



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
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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 2899
(Also available in French, Spanish and Russian)

IOC/VR/HE/KI/ss
20 July 2022

To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for Liaison with the IOC

cc. : Permanent Delegates/Observers Missions to UNESCO and National Commissions for UNESCO of IOC
Member States Chair and Vice-Chairpersons of IOC
Officers of Major Subsidiary Bodies of IOC (Scientific, Technical and Regional)

Subject: Second Consultation on the pilot edition of the 'IOC State of the Ocean Report' (StOR)

The pilot edition of the 'IOC State of the Ocean Report' was presented to the IOC Executive Council at its 55th session in June 2022 as IOC Technical series, [173](#). The pilot edition was drafted after an initial consultation of Member States and experts that started in April 2021 (Ref. IOC Circular Letter, [2843](#)) and is structured around the Challenges of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030).

In its decision EC-55/3.3, the Council welcomed the regular publication of the StOR on the model provided by the pilot edition of the Report but requested an opportunity and more time for IOC Member States to provide further comments on the scope, process, frequency and plans going forward for its future editions.

During the Executive Council (EC-55) the following key points were raised and opinions expressed:

- The StOR was referred to as being important for sustainable development and to track changes in the Ocean, as well as progress in addressing the Decade Challenges.
- The role of the StOR to strengthen ocean governance and the science-policy interface, as well as raising awareness, was recognized.
- The StOR was referred to as a potential major contribution to the Ocean Decade, as well as to—and complementary to—the World Ocean Assessment, providing guidance to and serving as a resource for Member States in addressing the different Challenges of the Ocean Decade.
- The StOR concept for future editions was welcomed as a pan-UN publication and an outcome of the Decade.
- The StOR should focus on key indicators for each Ocean Decade Challenge.

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- It was stressed that the StOR has to be based on data wherever these exist and that the identification or reconfirmation of data gaps is equally important.
- The pilot edition StOR structure around the Decade Challenges was commended.
- Several Member States urged that the report ought to be shorter and concise.
- Key high-level messages were recommended to be spelled out stronger, including the expected or documented impact on society.
- Concern was expressed for the capacity of the IOC Secretariat to develop a StOR on an annual basis. A biennial cycle (every second year) was proposed by several Member States.
- The continued development of the StOR was supported and it was recognized that it is essential that human and budgetary resources are secured for its further development and delivery.

Through the present Circular Letter, the IOC Secretariat solicit the views of Member States on the pilot edition of the StOR. The input received, preferably in English, will provide the basis for a revised scope and outline of the StOR to be presented to the Assembly at its 32nd session in June 2023.

In submitting comments and suggestions on the pilot edition of the StOR, Member States are invited to use the template annexed hereafter or to reply via using the [online form](#). This will greatly ease the processing and analysis of your suggestions and proposals.

Please kindly send your responses to Mr Ikroh Yoon, IOC Ocean Science Section by 30 September 2022 (i.yoon@unesco.org).

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

Vladimir Ryabinin
Executive Secretary

Enclosure: Survey on State of the Ocean Report – on the basis of its pilot Edition 2022 (English only)

Annex I: Survey on State of the Ocean Report – on the basis of its pilot Edition 2022
(English only)

This form, filled by IOC Member States, will help the IOC Secretariat to further improve future editions of the pilot State of the Ocean Report and full State of the Ocean Report.

The questions below will allow to refine the scope, define the drafting and review process, as well as decide on a preliminary frequency of publication.

1. Reviewer Information

1.i	Email:	
1.ii	Country:	
1.iii	Name/First name:	
1.iv	Institution:	

2. Scope of the report

The pilot edition of the State of the Ocean Report (StOR) presented in June 2022, according to [IOC/INF-1393 Rev.](#), focused on the initial Ocean Decade Challenges and on a limited number of corresponding proxies, for which IOC and affiliated programmes are collecting and developing information and data.

For the first pilot edition the following template was sent to the authors:

(<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dBJ470IEHjSDOGhI5LhkfoXoFsTuZl8gkPQ7z6awO0U/edit?usp=sharing>)

The pilot edition of the StOR addresses 9 out of the 10 Ocean Decade Challenges, illustrated by 21 storylines. The full StOR will address all 10 challenges.

2.i Please advise how to improve the template in terms of format, length, inclusion of figures etc.

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2.ii Advise on the relevance of the existing storylines

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2.iii Propose how to improve the currently used indicators and benchmarks

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2.iv Advise on how to identify new potential indicators

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3. Frequency of the report

The 55th Session of the IOC Executive Council concluded that an annual StOR might not be feasible neither in terms of gathering new data nor in terms of IOC resources.

3.i How often should the StOR be published? (select one option)

Annual	
Biennial	
Other	please provide further guidance below

4. Additional comments

The StOR is envisaged to provide a platform for integrating relevant findings of other UN Organizations on the state of and trends in the world's ocean.

4.i Please advise on relevant UN Organizations and the information they could provide and to which Decade challenges

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4.ii Please suggest additional resources to be consulted to support the IOC Secretariat in the preparation of the StOR

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4.iii Please let us know if you have any further advice to improve the next edition of the StOR

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End