

DRAFT RESOLUTION EC-57/DR.[5.4]

Submitted by: Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Pakistan, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and United States of America

GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING MATTERS OF THE COMMISSION

The Executive Council,

1. **Having examined** documents:

- (i) IOC/EC-57/3.1.Doc(2) – Report on 2022–2023 (41 C/5) budget implementation as at 31 December 2023,
- (ii) IOC/EC-57/3.1.Doc(3) – Financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2023 and forecast for 2024-2025,
- (iii) IOC/EC-57/3.1.Doc(4) – Consultation Process - IOC and the Future of the Ocean: Sustainable Delivery and Expansion of IOC Activities,
- (iv) IOC/EC-57/5.1.Doc(1) – Revised Programme and Budget for 2024–2025 (42 C/5) and Preliminary Proposals for 2026–2029 (Draft 43 C/5),
- (v) IOC/EC-57/5.2.Doc(1) – Action Plan in response to the IOS Evaluation of the IOC Strategic Positioning – Update on implementation,
- (vi) IOC/EC-57/5.2.Doc(2) – Report of the Chairperson of the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (intersessional period January – June 2024), and
- (vii) IOC/EC-57/5.3.Doc(1) – Draft Guidelines for the preparation and participation of Member States in the Biennial Elections for IOC Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons (Officers of the Commission) and Member States of the Executive Council,

Part I.

**Report on 2022–2023 (41 C/5) budget implementation as at 31 December 2023
and Financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2023
and forecast for 2024–2025**

2. **Confirms** that the IOC budget for 2022–2023, as reported in IOC/EC-57/3.1.Doc(2), has been executed in accordance with the Approved Programme and Budget 2022–2023 (41 C/5), including the adjusted budgetary appropriations for the IOC Special Account as approved by the IOC Assembly at its 31st session through IOC Resolution A-31/2 and further reviewed by the IOC Executive Council at its 55th session through Resolution EC-55/2;

3. **Notes** that while the overall extrabudgetary resource mobilisation targets set for the 2022–2023 biennium have been achieved, there were still some gaps in funding for Functions D and F as at year end 2023;
4. **Thanks** Member States who have contributed extrabudgetary funds for the 2022–2023 programme implementation;
5. **Acknowledges** the information on the financial situation of the IOC Special Account as at year end 2023 and forecast for 2024–2025 provided in IOC/EC-57/3.1.Doc(3);
6. **Approves** the revised budgetary allocations for 2024–2025 for the IOC Special Account as proposed in Table 1 of IOC/EC-57/3.1.Doc(3);
7. **Encourages** Member States to provide voluntary contributions to ensure full achievement of the collectively agreed extrabudgetary resource mobilization targets for 2024–2025 for all IOC Functions, preferably to the IOC Special Account;
8. **Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to intensify proactive efforts to obtain further voluntary contributions, including from private sector donors and other partners, and to achieve full implementation of the Commission’s programmatic targets for 2024–2025;

Part II.

Revised Programme and Budget for 2024–2025 (42 C/5) and Preliminary Proposals for 2026–2029 (Draft 43 C/5)

9. **Recalls** the decision of the UNESCO Executive Board at its 216th session to recommend that the UNESCO General Conference at its 42nd session agree to an increase in the IOC’s share of the UNESCO regular budget of [1%], not to be decreased by transfers of funds to other parts of the budget and ‘that a baseline be identified and agreed for the IOC’s share of UNESCO’s regular budget under document 42 C/5 and future C/5 documents and that no reduction to this baseline be made in the future unless agreed by the General Conference’;
10. **Thanks** Member States for including in the agenda of the 216th session of the UNESCO Executive Board item 44 ‘Urgent requirement for increased and more stable resources to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)’ that led to the above-mentioned decision;

11. **Notes with appreciation** the increase in regular budget allocation to the IOC within the overall UNESCO 42 C/5 budget ceiling revised due to the United States of America re-joining the Organisation in July 2023, endorsed by the UNESCO General Conference at its 42nd session in line with Member States' priorities and allowing IOC to maintain its core programmes and to fulfil its role in the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030);
12. **Acknowledges** the presentation of the Revised Programme and Budget for 2024–2025 (42 C/5) contained in IOC/EC-57/5.1.Doc(1), prepared as an integral part of the UNESCO Draft Programme and Budget for 2024–2025 (42 C/5), submitted by the Director-General of UNESCO to the UNESCO Executive Board at its 217th session and subsequently approved by the UNESCO General Conference at its 42nd session;
13. **Takes note** of the additional information provided by the IOC Secretariat upon the request from the IOC Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (IFAG) and reflected in the Report of the Chairperson of IFAG (IOC/EC-57/5.2.Doc(2));
14. **Considers** that the programmatic choices of the IOC Secretariat in developing the Revised Programme and Budget for 2024–2025 (42 C/5) follow Member States' strategic guidance provided in IOC Resolution A-32/4;
15. **Welcomes** in particular:
 - (i) the stabilisation of all IOC Functions, coupled with targeted additional investment in IODE, GOOS, Capacity Development and Regional Subsidiary Bodies, identified by the IOC Assembly as 'critically vulnerable areas';
 - (ii) the IOC Executive Secretary's staffing choices, aimed at reinforcing the above-mentioned critically vulnerable areas as a matter of priority;
 - (iii) the significant improvement in the ratio of staff versus non-staff resources support from the regular budget, and;
 - (iv) the considerable increase of the regular budget allocated to IOCAFRICA activities, in line with UNESCO's Global Priority Africa, and taking into account the need to avail adequate resources for programme implementation;

16. **Notes** that consultations on priorities take place on a continuous basis within the relevant programmes and subsidiary bodies to co-design priority activities and optimise delivery in 2024–2025, and to lay the foundations for the Draft 43 C/5 in line with the priority areas of the 42 C/5 and the spirit of maintaining the achievements related to the high-level principles of the IOC Resolution A-32/4;
17. **Further notes** with great concern that some of the above-mentioned IOC critically vulnerable areas are still understaffed and their reinforcement would need to be considered in the next budgetary cycles;
18. **Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Officers of the Commission, to launch an external assessment of IOC's governance and management processes, with a view to streamlining operations and optimising the use of resources so as to be truly fit for purpose in response to the fast-evolving ocean agenda and increasing demands of Member States and multilateral processes;
19. **Endorses** the approach to the Preliminary Proposals for the Programme and Budget for 2026–2029 (Draft 43 C/5), including the formulation of the IOC Output 1, as presented in Part III of IOC/EC-57/5.1.Doc(1);
20. **Highlights** the critical importance of a clear and comprehensive consultation process with IOC Member States on governance, programming and budgetary matters of the Commission;
21. **Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to develop the proposal for the Programme and Budget for 2026–2029 (Draft 43 C/5) for endorsement by the IOC Assembly at its 33rd session, keeping Member States appraised of and involved with all relevant developments during the intersessional period, including through regular and timely online meetings of the IFAG;

Part III.

Action Plan in response to the IOS Evaluation of the IOC Strategic Positioning – Update on Implementation

22. **Recalls** that the Action Plan in response to the IOS Evaluation of the IOC Strategic Positioning was endorsed by the IOC Assembly at its 32nd session as presented in IOC/A-32/6.3.Doc(1) and reproduced for the attention of the IOC Executive Council in IOC/EC-57/5.2.Doc(1), with the

update on implementation in the table titled 'Summary of proposed actions and updates on progress';

23. **Also recalls** that the IOC Assembly, at its 32nd session, requested the IOC Secretariat to move forward with the implementation of the Action Plan 'considering the IOC's evolving situation, including the resources available, proposing adjustments accordingly and reporting on progress both to IOC and UNESCO Governing Bodies';
24. **Welcomes** the update on implementation as contained in the 'Summary of proposed actions and updates on progress' referred to above;
25. **Agrees** with the IOC Executive Secretary's assessment that, although some actions have already been implemented and work is in progress on others, a number of strategic actions will require further reflection and discussion with Member States as part of the new phase of the 'IOC and the Future of the Ocean' consultation;
26. **Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to proceed accordingly and submit the resulting proposal to the IOC Assembly for review at its 33rd session;

Part IV.

Consultation Process – IOC and the Future of the Ocean

27. **Recalls** IOC Decision A-32/5, mindful of the IOC's status as a body with functional autonomy within UNESCO;
28. **Notes** the proposal in document IOC/EC-57/3.1.Doc(4) that the 'IOC and Future of the Ocean' consultation allow for a three-year process synchronized with the calendar of IOC governing body sessions;
29. **Decides** that the consultation will first focus on an overall review of activities relevant to the role of IOC in assisting Member States and other stakeholders, including identifying gaps and needs in IOC programmes, in order to optimally facilitate current and emerging activities in science-based sustainable ocean planning, ocean science support to implementation of relevant UN conventions and frameworks, and development of a sustainable ocean economy;

30. **Also decides** that the review will be carried out by the IOC Secretariat in consultation with IOC programmes, IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies, IOC Member States, including through IFAG and relevant IOC intersessional working groups, in particular the IOC working group on sustainable ocean planning and management, and other relevant stakeholders as necessary;
31. **Further decides** that the review will draw on the Action Plan in response to the IOS Evaluation of the IOC strategic positioning, the IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029), and other relevant resources as necessary;
32. **Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to start the consultation process, including engagement with IFAG on the review modalities, and to provide regular updates to IFAG on progress for input and guidance;
33. **Also requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to present the results and recommendations of the review to the IOC Assembly at its 33rd session for guidance on how to proceed with the second phase of the consultation;

Part V.

Follow up to Resolution A-32/4 Part III – Governance and Working Methods Draft Guidelines for the preparation and participation of Member States in the Biennial Elections for IOC Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons (Officers of the Commission) and Member States of the Executive Council

34. **Recalls** that the IOC Assembly at its 32nd session, through IOC Resolution A-32/4, endorsed the updated IOC Rules of Procedure, now published as document IOC/INF-1166 Rev., and invited the IOC Executive Secretary ‘to prepare guidelines to support Member States’ preparation for and participation in the elections, in accordance with the IOC Statutes and Rules of Procedure, and to consider having an information session prior to the vote’;
35. **Takes note** of the information contained in IOC/EC-57/5.3.Doc(1) as intended to highlight the specificities of IOC elections for Member States’ ease of reference, while the complete information is available in the IOC Statutes and Rules of Procedure, constituting the Commission’s regulatory framework;
36. **Welcomes** the IOC Executive Secretary’s confirmation that an information session will be organised prior to the 33rd session of the IOC Assembly to facilitate Member States’ preparations.