



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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To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with the IOC

cc. : Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States National Commissions for UNESCO in IOC Member States
Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission
Officers of Major Subsidiary Bodies of IOC

Subject: Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap and Call for Nominations to the Africa and Adjacent Island States Ocean Decade Taskforce for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)

This circular letter is to seek the support of Member States and partners for the implementation of the [Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap](#). The Africa Roadmap was prepared in a highly participatory process, and was recently presented at the “African Conference on Priority Setting & Partnership Development for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development” (10–12 May 2022, Cairo, Egypt).

The *Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap* provides a vision and plan for diverse stakeholders to convene around a common set of nine priorities. With the support and engagement of diverse actors from the region, it is envisaged that these priorities will be transformed into future Ocean Decade Actions (Decade programmes and projects) through a process of co-design and co-delivery in the coming years. The development and endorsement of Decade Actions with a high societal impact is critical for sustainable development in Africa. The preparation of the Africa Roadmap responds to the decisions of the IOC’s Sub Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States (IOCAFRICA) at its sixth session (13–15 April 2021, online), which emphasised the importance of developing a strong regional programme for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, and urged IOC Member States to provide support for its development and implementation. I warmly encourage all Member States and partners to actively contribute to implementation of the Africa Roadmap.

This circular letter also invites nominations for membership of the African and Adjacent Island States Ocean Decade Taskforce (hereafter the Taskforce), a multi-stakeholder body that will oversee and promote the implementation of the *Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap* and the enabling environment necessary for its success. The Taskforce will play a critical role in supporting and contributing to the coordination of stakeholders as they come together to implement the Africa Roadmap, co-design

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and co-deliver Decade Actions. The Terms of Reference for the Taskforce are attached to this circular letter.

The Taskforce will comprise up to 15 expert members drawn from government, private sector, philanthropy, civil society, and the scientific community from the African and Adjacent Island States. Five more seats will be reserved for regional organizations, UN agencies and NGOs to be identified through consultations with the IOCAFRICA Officers.

Proposals for nominations of the 15 expert members can be put forward by Member States of IOC-UNESCO, United Nations or United Nations entities, as well as by intergovernmental organizations. Self-nominations are also encouraged to facilitate nominations from non-governmental entities.

A Selection Panel convened by the IOC Executive Secretary and composed of the IOCAFRICA Chair and three Vice Chairs, with the technical support of the IOCAFRICA Secretariat and the Decade Coordination Unit, will be tasked with selecting the expert members of the Taskforce.

The Selection Panel will ensure that the proposed expert members have sufficient skills, knowledge, influence and impartiality regarding the vision and objectives of the Decade and are able to undertake the work outlined in the terms of reference. Their skills and expertise should cover at least one of the following areas:

- (i) Intergovernmental processes and coordination;
- (ii) The ocean aspects of sustainable development;
- (iii) Ocean science (natural / social dimensions);
- (iv) Science-policy / decision / end-user interface and engagement;
- (v) Ocean Economy / finance/ partnerships;
- (vi) Innovation / technology/ infrastructure development;
- (vii) Capacity development, training and transfer of marine technology, education, communications and outreach; and/or
- (viii) Resource mobilisation and development of large-scale multi/inter-disciplinary international programmes / projects.

Expert members will be selected with due consideration to expertise, geographic, generational, and gender balance and will serve on a voluntary, non-remunerated basis. Membership on the African Ocean Decade Taskforce will be for a two-year term, renewable for a second mandate with membership terms to be staggered.

The Taskforce will work mainly through remote means (teleconferences, virtual meetings). A physical meeting is anticipated at least once a year when resources and the sanitary situation allow. The IOCAFRICA Secretariat will be the Secretariat for the Taskforce.

The nomination form for membership of the Africa and Adjacent Island States Ocean Decade Taskforce can be found here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/J7XLXHF>.

The call for nominations will be open until 25 August 2022 at 23.59h UTC. A first meeting of the Taskforce is envisaged in October 2022.

With the assurances of my highest consideration, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

Vladimir Ryabinin
Executive Secretary

Enclosure: Terms of reference of the African and Adjacent Island States Ocean Decade Taskforce



United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

African and Adjacent Island States Ocean Decade Taskforce

Terms of Reference

Introduction

With its vision of ‘the science we need for the ocean we want’, the [United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#), the ‘Ocean Decade’ (2021-2030) provides a global framework to help generate ocean-based solutions to societal problems and challenges for sustainable development. In view of the importance of Africa’s ocean resources for sustainable development, the Ocean Decade is especially opportune for the region.

As part of the preparatory phase of the Ocean Decade (2018-2020), the [Regional Consultation for Africa and Adjacent Island States](#) was held in Nairobi, Kenya (January 2020), followed by the preparation of the Regional Gap Analysis report. The outcomes of the Regional Gap Analysis process were then presented and discussed extensively during a series of multi-stakeholder pre-conference workshops held in early 2022. This process led to the organization of the ‘[African Conference on Priority Setting & Partnership Development for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#)’ in May 2022 and the launch of the [Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap](#) (the ‘Africa Roadmap’) considered as a major milestone for the region.

The Africa Roadmap provides a vision and plan for diverse stakeholders to convene around a common set of nine priorities. With the support and engagement of diverse actors from the region, it is envisaged that these priorities could be transformed into future Ocean Decade Actions (Decade programmes and projects) through a process of co-design and co-delivery in the coming years. The development and endorsement of Decade Actions with a high societal impact is critical for sustainable development in Africa. Yet to date, the implementation of the Ocean Decade in Africa has lagged behind many other regions of the world. To this end, a regional taskforce is required as a platform to continue the momentum for engagement of African member states and partners in the Ocean Decade to implement the Africa Roadmap through a participatory and inclusive process.

Objectives of the Africa Regional Taskforce

The primary objective of the African and Adjacent Island States Ocean Decade Taskforce is to convene regional stakeholders to coordinate and advance on the implementation of the Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap. This will ensure that the ownership of the Africa Roadmap is systematically reconfirmed and strengthened among African nations, regional organizations, indigenous organizations and fora.

Mandate

The mandate of the African Ocean Decade Taskforce is to oversee and promote the implementation of the Africa Roadmap and the enabling environment necessary for its success. The Taskforce will play a critical role in supporting and contributing to the coordination of stakeholders as they come together to implement the Africa Roadmap, co-design and co-deliver Decade Actions. More specifically, this support will:

- provide a strategic vision, direction, and coordination of specific actions;
- provide advice on measures and initiatives required to create the appropriate enabling environment for translating the Africa Roadmap into co-designed Decade Actions at multiple levels from resource mobilization, development of new partnerships, coordination, to research and policy initiatives;

- facilitate and provide support to the development of co-designed programmes, projects and initiatives for submission in response to Calls for Decade Actions;
- continue socialization/communication on the Ocean Decade in Africa and Africa Roadmap with existing networks, institutions, experts and stakeholders;
- identify multisector/multistakeholder engagement and outreach activities to engage further regional stakeholders outside the Taskforce and raise awareness of the Decade. This will include specific mechanisms to engage priority groups, including indigenous and local knowledge holders, Early Career Ocean Professionals, ports authorities and maritime services, business and industry or philanthropy;
- provide guidance and support on the mobilization of financial and in-kind resources to support Roadmap implementation; and
- establish specific / thematic working groups as deemed necessary.

The African Ocean Decade Taskforce will meet its objectives by carrying out the aforementioned functions in close collaboration with IOC's Sub Commission for Africa & the Adjacent Island States (IOCAFRICA) and the Decade Coordination Unit/IOC Secretariat. Within this framework, detailed mandates can be tailored according to the regional circumstances, at the discretion of the Taskforce and its members.

Composition and selection process

The African Ocean Decade Taskforce will comprise up to 15 expert members serving in their individual capacity drawn from government, private sector, philanthropy, civil society, and the scientific community, as well as five members representing regional organizations (UN agencies regional intergovernmental organization and NGOs) to be identified through consultations with the IOCAFRICA Officers.

Proposals for nominations can be either self-nominations or nominations made by IOC-UNESCO and United Nations Member States or United Nations entities, as well as intergovernmental organizations.

Expert members will be selected with due consideration to expertise, geographic, generational, and gender balance and will serve on a voluntary, non-remunerated basis in their personal capacities. Expert members of the Regional Taskforce do not represent their institutions or countries. They should be able to commit sufficient time to the work of the Regional Taskforce and will take the responsibility to request the authorization of their employer to participate in this process.

Membership on the Taskforce will be for a two-year term, renewable for a second mandate. Members' terms will be staggered to ensure there is information exchange and mentoring between current and new Taskforce members.

A Selection Panel convened by the IOC Executive Secretary and composed of the IOCAFRICA Chair and Vice Chairs, with the technical support of the IOCAFRICA Secretariat and the Decade Coordination Unit, will be tasked with selecting the members of the Taskforce.

The Selection Panel will ensure that the proposed members have sufficient skills, knowledge, influence and impartiality regarding the vision and objectives of the Decade and are able to undertake the work outlined in the terms of reference. Their skills and expertise should cover at least one of the following areas:

- (i) Intergovernmental processes and coordination;
- (ii) The ocean aspects of sustainable development;
- (iii) Ocean science (natural / social dimensions);

- (iv) Science-policy / decision / end-user interface and engagement;
- (v) Ocean Economy / finance/ partnerships;
- (vi) Innovation / technology/ infrastructure development;
- (vii) Capacity development, training and transfer or marine technology, education, communications and outreach; and/or
- (viii) Resource mobilization and development of large-scale multi/inter-disciplinary international programmes / projects.

Leadership and governance

The African Ocean Decade Taskforce will appoint two Co-Chairs amongst its members for a period of one year (12 months) taking into consideration gender and geographical balance in this selection. IOCAFRICA will act as the Secretariat, and together with the Decade Coordination Unit/IOC Secretariat will provide administrative, technical and editorial support to the African Ocean Decade Taskforce.

Working modality

The African Ocean Decade Taskforce shall meet four (4) times per year, with at least one (1) in presentia meeting annually when possible. Additional in-person or virtual meetings will be held as necessary. The Co-Chairs of the African Ocean Decade Taskforce will be primarily responsible for the development of the Taskforce Meeting Agenda and directing the African Ocean Decade Taskforce meetings. All African Ocean Decade Taskforce Members can recommend agenda items. The African Ocean Decade Taskforce may invite external experts as needed to address specific issues or tasks. The decision to invite these external experts would be a decision of the Taskforce. The minutes of the Regional Taskforce meetings will be developed and distributed by the Secretariat to the Regional Taskforce members.

The Taskforce will report annually to the IOCAFRICA Officers and to the biennial sessions of the IOC's Sub Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States as well as to the IOC Governing Bodies.