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Item 4.6 of the Provisional Agenda

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IOC CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY (2023–2030)**

Summary

By IOC Decision A-32/Dec.4.3, the Assembly at its 32nd session decided to adopt the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 (IOC/INF-1433) and its Outreach and Communication Plan.

The present document presents detailed information related to the actions taken and to be taken following the adoption of the new Strategy, in particular through the report on the activity of the Group of Experts on Capacity Development at its fifth meeting ([IOC/GE-CD-V/3](#), 27–29 February 2024). It follows from this information a proposal to maintain the GE-CD with revised terms of reference.

The proposed decision is referenced as EC-57/ Dec.4.6 in the Action Paper for the session (document IOC/EC-57/AP Draft).

Background

1. Shortly after adopting the IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2015–2021), the IOC Assembly established in 2017 the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development through Decision [IOC-XXIX/10.1](#) to assist the global and regional programmes in developing capacities in line with the objectives of the new Strategy. The group encouraged them to assess needs, to develop workplans, and to mobilize resources, and to put forward working methods and tools for capacity development.
2. Drawing on the expertise of its experts, the Assembly in 2021 instructed the GE-CD to conduct a review of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy for the period beyond 2021 and revised its Terms of Reference accordingly in its decision [A-31/3.5.3](#).
3. At the 32nd session of the Assembly in 2023, the Group submitted three documents: (i) [Document IOC/A-32/4.3.Doc\(1\)](#) 'IOC Capacity Development Strategy for 2023–2030' providing a strategic framework with six outputs composed of activities and actions; (ii) [IOC-32/4.3.Doc\(1\) Addendum](#) with extensive background information related to the process of reviewing and revising the strategy, leading towards its updating; and (iii) [IOC-32/4.3.Doc\(2\)](#), detailing the Outreach and Communications Plan (of the Strategy) to Promote its Visibility and Reach.
4. The Assembly, through [Decision A-32/4.3](#), adopted the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030 (IOC/INF-1433) and its Outreach and Communications Plan.
5. The strategic framework incorporated an increased recognition for the role that the ocean plays in political, commercial, science circles and society and the importance of capacity development in the delivery of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development (2021–2030). It also highlighted IOC's critical role in fostering international cooperation while using the strategy as the motivation to develop an implementation plan, such that IOC capacity development activities are clearly articulated and that the benefits are more readily identified.
6. While the strategic framework provides general guidance on vital elements of capacity development, an implementation plan is yet to be developed and venues for elevating IOC's impact to the required scale to be further explored.

Proposed reconstitution of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development with revised Terms of Reference

7. The fifth meeting of the IOC Group of Experts on Capacity Development ([IOC/GE-CD-V/3](#)), held from 27 to 29 February 2024, provided an opportunity to assess the work of the group and its results in support of the IOC Capacity Development Secretariat. In addition to the revision of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy, the group supports the development of the Ocean InfoHub and Ocean CD-Hub projects and advises on the design of and follow-up to the biennial Capacity Development needs assessment survey (2018, 2020, 2023). As part of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), the GE-CD is consulted in the implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Capacity Development Facility (CDF), which develops a community of practice among LDCs, SIDS and ECOPs in the Caribbean and African region. In addition, the GE-CD is contributing to the public review of the [White Paper on the Ocean Decade Challenge 9: Skills, knowledge and technologies for all](#), presented at the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference (Barcelona, Spain, 10-12 April 2024).
8. Based on this background, the new CD Strategy 2023–2030 and its Outreach and Communications Plan, it is proposed that the Executive Council renews the Group of Experts on Capacity Development (GE-CD) with revised terms of reference to reflect the continuation of the work described above and the development of an implementation plan for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy to be presented to the IOC Assembly at its 33rd Session in 2025. In this way, new and existing CD initiatives and efforts supporting the six outputs (with 16 activities detailed in

31 actions) of the new IOC CD Strategy will benefit from the continued role of the Group of Experts in informing and, where relevant, assisting the CD Secretariat in implementing IOC CD activities.

9. At its fifth meeting, the Group of Experts on Capacity Development proposed revised Terms of Reference in accordance with the requirements of the new IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023–2030, taking into account consultations with the global programmes and regional subsidiary bodies for their regional CD workplans.

10. The revised Terms of Reference of the GE-CD are presented to the Executive Council in draft decision EC-57/4.6 of the Action Paper for the session.

11. As the current GE-CD will be closed as soon as the Executive Council approves the revised terms of reference of the GE-CD, Member States will be invited to nominate suitable candidate members for the Group and submit their information including an updated CV, with brief biography highlighting their experience and expertise on capacity development.

12. Current members of the GE-CD who wish to remain in the Group will also need to go through the nomination process and secure a renomination from their respective governments. The call will be open until the end of July 2024, and the list of selected experts will be submitted for the approval of the Executive Secretary ideally in August 2024, with the new Group starting its work in September 2024.

Actions for the 33rd Session of the IOC Assembly

13. At the fifth meeting of the Group of Experts on Capacity Development, all global programmes and regional sub-commissions were asked to provide information on how they plan to address the six outputs of the IOC CD Strategy according to their specific regional needs and priorities. The Group recommended that global and regional programmes consider a mapping exercise to prepare regional CD workplans for discussion at the next meeting of the GE-CD, if so decided by the Council, and in preparation for submission to the IOC Assembly at its 33rd session in June 2025.

14. The CD workplans of the global programmes and regional sub-commissions were prepared at joint meetings with the global programmes and regional subsidiary bodies in the first semester of 2024. The CD elements of their workplans are being mapped in a matrix to the outputs of the IOC CD Strategy 2023–2030.

15. The matrix exercise will help identify gaps where an output, activity or action is currently not being addressed, and identify the associated efforts and resource needs to fill these gaps. This will identify where assistance and guidance will be most needed and useful, which can then guide the development of project proposals and other new initiatives with the assistance of the IOC CD Secretariat for submission to interested donors.