



**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)**

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Item 3.5.6 of the Provisional Agenda

**THE CASE FOR A NEW GOVERNANCE FOR THE IOC REGIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE CENTRAL INDIAN OCEAN (IOCINDIO)**

**A PROPOSAL FOR CHANGING THE STATUS OF IOCINDIO IN A
SUB-COMMISSION OF IOC FOR THE INDIAN OCEAN (IOCIO)**

Summary

In April 2020, Dr M. A. Atmanand, Chairman of the IOC Regional Committee of the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO), pursuant to IOC Assembly Decision IOC-XXX/3.3.4 (Paris, 26 June–4 July 2019), submitted to the Council a document on the proposal for transformation of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission. Originated by Dr. Atmanand in his capacity as the IOCINDIO Chair as requested by the above Assembly Decision, the document received inputs and support from IOCINDIO Officers including the Vice-chairpersons, Dr. Faiza Al-Yamani, (Kuwait), Dr Mohammad Muslem Uddin (Bangladesh); and IOC Vice-Chairperson, Electoral Group IV. Satish S. C. Sheno. The document was intended to be presented to the Council in a dedicated agenda item.

Upon its receipt by the IOC Secretariat, the document was discussed during a virtual meeting involving the IOCINDIO Officers, the IOC Chair Ariel Troisi, the Executive Secretary, and senior members of IOC Secretariat. The group agreed that a large-scale transformation of an IOC primary subsidiary body is not just a formal exercise. The IOC needs a vibrant body for the Indian Ocean. It was therefore decided to initiate a broad and inclusive consultation on this subject among IOC Member States, especially all those with interest in the Indian Ocean.

This document is an updated version the original submission by the IOCINDIO Chair, Dr Atmanand.

The Executive Secretary of the IOC, in his Report to the 53rd Session of the Executive Council, reported on the progress of the IOCINDIO transformation process.

A summary of the consultations meeting, which was held online, 16 February 2021, provided as an information document to the Assembly.

The proposed decision is indicated in Second Revised the Action Paper IOC/A-31/AP rev 2. as Dec. A-31/3.5.6.

Introduction

1. The IOC Assembly at its 30th session (UNESCO, Paris, 26 June–4 July 2019) took note of the recommendation put before it by IOCINDIO at its 7th session (Hyderabad, India, 31 May–1 June 2019) to change the status of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean into an IOC Sub-commission. By Assembly decision IOC-XXX/3.3.4, the IOCINDIO Chair was requested to prepare, with the help of the IOC Secretariat, a proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO that would contain the mission, the objectives, terms of references, budgetary implications, secretarial arrangements and other necessary provisions for the consideration of the IOC Executive Council in 2020.

Historical background

2. The IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO) was established by IOC Resolution XII-14 of the IOC Assembly in 1982.

3. The current membership of IOCINDIO is the following: Australia, Bangladesh, France, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom.

4. The Regional Committee coordinates and facilitates the development and implementation of IOC activities in the Central Indian Ocean region. The focus of the Committee is on enhancing national capabilities in marine science and ocean services through cooperation between the Member States from the region and with those from other regions.

5. The Terms of Reference of the Committee with no sunset date include the following objectives:

- (i) Plan, promote and co-ordinate the implementation of co-operative regional marine scientific projects, ocean services and supporting Training Education and Mutual Assistance (TEMA) activities of direct interest to its Member States and to meet specific regional needs.
- (ii) Assist in the implementation of regional components of the IOC's global ocean science programmes and ocean services.
- (iii) Facilitate the transfer of scientific knowledge and technology in the field of marine research and related ocean services, especially to the developing countries of the IOCINDIO region;
- (iv) Facilitate the exchange of oceanographic data and information within and outside of the region;
- (v) Identify the needs for training, education, and mutual assistance in the marine sciences among its Member States.

6. Although IOCINDIO was established in 1982, the first intergovernmental session was held six years later (Islamabad, Pakistan, 3–7 July 1988). The seven IOCINDIO sessions took place at irregular intervals from 1988 to 2005 with a big gap between 2005 and 2016 while the IOC regional subsidiary bodies are expected to meet every two or three years and report to the subsequent IOC Assembly or Executive Council.

Session	Location/dates	MSs attending (noting current MSs first and observers in italics)
1	Islamabad, Pakistan, 3-7 July 1988	Bangladesh, France, India, I.R. Iran, Kuwait, Maldives, Mauritius, Oman, Pakistan, UK, and <i>Canada, Germany, Kenya, Turkey, USA, USSR</i> (15)
2	Goa, India,	Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, I.R. Iran, Kuwait, Maldives, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, and <i>Canada, Germany, Kenya, The</i>

Session	Location/dates	MSs attending (noting current MSs first and observers in italics)
	20-22 Nov. 1996	<i>Netherlands</i> (14)
3	Tehran, Iran, 21-23 Feb. 2000	Bangladesh, India, I.R. Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Thailand (7)
4	Colombo, Sri Lanka, 8-10 Dec. 2005	Australia, Bangladesh, India, I.R. Iran, Kuwait, Maldives, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and <i>Canada</i> (11)
5	Chennai, India, 25-27 April 2016	Bangladesh, India, I.R. Iran, Kuwait, Thailand, UK (6)
6	Kuwait City, Kuwait, 24-25 May 2017	Bangladesh, India, I.R. Iran, Kuwait, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, UK (7)
7	Hyderabad, India, 31 May –1 June 2019	Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Australia, UK, with observers from Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa. (11)
8	Online hosted by Iran, 17-19 May, 2021	7. Australia, Bangladesh, France, India, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Maldives, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Ghana, Morocco, Mexico, Yemen, USA, South Africa.

Table 1. List of intergovernmental sessions of IOCINDIO

Root causes of the unsustainability of IOCINDIO with subsequent Member States responsive actions

8. The lack of regional secretariat has been identified as a hindrance to the development of IOCINDIO.

9. The lack of a regional secretariat with a full time IOC staff and regular budget funding for operations and activities have been a generic and common hindrance to the development of IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies, more particularly with a greater impact for the Regional Committees compared to the Sub-Commissions. The development of both the IOC Regional Committee for the Eastern and Central Atlantic (IOCEA) and the IOC Regional Committee for the Central and Western Indian Ocean (IOCWIO) is a case in point. Owing to the active support of African Member States, these two dormant Committees were dissolved and merged to form a single IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Islands (IOCAFRICA) with a supportive full time IOC staff heading a regional secretariat with seed funds for operations and activities from the IOC regular budget. The other two Sub Commissions, respectively, the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC) and the IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (IOCARIBE) went through a similar malaise over a long period for the same reason.

10. It was only when the IOC Governing Bodies have taken the appropriate measures with regard to their organizational structure and strategic approach, as well as an enhanced Regional Secretariat support that these three IOC Sub Commissions were able to perform their relevant basic functions.

11. The change of status of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission IOCINDIO into a Sub commission of the IOC for the Indian Ocean was proposed for the first time in July 2008 in the [Letter](#) to the IOC Chair and Executive Secretary by IOC Vice-Chair of Group 4 (Dr Neville Smith) entitled: **“Toward an Indian Ocean Sub-Commission”**. The letter proposed a number of follow-up steps towards that transformation including a desktop study.

12. Based on this first proposal and taking into consideration the inactive status of the Committee, severely contrasting with the importance and opportunities of the Indian Ocean, the IOC Member States expressed concerns and raised a strong interest for re-activating IOCINDIO through Resolution XXV-2 at the 25th Session of the Assembly in June 2009.

13. With the temporary designation in 2014 of the IOC Regional Liaison Officer at Headquarters as the part-time Technical Secretary and Coordinator for the reactivation of the IOCINDIO, the IOC Secretariat initiated a series of informal meetings at the margins of the IOC governing bodies' sessions with interested Member States, leading to a consensus for the current reactivation of the Committee. Subsequently, the IOC [Circular Letter 2546](#) of October 2014 called upon Member States to support the revitalization of the IOCINDIO.

14. As a result of this successful consultative process, the Government of India generously hosted the long overdue Fifth Session of the Committee (IOCINDIO-V) in Chennai (India) from 25 to 27 April 2016. A new bureau of officers was elected, giving the current impetus to the regional committee.

15. Currently, despite the huge efforts of Member States in the region and the Officers, leading to a significant progress with the reactivated IOCINDIO now back on track, the absence of a dedicated Regional Secretariat with a full time staff based in the region remains an impediment for the full development and operations of the IOC programmes in the Indian Ocean. The allocated regular budget for activities of IOCINDIO is USD 20K for Ocean Management and Governance (IOC Medium Term Strategy Function E) and USD 20K for Capacity Development (Function F). The overall extrabudgetary target of IOCINDIO is currently USD 115K.

16. The IOC Regional Liaison Officer serves as the Technical Secretary of IOCINDIO.

17. Therefore, based on the above lessons learnt for all IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies, the same causes leading to the same effect and because all existing sub-commissions were first established as Regional Committees or as an "Association" (pre-existing IOCARIBE) and later changed their status into Sub-Commission with a dedicated IOC Regional Secretariat; it becomes very clear that there would be no future for the reactivated IOCINDIO without the change of its status from a Regional Committee to a Sub-Commission with dedicated Regional Secretariat and subsequent seed funding for operations and activities.

18. To some extent, the evolution of the existing Sub-Commissions is, in a way; the inspiration for the proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO into a Sub Commission of the IOC for the Indian Ocean (IOCINDO).

19. The United Nations Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) Workshop for the Indian Ocean and ROPME area organised by IOCINDIO in January 2020 is also a vibrant justification for the reinforcement of the IOCINDIO into a Sub-Commission. In fact, this dedicated Regional Planning Workshop for the Northern/Central Indian Ocean countries as well as ROPME Sea Area towards the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) was attended by approximately 100 participants including from IOCINDIO Member States as Australia, Bangladesh, India, Kuwait, Maldives, Saudi Arabia and UK, and some other countries, notably African countries from the IOCAFRICA. It discussed the Ocean Decade societal outcomes and recommended some activities including:

- (i) A Regional Framework for Coastal Vulnerability towards the Safety, Security and Sustainable Development of Member States in the Indian Ocean
- (ii) Monitoring and management of marine litter and research on micro plastics
- (iii) Reinforcing the Tsunami Early Warning in the Indian Ocean
- (iv) Inventory of knowledge gaps in existing programmes, studies and research 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 Ocean Decade Action Plan in the Indian Ocean region
- (vi) Establishment of
 - a. an Indian Ocean Youth Leadership Network of Ocean, Climate and Atmospheric Sciences
 - b. an Indian Ocean Leadership Mentoring Network
 - c. a workshop follow up coordinating experts group composed of chairs and rapporteurs from the workshop
- (vii) Reinforcing IOCINDIO-IOCAFRICA cooperation with joint IOCINDIO-IOCAFRICA Experts Team, 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.

The proposed new governance for the IOC Regional Subsidiary Body in the Indian Ocean: The Sub-Commission of IOC for the Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO)

Rationale and justification of the importance of the Indian Ocean to the global ocean and to the IOC-UNESCO

20. The proposed Sub-Commission is a fitting and appropriate measure as a logical evolution of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean in accord with the strong community feeling among Indian Ocean countries with substantial national investments in the IOC programmes. It is also timely with the 60th Anniversary of the IOC engaged in the preparation and further implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) which must have relevant IOC responding fully operational intergovernmental body in this fascinating region. Thus, it is expected that the proposed Sub-Commission shall be the leading sustained intergovernmental body, harvesting the recent progress of the IOCINDIO. It is worth noting that even with a part time Secretariat support and a small regular budget, IOCINDIO has shown its strength as the vital IOC intergovernmental body in the region, which mobilized in a very short period of time, Member States together with international, regional and national interested partners and organized the Regional Planning Workshop for the Northern/Central Indian Ocean countries as well as ROPME Sea Area towards the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) in Chennai in India, 8-10 January 2020. No other stakeholder, nor mechanism stood up in the region to accomplish this imperative unifying activity towards the preparation of the Decade.

21. There are indeed most favourable conditions for raising the voice of IOC in the Indian Ocean, full of opportunities and challenges with incredible engagement, commitments and investments of Member States in the IOC programmes.

Dynamic Population of IOCINDIO Member States countries

22. The population of IOCINDIO Member States countries is about 2525 million, a third of the global world population of 7715 million. The population of the proposed Sub-Commission of IOC for the Indian Ocean that will encompass all the Member States of the entire Indian Ocean involving the current IOCINDIO Member States together with the Indian Ocean Rim countries, South Asia, relevant African and SIDS Member States would be close to the half of the global world populations (see table below).

N0	Country Member States	Populations (Millions)
1	Australia	25.1
2	Bangladesh	168.1
3	India	1,368.7
4	Indonesia	269.5
5	Iran	82.8
6	Iraq	40.4

NO	Country Member States	Populations (Millions)
7	Kuwait	4.2
8	United Kingdom	67.0
9	Sri Lanka	21.0
10	Thailand	69.3
11	United Arab Emirates	9.7
12	France	65.5
13	Malaysia	32.5
14	Maldives	0.5
15	Myanmar	54.3
16	Oman	5.0
17	Pakistan	204.6
18	Qatar	2.7
19	Saudi Arabia	34.1

Table 2. Population of Member States countries of IOCINDIO (Source: *UN/UNFPA REPORT: State of world population 2019: "Unfinished business - the pursuit of rights and choices for all"*)

IOCINDIO Member States supporting regular intergovernmental Sessions of the Committee since 2016 as never in the past.

23. Despite the part time IOC staff support at headquarters and limited regular budgetary resources compared to the IOC Sub-Commissions as Regional Subsidiary Bodies, it is particularly encouraging to see the increased efforts and contributions of Member States in the region since 2009. The 5th session in 2016 fast-tracked the re-activation of IOCINDIO leading to unprecedented regular intergovernmental sessions, each preceded with high level international scientific and technical workshops of experts.

24. This unprecedented consistency of regular and consecutive sessions was possible because IOCINDIO Members States, national and regional organizations took charge of the expenses associated with the sessions including, local logistics with secretariat support and full board accommodation for participants, notably India for IOCINDIO-V and IOCINDIO-VII; and Kuwait for IOCINDIO-VI with a budget more than US\$100,000.

25. India: The National Institute of Ocean Technology in Chennai, the UNESCO Category 2 Centre in Operational Oceanography and the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services of the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India provided significant in-kind contributions for the organization of the Regional Planning Workshop for the Northern/Central Indian Ocean countries as well as ROPME Sea Area towards the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) in Chennai in India, 8-10 January 2020 with the total amount of sixty thousand five hundred American dollars (US\$60,500).

26. Kuwait: Several national and regional institutions joined forces to sponsor the IOCINDIO-VI session and the preceding workshop in Kuwait amounting eighty-eight thousand five Hundred Five (88,505) US dollars. The main sponsors were the following: the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME).

Direct contributions of the IOCINDIO Member States to the IOC Programmes

27. In terms of ocean science and observations technology, innovation, infrastructures and capacities, the Indian Ocean is a mixture of both well-advanced and least-developed countries patterning respectively to the groups of (i) the seven richest countries (G7); (ii) economies in transition and (iii) the seventy-seven group (G77). Furthermore, the IOCINDIO is the only IOC Regional Subsidiary Body hosting the only two UNESCO Category-2 centres in ocean science research and operational oceanography, respectively in Iran and India. Recently, two UNESCO Chairs were established in the region, respectively, the UNESCO Chair on Seismic and Tsunami Hazards Studies – Earthquakes in Oman and at the Qatar University in Qatar, the UNESCO Chair

in Marine Science: - Oceanography of the Arabian Gulf with particular reference to EEZ of Qatar. These ocean science research and academic institutions are entirely funded by the Indian Ocean host Member States.

28. Unquestionably, the Indian Ocean is the area of play for international cooperation with significant amounts of funding for international, regional and national innovative cooperation in ocean science, observations and services including the following programmes and frameworks supported by IOCINDIO Member States:

- The Second International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE-2) with Joint Programme Office nodes in Perth (Australia) and Hyderabad (India);
- The Decade of African Seas and Oceans (2015–2025) as a framework for the African contribution to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030);
- The Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System for the Indian Ocean (ICG/IOTWS) with regional accredited Tsunami early warning centre at the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) in Hyderabad, Joint Australian Tsunami Warning Centre in Melbourne, and Indonesian Tsunami Early Warning Centre in Jakarta;
- To maintain the tsunami early warning system, Government of India spends approximately one hundred twenty (120) millions USD per year including the maintenance of sea level gauges and tsunami buoys in the Indian Ocean and also contributes one 1.2 million USD per year to support the training courses, maintenance and upkeep of the International Training Centre of operational oceanography (ITCOcean), a UNESCO Category 2 Centre at INCOIS in Hyderabad;
- Islamic Republic of Iran contributes US\$500 K for the regional and international activities of the UNESCO Category 2 Centre;
- The Indian Ocean Observing System;
- The International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange;
- The Integrated Coastal Area Management;
- The IOC Capacity Development Strategy;
- The Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/IOTMWS). It is underpinned by three Tsunami Service Providers in Canberra-Melbourne (Australia), Hyderabad (India) and Jakarta (Indonesia), which produce tsunami information products to 25 countries bordering the Indian Ocean. The Secretariat of the ICG/IOTMWS is based in Perth and funded/hosted by the Government of Australia. The Indian Ocean Tsunami Information Centre (IOTIC) is based in Jakarta hosted and supported by the Government of Indonesia;
- The Indian Ocean GOOS (IOGOOS), GOOS Africa, and SEAGOOS, which are GOOS Regional Alliance for the Indian Ocean or a part of the Indian Ocean;
- Perth Programme Office (PPO) facilitating the some alliances that integrate thematically and programmatically with IOGOOS and IIOE-2 (hosted at INCOIS, Hyderabad, India), including the Sustained Indian Ocean Biogeochemistry and Ecosystem Research (SIBER) of IOGOOS/IMBeR; and the Indian Ocean Observing System (IndOOS) Resources Forum (IRF) of IOGOOS;
- Two UNESCO Category-2 Centres in ocean science research and operational oceanography, respectively in Iran and India;

- Four UNESCO Chairs in Oman, Qatar, Mozambique, and Tanzania dedicated to oceanography and capacity development;
- IOC OceanTeacher Global Academy (OTGA) Regional and/or Specialised Training Centres in Mozambique, Kenya, India, Malaysia and Indonesia;
- CORDEX, coordinated by the ESSO-IITM, India and GEOTRACERS coordinated by CSIR-NIO, India;
- WESTPAC Regional Training and Research Centres, respectively on Ocean Dynamics and Climate (RTRC-ODC, China), and Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health (RTRC-MarBEST, Indonesia) with some of their trainees received from the Western Pacific/ Indian Ocean countries;
- Engagement and technical support activities through IW:Learn with established GEF-funded Large Marine Ecosystems (LME) projects for the Bay of Bengal LME, and for the Agulhas and Somali Current LME;
- Marine Spatial Planning and Blue Economy technical and capacity development support (national and regional) activities;
- The IOC Ocean InfoHub project (Africa region);
- The IODE/Ocean Biodiversity Information System (OBIS) nodes active in the Indian Ocean (e.g. Kenya, Islamic Republic of Iran, India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia), serving as global open-access data and information clearing-house on marine biodiversity to support the development of biological indicators (biological Essential Ocean Variables) and reporting on the status and trends of ocean health; and
- The IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean, the initiator of this proposal.

29. A wide array of activities in the Indian Ocean also take place under the IOCAFRICA and WESTPAC.

30. There is relevant focus in the regional work of the IOC-cosponsored World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) and its CLIVAR project with CLIVAR/IOC-GOOS Indian Ocean Region Panel, the Grand Challenge “Regional Sea-level Change and Coastal Impacts”, the suite of WCRP regional activities and regional downscaling of climate predictions and projections (which does not include, however, a climate modelling grid over the Indian Ocean region).

31. There are regional and national research programs that are external to IOC but of high importance and relevance for IOC interests in the Indian Ocean, including:

- Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA);
- the South Asian Cooperative Environment Programme and the South Asian Seas Programme (SACEP/SASP);
- the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME);
- the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA);
- The Indian Ocean Observing System (IndOOS-2), including its important deep ocean mooring component known as RAMA: *Research Moored Array for African-Asian-Australian Monsoon Analysis and Prediction*, sponsored by many constituents represented within IOGOOS, IORP, SIBER and IRF;
- the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), with which IOC is in process of completing an MoU on cooperation;

- the WMO Regional Association (RA) RA I Tropical Cyclone Committee for the South-West Indian Ocean and RA V Tropical Cyclone Committee for the South Pacific and South-East Indian Ocean;
- The Indian Ocean Commission (Commission de l'Océan Indien, COI) ;
- Coastal Oceans Research and Development – Indian Ocean (CORDIO), East Africa;
- Global Island Partnership of IUCN;
- Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, FAO;
- Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement;
- South African Environment Observation Network (SAEON), linked with GRAs;
- The 79 Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) in the Indian Ocean, defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- Several potential exploration areas in the Indian Ocean under the International Seabed Authority rich with polymetallic nodules and polymetallic sulphides.

32. The above list is not exhaustive. In particular, it does not include multiple activities and organizations active in the Southern Ocean or close to the Antarctic coast.

33. The UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, 2021-2030, to be coordinated by IOC on the global scale, offers a unique opportunity to develop meaningful cooperation in the Indian Ocean basin. A call for Decade Action of 15 October 2020 and subsequent calls will offer an additional platform for designing IOC and partners' activities in the Indian Ocean region.

34. There are as well other international global and regional Frameworks and programmes in the Indian Ocean:

- The 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals
- Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway)
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
- The Paris Climate Agreement
- The Bay of Bengal Intergovernmental Programme
- The Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) program
- The Research Moored Array for African-Asian-Australian Monsoon Analysis and Prediction (RAMA) sponsored by Japan, India, Indonesia, China, the USA, and the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) program
- The Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA).

35. Information on direct voluntary contributions to the IOC from Member States and partners of the Indian Ocean region can be found in the statutory financial reports provided to IOC Governing Bodies. The latest documents available for consultations are: Report on 2020–2021 (40 C/5) budget implementation as at 31 December 2020 ([IOC/A-31/3.2.Doc\(2\)](#)) and Financial Situation of the IOC Special Account at year-end 2020 and Forecast for 2021 ([IOC/A-31/3.2.Doc\(3\)](#))

36. When it will be established, the Sub-Commission will be in a position to increase the level of contributions of existing and new partners inside and outside the region based on ongoing international joint ventures with significant resources. The Sub-Commission will also build on the ongoing cooperation with the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Islands (IOCAFRICA) as

well as with the IOC Sub commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC). The three Sub-Commissions IOCINDIO, IOCAFRICA and WESTPAC with overlapping membership will reinforce inter-regional cooperation to better serve the IOC programmes in the Indian Ocean.

Proposed Terms of Reference of the IOC Sub Commission for the Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO)

Mission

37. The IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO) is a primary intergovernmental subsidiary body of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO responsible for the promotion of regional and international cooperation, and the development and coordination of the Commission's marine scientific and research programmes, the ocean services, the ocean observing systems, data and information management, capacity development and related activities in the region by taking into account the specific interests and priorities of Member States in the Indian Ocean¹. Building on the legacy of the Regional Committee, the IOC Sub-commission for the Indian Ocean shall fully and efficiently reinforce and increase the IOC programmes deliveries and benefits to Member States and people in the entire Indian Ocean basin. The new Sub-commission would offer Member States a wider scope for their participation in international and regional activities according to their interests.²

Objectives

38. The Sub-Commission shall:

- (a) Promote regional and international cooperation and coordinate programmes, projects and other activities adopted by governing bodies of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO among the interested Member States and the marine scientific community as necessary, and make, if appropriate, recommendations to parent body to this effect;
- (b) Prepare a detailed plan of action for implementation of the adopted programmes, projects and other activities;
- (c) Define regional problems, set priorities and look for solutions, which call for regional and international cooperation, and coordinate ocean and coastal related activities;
- (d) Stimulate cooperation with relevant organizations, agencies, and institutions with the view to ensuring complementarity;
- (e) Cooperate with other regional subsidiary bodies of the IOC on relevant matters of common interest, in particular the IOCAFRICA and WESTPAC owing to the overlapping of geographic coverage; and
- (f) Support and lead the development and implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) in the Indian Ocean.

Structure

39. The key components of the structure of the Sub-Commission include:

- (i) Member States
- (ii) Bureau of officers
- (iii) Regional Secretariat

² A smaller list of coordinated or supervised activities under the mission statement may be suggested because it is not desirable to have an additional layer of supervision, e.g. for the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System. It may be useful to formulate the general mission and rather general description of duties that would be somewhat similar for all regional bodies of IOC.

- (iv) Thematic working groups or task teams, which will address specific oceanographic issues of sub-regional, regional or international concerns.

Membership and Composition

40. Membership of the Sub-Commission is according to established IOC Guidelines for the Structure and Responsibilities of the Subsidiary Bodies of the Commission. The Sub-Commission of the IOC for the Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO) may encompass the current Member States of the IOCINDIO and, as appropriate, some IOC Member States of the Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Islands States (IOCAFRICA), of the Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC) based on the established IOC Guidelines, and any other Member States of the IOC.

41. IOCINDIO Member States will be required to nominate national focal points.

Officers of the Sub-Commission

42. The Bureau of the Sub-Commission comprises the Chair and three Vice-chairs elected by the Sub-Commission and shall serve in accordance with the Guidelines for Structure and Responsibilities of the Subsidiary Bodies of the IOC.

Regional Secretariat for the Sub-Commission

43. The Government of India has made a kind offer at the recent IOCINDIO-VIII Session, 17-19 May, 2021 to host the interim Secretariat in support of the new Sub-Commission at the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS of the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India).

44. The IOCINDIO-VIII Session warmly welcomed the generous offer of the Government of India and expressed its deep gratitude and appreciation to India. The Intergovernmental Session recommended that the Assembly accept this interim arrangement until the time when the IOC Secretariat will provide a dedicated Secretariat to the new Sub Commission as it is the case for the existing IOC Regional Sub commissions, such as IOCAFRICA, IOCARIBE and WESTPAC. To this end, all options should be explored for a suitable Secretariat of the IOCINDIO based on the current practices at the IOC with existing IOC Sub Commissions.

45. The interim regional secretariat in support of IOCINDIO established by the Government of India, would support the Technical Coordinator of IOCINDIO in coordinating the implementation of all programmes and activities of IOCINDIO, in consultation with relevant stakeholders and partners. As is the case with the Government of Indonesia for the Indian Ocean Tsunami Information Centre, the terms of reference of such an interim secretariat will be subject to a specific agreement to be developed and brought to the attention of the IOC Executive Council at its 55th session.

Programme and budget

46. The recommendation is that the IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean shall be funded from the IOC regular budget and voluntary (extra budgetary) contributions, consistently with the funding provided for the Sub-Commissions. The Sub-Commission should actively explore the opportunities for raising additional resources for implementation of its programmes.