

IOC and Future of the Ocean

**Phase 1 – Consultation process with Member States
& partners**

Rationale & context for 'IOC and Future of the Ocean'

- The “big picture”:
 - Statutes of IOC include both international cooperation for generation of knowledge and CD, and application of knowledge for sustainable development, protection & management of the ocean and MS decision making
 - Focus to date has been largely on first part of statutes with significant achievements but with remaining needs (persistent & dynamic)
 - Less investment to date cf. second part of statutes despite growing needs due to rapidly evolving policy framework, growing focus on SOP, and growing demands and opportunities of sustainable ocean economy
- Assembly decision in 2023 requested a thorough consultation to define optimal role of IOC in facilitating Member State and partner activities in *science based sustainable ocean planning, ocean science support to implementation of UN environmental conventions and frameworks, and development of a sustainable ocean economy*

Governance context for 'IOC and Future of the Ocean'

- IOC Resolution EC-57/2 Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission
- 3-year consultation process with three main phases:
 - Phase 1: June 2024 – June 2025: Needs in knowledge, decision-making and action presented to IOC Assembly
 - Phase 2: June 2025 – June 2026: Dialogue on the effectiveness of multilateral ocean frameworks presented to Executive Council
 - Phase 3: June 2026 – June 2027: IOC and the Future of the Ocean presented to IOC Assembly
- Exercise will be carried out in consultation with IOC programmes, Regional Subsidiary Bodies, Member States (including through IFAG & IOC working group on sustainable ocean planning and management), and other relevant stakeholders as necessary
- Executive Council requested the Executive Secretary to start the consultation process with regular reporting to IFAG, and reporting of the results of the first phase to 33rd Session of the IOC Assembly

Phase 1: June 2024 to June 2025

- Objective: Review of activities relevant to the role of IOC in assisting MS and other stakeholders, including identifying gaps and needs in IOC programmes, 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**.
- Method:
 - Review of existing analyses on state and trajectory of the ocean
 - Member State survey on gaps and needs that a future IOC could meet
 - Consultations through interviews with Member States, multilateral organisations and private sector
 - Workshops organized in margins of other meetings including RSBs
- Strong alignment with other processes including Ocean Decade Mid-Term Evaluation, management and governance assessment process, and reporting process for Medium Term Strategy

Focus of Phase 1 Consultation with MS and partners – survey, interviews + workshops

1. **Current status / perceptions** of IOC's position (including achievements and challenges) in relation to meeting Member State and partner needs on:
 - a. Facilitating sustainable ocean planning processes in Member States
 - b. Supporting implementation of relevant UN conventions and frameworks
 - c. Providing relevant knowledge products to public and private sector actors in developing a sustainable ocean economy
2. What would an **ideal future vision and role for IOC** be in the medium term (to 2029) and longer term (post-2030) in relation to meet Member State and partner needs in relation to:
 - a. Facilitating sustainable ocean planning processes in Member States
 - b. Supporting implementation of relevant UN conventions and frameworks through Members States and other partners
 - c. Providing relevant knowledge products to public and private sector actors in developing a sustainable ocean economy
3. What **expanded, improved or new activities and initiatives** (including products and services) could IOC undertake in the medium and long term to achieve this ideal positioning including consideration of role of partners and prioritization
4. What resources, partnerships or other **enabling conditions are needed** to achieve the above?

Milestones & Timing



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Oceanographic
Commission

Milestone	Timing
Discussion of approach at IOC Officers meeting	Mid January 2025
Discussion of process & detailed methodology with IFAG	February 2025
Member State and partner interviews	Throughout February 2025
Member State survey	Launched end February
Agenda item for MS discussion and informal MS dialogue at RSB meetings	WESTPAC: March 2025 IOCARIBE: April 2025 IOCINDIO: April 2025 IOCAFRICA: May 2025
Informal dialogue with Group I	TBC
Presentation progress & initial results to IFAG	April 2025
Presentation to IOC Assembly	June 2025