of the 26th session of the IOC Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange including the recommendations and workplan for 2021–2022 contained therein;
3. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4];

II – Establishment of the IOC Ocean Data and Information System Project (ODIS)

4. Having examined the proposal contained in document IOC/A-31/3.4.2.Doc(1) and document IOC/IODE-XXVI/6.1.1,
5. Recalling Decision IODE-XXIV.4 on the Ocean Data and Information System,
6. Recognizing that a significant fraction of the work on ocean data and information system takes place outside IOC and that there is a need to collaborate with those communities/systems in order to achieve improved accessibility, unrestricted use and interoperability of data and information,
7. Recognizing also the key role that distributed and interoperable data, information, and digitized knowledge resources will have during the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development,
8. Recalling further that the IOC decided that IODE will work with existing stakeholders, linked and not linked to the IOC, to improve the accessibility and interoperability of existing data and information and to contribute to the development of a global ocean data and information system, to be referred to as the IOC Ocean Data and Information System, leveraging established solutions where possible, including existing IODE systems and others,
9. Noting with appreciation that IODE has:
 - (i) established the IOC Ocean Data and Information System Catalogue of Sources Project (ODISCat) in 2019,
 - (ii) started the implementation of the Ocean InfoHub project as a three-year project (2020–2023) funded by the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium),
10. Decides to establish the “IOC Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) project” with the terms of reference as attached in Annex 1, and terms of reference of the Steering Group as attached in Annex 2 to this decision;
11. Invites all IOC programmes, IOC regional subsidiary bodies and partner organizations to collaborate by mobilizing their stakeholder communities to enter information into the ODIS-Cat system, and to participate in the OIH and ODIS Projects;

Annex 1 to Dec. A-31/3.4

Terms of Reference of the IOC Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) project

The objectives of this project are to:

- (i) develop the IOC Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) as an e-environment where users can discover data, data products, data services, information, information products and services provided by Member States, projects and other partners associated with IOC;

- (ii) work with partners, linked and not linked to the IOC, to improve the accessibility and interoperability of existing data and information. It will contribute to the development of a global ocean data and information system, to be referred to as the IOC Ocean Data and Information System, leveraging established solutions where possible;
- (iii) start its development using existing “ecosystem components” such as, inter alia, the ODIS Catalogue of Sources (ODISCat), the Ocean InfoHub project, and all IODE data and information products and services, and to add components within and outside the IODE programme as these become available to and interoperable with the ODIS ecosystem.

Annex 2 to Dec. A-31/3.4

**Terms of Reference of the IODE Steering Group
for the IOC Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS)**

Objectives:

- (i) Propose the vision, strategy, workplan and timetable for the ODIS Project;
- (ii) Advise on technical aspects;
- (iii) Establish a stakeholder forum to ensure active participation of representatives from ODIS nodes and other contributors;
- (iv) Report to the IOC and to other partners on the progress of the ODIS Project;
- (v) Provide guidance to the project manager and project technical manager;
- (vi) Identify funding sources to further develop the ODIS.

Membership: The Steering Group will be composed, inter alia, of:

- Representatives from IOC Programmes;
- Project Manager;
- Project Technical Manager;
- Invited Experts;
- Representatives of major stakeholder (user) groups including regional/international organizations;
- Representative of the IODE Secretariat;
- Representative of the Decade Coordination Unit.

III – Revision of the IOC Oceanographic Data Exchange Policy (2013, 2019)

12. Having examined the proposed arrangements contained in document IOC/A-31/3.4.2.Doc(2),
13. Recalling IOC [Resolution XXII-6](#) that established the IOC Oceanographic Data Exchange Policy in 2003 and [Decision IOC-XXX/7.2.1\(II\)](#) that amended Clause 5 in 2019,
14. Noting that partner and sister organizations are changing their data policies, which can serve as a model for updating the IOC data policy,
15. Noting further that principles of data sharing and licensing are becoming globally

recognized and adopted, e.g., FAIR Principles and Creative Commons licences,

16. Decides to establish the IOC inter-sessional working group on the Revision of the IOC Oceanographic Data Exchange Policy (2003, 2019) with terms of reference as included in Annex 3 to this decision;

Annex 3 to Dec. A-31/3.4

Terms of Reference of the IOC Inter-sessional Working Group on the Revision of the IOC Oceanographic Data Exchange Policy (IWG-DATAPOLICY)

Objectives: This working group will:

- (i) create an inventory of existing international, national and organizational data policies,
- (ii) review and compare existing international, national and organizational data policies,
- (iii) develop a glossary with clear definitions (e.g. open vs free and unrestricted; data vs metadata vs information, licence options),
- (iv) investigate the expansion of scope and name of the IOC Oceanographic Data Exchange Policy,
- (v) gather advice from partner/sister organizations and recognized data provider/manager organizations,
- (vi) organize a broad consultation on the proposed revised IOC Ocean Data Policy with Member States, IOC global and regional programmes,
- (vii) submit a revised IOC Oceanographic Data Exchange Policy to the IOC Assembly at its 32nd Session in 2023.

Modalities: The IWG-DATAPOLICY aims to have at least three meetings (second half 2021, first half 2022). The group may meet online, face-to-face or mixed as appropriate. For face-to-face meetings participation will be self-funded.

Membership: The IWG-DATAPOLICY will be composed, inter alia, of:

- Chair of the working group (to be designated by the group)
- Invited experts from the global data and information communities including UN agencies
- Representatives of IOC programmes and projects
- IOC (including IODE) Secretariat

IV – The UNESCO/IOC Project Office for IODE

17. Having examined the Proposal to renew the MoU between VLIZ and the IOC regarding the IOC Project Office for IODE contained in document IOC/A-31/3.4.2.Doc(3),
18. Recalling:
- (i) IOC Resolution XXII-7 which accepted the offer of the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) and the city of Ostend to host the IODE Project Office,
 - (ii) IOC Resolution XXII-1 which adopted the Guidelines for the Establishment of

IOC Decentralized Offices, subsequently published in Document [IOC/INF-1193](#),

19. Noting with appreciation:

- (i) the positive results of the review the IOC Project Office for IODE (2020 presented in document is IOC/A-31/3.4.2.Doc 3),
- (ii) that the IOC Project Office for IODE has been successfully implementing its objectives:
 - the successful development and hosting of data/information products/services such as web sites and databases,
 - the successful development and hosting of the training system OceanTeacher Global Academy,
 - the continued management of an excellent international meeting and conference centre.
- (iii) the considerable financial support provided by the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) to the IOC in general and to the IOC Project Office for IODE in particular, and the excellent in-kind support provided by the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ),
- (iv) the complementary nature of the activities carried out at the Project Office and the financial support provided by the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) through the UNESCO/Flanders Fund-in-Trust for the support of UNESCO's activities in the field of Science (FUST),
- (v) the contribution by the IOC Project Office for IODE (as the IODE secretariat and Meeting & Training Facility) to the further development of Ocean Data and Information Networks in developing regions,
- (vi) the efficient and effective management of the Project Office and the professionalism of its Staff,

20. Expressing its profound gratitude to the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) and the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) for the considerable support provided, both financially and by hosting the Project Office since April 2005,

21. Invites the Government of Flanders to continue hosting the IOC Project Office for IODE as well as its considerable financial and in-kind contributions and support;

22. Agrees to

- (i) the continuation of the IOC Project Office for IODE; and
- (ii) the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO/IOC and the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) through the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) that establishes the IOC Project Office for IODE in Ostend, Belgium.

109. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.4.3 Harmful Algal Blooms: 15th Session of IPHAB, 23–25 March 2021

[Rule of Procedure 48.3]

Information:

[IOC/INF-1399](#)

Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms,
online, 23–25 March 2021

Global HAB Status Report. A Scientific Summary
for Policy Makers (2021)

110. Mr Joe Silke, Chair of the IOC Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms (IPHAB), presented the main outputs of the 15th session of the Panel. The Panel took eight decisions and endorsed two recommendations for the consideration of the Assembly at its 31st session. The decisions concern: (i) Regional HAB Programme Development taking into account the difference of support for the various groups and networks depending on whether they are affiliated to a regional IOC subsidiary body or not; (ii) the continuation of the Task Team on the Early Detection, Warning and Forecasting of HAB Events with new terms of reference; (iii) the continuation of the Task Team on the development of the Harmful algal Information System and a periodic Global Harmful Algal Bloom Status Report with new terms of reference; (iv) the continuation of the Task Team on a Global Inter-Agency Ciguatera Strategy for Improved Research and Management with new terms of reference; (v) the continuation of the Task Team on Harmful Algae and Desalination of Seawater to assess and explore the feasibility of a joint FAO-IOC food safety risk assessment (or what available data allow) for toxins in drinking water coming from desalination plants; (vi) the continuation of the Task Team on Biotoxin Monitoring, Management and Regulations with new terms of reference; (vii) the continuation of the Task Team on Algal Taxonomy with new terms of reference; and (viii) the continuation of the Task Team on Harmful Algae and Fish Kills with new terms of reference and renamed to Task Team on Fish Killing Microalgae and Ecosystem Effects.
111. In addition to the above, the Intergovernmental Panel submitted to the Assembly its planned intersessional activities in the form of a workplan and budget for the IOC HAB Programme 2022–2023 and recommended to it the continuation of IPHAB as a major technical subsidiary body with unchanged terms of reference.
112. The Chair of IPHAB informed the Assembly that the Memorandum of Understanding between FAO, IAEA, IOC and WHO on Ciguatera Poisoning, presented to the 30th session of the Assembly as [IOC-XXX/Inf.4](#), and subsequently approved by the UNESCO's Executive Board, has not yet been signed due to delays caused by organization changes in WHO.
113. The Assembly was informed that Dr Joe Silke (Ireland) was re-elected as Chair and Dr Alexandra Silva (Portugal) was re-elected as Vice-Chair.
114. Finally, he drew the attention of the Assembly to the interest of FAO to investigate the possibility of returning as a cosponsor of IPHAB as set out in IOC Assembly Resolution XVI-4.

Dec. A-31/3.4.3

Harmful Algal Blooms

The Assembly,

1. Having considered the Executive Summary Report of the 15th online session (23–25 March 2021) of the IOC Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms (IPHAB),
2. Endorses the Executive Summary Report of IPHAB-XIV and the recommendations contained therein (IOC/IPHAB-XV/3s);
3. Takes note of the information related to the status of the FAO-WHO-IAEA-IOC

Memorandum of Understanding of Ciguatera Poisoning, and commends cooperation between the four UN organizations in this area;

4. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4].

115. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.5 PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENTS

3.5.1 Biennial assessment to be conducted by the Working Group on User Requirements and Contributions to GEBCO Products [Decisions EC-XLIX/4.4 and EC-LI/4.5]

<u>Working document:</u>	IOC/A-31/3.5.1.Doc	Biennial assessment of the Working Group on User Requirements and Contributions to GEBCO Products, 2021
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<u>Information:</u>	EC-LI/2 Annex 7	First report of the IOC regular Working Group on User Requirements and Contributions to GEBCO Products, 2018
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116. IOC Vice-Chairperson, Frederico Saraiva Nogueira, in his capacity as Chairperson of the IOC Working Group on User Requirements and Contributions to General Bathymetric Chart of the Ocean (GEBCO) Products, introduced this item. He recalled that, at its 51st Session in 2018, the IOC Executive Council had decided to reconduct the mandate of the Working Group with a view to: (i) collecting, integrating and assessing user requirements to inform the development of present and future GEBCO products; and (ii) addressing ways to strengthen the contributions of IOC programmes and Member States' activities to GEBCO data and products.

117. The group was established through IOC Circular Letter [2791](#) of 2020 and included representatives from GEBCO, IOC programmes, IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies, as well as representatives of Member States. IOC/AP-31/3.5.1.Doc presents the report of the Working Group developed on the basis on an online survey sent to the group and to the wider community. The results of the survey and recommendations were prepared by the Secretariat and finally reviewed by the Working Group.

Dec. A-31/3.5.1

Biennial assessment to be conducted by the Working Group on User Requirements and Contributions to GEBCO Products

The Assembly,

1. Recalling [Decision EC-LI/4.5](#) to, inter alia, conduct the Review of User Requirements and Potential Contributions to GEBCO on a biennial basis,
2. Having examined the report of the working group presented in IOC/A-31/3.5.1.Doc,
3. Recognizing the continued need of the IOC scientific community for bathymetric

products and the fact that access to high quality bathymetry is important not only for navigation, but also for other purposes including ocean science, tsunami warning and preparedness and climate modelling,

4. Noting that significant amounts of bathymetric data are collected by the scientific and commercial sector for purposes other than chart improvement, but are not easily made discoverable or available for secondary purposes,
5. Takes note of the conclusions of the Working Group contained in IOC/A-31/3.5.1.Doc;
6. Requests the Executive Secretary to:
 - (i) convey the conclusion of this review to the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the GEBCO Guiding Committee;
 - (ii) identify ways and means to increase the participation of respondents, particularly representing the interest of IOC programmes, as well as regional subsidiary organs, in future assessments carried out by the working group;
 - (iii) share the findings of the review with relevant IOC communities;
7. Decides to conduct the Review of User Requirements and Potential Contributions to GEBCO on a triennial basis, with the next assessment to be presented to the IOC Governing Body in 2024;
8. Encourages Member States to:
 - (i) cooperate to advance basin-scale campaign mapping and accelerate the delivery of GEBCO objectives and general knowledge of the ocean in particular by supporting and contributing to the Nippon Foundation–GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project;
 - (ii) facilitate GEBCO capacity development, including training opportunities; and
 - (iii) actively participate in the next assessment, to be conducted by the Working Group;
9. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4].

118. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.5.2 Global Ocean Observing System Work Plan

[Rule of Procedure 8.1(a); EC-LI/Dec.5.3; IOC-XXX/Dec. 7.1.1]

Working document:

[IOC/A-31/3.5.2.Doc](#)

Executive Summary of the Global Ocean Observing System Implementation Plan

119. Dr Anya Waite, co-chair of the GOOS Steering Committee, introduced this item. She recalled that the Assembly at its 30th session adopted a Global Ocean Observing System 2030 Strategy in 2019 ([IOC/BRO/2019/5/rev.](#)), which now forms the basis of the work of the GOOS core team of panels, expert teams, and coordinating groups, as well as the focus of an internal core team implementation plan. She also recalled that the disbandment of JCOMM at the end of 2019 had increased the scope of GOOS with the inclusion of the former JCOMM Observations Coordination Group and observing networks, the technical coordination centre

OceanOPS (formerly known as JCOMMOPS), and the Expert Team on Operational Ocean Forecasting Systems. GOOS was participating in Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board and WMO Infrastructure Commission work to identify its functional connections to WMO structures and strategic collaborative actions that had the highest potential impact for sustained ocean observations in an Earth System approach.

120. She reviewed the status of the sustained ocean observing system, as revealed in regular reporting of the GOOS networks, as well as in surveys of developing biological and ecological ocean observing networks.
121. The GOOS Steering Committee was focused on a number of priorities, high amongst them the development and implementation of three linked GOOS Ocean Decade Programmes that would deliver a more integrated and responsive observing system by 2030. *Ocean Observing Co-Design* aims to transform the ocean observing system assessment and design process, creating an integrated and agile system co-designed with observing, modelling, and key user stakeholders. *CoastPredict*, a large programme of which GOOS is a major partner, will transform the science of observing and predicting the Global Coastal Ocean, from river catchments - including urban scales - to the oceanic slope waters. *Observing Together* aims to transform ocean data access and availability by connecting ocean observers and the communities they serve, through enhanced support to both new and existing community-scale projects. GOOS also intends to play a leading role in supporting all ocean observing and forecasting programmes and projects in the Ocean Decade in a Community of Practice.
122. The tenth session of the GOOS Steering Committee was held online 26-29 April 2021. Supported by its 2030 Strategy, an Implementation Plan that looks across the Core Team elements, and a stakeholder survey of the support structures to global and regional sustained ocean observing, the Steering Committee is committed to change.
123. It will initiate a three-pronged approach to improving governance and support structures: designing a change process with stakeholders, critically assessing its internal architecture to be more fit for purpose and aligned with key functions, and asking its co-sponsors to design individual or joint ways of examining and evolving their GOOS governance that will be inclusive of additional stakeholders and open to recommendations.
124. The Steering Committee will focus on regional support to GOOS—critically looking at GOOS Regional Alliances, GOOS Projects with a regional scope, and their connection to both global networks and national sustained ocean observing activity—with principles of subsidiarity and resonance to identify the best scales of activity to effect change and support stakeholders, which will include regional ocean management structures.
125. Finally, GOOS will work to improve the understanding and use of Essential Ocean Variables (EOVs) as strategic assets of GOOS. Goals will include better understanding and response to how EOVs and Essential Climate Variables are used, make them more useful for reviewing the status of the observing system development and gaps, and how reviews of the observing system can be oriented.
126. The Steering Committee also reviewed the GOOS Implementation Plan that for the first time assembled actions across the GOOS Core Team, providing visibility towards implementation of the Global Ocean Observing System 2030 Strategy, enabled priority setting and identification of gaps, promoted the creation of cohesive cross-GOOS actions, and identified resource needs and partnerships.

Dec. A-31/3.5.2

I. Global Ocean Observing System Work Plan

The Assembly,

1. Having examined IOC/A-31/3.5.2.Doc, the *Executive Summary of the GOOS Implementation Plan*,
2. Thanks the GOOS Steering Committee for the identification of proposed strategic actions in the implementation plan;
3. Expresses its appreciation for the planning for contributions to the Ocean Decade with the GOOS *Ocean Observing Co-Design* and *Observing Together* Programmes (detailed as IOC registered actions in Draft Resolution A-31/[3.7]), as well as the *CoastPredict* Programme;
4. Adopts the *Executive Summary of the GOOS Implementation Plan* (IOC/A-31/3.5.2.Doc) as the GOOS work plan for 2022–2023;
5. Notes the broad ambition of this implementation plan, its identified resource implications - which if all levels of priority are addressed would imply a more than doubling of human resources in the medium term - as well as the need to reinforce partnerships and support structures;
6. Expresses its appreciation for Member States and organizations that have provided direct and in-kind contributions for the distributed GOOS Office;
7. Invites co-sponsoring organizations of GOOS to consider how they will support implementation, and to work with IOC to design ways of examining and evolving GOOS governance that would lead to improved advice and operational support, be inclusive of additional stakeholders, and be open to advice from a process of governance change;
8. Urges Member States to work with the GOOS Office to identify how they can help with implementation and what their contributions will enable us to achieve together;
9. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4];

II. GOOS Steering Committee Regional Membership

10. Recalling the GOOS SC regional membership appointment defined in IOC Resolution XXVI-8, and further recalling the IOC Circular Letter inviting Member States to the 31st Assembly and requesting nominations of experts for appointment by Member State Electoral Groups,
11. Notes the appointment by each of the Member State Electoral Groups of a regional expert member of the GOOS SC for 2022–2023:
 - _____ (Group I)
 - _____ (Group II)
 - _____ (Group III)
 - _____ (Group IV)
 - _____ (Group V)

127. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.5.3 Revision of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy

[Resolution XXVIII-2]

<u>Working document:</u>	IOC/A-31/3.5.3.Doc	Outlines of the Findings and Recommendations of the Group of Experts on Capacity Development for the Revision of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy
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<u>Report</u>	IOC/INF-1396	GE-CD Task Team report relating to the revision of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2015–2021
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128. Mr Alan Evans, Co-Chair of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development (GE-CD) introduced this item on behalf also of Mr Ariel Troisi as other Co-Chair of the GE-CD. He started by noting that this agenda item does not cover the results of the 2nd IOC CD needs assessment or full outcome of the 2nd Meeting of the IOC GE-CD due to the limited agenda of this Assembly. He referred to the web site <https://surveys.ioc-cd.org> for the survey results.

129. He referred to Documents IOC/A-31/3.5.3.Doc and IOC/INF-1396. He noted that the current IOC CD strategy was developed for the period 2015–2021 and accordingly, it will “expire” end of December 2021. He recalled Decision [IOC-XXX/Dec. 11.1](#) (IOC Capacity Development Group of Experts). He informed the Assembly that the second session of the GE-CD had taken place on 26 October 2020 as an online meeting. The Group decided to establish a GE-CD Task Team to identify what changes may be needed in the current IOC CD strategy (2015–2021) and submit a report for consideration by the 31st Session of the IOC Assembly (2021). The Task Team took into account: (i) Global Ocean Science Report (GOSR); (ii) outcomes of the 2nd IOC Capacity Development Survey (September 2020–January 2021); (iii) Capacity Development Chapter of the Implementation Plan of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030); (iv) input of consultations with IOC global and regional programmes related to Capacity Development. The Task met twice online (in December 2020 and February 2021).

130. The results of the Task Team’s review laid out vital elements that should be incorporated in a revised IOC CD Strategy, so that it provides appropriate capacity development in support of existing and emerging initiatives, including the UN Decade for Ocean Science. It should be drafted in a way that has a form and structure that is easily digestible and able to entice target audiences to read through the document. There is also a need to consider how to promote visibility and outreach of a revised IOC CD Strategy so that it becomes a recognized guide in implementing capacity development activities. One possibility could be to create, an accompanying summary document incorporating the key messages for a wider outreach.

131. The Task Team recommended that the GE-CD continue its work on revising the IOC CD Strategy for 2023-2030. The current strategy can be extended until 2023 to give sufficient time to delve into this important work. The GE-CD’s ToR should be revised to allow a continuation of the work on the revision of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy and the preparation of a proposal for submission to the 32nd Session of the IOC Assembly in June 2023.

132. The GE-CD subsequently considered the results of the work of the Task Team and its recommendations which resulted in the below draft decision for consideration of the Assembly.

Dec. A-31/3.5.3**Revision of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy**

The Assembly,

1. Recognizing the importance of Capacity Development as one of the six functions of the IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2014–2021), enabling all Member States to participate in, and benefit from, ocean research and services that are vital to sustainable development and human welfare on the planet,
2. Recalling [Resolution XXVIII-2](#) by which it adopted the IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2015–2021) at its 28th session,
3. Having examined the Report of the GE-CD Task Team related to the revision of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2015–2021,
4. Decides to extend the current IOC Capacity Development Strategy until July 2023,
5. Decides also to revise the Terms of Reference of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity development as follows:
 - (i) assist global and regional programmes with the implementation of capacity development needs assessments in a consistent manner;
 - (ii) assist global and regional programmes with the development of programmatic and regionally relevant capacity development work plans based on the IOC CD strategy and related needs assessments, building on ongoing activities and making use of existing training and education facilities;
 - (iii) provide advice to global and regional programmes on relevant methods and tools to improve the quality and impact of CD efforts;
 - (iv) repeat the CD survey at regular intervals in 2022 [and biannually], possibly including CD implementation impact monitoring/metrics, also taking into account other methods such as regional reviews, science conferences etc.;
 - (v) ensure coordination of the work of the Group of Experts and its Task Teams with GOSR and CD aspects of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development;
 - (vi) advise the Assembly on the Transfer of Marine Technology Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) as requested by the *IOC Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology* ([IOC/INF-1203](#)), making use, to the largest extent possible, of existing data and information systems and building upon the Ocean InfoHub project (2020–2023);
 - (vii) revise the IOC Capacity Development Strategy and prepare a proposal for submission to the IOC Assembly at its 32nd Session;
 - (viii) prepare a proposal to promote visibility and reach of the revised IOC CD Strategy so that its target audience will read through and appreciate the document as a guide in implementing capacity development activities for submission and submit it to the IOC Assembly at its 32nd Session.

6. Calls on IOC's regional subsidiary bodies as well as regional components of global programmes to:
 - (i) promote contributions to the CD survey;
 - (ii) identify CD efforts of other organizations and seek complementary cooperation;
 - (iii) link with other global, regional and national processes and strengthen the relationships with philanthropic, private partnerships and other regional organizations.
7. Invites Member States to actively contribute to the surveys and contribute to the IOC's Capacity Development activities through financial and/or in-kind contributions;
8. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4].

133. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.5.4 IOC Ocean Literacy Action Plan and Strategy

[Decisions IOC/EC-LI.4.9 and IOC-XXX/11.2]

<i>Working document:</i>	IOC/A-31/3.5.4.Doc	Revised Draft IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action 2018–2021
<i>Information:</i>	IOC/EC-53/4.5.Doc	Revised Draft IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action 2018–2021
	IOC/2021/ODS/22 (The Ocean Decade Series 22)	Ocean Literacy Framework for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021–2030

134. Ms Francesca Santoro, programme specialist for ocean literacy, introduced this item. She recalled that increased visibility and awareness is one of the outputs of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2015–2021) and fostering the development of an IOC ocean literacy programme to share experience of communities of practice within and across regions is one of the actions to achieve it.

135. She then referred to [Decision IOC/EC-LI.4.9](#) by which the Executive Council requested the Secretariat to develop a plan of action for ocean literacy, and [Decision IOC-XXX/11.2](#) deciding to distribute the Draft IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action to Member States, IOC regional subsidiary bodies as well as global programmes for comments. She described the review process, the comments received and how they were incorporated in the new version of the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action as presented in the [IOC/EC-53/4.5.doc](#).

136. Ms Santoro also recalled the role of ocean literacy in 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 presented the main elements of the Ocean Literacy Framework of Action (IOC/2021/ODS/22).

137. Ms Santoro also presented a progress report on IOC Ocean Literacy activities, implemented both at global and regional levels, as well as in collaboration with other UNESCO Sectors. She informed that through the support of the Government of Sweden it was possible to implement the activities included in the “Ocean Literacy for All” initiative put forward to the 2017 UN Ocean Conference as voluntary commitment. Moreover, an Ocean Literacy Virtual Summit was organized at the occasion of the World Ocean Day 2019, and an updated version of the Ocean Literacy Portal was launched to act as global hub for ocean literacy experts and practitioners. The test of the Ocean Literacy for All: A toolkit developed within the framework of the network of the UNESCO Network of Associated Schools (ASPNet) was completed, and through the support of Italian National Commission for UNESCO and of the Secretaria do Meio Ambiente da Prefeitura Municipal de Santos and of the project Maré de Ciência of the Universidade Federal de São Paulo it was possible to produce respectively the Italian and the Portuguese versions of the toolkit.

Dec. A-31/3.5.4

IOC Ocean Literacy Action Plan and Strategy

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the revised draft IOC Ocean Literacy 2018–2021 proposed in document IOC/A-31/3.5.4.Doc and the accompanying review analysis ([IOC/EC-53/4.5.Doc](#)),
2. Recalling the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2015–2021 in which ocean literacy is identified as a main activity of the strategy output 5: Visibility and awareness increased,
3. Taking into account the IOC’s progress on ocean literacy and the role it can play in communicating the relevance of IOC’s activities for sustainable development, and in the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,
4. Also taking into account the role of ocean literacy plays in the context of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development as described in the Proposed Ocean Literacy Framework of Action ([IOC/2021/ODS/22](#)),
5. Trustful that Ocean Literacy will remain integral to the IOC Capacity Development Strategy beyond 2021,
6. Establishes the IOC Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy with the terms of reference presented in the annex to this decision and invites Member States to nominate suitable candidate members for the Group;
7. Endorses the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action 2018–2021 as contained in document IOC/A-31/3.5.4.Doc as a guidance document for the work of the IOC Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy for the next four years;
8. Expresses its appreciation to the Government of Sweden for the financial support provided to the IOC’s Ocean Literacy activities and encourages other Member States to follow this example;
9. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4].

Annex to Dec. A-31/3.5.4

Terms of Reference of the IOC Group of Experts on Ocean Literacy

- (i) The Group will be composed of 20 experts from diverse and relevant disciplines and interested parties reflecting the multi-stakeholder nature of ocean literacy and taking into consideration geographical and gender balance. Experts will be selected following a call to Member States and partner organizations and suggestions from the IOC Secretariat. The Group of Experts will elect its Chair and Vice-chair;
- (ii) The Group of Experts will provide guidance in the scoping, implementation and monitoring of the IOC Ocean Literacy portfolio of activities, specifically in relation to:
 - a. the definition of good practices in Ocean Literacy based on lessons learned in Member States;
 - b. the development of Ocean Literacy global and regional programmes guided by the IOC Ocean Literacy Plan of Action ([IOC/A-31/3.5.4.Doc](#)) and the Ocean Literacy Framework of Action for the UN Decade of Ocean Science (IOC/INF-1400);
 - c. the coordination of Ocean Literacy networks at regional, national and local levels;
 - d. the identification of modalities for the mobilization of financial and in-kind resources to enable the implementation of global and regional Ocean Literacy activities;
 - e. the identification of synergies with relevant UNESCO Sectors, international organizations, academic institutions, NGOs and private sector associations;
 - f. the coordination of Ocean Literacy research activities relevant to the development of tools and methodologies and the assessment of impact of Ocean Literacy initiatives;
- (iii) The Group of Experts will produce regular reports and communications to the Ocean Literacy international community through newsletters, side events, etc.;
- (iv) The Group of Experts will provide guidance on the application and possible evolution of the Ocean Literacy Framework of Action for the UN Decade of Ocean Science in coordination with the Decade Advisory Board and the Decade Coordination Unit;
- (v) The Group of Experts will be established for an initial period of four years and will report to the IOC Assembly at its 33rd session, which will decide on its continuation or termination.

138. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.5.5 Adoption of a Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy and Report on the Establishment of the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board

[Resolution XXX-2]

<u>Working documents:</u>	IOC/A-31/3.5.5.Doc(1)	Proposed Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy
	IOC/A-31/3.5.5.Doc(2)	Proposed Rules of Procedure for the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board

139. Monika Breuch-Moritz, co-chair of the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board (JCB), introduced this item. She recalled the multi-level terms of reference of the JCB which include providing strategic advice to IOC and WMO governing bodies including a collaborative strategy, giving scientific and technical recommendations to WMO and IOC bodies including proposing cross-cutting projects, and liaison and consultant with relevant external stakeholders. The JCB met for the first time in nine online sessions from May to June 2020, identifying key points of potential mutually-reinforcing collaboration across a value chain extending from observations, data systems, forecasting systems, to research and service delivery, with enabling support from the development of best practices and standards, training and capacity development, and regional approaches.

Dec. A-31/3.5.5

Adoption of a Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy and Report on the establishment of the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board

The Assembly,

1. Recalling IOC [Resolution XXX-2](#) that created the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board (JCB), and requested the Board to produce a WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy for adoption in 2021,
2. Having examined IOC/A-31/3.5.5.Doc(1), *Proposed Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy*,
3. Having further examined IOC/A-31/3.5.5.Doc(2), *Proposed Rules of Procedure for the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board*,
4. Thanks the co-chairs and members of the JCB for their work in developing the proposed strategy;
5. Adopts the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy, subject to its parallel adoption by the WMO Executive Council at its 73rd Session (14–25 June 2021);
6. Adopts the Rules of Procedure of the Joint WMO-IOC collaborative Board, subject to its parallel adoption by the WMO Executive Council at its 73rd Session, and agrees to keep these rules of procedure under regular review, jointly with WMO governing bodies;
7. Requests the JCB to continue work across IOC and WMO to identify and promote priority implementation actions in support of the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy;
8. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission -

A-31/[4.4].

140. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.5.6 Status of the Regional Committee of the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO)
 [Dec. IOC-XXX/3.3.4]

<u>Working document:</u>	IOC/A-31/3.5.6.Doc	The Case for a New Governance for IOCINDIO: A Revised Proposal for Changing the Status of IOCINDIO in a Sub-Commission of IOC
<u>Information:</u>	IOC/INF-1410	Report on the online Consultation on the potential transformation of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO) into an IOC Sub-Commission, 16 February 2021 (online)
	IOCINDIO-VIII/3s	Executive Summary Report of the 8 th Session of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean, online, 17–19 May 2021
	IOC/INF-1411	Summary Report of the IOCINDIO Blue Economy Webinar, 6 May 2021

141. The newly elected IOCINDIO Chair, Rear Admiral Kushed Alam (Retd) Md; presented the proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission; containing the mission, the objectives, terms of references, budgetary implications, secretarial arrangements and other necessary provisions as a follow up to Decision IOC-XXX/3.3.4, by which the IOC Assembly at its 30th session requested the IOCINDIO Chair to prepare, with the help of the IOC Secretariat the said proposal, initially intended for the 53rd session of the Executive Council in June 2020.

142. The Chair recalled that following the 30th Session of the Assembly, the IOCINDIO Officers with the support of the IOC Vice-Chair for Group IV (Asia and the Pacific) engaged in consultations with the IOC Secretariat with a view of the proposal development.

143. Subsequently, in April 2020, the IOCINDIO Chair submitted to the IOC Secretariat the draft proposal. Upon reception of the proposal, the Executive Secretary of IOC organised a meeting involving the IOC Chair, the IOC Vice-Chair for Group IV, the IOCINDIO Officers and relevant senior members of the IOC Secretariat. It was agreed that noting the postponement of the 53rd session of the Executive Council of the IOC from summer 2020 to 3–9 February 2021 online meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was useful to organise a broad, inclusive, and comprehensive consultation on the status of the IOCINDIO among IOC Member States, especially those bordering or with interest in the Indian Ocean. Such consultation would be helpful to engage IOC Member States in the work of creating a vibrant IOC body for the Indian Ocean.

144. The consultation meeting took place online on 16 February 2021 (online). Rear Admiral Kushed Alam (Retd) noted that this meeting was not a mandatory or statutory in its nature and did not require a decision for the Assembly. It only provided advices and suggestions. In the context of the preparations of the consultations meeting, upon the request of the IOC Chair and the Executive Secretary, IOCINDIO Chair, with the support of the IOCINDIO Officers and the Vice-Chair for Group IV, revised the proposal document as the basis for the consultations with Member States.

145. The consultations meeting was well attended by approximately 138 participants representing the following countries: Angola, Australia, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Cameroun, Canada, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Japan, France, Gabon, Guinea, India, Italy, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Monaco, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, The Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tunisia, United Kingdom, USA, Viet Nam. The IOCINDIO Chair noted with appreciation that Member States bordering or with interest in the Indian Ocean, notably the African countries from Indian, Atlantic, Mediterranean and Red Seas coasts as well as the Pacific countries were well represented at the consultation meeting, showing their interests in the further development in the Indian Ocean basin.
146. At the Consultation meeting, the past Chair of IOCINDIO, Dr Atmanand, informed the participants that the proposal was a result of a teamwork of the IOCINDIO Officers and the IOC Vice-Chair representing Group IV with inputs of the IOC Secretariat including the Executive Secretary and senior IOC staff members. The goal of the transformation of the IOCINDIO into a Sub-Commission is to facilitate coordinated, focussed, and energized IOC activities in the region, which is the ultimate *raison d'être* of the IOC and its Sub-Commissions. He also provided background illustrations with existing good cooperation among IOCINDIO Member States with interested Member States of WESTPAC and IOCAFRICA.
147. The IOCINDIO Chair informed the Assembly that at the consultative meeting, the following opinions emerged:
- The majority of participants supported the unconditional transformation of the IOCINDIO into a Sub-Commission at the same level with the existing IOC Sub-Commissions, such as IOCAFRICA, IOCARIBE and WESTPAC.
 - Some participants, while supporting the transformation of the Committee into an IOC Sub-Commission, made a reservation about the proposal because of remaining ambiguity with regard to its future geographical coverage, and, hence, expected membership.
 - A number of participants suggested that a feasibility study was required before considering the transformation of the Regional Committee into a Sub-Commission.
148. The Chair recalled that in his response to the consultation meeting, the past Chair of IOCINDIO; Dr Atmanand stressed that the document carefully reviewed the development of IOCINDIO throughout the years and its current state and, as requested by the IOC Assembly, proposed initial elements for the reorganisation of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission, ideally for the whole Indian Ocean with the view to foster intraregional and interregional cooperation with the overlapping IOC Sub-Commissions, namely IOCAFRICA and WESTPAC.
149. Ongoing active national, regional and international programmes and stakeholders in the IOCINDIO region fully supported by national commitments and partners countries outside region are a good justification for the transformation of the Committee into a vibrant Sub-Commission, with the same level of administrative arrangements and resources support like the other existing IOC Sub-Commissions. There are only positive implications for the transformation of the IOCINDIO into a Sub-Commission, not only for current IOCINDIO Member States, but also for Member States of IOCAFRICA and WESTPAC, based on the good cooperation among interested Member States of these three regional bodies reinforcing mutual benefits.
150. IOCINDIO Chair, Rear Admiral Kushed Alam (Retd) Md, reiterated that the 8th intergovernmental session of IOCINDIO (IOCINDIO-VIII) adopted a Recommendation on the IOCINDIO Status in relation with Decision IOC-XXX/3.3.4, requesting the transformation of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean into the IOC Sub-Commission for the

Indian Ocean with the relevant prerogatives, secretariat support, programme and operational budget.

151. He further informed the Assembly with appreciation that the Government of India, through the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), under the auspices of the Ministry of Earth Science, has generously offered to provide support to IOCINDIO allowing to agree on modalities to establish a regional secretariat and not prejudging the Assembly decision with regard to the IOCINDIO status.
152. Finally, he expressed gratitude to the IOC Member States for their support, and to the IOCINDIO Member States and officers for their trust and proactive support to the IOCINDIO reactivation and transformation into an IOC Sub-Commission.

Dec. A-31/3.5.6

Status of the Regional Committee of the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO)

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission, containing the mission, the objectives, terms of references, budgetary implications, secretarial arrangements and other necessary provisions as a follow-up to Decision IOC-XXX/3.3.4, by which the IOC Assembly at its 30th session requested the IOCINDIO Chair to prepare, with the help of the IOC Secretariat, the said proposal,
2. Expresses gratitude to the Government of India for its offer made through the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), under the auspices of the Ministry of Earth Science, to provide support to IOCINDIO, pending the establishment of a dedicated Regional Secretariat Regional Subsidiary Bodies of the IOC;
3. Thanks Member States for their support, in particular the IOCINDIO Member States and partners for their pro-active contributions for the reactivation of the Committee;
4. Endorses the IOCINDIO-VIII Recommendation for changing the status of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission;
5. Decides to establish the IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean, as described in the proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission, as a framework to improve coordination of IOC Member States in the region and to ensure efficient implementation of IOC programmes in the Indian Ocean;
6. Also decides that: (i) the existing IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean will be dissolved during the First Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean, without prejudice to existing international cooperation in the region; (ii) choice of geographic coverage of the new Sub-Commission and its membership will be addressed at the First Session of the Sub-Commission;
7. Requests the Executive Secretary to:
 - (i) Take the necessary measures for convening the first session of the Sub-Commission before the 55th session of the IOC Executive Council in 2022;
 - (ii) Work closely with the IOCINDIO Officers on the modalities to establish the Regional Technical Secretariat for the Sub-Commission;
 - (iii) Present to the Executive Council, at its 55th session, a report on the status of

implementation of this decision;

8. Calls upon all Member States, in particular those from the Indian Ocean, to continue the implementation of the IOCINDIO Work Plan pending the First Session of the Sub-Commission and to support and participate actively in the programmes of the Sub-Commission;
9. Agrees that the regular budget for these activities will be identified as part of the Resolution on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission - A-31/[4.4].

153. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.6 IOC REPORT TO THE 41ST GENERAL CONFERENCE OF UNESCO
[Statutes Art. 3.2; Rule 6.1 of Procedure 49.2]

Working document: [IOC/A-31/3.6.Doc](#) Report of the IOC activities (2020–2021) to the Forty-first General Conference of UNESCO

154. The Executive Secretary briefly introduced this item, considering that the essence of the information contained in the draft report presented for Assembly's consideration have already been covered in his presentation under [item 3.2](#).

Dec. A-31/3.6

IOC Report to the Forty-first General Conference of UNESCO

The Assembly,

1. Recalling [Article 3.2](#) of the Statutes and Rule of Procedure [49.2](#),
2. Having examined document IOC/A-31/3.6.Doc,
3. Takes note of the report to be presented to the 41st session of the General Conference of UNESCO, and requests the Executive Secretary to submit the report on IOC activities (2020–2021) to the 41st General Conference of UNESCO as document 41 C/REP.9.

155. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

3.7 REPORT ON THE DECADE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
[A/RES/74/19, A/RES/75/239; 39 C/Resolution 25; Res. XXIX-1, XXX-1, EC-53/1]

Working documents: [IOC/A-31/3.7.Doc\(1\)](#) Draft Terms of Reference of the Decade Advisory Board
 [IOC/A-31/3.7.Doc\(2\)](#) Report on the Implementation of the UN Ocean Decade (including outcome of 1st Call for Action)

<u>Information:</u>	IOC/2021/ODS/22 (The Ocean Decade Series, 22)	Ocean Literacy Framework for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021–2030
	IOC/A-31/3.4.1.Doc(1)	Warning and Mitigation Systems for Ocean Hazards: Towards an Ocean Decade Tsunami Programme
	IOC/2021/ODS/24 (The Ocean Decade Series, 24)	National Decade Committees Operational Guidelines
	IOC/2021/ODS/23 (The Ocean Decade Series, 23)	Operational guidelines for the establishment of Decade Collaborative Centres and Implementing Partners
	IOC/INF-1417	List of endorsed Programmes (outcome of 1st Call for Action)
	IOC/INF-1416	IOC contributions to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) including resource needs
	IOC/2021/ODS/25 (The Ocean Decade Series, 25)	Advisory Report on the Communication Strategy for the Ocean Decade
	IOC/INF-1415	Preliminary Framework for the Decade Resource Mobilisation Strategy
	IOC/2021/ODS/21 (The Ocean Decade Series 21)	Report of the 1 st Meeting of the Interim Decade Advisory Board (6–8 April 2021)
	IOC/2021/ODS/28 (The Ocean Decade Series, 28)	Report of the 2nd Meeting of the Interim Decade Advisory Board (19 May 2021)
IOC/2021/ODS/19-20 (The Ocean Decade Series, 19 & 20)	The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) Implementation Plan (full text, 2021) and Summary	
<u>References:</u>	A/RES/75/239	UN General Assembly Resolution: Oceans and the law of the sea (2 December 2020)

156. The IOC Executive Secretary introduced this item recalling that on 31st December 2020, through [UNGA resolution 75/239](#), the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) inter alia ‘took note with satisfaction’ of the Implementation Plan of the UN Decade prepared by the IOC Secretariat in accordance with [UNGA resolution 72/73](#) of 2017. The adoption of this resolution de facto confirmed the role of the IOC as the coordinating agency for the implementation of the Decade. This high-level endorsement closes a three-year preparatory process that led to the formulation of Decade Implementation Plan through a highly participatory manner. Over 1,900 stakeholders participated in 11 regional planning meetings across 9 ocean basins between June 2019 and April 2020, as well as other thematic meetings organised around the world. Despite the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on international travel, the engagement of stakeholders continued through a series of virtual events such as the Decade Virtual Series which was launched in September 2020. Several information sessions were also held in July, and October 2020 as well as March 2021 to brief UN, UNESCO and IOC Member States. Overall, these meetings generated comprehensive information on the scientific research and capacity development priorities for each ocean basin

and catalysed discussions between stakeholders regarding regional partnerships to advance implementation of the Decade.

157. The Executive Secretary recalled that many IOC activities will directly contribute to the Decade and that IOC programmes are working with partners to develop programmatic contributions to the Decade. The IOC coordinating role means new dedicated resource requirements for the Secretariat. These needs have to be recognised and urgent action should be taken to ensure that a fully staffed and operational Decade Coordination Unit within the Secretariat can carry out the mandate given to it by the UN General Assembly. Similarly, a number of IOC programmatic contributions to be endorsed at the level of Decade Programmes will also require additional extra-budgetary support to achieve their transformative ambitions, guide their respective communities and act as a catalyser of action, particularly around funding proposal development and matchmaking. Specific resource needs will continue to be regularly identified and reported to IOC Member States and other potential funders with a view to solicit voluntary contributions.
158. The Executive Secretary recalled the constitution of a Decade Alliance to facilitate resource mobilisation for the Decade. This Alliance was launched on 3 February 2021 with the “A Brave New Ocean” virtual event that brought together ocean experts and leaders from around the world. The event brought together a number of founding members of the Ocean Decade Alliance, including H.E. Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya, H.E. Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway, H.R.H. Princess Lalla Hasnaa of Morocco and H.E. Hon. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa of Portugal, as well as leading philanthropic institutions like the Schmidt Ocean Institute and the Bertarelli Foundation. He invited Member States to join this initiative and identify additional contribution to support the work of the Decade. Finally, he recalled that the Executive Council at its 53rd Session agreed to extend the Decade Executive Planning Group, originally established in 2018 for the preparation phase, to serve as Interim Decade Advisory Board, until the establishment of the Decade Advisory Board.
159. Mr Julian Barbière, Decade Focal Point supported by Ms Alison Clausen, MPR Section presented an overview of the progress in operationalizing the Decade Implementation Plan, its governance and engagement mechanisms. He reported on the outcome of the 1st Call for Action launched in October 2020, highlighting that the 213 submissions received by the Secretariat were highly diverse both in terms of geography, themes and type of proponents. He explained the process put in place by the Secretariat to assess the submissions, prepare supporting documentation for consideration by the (Interim) Decade Advisory Board (DAB) and communicate with the proponents of the programme proposals to finalize or fine tune such potential Decade programme. He reported on the outcome of the first and second Meeting of the Interim DAB (6–8 April 2021 and 19 May 2021) that recommended to endorse 28 programmes and 33 contributions. In addition, four Decade Programmes were registered by IOC as reflected in the Draft Resolution under this agenda item. An announcement of the 1st batch of Decade Programme was made on 8 June 2021.
160. He further highlighted the recommendations made by the Decade Advisory Board and the Secretariat with regards to the focus of subsequent Calls for Action. Other contributions (national/partner contributions, offers to host Decade Collaborative Centres and Implementing Partners) received through the 1st call for action were also considered. He highlighted the development of a set of operational guidelines for the establishment of Decade Collaborative Centres and Implementing Partners, which will facilitate the establishment of such decentralised arrangements, in accordance with UNESCO practice, and support the coordination role of the IOC at both global and regional level. IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies are also heavily involved in promoting and coordinating Decade activities. He referred to the IOCAFRICA and WESTPAC led regional kick-off conference to be organised later in 2021 in Egypt (December 2021) and Thailand (August 2021), as well as the virtual regional kick-off event to be organised by IOCARIBE Secretariat in October 2021. He recalled that Germany hosted the High-Level launch of the Decade on 1st June 2021, which will be followed by a

series of seven virtual Decade Laboratories events in the course of 2021/2022, acting as platforms for ocean stakeholders to co-design and identify partnerships in support of the Decade.

161. Mr Barbière introduced the Terms of Reference of the Decade Advisory Board (DAB) as presented in IOC/A-31/3.7.Doc(1) and invited the Assembly to consider these. He informed Member States that the Secretariat will launch a call for nomination in July 2021 with a view to formally establish the Board and hold a first meeting ideally before the end of the year. The DAB will be conceived as a strategic advisory body to both the Secretariat and IOC Governing Bodies and will not exercise policy-making functions. The Board will provide technical advice on Decade implementation, for example by commenting on the Decade monitoring and evaluation framework or data stewardship strategies. It will provide recommendations on the endorsement of programmes, and comment on the consolidated performance of Decade.

162. Finally, Mr Barbière informed the Assembly about the development of a number of document developed during the intersessional period by the Secretariat, these are the: Advisory report on Communication strategy for the Decade (IOC/2021/ODS/24), the Preliminary Framework for the Decade Resource mobilization strategy (IOC/INF-1415), and the Operational guidelines for National Decade Committees and coordination mechanisms, developed on the basis of a survey sent to IOC Member States through IOC [Circular Letter 2840](#). He invited the Assembly to make comments on these. He highlighted the call made to Member States through previous Circular Letters to support through financial and in-kind contribution the establishment of the Decade Coordination Unit, a *sine qua none* condition to achieve an orderly, impactful, inclusive and effective implementation of the Decade. He thanked Member States that provided support towards the coordination and programme implementation work of the Secretariat, and emphasised the on-going efforts to develop resource assessments needs for both coordination and Decade Actions (particularly at Programme and Project level) in order to guide the provision of contributions by Member States and other supporters.

Draft Resolution A-31/[3.7]

Submitted by India, USA, Colombia, Russian Federation, Germany, Brazil, Morocco, Portugal United Kingdom, and France.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF OCEAN SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (2021–2030)

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

1. **Recalling** IOC Assembly [Resolution XXIX-1](#) proposing the establishment of an international (UN) Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), the subsequent proclamation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) at its 72nd session through Resolution [A/RES/72/73](#) (therein the Decade), and the invitation to the IOC to prepare an implementation plan for the Decade in consultation with Member States, specialized agencies, funds, programmes, and bodies of the United Nations, as well as other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and relevant stakeholders,
2. **Further recalling** IOC Assembly [Resolution XXX-1](#) on Progress Report on the Preparation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the call on IOC by the UNGA through Resolution [A/RES/74/19](#) to:
 - (i) continue to provide information on the development of the implementation plan

and present it to the UNGA at its 75th session,

- (ii) regularly consult with, and report to, (UN) Member States on the Decade and its implementation,
3. **Also further recalling** the consultation with IOC Member States in 2020 on the modalities of completion and submission of the Decade Implementation Plan (DIP) to the 75th Session of the UNGA and that the UNGA through Resolution [A/RES/75/239](#) welcomed the steps taken by IOC in the preparation of the Implementation Plan and took note with appreciation of that Plan (para 304),
 4. **Noting** [IOC Resolution EC-53/1](#) on Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030),
 5. **Welcoming** the Report on the Implementation of the UN Ocean Decade (Document [IOC/A-31/3.7.Doc\(2\)](#)) and, in particular, the outcomes of the global consultation meetings, regional workshops, the inclusive review process of the Implementation Plan by Member States, members of UN-Oceans, and stakeholders, the engagement activities with UN and non-UN ocean stakeholders, as well as the launch of the 1st Call for Actions under the Decade;
 6. **Expressing** confidence in the IOC Secretariat's ability to continue coordinating the Decade during its implementation phase (2021–2030) in consultation with Member States, specialized agencies, funds, programmes, and bodies of the United Nations, as well as other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and relevant stakeholders;

I – Decade Coordination matters

7. **Takes note** of the Implementation Plan as the basis for launching the Decade and establishing the governance arrangements and engagement mechanisms described therein;
8. **Acknowledges** the outcome of the 1st Call for Action and the endorsed Decade Programmes as presented in Document [IOC/INF-1417](#);
9. **Supports** the establishment of the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU) within the IOC Secretariat as the primary mechanism to achieve orderly, impactful, inclusive and effective implementation of the Decade;
10. **Invites** institutional partners to act as Decade Collaborative Centres or Decade Implementing Partners on the basis of the guidance provided in Document [IOC/2021/ODS/23](#) and **requests** the IOC Secretariat to report to IOC Governing Bodies on the establishment of such arrangements;
11. **Invites** Member States and partners to:
 - (i) provide voluntary financial contributions to support the work of the IOC Secretariat in coordinating the Decade including in-kind support such as staff loans and secondments to the DCU;
 - (ii) offer to host and fund Decade Actions, Decade Coordination Offices, and Decade Collaborative Centres as described in the Implementation Plan;
 - (iii) establish national multi-stakeholder Decade coordination mechanisms with a

view to stimulating national activities and international cooperation; and

(iv) Host regional or international convenings of Decade stakeholders including events in the International Ocean Decade Conference Series.

12. **Further invites** UN-Oceans partners, UN Member States, international scientific and academic organizations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders to support the Decade, contribute to its implementation by proposing Decade Actions in accordance with the DIP

13. **Thanks** the Governments of Canada, the Republic of Korea, Japan, the Kingdom of Belgium (Government of Flanders), Norway, Sweden, Portugal, the United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland, and the People's Republic of China as well as REV-Ocean for their financial contribution to the Decade and thanks Germany for their hosting of the High Level Launch of the Ocean Decade - First International Ocean Decade Conference, and the UN Ocean Decade Laboratories;

II – Establishment of the Decade Advisory Board

14. **Thanks** members of the Decade Executive Planning Group for their work in supporting the preparation phase of the Decade in 2018–2020 and for acting as *Interim Decade Advisory Board* in 2021 in accordance with the revised terms of reference of the group adopted by the 53rd session of the Executive Council through [resolution EC-53/1](#);

15. **Approves** the terms of reference for the Decade Advisory Board on the basis of Document [IOC/A-31/3.7.Doc\(1\)](#), including the selection process of its members envisaged for the balanced constitution of such a group, to be established under the coordination of the IOC Executive Secretary;

III – IOC Contribution to the Decade

16. **Emphasizes** the unique position of IOC to make a substantial contribution to the Decade through the implementation of High-Level Objectives (HLOs) as reflected in its Draft IOC Medium Term Strategy for 2022–2029 (41 C/4) and Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (41 C/5);

17. **Invites** IOC subsidiary bodies, relevant IOC governance structures to continue identifying programmatic contributions to the Decade during the inter-sessional period;

18. **Welcomes** the active role of the IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies in facilitating Decade regional coordination and engagement activities;

19. **Supports** the registration or planned registration of IOC-led Decade Actions, specifically:

(i) “Ocean Observing Co-Design” Programme by the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), which will build the process, infrastructure and tools for ocean observing co-design necessary to support the Ocean Decade;

(ii) “Observing Together” Programme by GOOS, which will transform ocean data access and availability by connecting ocean observers and the communities they serve through enhanced support to both new and existing community-scale projects;

(iii) the establishment of a Decade Tsunami Programme aimed at achieving

transformational advances in tsunami detection, observing and warning, including tsunamis generated by non-seismic sources, making 100% of communities at risk of tsunami prepared for and resilient to tsunamis by 2030 through the implementation of the UNESCO/IOC Tsunami Ready Programme, as reflected in decision Dec. A-31/3.4.1 of the Assembly;

- (iv) the “[Ocean Literacy With All \(OLWA\)](#) Programme to respond to priorities identified in the Ocean Decade Ocean Literacy Action Framework (Document [IOC/2021/ODS/22](#)); and
- (v) “[Ocean Practices for the Decade](#)” as a Programme connected to the IODE - GOOS Ocean Best Practices System;
- (vi) the registration of ODIS, OBIS, OTGA, WOD, and PacMAN as Ocean Decade Actions.

20. **Further invites** Member States, partners, and donor organisations to support these Decade Actions including through allocation of extra-budgetary resources to relevant IOC programmes to achieve their transformative ambitions, guide their respective communities, and act as a catalyser of further actions within and beyond the Decade.

163. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

4. GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING

- 4.1. DRAFT IOC MEDIUM TERM STRATEGY FOR 2022–2029 (41 C/4)
[Resolution EC-53/2]

Working documents: [IOC/A-31/4.1.Doc\(1\)](#) Draft IOC Medium Term Strategy for 2022–2029
(41 C/4)

164. The Executive Secretary introduced this item. He reminded Member States that the document, already reviewed by the IOC Assembly at its 30th session in 2019 and by the Executive Council at its 53rd session in February 2021, builds on the current IOC Medium-term Strategy, 2014–2021 ([IOC/INF-1314](#)), preserving the comprehensive framework of six functions for its implementation, while at the same time attempting to further clarify and sharpen the proposed vision statement and five High-Level Objectives of the Commission. The version proposed for Member States consideration in document IOC/A-31/4.1.Doc(1) was revised in accordance with [Resolution EC-53.2](#).

165. The Executive Secretary stressed the importance of a constructive and inclusive discussion of the document, both in the plenary and in the Financial Committee, with a view of endorsing this key document that will define the Commission’s strategy in the next eight-year period, largely concordant with the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

[Dec. A-31/4.1](#)

Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029

The Assembly,

1. Having examined documents IOC/A-31/4.1.Doc(1) and [Resolution EC-53/2](#),
2. Takes note of the documents IOC/A-31/4.1.Doc(1) and [Resolution EC-53/2](#) and Annexes subject to further examination by the Financial Committee with a view of formulating draft resolution for discussion and adoption in plenary.

166. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

4.2. DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2022–2025 (41 C/5)
[Res. EC-53/2]

<i>Working document:</i>	IOC/A-31/4.2.Doc	Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (41 C/5) – First Biennium 2022–2023
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167. The Executive Secretary introduced this item. He reminded the Assembly that while the programme of UNESCO is defined for the quadrennial period 2022–2025, the General Conference of UNESCO decided to maintain the biennial cycle for the appropriation of the budget. The proposal for the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025, first biennium: 2022–2023 ([41 C/5](#)) submitted to UNESCO Executive Board at its 211th session (April 2021) was based on the same amount of Member States assessed contributions (regular budget) as in 2020–2021, or US\$534.6 million. This scenario included an allocation of \$11.2 million from the assessed contributions to the IOC (compared to \$10.9 million in 2020–2021). There is an expectation and ambition for the IOC to raise \$20,6 million in voluntary contributions (\$15.8 million in 2020–2021), of which \$4,4 million are already in hand (\$2.6 million in 2020–2021). Despite the fact that the overall regular budget for the biennium is nominally a little higher than the figures for 2020–2021 (\$11.2 M vs \$10.9 M), budget available for operations in the new biennium is expected to be lower due to an increase in staff costs. With the new comprehensive and transparent approach to presenting staff costs, the full anticipated costs of staff are now reflected under the Sectors/Bureaux where they are working and delivering results. This is expected to support more flexibility in the ability of Sectors/Bureaux to manage their staff costs as needed throughout the biennium.

168. At the same time, the opportunity and the responsibility presented by the Decade, required a strategic assessment and a decision on where to invest. The volume of work for the IOC Secretariat is increasing. The resources for activities originating from assessed contributions of UNESCO Member States are decreasing. The only rationale for adequate delivery is to reinforce the Commission’s capacity to mobilise additional resources. In this context, the Executive Secretary’s choice is to invest in the human resources of the IOC, its greatest asset, in anticipation that a stronger team will be able to adequately respond to a higher demand on IOC’s critical work in enabling science-based ocean management. A corporate investment in IOC staffing, elevating its profile to the level commensurate with our vision for a truly transformative Decade is required in order to raise more resources for an effective and efficient Decade Coordination Unit and strengthen all IOC programme activities. It is this vision that enables the increased projections for voluntary contributions.

169. The Executive Secretary stressed that the IOC programme and budget for the period 2022–2023, the starting biennium of the IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029, requires a deep reflection of its Member States.

170. At its 30th Session the Assembly adopted [Resolution XXX-3](#), requesting the Executive Secretary to produce an “estimate of the necessary budget to effectively operate the IOC at an optimum level, to help identify how and what additional resources might be secured”.
171. Secretariat’s considerations in this regard focused on two options:
- (i) the “healthy IOC” scenario ensuring the ability of the Secretariat to support the current portfolio of activities (now including coordination of the Decade, pursuit of IOC work on ocean planning, including maritime spatial planning, more resourceful work in the regions and activities in the areas of ocean literacy and communication);
 - (ii) and a hypothetical sketch of “optimal IOC” that would be able to support the emerging alliance of ocean science and management. This configuration is still not clear due to emerging negotiations at the United Nations and evolving developments in ocean governance. Consultations with Member States will be needed to complete this crucial strategic planning exercise.
172. The Executive Secretary also referred Member States to the [IOC Statutes](#)’ Article 11.3 outlining the possibility for the IOC to act as a joint specialized mechanism in the UN system and to Article 10.4 allowing the Commission to establish additional financial arrangements for the implementation of its programme of work. He shared his view that modern leadership can only be achieved through partnership. Seeking adequate strategic partnerships will allow IOC to keep and strengthen its role of as a coordinator and facilitator of ocean science at the service of sustainable development.

Dec.A-31/4.2

**Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025
(41 C/5)**

The Assembly,

1. Having examined document IOC/A-31/4.2.Doc(1) and Resolution [EC-53/2](#),
2. Takes note of document IOC/A-31/4.2.Doc(1) and [Resolution EC-53/2](#) and Annexes subject to further examination by the Financial Committee with a view of formulating a draft resolution for discussion and adoption in plenary.

173. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

4.3. FOLLOW-UP TO RESOLUTION EC-53/2 ON REVIEW & UPDATE OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE TO ADAPT THEM TO ONLINE MEETINGS AND GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING ON IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Working document:

[IOC/A-31/4.3.Doc](#)

Report of the Chairperson of the IOC
Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (2021)

174. The Chair of the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group, Prof. Karim Hilmi, introduced this item.

Dec.A-31/4.3

Follow-up to Resolution EC-53/2 on Review and Update of the Rules of Procedure to Adapt them to Online Meetings and Guidelines for Reporting on in-kind Contributions

The Assembly,

1. Having examined document IOC/A-31/4.3.Doc,
2. Takes note of the document IOC/A-31/4.3.Doc subject to further examination by the Financial Committee with a view of formulating a draft resolution for discussion and adoption in plenary.

175. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

4.4. REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE
[Statutes Art. 1.2]

176. The Chair of the Financial Committee, Prof. Karim Hilmi, 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 statutory ones foreseen in the [Rule of Procedure 8.1\(c\)](#).

177. The Assembly expressed its high appreciation to the Chair of the Financial Committee Prof. Karim Hilmi, for his effective and efficient way of leading the work of the Financial Committee in a truly inclusive and collegial spirit. Once again, this constructive approach allowed the Committee to complete its expanded and challenging mandate in a very limited period of time.

Draft Resolution A-31/[4.4]

Submitted by Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Madagascar, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Russian Federation, Turkey, UK, and USA.

Governance, programming and budgeting matters of the Commission

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

1. **Having examined** documents:
 - (i) [IOC/A-31/3.2.Doc\(2\)](#) – Report on 2020–2021 (40 C/5) budget implementation as at 31 December 2020,
 - (ii) [IOC/A-31/3.2.Doc\(3\)](#) – Financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2020 and Forecast for 2021,
 - (iii) [IOC/A-31/4.1.Doc](#) – Draft IOC Medium Term Strategy for 2022–2029 (41 C/4),
 - (iv) [IOC/A-31/4.2.Doc](#) – Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (41 C/5) – First Biennium 2022–2023,

- (v) [IOC/A-31/4.3.Doc](#) – Report of the Chairperson of the IOC Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (2021),

**I – 2020–2021 budget implementation as at 31 December 2020
and Financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2020 and
Forecast for 2021**

2. **Confirms** that the IOC workplans for 2020–2021, as reported in IOC/A-31/3.2.Doc(2), have been implemented in accordance with the budgetary allocations approved by the IOC Assembly at its 30th session ([IOC-XXX/2 Annex 9](#)) through [Resolution XXX-3](#);
3. **Notes** the slightly lower than usual implementation rate in the first year of the 2020–2021 biennium, due to the working conditions under the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the Secretariat’s intention to fully implement the biennial programme of work by the end of 2021;
4. **Further notes** that as at 31 December 2020, the extrabudgetary resource mobilisation targets set for the 2020–2021 biennium have been achieved to the level of 76% overall, but with considerable variance between the Commission’s Functions;
5. **Acknowledges** the information on the financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2020 and Forecast for 2021 as provided in [IOC/A-31/3.2.Doc\(3\)](#);
6. **Approves** the adjustments to the 2020–2021 budgetary appropriations as proposed in Table 1 of [IOC/A-31/3.2.Doc\(3\)](#);
7. **Thanks** Member States who have already contributed or committed to contributing extrabudgetary funds for the 2020–2021 programme implementation;
8. **Encourages** all Member States to provide voluntary contributions to ensure full achievement of the collectively agreed extrabudgetary resource mobilization targets for 2020–2021, preferably to the IOC Special Account;
9. **Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to continue efforts to obtain further voluntary contributions, including from private sector donors and other partners and to achieve full implementation of the IOC’s programmatic targets for 2020–2021;

I. Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029

10. **Welcomes** the revisions and improvements introduced by the Secretariat in the IOC’s Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029, in response to the recommendations of the IOC Executive Council at its 53rd session through [Resolution EC-53/2](#);
11. **Endorses** the IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 as contained in [IOC/A-31/4.1.Doc\(1\)](#);
- or
12. **Endorses** the IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 with the amendments to [IOC/A-31/4.1.Doc\(1\)](#) as contained in Annex I to this Resolution;

II.

III. Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025

13. **Expresses its appreciation** to the IOC Secretariat for the proposal contained in

[IOC/A-31/4.2.Doc](#) as consistent with the guiding principles set out in [Resolution EC-53/2](#) and the high level objectives defined in the Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029;

14. **Takes note** of the Executive Secretary’s programmatic choices, while also expressing concern regarding the decrease in the regular programme budget for operations;
15. **Highlights** the importance of ensuring that the IOC has the adequate strategy and the necessary resources, both in terms of regular programme budget and voluntary contributions, to fulfil its role in the implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), hereafter the Ocean Decade;
16. **Invites** the Director-General of UNESCO to:
 - (i) continue every effort to enhance the resources available to the IOC in the 41 C/5, to enable the IOC to fulfil its increasing mandate and to address current and emerging priorities, including those related to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Ocean Decade;
 - (ii) ensure that the budgetary appropriation for the IOC approved in the 41 C/5 shall not be decreased by transfers of funds to other parts of UNESCO’s budget;
17. **Invites** IOC Member States to:
 - (i) continue to advocate to the Director-General of UNESCO and the Governing Bodies of UNESCO on the importance of the IOC as a body with functional autonomy within UNESCO, focusing in particular on the value that the IOC provides to UNESCO and to sustainable development;
 - (ii) support the reinforcement of the IOC in the consultation process for the UNESCO Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 (Draft 41 C/4) and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (Draft 41 C/5);
 - (iii) increase their voluntary contributions to support the IOC in the face of its increasing responsibilities, preferably to the IOC Special Account, as well as, *inter alia*, by providing in-kind support such as staff loans (either in-person or via telework arrangements) to the IOC Secretariat;
18. **Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to:
 - (i) keep the IOC Officers and Member States updated on the 41 C/5 adoption process by UNESCO;
 - (ii) following the approval of the 2022–2023 budget by the General Conference of UNESCO, develop the workplans based on the overall approach set out in [IOC/A-31/4.2.Doc](#);
 - (iii) support the work of the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (IFAG) by providing timely information on the relevant programming and budgetary planning process, in order to facilitate informed decision-making by Member States at the 55th session of the IOC Executive Council in 2022;

IV. Governance and Working Methods

19. **Recalling** that the IOC Assembly at its 30th session through [Resolution XXX-3](#) invited

the IFAG 'to continue reflecting on the best practices to further enhance the efficiency of the IOC Governing Bodies' meetings',

20. **Acknowledging** that the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need to review and possibly update the IOC's Rules of Procedure in order to align them with the prevailing United Nations' best practices facilitating informed and timely decision-making by IOC Member States,
21. **Noting** that the IOC Executive Council at its 53rd session through [Resolution EC-53/2](#) acknowledged the need to adapt the IOC's Rules of Procedure to on-line meetings,
22. **Welcomes** the information provided in the Report of the IFAG Chair (IOC/A-31/4.3.Doc) regarding the consultations held on this matter with the UNESCO Legal Advisor;
23. **Requests** the Executive Secretary to prepare, in consultation with the UNESCO Legal Advisor and IFAG, a preliminary proposal for the revision of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council aligned with the prevailing best practices for review and adoption by these two bodies, in accordance with the following timeline:
 - (i) the first draft of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council would be reviewed by the Executive Council at its 55th session in 2022;
 - (ii) draft Rules of Procedure of the Assembly would be presented for review and adoption by the Assembly at its 32nd session in 2023;
 - (iii) the Executive Council would hold an extraordinary session immediately following the 32nd session of the Assembly in order to adopt its Rules of Procedure;
24. **Agrees** that each governing body will adopt the recommendations on the working methods for a virtual session at the same time as the Rules of Procedure, following the practice of the UNESCO Executive Board.

178. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

4.5. ELECTIONS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE COMMISSION AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

[Statutes Art. 6. B.5 and 7; Annex I to the Rules of Procedure]

Information:

IOC/A-31/4.5.Inf(1)	Updated listing of the IOC electoral groups and listing of the distribution of seats on the Executive Council among the electoral groups
IOC/A-31/4.5.Inf(2)	List of candidates for Elections
IOC/A-31/4.5.NOM	Report of the Chair of the Nominations Committee

179. The Chair of the Nominations Committee reported on this item (IOC/A-31/4.5.NOM). *[to be completed]*

180. The membership of the Executive Council for the next intersessional period and the 31th session of the Assembly is given in Annex ____ to the present report.

4.5.1. Election of the Chairperson of the Commission

4.5.2. Election of the Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission

4.5.3. Election of the Members of the Executive Council

Dec. A-31/4.5.2

IOC Elections 2021

The Assembly,

I. Election of the Chair of the Commission

1. Taking note that:

(i)

(ii)

2. Elects _____ (country)

II. Election of the Vice-chairs of the Commission

3. Taking note that:

(i)

(ii)

4. Elects

- _____ (country) (Group 1)

- _____ (country) (Group 2)

- _____ (country) (Group 3)

- _____ (country) (Group 4)

- _____ (country) (Group 5)

III. Election of the Members of the Executive Council

5. Taking note that:

(i)

(ii)

6. Elects _____

4.6. 32ND SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY AND 55TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

[Statutes, Art. C.7; Rule of procedure 19.2; EC-LI/Dec.6.3; IOC-XXX/Dec.12.7]

181. Dr Ryabinin reminded the Assembly of the recommendations of the 54th session of the Executive Council, acting as the Steering Committee for this Assembly, on the dates and duration of the 55th session of the Council in 2022 and duration of the 32nd session of the Assembly in 2023.

182. The Executive Secretary also informed the Assembly of the main events/conferences that will need to be taken into account when choosing the dates for the next sessions [*to be completed*].

Dec. A-31/4.6

32nd session of the Assembly and 55th session of the Executive Council

The Assembly,

1. Recalling the recommendations of the Executive Council at its 54th session (Dec. EC-54/4),
2. Decides to hold:
 - (i) The 55th session of the Executive Council for [*number to be completed*] days in UNESCO Headquarters, Paris over the period of [*to be completed*],
 - (ii) The 32nd session of the Assembly for a duration of six [or days 6.5] plus one Ocean Science Day, at UNESCO Headquarters, over the period from _____ to _____ in June-July 2023, preceded by a one-day session of the Executive Council (56th session) acting as the steering committee of the Assembly.

183. The representatives of ___ 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: _____.

5. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND MODALITIES FOR THE FINALISATION OF THE REPORT
[EC-LII, Dec. 3.3]

184. The Chairperson thanked the Rapporteur Mr/Ms _____ from [country] for his/her excellent work in support of the work of the session.

185. The Chair of the Resolutions Committee reported to the Assembly on the work of the Committee during the session (Annex ___ to the present report).

186. The IOC Chair then invited the Executive Council to adopt, in plenary, the draft decisions that were still pending after discussion in plenary and ___ resolutions. Parts of the draft summary report of the discussions at the present session were presented to the Council in English only for information.

Dec. A-31/5

Adoption of Resolutions and Modalities for the finalisation of the Report

The Assembly,

1. Having considered the recommendations of the Executive Council at its 54th session (Dec. EC-54/3.1) on organization matters,
2. Adopts the decisions and ___ resolutions of the session;
3. Takes note of the draft summary report of the session; and

4. Requests the Executive Secretary to circulate the narrative part of the report to Member States in the four working languages of the Commission by 30 July 2021 at the latest for its adoption by correspondence by 15 September 2021.

6. CLOSURE

187. The Assembly met in plenary session during ___ days from ____, considered ___ items on its agenda and approved ___ decisions and ___ resolutions. The plenary meeting was supported by some ___ preparatory meetings and ___ information side meetings during the session. The Chair of the Commission closed the 30th Session of the Assembly at ___ on ___ 2019.