



IOC Circular Letter No 3013
(Available in English, French, Russian and Spanish)

IOC/VH/JB/AC
22 November 2025

To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with the IOC (IOC Member States)

C.c. : Permanent Delegates/Observers Missions to UNESCO and
National Commission for UNESCO of IOC Member States
Chair and Vice-Chairpersons of IOC
Officers of Major Subsidiary Bodies of IOC

Subject: Call for Expressions of Interest to host the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference

As envisaged in the Ocean Decade [Implementation Plan](#), an in-person multi-stakeholder global Ocean Decade Conference is being held every three years as a means of convening the Ocean Decade community to discuss and set priorities for the future work of the Decade. The 2021 Kick-Off Conference, which was hosted as an online event by Germany due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was followed by the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference, held in Barcelona in April 2024 hosted by the Kingdom of Spain and co-organised by IOC in partnership with Government of Catalonia and the Barcelona City Council through the Barcelona Capital Náutica Foundation, and the Spanish National Ocean Decade Committee, which is led by the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities through the Spanish Research Council (CSIC). The Conference convened over 2,600 participants from 124 countries and significantly raised the visibility of the Ocean Decade and its achievements in the first three years of implementation. The final outcomes of the Conference which are documented in [The Barcelona Statement](#) and the [summary report of the Vision 2030 process](#) will guide the priorities of the Ocean Decade in coming years.

Building on the success and outcomes of the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference, the IOC Secretariat is now seeking written Expressions of Interest from Member States to host the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference. The 2027 Ocean Decade Conference will be instrumental in showcasing and tracking the progress of achievements towards the priorities of *The Barcelona Statement*, in further refining Ocean Decade priorities for the remainder of its implementation, and in facilitating discussions and the creation of partnerships to build the post-2030 legacy of the Ocean Decade.

Expressions of Interest from Member States should be submitted as a maximum five-page document and provide preliminary information on the following:

Chairperson

Yutaka MICHIDA, Prof.
Special Presidential Envoy
for UN Ocean Decade
The University of Tokyo (Atmosphere
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Vice-Chairpersons

Dr Marie-Alexandrine SICRE
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Centre national de la recherche scientifique
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Dr Nikolay VALCHEV
Director
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Mr Juan Camilo FORERO HAUZEUR
Executive Secretary
Colombian Ocean Commission (COO)
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Prof. Amr Zakaria HAMOUDA
President of Marine Hazards Mitigation Center
(MHMC)
National Institute of
Oceanography and Fisheries (NIOF)
Qaitbay, Al-Anfoshi
Alexandria
EGYPT

Executive Secretary

Mr Vidar HELGESEN
Intergovernmental Oceanographic
Commission — UNESCO
7 Place de Fontenoy
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- (i) Strategic interest in hosting the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference including alignment with national and regional priorities;
- (ii) Overall approach to the design and development of the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference to ensure that the Conference objectives are met;
- (iii) Experience in organizing and hosting similar events, including UN events;
- (iv) Outline of approach to ensuring strong geographical, cultural, gender and generational diversity and diversity of representation across sectors of society;
- (v) Basic travel and logistical information including the proposed location of the event and availability of suitable venues for participation of up to 2,000 persons;
- (vi) Initial indication of financial and logistic support that would be provided as part of the hosting offer;
- (vii) Initial indication of government support for the hosting of the Conference, and the role of the National Decade Committee in the Conference planning (as relevant); and
- (viii) Any other relevant issues.

Joint Expressions of Interest that include resourcing from two or more Member States are welcomed, particularly when this may allow the Conference to be held in a Least Developed Country or Small Island Developing State that may have the capacity, but not all the required resources, to host the conference.

A review of the Expressions of Interest will be carried by the IOC Executive Secretary in consultation with the IOC Chair and Officers. The results of this review are expected to be available in February 2025. Following this, the IOC Executive Secretary will request a full proposal for the hosting of the Conference from a short-list of Member States that will include: (i) detailed budget and resourcing plan; (ii) security and contingency protocol; (iii) written commitment of support from the host country government as well as from other key partners; (iv) detailed description of the proposed venue including travel and logistical organization; (v) inclusivity and diversity strategy (e.g., financial aid, subsidies, or other mechanisms to support participation of underrepresented groups); (vi) logistical plan (e.g., covering visa facilitation, transportation arrangements, coordination of side events, exhibitions, and cultural programmes); (vii) identification of local partners and institutions involved in the Conference organization; (viii) plans for engagement of technical and logistical support services to assist Conference planning and execution, (ix) communication and outreach plan; and (x) any other relevant information.

The final decision on the host country will be made by the IOC Executive Secretary, in consultation with the IOC Chair and Officers, based on an evaluation of the detailed proposals. It is planned to announce the selected host country at the 33rd Session of the IOC Assembly in June 2025.

A Host Country Agreement will be established with the selected host of the Conference to formalize the details of the Conference and the roles and responsibilities of the host country and the IOC Secretariat in Conference organization and hosting.

Further details of the requirements for the hosting of the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference are listed in Annex I.

Expressions of Interest should be addressed to the IOC Executive Secretary before 5 January 2025 with a copy to j.barbiere@unesco.org and a.clausen@unesco.org.

[signature]

Vidar Helgesen
Executive Secretary

Enclosure: 1/ Indicative Requirements for the hosting of the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference

1/ Indicative Requirements for the hosting of the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference

Introduction

The following requirements should guide Member States in developing their proposals for hosting of the 2027 Ocean Decade Conference. The Conference will be an in-person event for around 2,000 persons, with facilities for some degree of hybrid participation / live streaming. The Conference will include a series of plenary and interactive sessions and should have scope for side events and cultural / networking events. The Conference could be held consecutively with another major ocean convening in this period to minimize travel. Conference organizers could also propose special events to precede or follow the main Conference.

Expression of Interest criteria

1. Political, financial & logistic support
 - a. Written endorsement from the national government and relevant authorities and partners that have a key role in the organization process.
 - b. Commitment to mobilize international, regional and local high-level partners and attract interest in the event.
 - c. A clear explanation of the host's intention to provide political and logistical support for the event, including transport, visa facilitation, security protocols and contingency plans for various scenarios (e.g., natural disaster, health emergency, political instability, etc.).
 - d. Commitment to facilitating equitable access for all Member States, especially SIDS and LDCs and underrepresented groups like ECOPs, by providing subsidies or other financial support for participants to ensure inclusive participation.
 - e. A clear budget proposal and plan adjustable in response to evolving needs, such as additional logistical requirements.
 - f. A fundraising and sponsorship strategy to cover additional costs emerging during Conference planning.
 - g. Availability of financial resources (e.g., combination of government support, sponsorships, and partnerships with international organizations or private entities) to cover direct costs and in-kind contributions (e.g., venue, catering, human resources, travel support, accommodation).
 - h. Commitment to engage an experienced events management team to coordinate logistics including a rigorous registration system for in-person participation.
 - i. Experience of local institutions or organizations in hosting large-scale international conferences, with the organizing committee demonstrating a solid understanding of UN conference management.
 - j. Proven experience in implementing security measures and protocols for international events.
 - k. Capacity to manage event logistics, including organizing side events, exhibitions, and cultural programmes.
 - l. Dedicated communications / outreach / engagement team in house or recruited.

2. Host city & country engagement with sustainable development

- a. Demonstrated commitment of the host city/country to sustainable ocean initiatives.
- b. Strong connections to global marine science research (e.g., partnerships with local universities, research centers, etc.).
- c. Past involvement in international environmental initiatives, particularly those related to ocean sustainability or climate action.
- d. The presence of strong expertise in marine science, oceanography, or environmental sustainability in local areas.
- e. Ability to organize the event sustainably (e.g., carbon-neutral event, waste reduction policies, eco-friendly transport options, etc.) through partnerships with organizations focused on sustainability.
- f. Commitment to promoting ocean sustainability in the region and showcasing local efforts.

3. Venue & infrastructure

- a. Availability of a large, modern conference center with adequate facilities to accommodate at least 2,000 attendees (e.g., wifi, charging stations, meeting rooms, plenary halls, exhibition spaces, workspaces for staff, a media zone, rooms for bilateral/multilateral discussions and high-level interviews).
- b. Technical infrastructures to support hybrid participation (e.g., streaming facilities).
- c. Proximity to international airports and public transportation.
- d. Adequate hotel accommodation and lodging capacity near the conference venue.
- e. Accessibility and inclusivity features for all participants (e.g., disabled access, multi-lingual services, maternity rooms, prayer rooms and on-site medical care).
- f. Commitment to sustainable practices at the conference venue, including energy efficiency, waste reduction and environmentally friendly operations.
- g. Available in-house or external catering services.