

**IOC Circular Letter No 3032**  
(Available in English, French, Spanish, Russian)

IOC/VH/KE/ki  
12 March 2025

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

C.c. : Permanent Delegations to UNESCO of IOC Member States  
National Commissions for UNESCO of IOC Member States  
IOC Officers  
Chair and Vice-Chairs of IOC Subsidiary Bodies (Scientific, Technical and Regional)

**Subject: 2026 State of the Ocean Report: Call for nominations for Advisory Board members**

The focus on the world's ocean and appreciation of its crucial role for life on Earth, the global climate, food security, human health and wellbeing, as well as its contribution to the global economy, have led to an increased demand by decision-makers for relevant, strategic, current, and easily accessible information on the state of the ocean.

At its 53rd session in February 2021, the IOC Executive Council (EC) considered the proposal to prepare a periodic 'IOC State of the Ocean Report (StOR)' as a response to increased demand for key information on the state of the ocean (see [IOC/INF-1393](#)). The [State of the Ocean Report 2022 – Pilot edition](#) was presented to the Executive Council in June 2022. This first edition was structured around the ten initial Challenges of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, 2021–2030, and identified an urgent need for a quantitative description of the state of the ocean and the capacity to report changes.

Following the 55th session of the Executive Council, the IOC Secretariat invited Member States to provide further views on the pilot edition of the StOR and recommendations on how to improve future editions, focusing on its scope and publication frequency (IOC Circular Letter, [2899](#)). A StOR Advisory Board was established in the first quarter of 2023 to support the preparation of revised StOR concept note and to actively guide the preparation of the next StOR edition, launched in 2024.

The StOR Advisory Board is composed of approximately ten experts from IOC Member States and the IOC Secretariat, taking into account the representation of the different electoral groups.

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Mr Vidar HELGESEN  
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The [2024 StOR](#) built on the pilot edition providing updates on physical, chemical and biological aspects of the ocean, the threats posed to the ocean, access to ocean observing and data infrastructure and insights into ocean literacy and Indigenous and traditional knowledge systems. Lessons learned in developing the 2024 StOR were reflected in the *Report on the Second Edition of the 'IOC State of the Ocean Report' (StOR) (2024) and Guidance for Future Editions* ([IOC/EC-57/4.5.Doc\(1\)](#)), which outlined an updated concept note. The Executive Council noted that there is an ongoing role for the Advisory Board with the following Terms of Reference:

1. *Guide the ongoing development of the Concept Note of the State of the Ocean Report to ensure the further refinement of the purpose, frequency, scope, target audience, and alignment of the StOR with other UN assessment reports.*
2. *Provide advice to the Secretariat in support of the production of the StOR, including:*
  - (i) *defining themes relevant for the different Ocean Decade Outcomes,*
  - (ii) *identifying the respective topics for the storylines.*
  - (iii) *identifying authors and reviewers for each storyline which reflect diversity in expertise, gender, geographic representation, career status and Indigenous Peoples and other coastal communities.*
3. *Provide regular reports on the concept and production of the StOR to IOC governing bodies.*

As part of preparations for the next edition of the StOR, scheduled for release in 2026, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) kindly requests Member States to nominate experts to the StOR Advisory Board. Nominations of experts from electoral groups II and III are particularly encouraged.

The Secretariat would appreciate receiving nominations before 31 March 2025 by email to [yj.lee@unesco.org](mailto:yj.lee@unesco.org).

Any questions can be addressed to the Head of the Ocean Science Section, Dr Karen Evans ([k.evans@unesco.org](mailto:k.evans@unesco.org)) with copy to Dr Kirsten Isensee ([k.isensee@unesco.org](mailto:k.isensee@unesco.org)).

With the assurances of my highest consideration, I remain,

Yours sincerely

*[signature]*

Vidar Helgesen  
Executive Secretary

Enclosure: 1/ Nomination form for StOR Advisory Board membership.

## 1/ State of the Ocean Report (StOR) Advisory Board Nomination Form

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Name:

Position:

Institution:

Tel:

Email:

Postal Address:

**Additional comments:**

Nomination submitted by:

Signature:

Position

Government Department/Agency:

Date:

Nomination Forms duly completed and signed should be sent by **31 March 2025** to the IOC Secretariat by email to [yj.lee@unesco](mailto:yj.lee@unesco) through one of the following channels:

1. The coordinating body for liaison with IOC (see the [list](#))
2. Head of UNESCO National Commission
3. Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Note: Any questions regarding the StOR and the StOR Advisory Board can be address to the Head of Ocean Science Section, Dr Karen Evans ([k.evans@unesco.org](mailto:k.evans@unesco.org)) with copy to Dr Kirsten Isensee ([k.isensee@unesco.org](mailto:k.isensee@unesco.org)).