IOC-OBPS WORK PLAN

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OBPS recently convened its sixth annual Steering Group meeting (SG-OBPS-VI), in Paris, France, from November 12–14, 2024. The meeting provided an opportunity to assess the progress of work packages, evaluate the implementation of the 2024 work plan, and discuss future developments for the OBPS repository. The meeting emphasized several technical priorities, including upgrading the DSpace software and reconfiguring analytics, to ensure the system remains operational and effective. Efforts to evaluate repository content were also a major focus. These included the implementation of a robust review process to ensure only relevant content is retained. A robust review process is being implemented to remove any materials that do not align with these updated criteria. The role of endorsing entities in managing best practices was also extensively discussed, and the need for a rigorous endorsing review process. This year, an Advisory Board was established, whose recommendations were reviewed and discussed. They emphasized the importance of stakeholder engagement with regional and funding organizations and the need for trust-building mechanisms to strengthen OBPS.

A comprehensive roadmap and implementation plan were identified as top priorities, supported by the adoption of a biennial review cycle for strategic alignment. One of the most notable strategic discussions centered on expanding OBPS's role within IOC mandates to maximize impact across the ocean value chain. The group proposed adopting a "federation model," which would integrate IOC Programmes and Regional Sub-Commissions. This model aims to enhance global representation and establish a structured governance framework across IOC. The session concluded with plans to finalize terms of reference and steering group membership.

2. OVERVIEW

The OBPS demonstrates its commitment to advancing the development, accessibility, interoperability, and global impact of best practices in ocean science and services through the following initiatives:

1. **Governance and Strategic Development:**
    - Establishment of the OBPS Advisory Board (8 members, international leaders in various marine science fields relevant to OBPS) with its inaugural meeting held in October 2024, focusing on stakeholder engagement and strategic guidance for both current and future activities of OBPS
    - Revision of the Terms of Reference to align OBPS activities with the broader IOC mandates and a federation model for enhanced IOC representation.
2. **Repository Evolution:**
    - Growth in repository content, reaching 2,226 documents (increase of 185 documents since November 2023), with steady user engagement (86,720 users and 100,905 sessions recorded from July 2023 to November 2024).

- Technical upgrades underway, including a DSpace software upgrade and enhanced metadata filter search. These improvements are designed to streamline access and improve the discoverability of documents for users.

3. **Repository content:**
   - Reviewing of repository content criteria focusing on methods and ensuring only relevant content is retained. A robust review process is being implemented to remove any materials that do not align with these updated criteria.
   - Exploration of AI tools for improving discoverability, content validation and curation of the repository.
   - Translation of endorsed practices into multiple languages, for broader accessibility and inclusivity for diverse global audiences.

4. **Community and Stakeholder Engagement:**
   - Increased outreach through the Virtual OBPS VIII Annual workshop (October 2024), which attracted 700 participants across 72 sessions.
   - Strengthened collaborations with Decade Collaborative Centers and endorsed projects (OceanPredict) through co-designed events, including joint sessions and a booth at the UN Decade Conference in Barcelona, 2024.
   - Addition of new endorsed programmes in OceanPractices for the Decade program, further expanding its reach and impact.
   - 18 new best practice articles published in OBPS's special issue in Frontiers in Marine Science.

5. **Training and Capacity Development:**
   - Launch of a self-paced OTGA training course (online, 4 hours), on how to create, submit, share and search for Best Practices, in November 2024.
   - Initiation of partnerships with the World Maritime University (WMU-WMO) to integrate a best practices module into the university curricula on biodiversity monitoring and maritime operations.

6. **Metrics and Analytics:**
   - Development of a public metrics dashboard to track repository content quality, usage and user engagement.
   - Plans for improved integration of metrics tools (e.g., Google Analytics, Altmetrics) for deeper insights into user behavior.

7. **Funding and Legal Structuring:**
   - Formation of the AISBL legal entity Ocean Practices in 2024 to be able to secure long-term funding and administrative flexibility.
   - Participation in 4 external EU projects (e.g., Blue Cloud, ILIAD, Obsea4Clim, CINEA) to develop and implement best practices.

3. WORKPLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS ACHIEVED

Outcomes	
Outcome N° 1: To secure the OBPS as a trusted system through which the ocean community persistently archives and converges their methods, standards, guides, and other methodological content into context-sensitive best practices.	
Performance indicators *(list 2-5 indicators)*	**Status** *(completed, in progress, canceled)*
- Number of records in the repository: 2226 - Number of registered users depositing documents: 391 - Number of documents accessed (at least once) in a 16-month period: 1812	**In progress**: Operational online repository of OBPS with metadata collection, and enhanced filter search by different categories: endorsement, EOVs, and

- CAPARDUS Collection reviewed: 6 documents retained and 2 withdrawn.	controlled vocabularies.
Deliverables [Repository content guidelines document](#)	

Outcome N° 2: To accelerate the endorsement and convergence of methodologies and conventions across ocean communities into trusted, adopted, and interoperable best practices and standards

Performance indicators *(list 2-5 indicators)* - Number of GOOS-endorsed practices in the repository: 11 - Number of GOOS-endorsed practices downloaded: >20K (sum of downloads for the 11 documents).	**Status** *(completed, in progress, canceled)* **In progress**: The OBPS endorsement process includes the development of a guidance document including a template for entities who would like to endorse their best practices, a promotional flyer for the community, an "endorsed" filter in the repository, and a maturity model to support the process of elevating a practice to a best practice
Deliverables - Bushnell, Mark and Pearlman, Jay (eds) (2024) Ocean Practices System Endorsement: Guidance for the Ocean Community, Version 2024-03-20. Ocean Best Practices System, 8pp. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25607/OBP-1983	

Outcome N° 3: To foster community-led and equitable capacity development in ocean best practices

Performance indicators *(list 2-5 indicators)* - Updates and development of new training courses in Ocean Best Practices on OTGA (ConCENSUS and Blue Cloud 2026) - Number of OBPS VIII Annual virtual workshop participants: 25 sessions and 800 participants from 100 countries - Training program designed and expert advisory team formed for the OBPS's ADAPT project - University curriculum in operational biodiversity monitoring with the World Maritime University (WMU-WMO)	**Status** *(completed, in progress, canceled)* **In progress**: ADAPT Project delayed; University curriculum, courses in CoNCENSUS, and BlueCloud2026 projects under development. **Completed:** OTGA BP courses and OBPS annual workshop completed
Deliverables - Ocean Best Practices Self-Paced online course in OTGA - OBPS VIII Annual Virtual Workshop Proceedings Report	

4. WORKPLAN AND BUDGET

Outcome N° 1: To secure the OBPS as a trusted system through which the ocean community persistently archives and converges their methods, standards, guides, and other methodological content into context-sensitive best practices.
- **Activity 1.1** Secure a CORE Trust Seal Repository Certification (IODE/GOOS Budget)
- **Activity 1.2** Maintenance of AWS subscription (IODE/GOOS Budget)
- **Activity 1.3** User Experience (UX) improvement (EB funds)
- **Activity 1.4** Development OBPS Core system (EB funds)
- **Activity 1.5** Ocean Practices Federated Network (OPFN) development (EB funds)

Outcome N° 2: To foster community-led and equitable capacity development in ocean best practices
- **Activity 2.1** Annual OBPS Workshop (IODE/GOOS Budget)
- **Activity 2.2** Promotional material video and flyers (IODE/GOOS Budget)

- **Activity 2.3** Ocean Best Practices training courses (EB funds)
- **Activity 2.4** Training resources provided by OTGA and other training providers available through the OBPS repository (EB funds: ADAPT)
- **Activity 2.5** Guidelines for Open Access Catalogue (EB: Blue Cloud 2026)

To sustain the critical activities of the OBPS in 2025, a total budget of $87,380 has been allocated to support essential areas such as governance, repository enhancements, and stakeholder engagement, as indicated in the following table:

Milestone	Jan–Jun 2025	Jul–Dec 2025	Total 2025
Project Manager (FTE=1)	$8,460	$16,920	$25,380
Travel to IOC Meetings	$4,500	$4,500	$9,000
OBPS Annual Workshop	$0	$10,000	$10,000
SG-OBPS Annual Meeting	$0	$25,000	$25,000
Promotional Material	$2,500	$2,500	$5,000
Repository Certification (CTS)	$0	$4,000	$4,000
AWS Subscription	$4,500	$4,500	$9,000
Total	**$19,960**	**$67,420**	**$87,380**

5. LIST OF PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

- **IOC-OBPS Parent Programmes:** GOOS and IODE.
- **Steering Group** (https://oceanexpert.org/group/448): Composed by 24 members with a wide range of backgrounds, geographical scope, and institutions types. The Steering Group participates in monthly meetings including the SG Annual meeting to advance the work plan and strategy development of OBPS. Most of the members are very active and contribute to at least one of the seven work packages. Additional responsibilities include: collaborative work on task teams, reviewing materials such as internal guidelines documents, and representing OBPS in external events.
- **Advisory Board** (https://oceanexpert.org/group/552): Composed by eight members well represented geographically and with senior profiles in different fields in ocean science and policy. Their primary objective is to provide strategic advice to advance best practices in ocean science and applications.
- **Ocean Practices Ambassadors (**https://oceanexpert.org/group/504): The early career Ocean Practices Ambassadors are representing diverse voices, and actively promoting the access and implementation of ocean best practices in the field, thereby raising awareness, building trust, and shaping ocean best practices across the entire ocean value chain.
- **OBPS Task Teams**: Task Teams of specific duration support specific needs related to the Work Package objectives. OBPS currently has five Task Teams: Decision Trees; Omics/eDNA Protocol Management; Coastal Observations in Under Resourced countries; OBPS Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Statement and Value Chain Analysis and KPI Development
- **External Projects collaborations:**

    - **Blue Cloud 2026:** OTGA courses and webinars (via the Trainning Academy) in Best Practices in data management and sharing.
    - **ILIAD**: Creation and adoption of best practices and standards.

- **Obsea4Clim**: Dissemination material on Capacity building and sharing of best practices.
- **CINEA**: A comprehensive and user-friendly information system.

6. LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY

- Reviewing of the Terms of References of the IOC OBPS to further expand the involvement and cooperation in the development of best practices by all IOC programmes and regional sub-commissions

- The rationale of establishing the AISBL legal entity Ocean Practices (OP) is to secure long-term funding for OBPS, to support its expansion via grants, sponsorships, donations, and membership fees, and to allow for flexibility on administration issues (ie. hiring, travel, etc.).
- OBPS (through IEEE) is involved in a number of external EU projects, where the budget is mainly covering personnel costs. The aim of the tasks in these project is to create best practices. The AISBL, will be replacing the involvement of IEEE as engaged organizations. The following EU projects and their corresponding budgets include:

    - Obsea4Clim [2024-2028]: 60K euros
    - CINEA [2024-2025]: 68K euros
    - Blue Cloud 2026 [2023-2026]: 63,9K euros/personnel, and 15K euros/OTGA: Training Academy
    - ILIAD[2022-2025]: 70K euros

7. POTENTIAL RISKS OF NOT ACHIEVING THE EXPECTED RESULTS

    - High cost of adapting repository technology (DSpace)
    - Lack of external budgetary funding for the development of OBPS Core System
    - In kind or volunteering human resources, limits the time investment
    - Missing technical profiles in Steering Group

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Signed by OBPS Project Manager:

Patricia Martin Cabrera

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