

Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
Reports of Meetings of Experts and Equivalent Bodies



**Ocean Data and Information System
(ODIS) Steering Group Meeting**

Report

10 March 2026

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Ocean Data and Information System Steering Group (SG-ODIS), Third Session, 10 March 2026 (virtual meeting) 5pp. & annex, 2026. (Reports of Meetings of Experts and Equivalent Bodies).

1. Overview

Time: Two Sessions – 08:00-10:30 and 16:00-17:30 (UTC)

Date: 10 March 2026

Participants: <https://oceanexpert.org/event/4979#participants>

Chairs: Adam Leadbetter and Elena Tel (ODIS SG Co-chairs)

Format: Online

Webpage: <https://oceanexpert.org/event/4979>

2. Agenda

1. Current status
2. Considerations / Questions
3. Developing a workplan
4. Next steps

3. Open discussion on the points under point 2 - Agenda

- ODIS is more than a technology
- Data discovery/search interface is down at the moment, we need to get this up and running again
- However, IOC has no resources for maintenance -> we need to find a long-time solution.

During its last Assembly (A33) the Member States (MS) adopted the IOC Data Architecture (IOC DA) consisting of 2 main pillars:

1. IOC DA implementation plan
2. FAIR Ocean Data Charter

Main goal: What do end-users need and how can we deliver this (to MS and IOC programmes)?

During its last Assembly, the Executive Secretary of IOC also received the request from MS to streamline the activities of IOC.

Question and proposal towards the Steering Group members (SG members):

- Question: What does ODIS SG want to cover in its workplan? DL for the workplan for the next 2 years is end of August 2026.
- Proposal (taking into account the requested streamlining of IOC: The ODIS SG becomes the Data Architecture SG. With this in mind, an OBIS SG member will be invited to join the IOC Data Architecture Steering Group

ODIS and IOC Data Architecture:

If ODIS SG would become IOC DA SG what should we keep in mind?

- Focus on the data types that the MS and other IOC programmes need.
- How do we focus on these datatypes?
- See that we are cross-cutting through the IOC programmes and not work in silos. = including better connection between GOOS and IODE, and relevant work in IOC science team such as the SDG indicators.

It is recognised that there is a big need to communicate on the activities of ODIS. To inform NODCs and ADUs that ‘although activities seem paused, we will be back’.

But keep NODCs and ADUs informed about the process and the timeline in order that people do not disconnect.

Moving forward a consultancy will be requested to help with the IOC Data Architecture definition.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) is almost finished.

Steering Group members who wish to comment on these ToRs can request these ToRs from the IODE Secretariat (k.de-lichtervelde@unesco.org). Comments should be received before 20 March 2026, 13h P CET.

The timeframe for this consultancy is expected to go as follows:

- Posting of RFP (expected around 25 March 2026)
- For about a period of 1 month
- After that 1-2 months to get the contract in place
- Expected start date: second half of June

If SG Members would know companies that, according to them, would have the skills to reply to this RFP, it would be much appreciated if they could pass on the coordinates and contact details of these so that they can be contacted and requested to submit a proposal.

ODIS Operations Group (ODIS OG)

The ODIS OG is on hold at the moment. They cannot work in a vacuum and a clear workplan is needed by ODIS SG to give the ODIS OG clear deliverables and to align with the SG's new strategic vision. Both SG and OG groups need to work closely together.

We need a flexible operations model with appropriate resources. This is challenging as IOC's resources are currently limited.

Some SG members offered in-kind support. This should be further discussed as part of the workplan so as to move together faster. The bigger the group, the better or the more can be done. ODIS OG should also be open to connecting with other groups such as: OBIS, GOOS. If working towards IOC DA then the scope will be even wider.

A holistic approach can be the opportunity to fully break open the siloes and work together towards joint goals.

ODIS / OIH History

The SG identified the need to understand the history of OIH/ODIS in more detail to help identify the way forward whilst keeping flexible.

- **ODIS Technical Documentation:** book.odis.org
- **ODIS History/Background:** [Document 35342 \(OceanExpert\)](#)

Workplan and Way ahead

The deadline for the ODIS SG workplan is the end of August 2026 so as to be approved by IODE-29 (05-09 October 2026).

The ODIS (DA) SG, or a subgroup of the SG – depending on the preference of SG members, will provide oversight of the work and deliverables of the consultancy for the IOC Data Architecture Implementation Plan

The SG identified the need for a NODCs support task team.

QMF seems to be the most important link between NODCs and should therefore be integrated in this work.

At the moment there is an IODE accreditation for NODCs. However, not that many NODCs take this up.

3 ways to get accreditation:

- IODE route
- ISO 9001
- CoreTrustSeal

Support for NODCs to take up this accreditation is limited and take up is low. Clearer communication of the how to and the benefits is required.

A further point raised in the meeting was the request from the joint WMO/IOC Collaborative Board to look at interoperability between IOC and WMO systems, TOR have been prepared for a JCB subgroup.

TO DO

- For SC members who wish to do so, provide a review of the ToRs for the request for proposals for the IOC Data Architecture Implementation Plan
DL: Friday 20 March 2026 – 13h CET (contact Kristin if you wish to provide a review)
- Prepare an update on the status of ODIS to IODE community
DL: out by the end of April 2026 after the next SG meeting
- Email Call for Volunteers: an email will be sent by March 12th to solicit members for the Task Teams (see below) and colleagues who wish to work with the WMO/IOC JCB subgroup
- OBIS co-chair, Dan Lear, invited to join the ODIS SG as OBIS representative
- 2 Task Teams to be setup:
 1. Task Team: Communications and Operations:
 - Goal: Draft a clear "Vision Statement" for ODIS/OIH.
 - ask: Communicate the current technical status to stakeholders and define the relationship between the SG and the Ops group.
 - Deadline: Draft communication to IODE to be reviewed at the April 21st meeting.
 2. Task Team: NODC/ADU Support:
 - Goal: Evaluate the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of data centres.
 - Task: Prepare documentation to support the accreditation process and identify barriers to participation.

Next meeting

Tuesday 21 April 2026

Annex 1. List of Participants

Denis CHANG SENG

Karen EVANS

Jhonny GARCES ORTEGA

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