



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION  
COMMISSION OCÉANOGRAPHIQUE INTERGOUVERNEMENTALE  
COMISIÓN OCEANOGRÁFICA INTERGUBERNAMENTAL  
МЕЖПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВЕННАЯ ОКЕАНОГРАФИЧЕСКАЯ КОМИССИЯ

اللجنة الدولية الحكومية لعلوم المحيطات

政府间海洋学委员会

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**IOC Circular Letter No 2872**  
(also available in French)

IOC/VR/YX/JA/pbo  
4 January 2022

**To :** Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with the IOC  
Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States  
Chair of IOC, Vice-Chairs, Chairs of IOCAFRICA, IOCINDIO, and WESTPAC

**cc. :** National Commissions for UNESCO of IOC Member States

**Subject: Invitation to Member States to nominate members of the open-ended intersessional Working Group on the Status of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO)**

By this letter, I wish to recall that the IOC Assembly at its thirty-first Session, online (UNESCO, Paris, 14–25 June 2021), discussed the proposal of IOCINDIO Chair Rear Admiral (Retd) Khurshed Alam to change the status of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission. That proposal was based on a corresponding Recommendation of IOCINDIO at its 8th Session, which was reflected in the Action Paper ([IOC/A-31/AP\\_rev2](#)) for the Assembly. The related Assembly working document is [IOC/A-31/3.5.6.Doc](#). Both documents are available in the four working languages of the Commission.

After the initial discussion of the above proposal in the plenary meeting of the Assembly, then in three meetings of a sessional dedicated working group and the concluding discussion in plenary meeting, the Assembly adopted IOC Decision A-31/3.5.6. The Revised Summary Report of the IOC 31st Assembly is available [online](#) and contains a summary of the item discussion and the decision. For the ease of use the decision is also given in the Annex 1 to this circular letter.

The time is now to implement the decision. By this circular letter, I am cordially inviting IOC Member States to nominate their representatives to the open-ended intersessional Working Group on the Status of IOCINDIO.

The Working Group will be chaired by IOC Chair Captain Ariel Troisi and IOCINDIO Chair Rear Admiral (Retd) Khurshed Alam. The draft Terms of Reference of the Working Group are given in Annex 2 to the circular letter. Please, kindly consider gender balance in your nominations of Working Group members.

While IOC Member States bordering the Indian Ocean are directly concerned by this circular letter, all IOC Member States with interest in the Indian Ocean are invited to participate in and contribute

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to the work of the Group. The IOCAFRICA Chair and WESTPAC Chairs are also cordially asked to either participate in the working group themselves or send names of their appointees.

Please kindly send names of your national representatives to the Working Group to the IOCINDIO Secretary Mr Justin Ahanhanzo at (j.ahanhanzo@unesco.org), with a copy to IOC Executive Secretary (v.ryabinin@unesco.org) and Mrs Elena Iasyreva (e.iasyreva@unesco.org) by 25 January 2022.

The subsequent steps will include a series of meetings of the Working Group, starting with the first meeting anticipated for end of January 2022 or soon thereafter, to agree on its terms of reference and programme of work. In parallel, the Executive Secretary will also start discussing with the Government of India the potential secretariat arrangements for IOCINDIO.

I look forward to nominations and the fruitful discussions towards shaping the way towards IOC energetic and successful work in the Indian Ocean.

Yours sincerely,

*[signed]*

Vladimir Ryabinin  
Executive Secretary

Enclosures (2): IOC Assembly Decision A-31/3.5.6 (25 June 2021)

(Draft) Terms of Reference of the open-ended intersessional Working Group on the Status of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO)

### IOC Decision A-31/3.5.6

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

The Assembly,

Having examined the proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission, 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,

Thanks the former IOCINDIO Officers, notably, the Chair (India) and the Vice-Chairs (Kuwait and Bangladesh) and the IOC Vice-Chair for Group IV (India), for their sustained efforts and commitments to IOC in general and IOCINDIO in particular;

Expresses gratitude to the Government of India for its offer to provide in-kind support for the operation of a Regional Secretariat for the IOCINDIO Sub-Commission;

Thanks the IOCINDIO and IOC Member States and other partners that supported and contributed to the reactivation of the Regional Committee;

Welcomes the IOCINDIO-VIII Recommendation for changing the status of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission and the responsive views of Member States, following the provisions of the IOC Manual (IOC/INF-785) with the Guidelines for the Structure and Responsibilities of the Subsidiary Bodies of the Commission (Chapter 5 of Part 1 of the Manual) and its section 5 on Sub-Commissions;

Decides to pursue further towards the establishment of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean, taking into account 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 implementation of IOC programmes in the Indian Ocean with a view to presenting a draft resolution to the Assembly of IOC at its 32<sup>nd</sup> Session;

Decides to undertake the remaining steps towards establishment of the IOCINDIO Sub-Commission through an intersessional Working Group in order to complete the work on: terms of reference; determination of the geographic scope; programme of work; the proposed projects and funding support; and mechanisms for coordination with adjacent Sub-Commissions; etc.

Requests the Executive Secretary to:

- (i) establish an open-ended intersessional Working Group and invite interested Member States to participate in the working group;
- (ii) work closely with the Government of India to explore appropriate arrangements for the establishment of the Regional Secretariat of the IOCINDIO Sub-Commission; and
- (iii) report to the Executive Council, at its 55<sup>th</sup> session, on the status of implementation of this decision.

Annex 2:

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**(Draft) Terms of Reference of the open-ended intersessional Working Group  
on the Status of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO)**

**Nature of the Working Group**

The open-ended intersessional Working Group on the Status of IOCINDIO will follow up on the IOC Decision A-31/3.5.6 on the Status of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO) based on the discussions at the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the IOC Assembly.

**Objectives**

Taking into account the proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission, the Working Group will:

- identify necessary steps remaining for the establishment of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean,
- present a written progress report for discussion by the Executive Council at its 55<sup>th</sup> session,
- prepare a proposal for the establishment of an IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean including: its title and terms of reference; geographic area of responsibility; programme of work with the proposed projects and funding support; mechanisms for coordination with adjacent sub-commissions, and other necessary specifications, and submit it to the IOC Assembly at its 32<sup>nd</sup> session as a working document as well as a draft resolution on the above subject.

**Membership and co-chairs**

The Working Group members will be composed of representatives of IOC Member States whose names were submitted to the IOC Secretariat in the response to the corresponding circular letter. In addition, the working group will include current and past IOC and IOCINDIO Officers willing to take part in the group's work. Chairs of WESTPAC and IOCAFRICA are invited to participate personally or appoint their representatives from the Officers of the Sub-Commissions. The Group will be co-chaired by the IOC Chair and the IOCINDIO Chair.

**Organization of work**

The Group shall first review and adopt its Terms of Reference based on this draft and conduct its work through a series of online meetings.