



IOC Officers meeting

Paris, 13-15 January 2025



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Commission



**2021
2030** United Nations Decade
of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development

Vidar HELGESEN, IOC Executive Secretary

A critical time for the ocean, people and planet

The triple planetary crisis is also a triple ocean crisis

- ✓ Climate change
- ✓ Biodiversity loss
- ✓ Pollution

Paradox: Crisis is growing by the day – and so is resistance to action, and resistance to knowledge!

The role of knowledge - for awareness, literacy, policy, management and monitoring

Knowledge support for multilateral, government and private sector efforts

- ✓ Fill data and knowledge gaps
- ✓ Renew and update data and knowledge in the light of a changing ocean
- ✓ Share knowledge to create crisis awareness and ocean literacy
- ✓ Use knowledge to develop products and services in support of action

Changes required at three levels

Strengthen the IOC's ability to deliver

- ✓ Organisationally: ex GOOS governance reform, GOOS/IODE integrated data architecture...
- ✓ Programmatically: ex Marine biodiversity strategy, Sustainable Ocean Planning...
- ✓ Partnerships for better reach and impact: especially in regions

Reinforce IOC governance and management

- ✓ Our statutory basis
- ✓ Medium-term strategy
- ✓ Optimize Secretariat processes for results

Facing the future of the ocean

- ✓ How can Member States, and the ocean, get more out of the IOC

IOC Resolution EC-57/2

2026-2027 Programming & Budgeting

External assessment of IOC's governance & management processes

IOC and the Future of the Ocean Member States' consultation process:

with first focus on the overall review of activities relevant to the role of IOC, including identifying gaps and needs in IOC programmes

drawing on the Action Plan in response to the IOS Evaluation of the IOC strategic positioning and the IOC Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2029

Keeping Member States appraised of and involved with all relevant developments during the intersessional period

2026-2027 Programming & Budgeting

UNESCO Executive Board 220: Preliminary Proposals by the UNESCO Director-General – 220 EX/17

UNESCO Strategic Objective 2: Reconciling Humanity with Nature

UNESCO Outcome 2: “A world where biodiversity, water and the ocean are valued and sustainably managed, in order to face the challenges posed by climate change and contribute to climate action”

IOC Output 1 - Resolution IOC/EC-57/2:

Member States critically supported in strengthening their capacity to conduct marine scientific research, generate knowledge, and develop and implement science-based tools, services, and policies in order to reverse the decline in ocean health and accelerate the transition towards sustainable management of ocean-related risks and opportunities

2026-2027 Programming & Budgeting

Implement priority action areas identified by the IOC Assembly

- ✓ Upscaling the Global Ocean Observing System (**GOOS**) infrastructure to address needs of national and UN processes
- ✓ Expanding the Ocean Data & Information System (**ODIS**) to achieve a truly global coverage
- ✓ Shape a **Marine biodiversity strategy** to better support the Global Biodiversity Framework and BBNJ
- ✓ Advance the **Tsunami Programme** ambition to get 100% of communities at risk to be Tsunami Ready
- ✓ Support **Sustainable Ocean Planning** through strengthened regional delivery mechanisms
- ✓ Support Member State **capacity** to benefit from programmes – with particular focus on **Africa & SIDS**

In order to accelerate delivery of knowledge and services in

- ✓ Climate change and coastal resilience: support mitigation and adaptation
- ✓ Marine biodiversity: support ocean planning within and beyond national jurisdiction
- ✓ Marine pollution: improved infrastructure for marine pollution monitoring as basis for action

2026-2027 Programming & Budgeting

Working with Member State institutions

Working with UN: examples

Ocean & climate observations
Early warning of harmful algae and sargassum
Tsunami warning
Global seabed mapping
GEF International Waters
Marine biodiversity

WMO, UNEP, ISC, UNFCCC
FAO, IMO
UNDRR, UNESCO (SC/DRR)
IHO
UNDP, UNEP, FAO
CBD, UNESCO (MAB)

Ocean Decade leverages innovative partnership opportunities: private sector, philanthropy, civil society

Participating in UNESCO intersectoral work: Education for Sustainable Development – Ocean Literacy
SIDS – Antigua & Barbuda Agenda

2026-2027 Programming & Budgeting

Draft 43 C/5 is current being finalized by UNESCO Secretariat for presentation to the UNESCO Executive Board at its 221st session in April 2025

2 ZNG scenarios are being presented:

- Both absorb additional costs approved by the 220th session of the Board (220 Decision/17)
- Both result in nominal allocation reduction for all sectors and services, including IOC
- IOC budgetary allocation is maintained at 3% of the total UNESCO regular budget

Regular budget for IOC: Option 1 - \$20.7 M

Option 2 - \$21.0 M (vs 42 C/5 - \$21.1M)

2026-2027 Programming & Budgeting

- ✓ Increase in UNESCO standard costs: 42 C/5 staff establishment re-costing 1M+
- ✓ 4 new positions proposed by IOC:
 - **restoring operations support capacity:**
G5 for Tsunami Resilience Section &
G5 for Operational Support Unit
 - **reinforcing 'critically vulnerable areas':**
National Officer for WESTPAC
National Officer for IOCARIBE
- ✓ Overall reduction to the non-staff portion of budget across the board

	42 C/5		Draft 43 C/5			
			Option 1		Option 2	
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
Non-Staff	9.0	43%	6.7	32%	7	33%
Staff	12.1	57%	14.0	68%	14	67%
Total	21.1		20.7		21	

Regular Budget Non-Staff Budget by Region					
	42 C/5	43 C/5			
		Option 1		Option 2	
	\$	\$	%	\$	%
HQ	4,081,216	3,279,543	80%	3,417,761	84%
ENA	1,968,738	1,355,482	69%	1,416,454	72%
AFR	937,309	774,185	83%	802,013	86%
LAC	537,738	416,448	77%	431,749	80%
APA	1,078,252	869,200	81%	903,559	84%
Total	8,603,253	6,694,857	78%	6,971,536	81%

External Assessment of Governance & Management

Scope of work underway:

1. Governance Structure and Processes:

- Assess the decision-making processes, including the efficiency and transparency of communication and reporting mechanisms
- Review the alignment of governance practices with international best practices and standards

2. Management and Operational Processes:

- Analyze the efficiency of the current management structure, including the roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat and senior management team.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of operational processes, including project planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Assess the adequacy and utilization of resources, including human, financial, and technological resources

External Assessment of Governance & Management:

3. Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration:

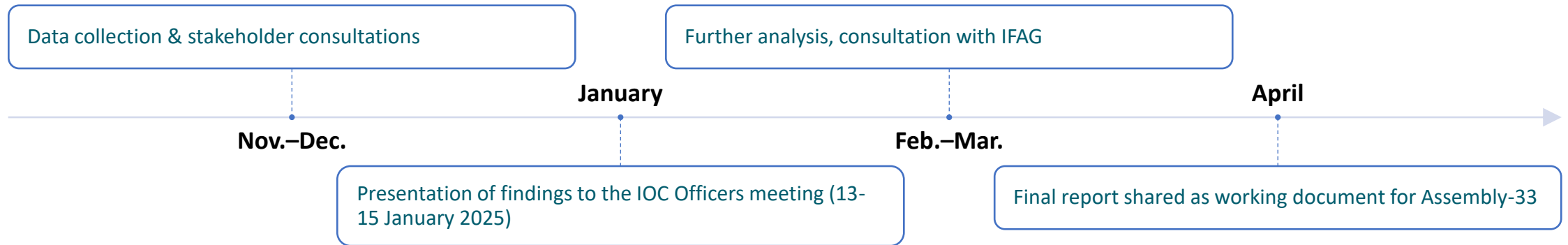
- Assess the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement mechanisms, including interactions with Member States, partners, and other stakeholders
- Evaluate the extent and quality of collaboration with other international organizations, regional bodies, and scientific communities
- Identify opportunities for enhancing partnerships and collaborative efforts

4. Resource Optimization and Sustainability:

- Analyze the current resource allocation and utilization practices, identifying areas for cost savings and efficiency improvements
- Evaluate the sustainability of funding models and resource mobilization strategies
- Provide recommendations for optimizing resource use to support the long-term sustainability of IOC's programs and initiatives

External Assessment of Governance & Management

Timeline:



External Assessment of Governance & Management

Initial Findings:

Medium-term Strategy Implementation

Challenge:

Medium-term strategy: no decision on reporting or mid-term evaluation

C/5 framework does not align well with the High-Level Objectives of the Strategy

Seeking better alignment:

IOC Secretariat will report on Strategy implementation to 2025 Assembly

A Secretariat Implementation Plan will facilitate strategy implementation and reporting

External Assessment of Governance & Management

Initial Findings:

Function Autonomy

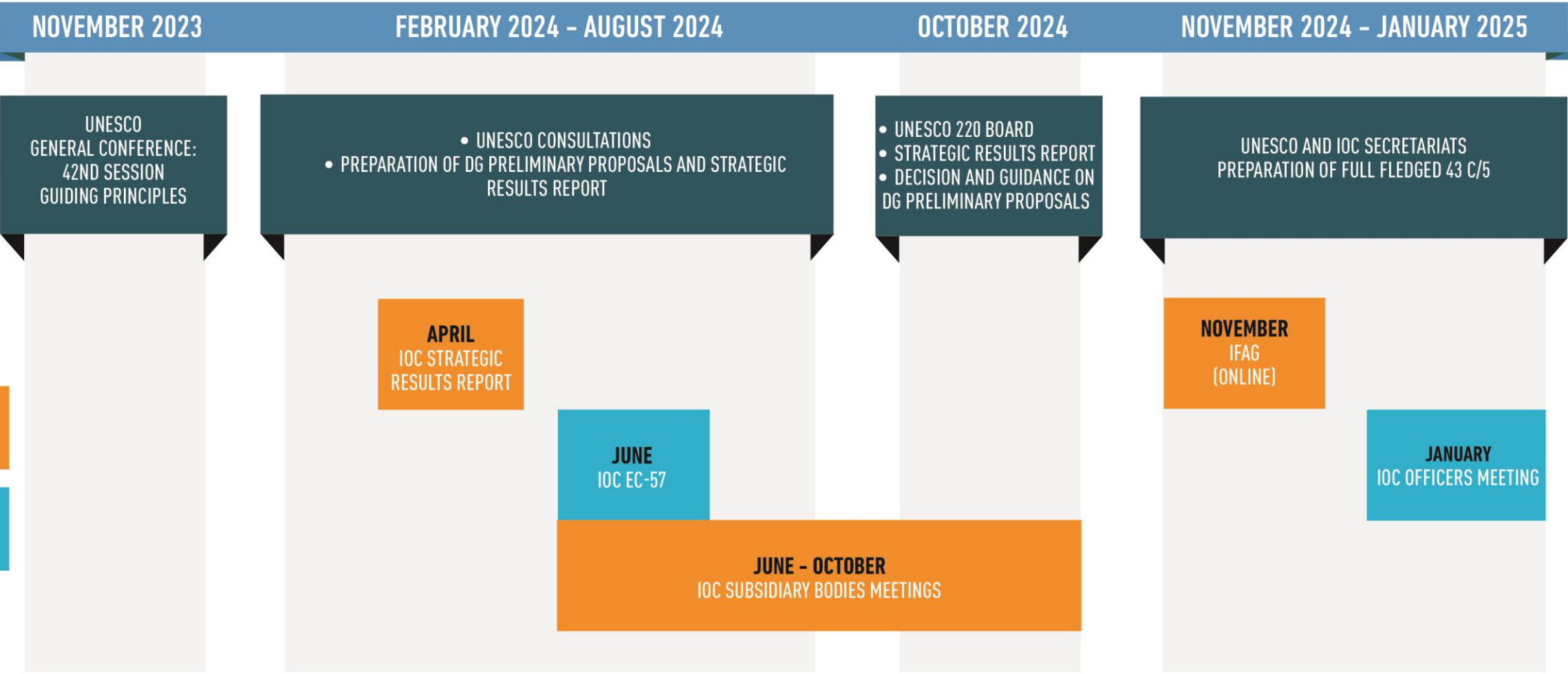
- Lack of clear definition in operational terms
- Non-alignment of programming and budgeting cycles/lack of Member States consultation mechanism
- Representation and visibility at UN level
- Communication strategy and identity

Accountability to Member States

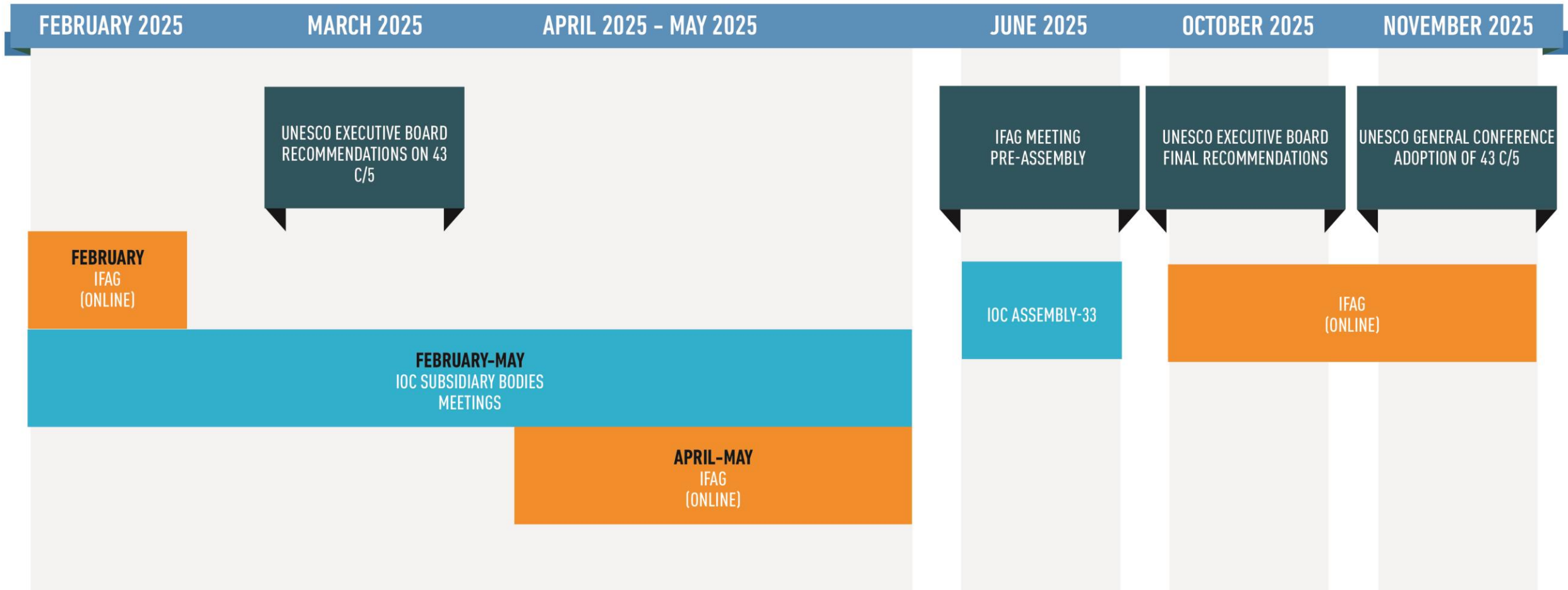
External Assessment of Governance & Management

Initial Findings:

2026-2027 Programming & Budgeting + Proposed Improvements



2026-2027 Programming & Budgeting + Proposed Improvements





THANK YOU



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