



IOC/INF-1400
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English only

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

INFORMATION NOTE
ON THE STRATEGIC EVALUATION OF THE IOC

Summary

This document is part of the background information supporting the Report of the Executive Secretary on the work accomplished since the previous session of the Assembly. It provides a brief update on the process of the Strategic Evaluation of the IOC carried out by UNESCO's Office of Internal Oversight. The final report will be presented to governing bodies of IOC and UNESCO later in 2021-2022,

Why a strategic evaluation of the IOC?

When the IOC was founded in 1960, just three billion people lived on Earth and climate change was a marginal issue for most people. Today, the global population has more than doubled, pressures on the ocean as a sustainable source of food and other resources are increasing and the ocean-climate nexus is clear. In this context, the need for effective and sustainable management of the ocean, underpinned by sound science, is more pressing than ever.

In 2017, the UN General Assembly declared the UN [Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#) (2021-2030). It entrusted IOC with designing and delivering the Decade to ensure that ocean science is indeed underpinning sustainable ocean management and the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) more broadly.

Fulfilling its mandate as trustee of the Ocean Decade, as well as delivering on a growing list of additional roles, in an oceanographic space that is both expanding and increasingly crowded, is the overarching challenge facing IOC and its parent body UNESCO.

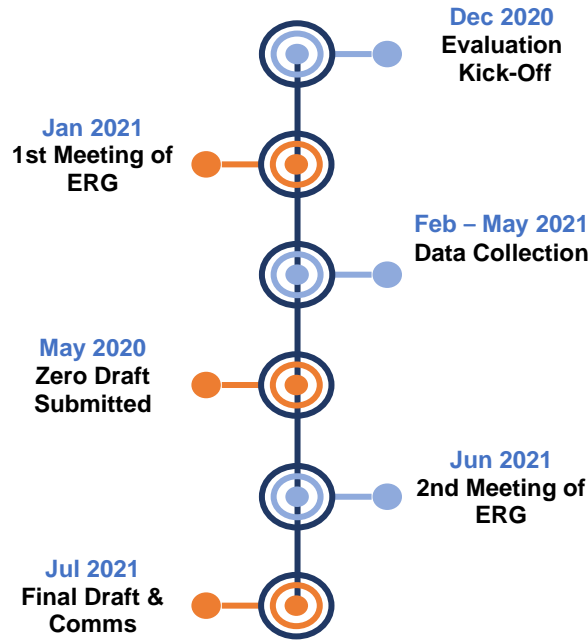
What are the objectives of the evaluation?

To meet this challenge, IOS-UNESCO commissioned an evaluation in December 2020 with four objectives, namely to:

- assess the strategic positioning of IOC within the UN system and the broader landscape of ocean-related actors and programmes
- identify the effectiveness of the Secretariat and IOC's overall contribution to Member States, including through regional delivery of IOC support
- assess different aspects of sustainability of IOC's activities
- review the engagement of IOC Member States in overall IOC governance mechanisms, and support to the Secretariat.

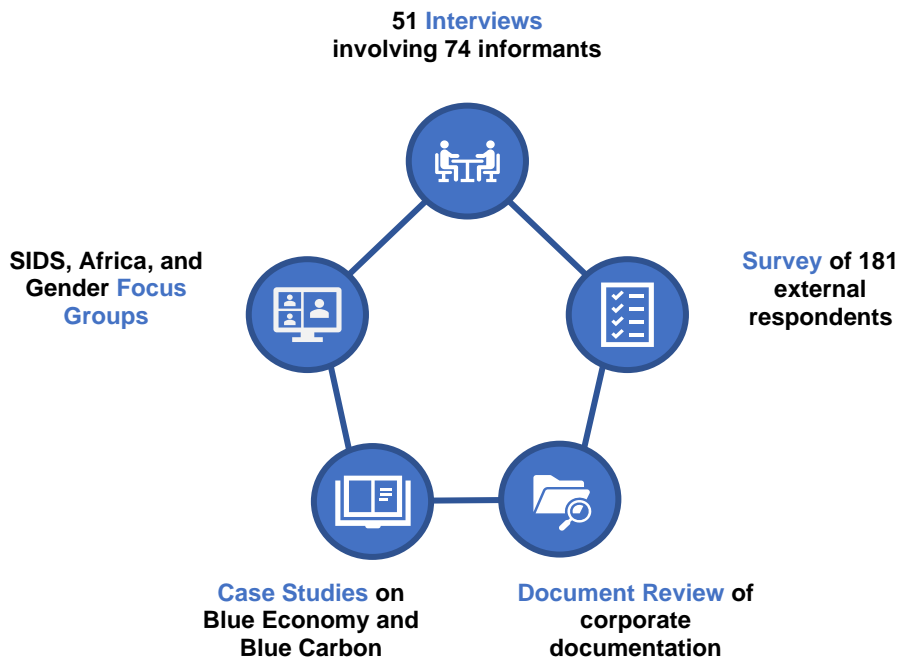
How was the evaluation carried out?

The evaluation took place between December 2020 and May 2021, following United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation norms and standards. An Evaluation Reference Group comprising senior oceanographic experts from around the world provided guidance for the evaluation team.



What data did the evaluation collect?

To respond to the evaluation objectives, the evaluation collected data using 5 different instruments:



What emerging issues has the evaluation identified?

Perspectives shared via interviews, focus groups, and the survey, supplemented by information from the documentary review, have highlighted the following issues as avenues for further exploration:

- connecting to senior decisionmakers in Member States

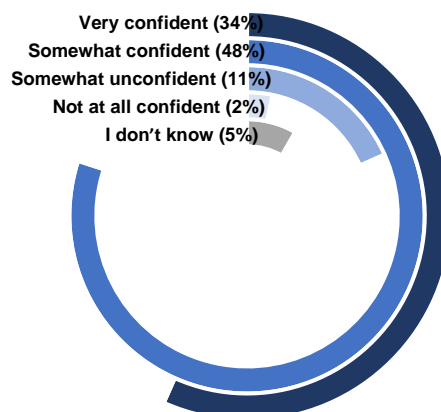
“What are the main barriers that impede policymakers from using ocean science in their decision-making?”



Source: Evaluation survey

- communicating the value of ocean science
- raising the profile of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)

“How confident are you in IOC's capability to ensure the Decade makes a difference?”

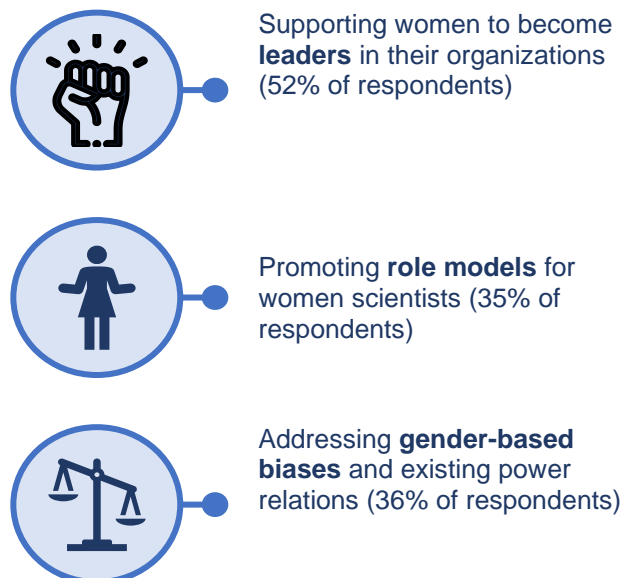


Source: Evaluation survey

- fostering partnerships within the UN System and externally
- attracting third-party funding
- raising the profile of oceans beyond IOC's immediate constituency
- increasing linkages between IOC's own regional presence and other regional organizations
- joining up initiatives between and within Member States as well as within IOC
- improving outcomes in the area of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

*“In your view, what are the top **THREE** actions that could help improve the gender balance of the ocean science sector?”*

Source: Evaluation survey



Next steps

- Finalisation of the report during June 2021
- Management response and quality assurance by mid-July 2021
- Final draft of the report by end-July
- Circulation and presentation of the final report to governing bodies of IOC and UNESCO later in 2021-2022