

IOC 55th Executive Council

3.2 INTERNAL OVERSIGHT SERVICE (IOS) EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGIC POSITIONING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION (IOC-UNESCO) [Resolution A-31/2(IV)]

<u>Working documents:</u>	IOC/EC-55/3.2.Doc(1)	Draft Action Plan in response to the IOS Evaluation of the IOC strategic positioning
<u>Reference:</u>	212 EX/9	Internal Oversight Service (IOS) evaluation of the strategic positioning of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC-UNESCO)
	IOS/EVS/PI/197	Evaluation of the strategic positioning of IOC-UNESCO

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EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGIC POSITIONING OF IOC-UNESCO

UNESCO Internal
Oversight Service
Evaluation Office

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IOC/EVS/PI 197

Questions posed (1)

Alignment with processes and frameworks such as UNESCO's Expected Results Framework, the Agenda 2030 including its Sustainable Development Goal 14 on Life Under Water, the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Sendai Framework

Strategic **positioning vis-à-vis** international and national **partners** and related policy processes and frameworks appropriate and coherent?

Positioning to leverage its **comparative advantage for** the upcoming **Decade** of the Ocean

Questions posed (2)

What **results**, intended or unintended, have been achieved in the areas of IOC-UNESCO's High-Level Objectives, including the Global Ocean Science Report?

What **outcomes** can be observed in relation to **gender equality**, inclusion of disadvantaged groups and in the area of Priority Africa?

What are the **key achievements and challenges** for IOC-UNESCO's work?

To what extent has IOC-UNESCO contributed to **capacity development for Member States** at the individual, institutional and political levels?

Questions posed (3)

How appropriate are current **efforts for monitoring and evaluation** of IOC-UNESCO's results and way of working?

What lessons can be identified for IOC-UNESCO's current **visibility** and communication tools, measures and strategy?

To what extent does IOC-UNESCO ensure **sustainability of its work**, including through development and a targeted resource mobilization strategy and the maintenance of strategic partnerships?

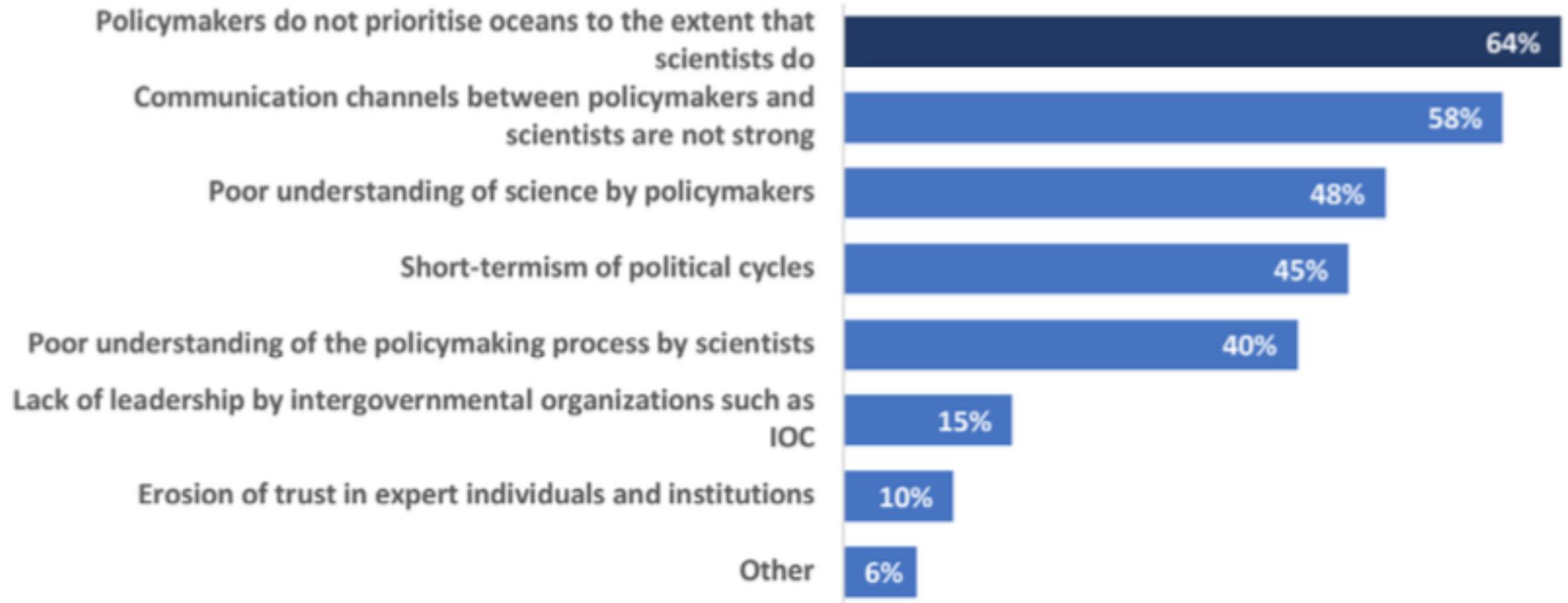
Key Results from Surveys (1)

*Figure 6: IOC-UNESCO's Strengths*³⁰



Key Results from Surveys (2)

Figure 4: Barriers to Science-Based Policymaking for the Oceans²⁸



Key Results from Surveys (4)

Figure 5: Confidence in IOC-UNESCO to lead a Successful Ocean Decade

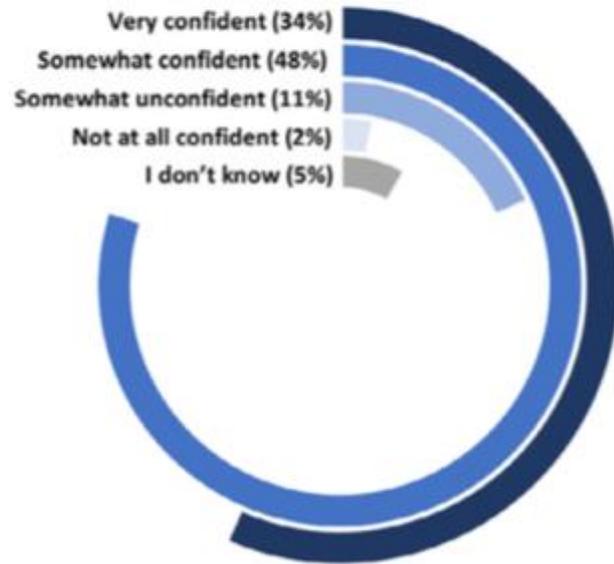


Figure 7: IOC-UNESCO readiness for capacity development

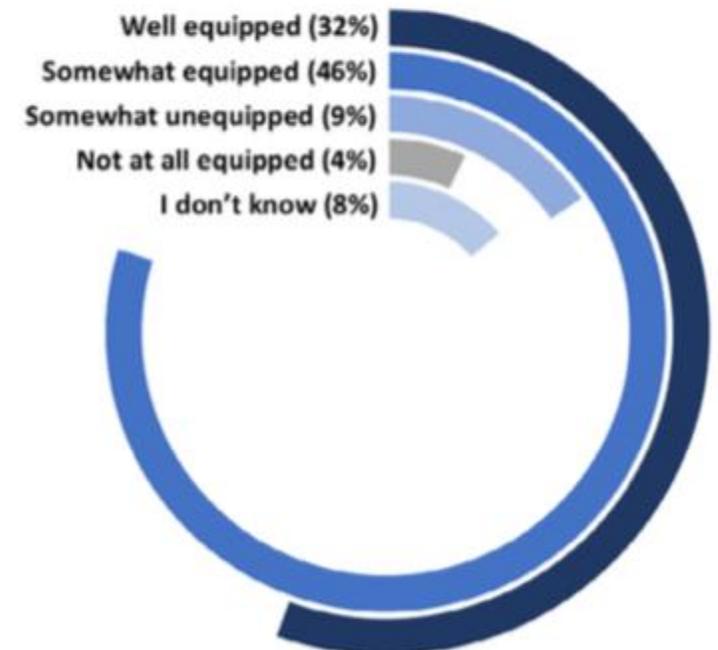
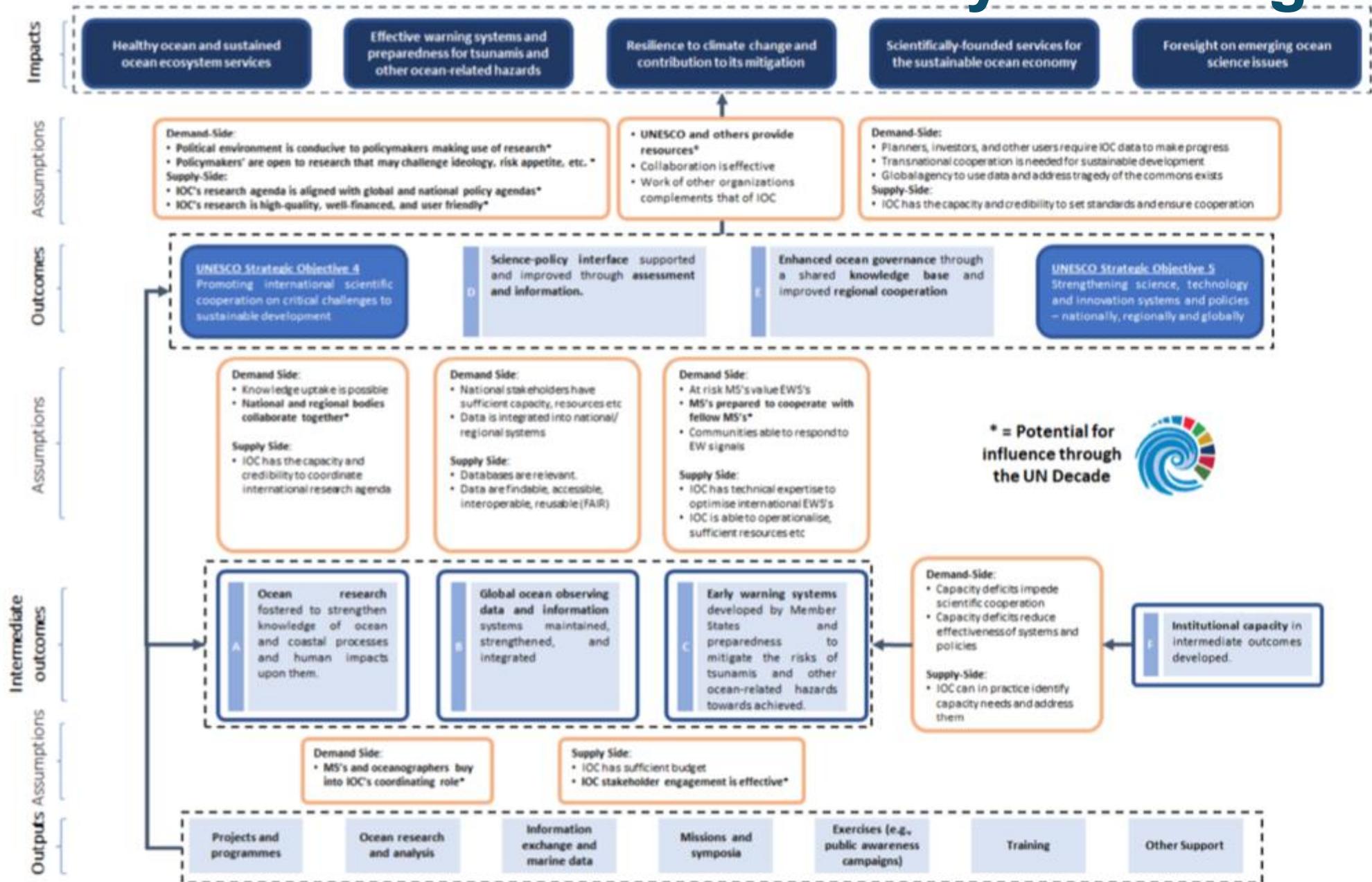


Figure 3: Science and Sustainable Ocean Management – A Theory of Change

Theory of Change



Key Findings (1)

The work undertaken by IOC-UNESCO is increasingly **relevant** in the context of the **Decade of Ocean Science** for Sustainable Development and **urgently needed to strengthen the sustainable management of the ocean**

IOC-UNESCO has made **vital technical contributions** at the outcome level towards its high-level objectives, although an increasing number of actors have become active in this space

Nonetheless, **IOC-UNESCO faces difficulties in engaging policy makers at the national level**

Key Findings (2)

Capacities have been developed at the individual and organizational levels but lack the necessary political will at national level to guarantee more sustainable results

The UNESCO global priority Gender Equality is not sufficiently resourced and lacks visibility in the ocean space within and outside IOC-UNESCO.

While Priority Africa is well represented, attention to other UNESCO regional priority groups such as Pacific SIDS is considered as insufficient

IOC is not always fully recognized for its contributions not least as a result of inadequate communication

Key Findings (3)

The UN **Decade** of Ocean Science **is an important opportunity**, but the absence of a clearly defined results framework could jeopardize its success

IOC-UNESCO and UNESCO have an opportunity to explore mutually beneficial ways of **promoting the cultural, educational, and scientific dimensions of the Ocean**

The **optimal institutional relationship between UNESCO and IOC-UNESCO** is yet to be clarified

IOC-UNESCO's activities increased over the last years, but its budget has not kept pace

Conclusions, way forward (1)

The **Decade is thus an opportunity** for IOC-UNESCO to reaffirm its global leading position and relevance to the members of UN Oceans, to policy makers and to the world at large in helping to bring about a more sustainable management of the ocean.

Collaboration with other agencies to develop a monitoring framework with measurable indicators should be prioritized to ensure an optimum allocation of resources and tasks.

Increasing decentralized work at the regional level, with existing regional networks and organizations

Advisory services to Member States at the national level, supporting the **capacity development and national policy development** in alignment with objectives laid out in SDG 14 of Agenda 2030.

Conclusions, way forward (2)

IOC-UNESCO should fully assume its **role as steward of the ocean science agenda**

Promote **gender equality in leadership** positions

Explore the **optimal financial and organizational arrangements** to support Member States in decision-making in view of IOC-UNESCO's envisaged global positioning **in science-based ocean management and for leading the UN Ocean Decade** as well as to facilitate intersectoral collaboration

6 Recommendations

Management response

Retreat, 25 and 26 October 2021

Session 1 Topic: Sustainable Ocean Management/Planning – What is Emerging and Needed?
Recommendation in focus: #1 (resourcing and organizational setting for IOC, now and in the future)

Session 2 Topic: Influencing policy - How to Increase IOC's Impact and Optimize its Positioning?
Recommendations in focus: #5 (increasing policy influence), #4 (better leveraging data and knowledge), and #6 (gender equality)

Session 3 Topic: UN Decade of Ocean Science – Ensuring Success
Recommendations in focus: #2 (Decade results framework) & #3 (UNESCO and Decade)

DRAFT ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO THE IOS EVALUATION OF THE IOC STRATEGIC POSITIONING

Summary

In September 2021, UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service published *The Evaluation of the Strategic Positioning of IOC-UNESCO—[IOS/EVS/PI/197](#)* (the Evaluation). The Evaluation included a set of six recommendations and suggested actions. IOC's management response accepted all recommendations. The key findings of the evaluation, its recommendations and the management response were presented to the UNESCO Executive Board at its 212th session ([212 EX/9](#)).

This document draws on the main conclusions of the Evaluation, reflections of the Secretariat and discussions with the IOC Officers at their meeting on 14–17 January 2022. It synthesises key challenges and opportunities facing IOC, as highlighted in the Evaluation, and introduces a draft Action Plan that seeks to turn the Evaluation's recommendations into actions. The IOC Executive Council is expected to discuss the report, its recommendations and the proposed Draft Action Plan. This will allow the IOC Secretariat to finalise the full-fledged Action Plan for the 32nd session of the IOC Assembly in 2023 and, in some instances, provide an update or report on progress.

Decision proposed: The Executive Council is invited to take note of this document and consider the draft decision referenced as Dec. EC-55/3.2 in the Provisional Action Paper (document IOC/EC-55/AP).

Implementation Plan (1)

	Proposed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
	Recommendation 1: By September 2022 – Follow up on the request of the IOC-UNESCO 30th Assembly by estimating the necessary resources and accelerating the application of provisions of Article 10.4 of the IOC-UNESCO Statutes to effectively operate the IOC at an “optimal” level, as well as to determine the most appropriate organizational setting in view of IOC’s envisaged global role in science-based ocean management and leading the UN Ocean Decade.		
1.a.	Obtain professional legal advice on the implications of utilizing Article 10.4 of the IOC Statutes to attract additional funding to the Commission to ensure effective and continuing delivery of its global and regional programmes, including the Ocean Decade	Early 2023	IOC ES in consultation with BSP and LA
1.b.	In cooperation with the Bureau for Strategic Planning, set up a Structured Financing Dialogue with a view to attracting new donors. To aid with this, identify a small group of member states, perhaps current main contributors that could serve as advocates and lead peer-to-peer resource mobilization and engagement conversations	End 2022	IOC ES, in consultation with BSP & IOC Officers
1.c.	Explore options for convening a High-Level Forum of decision-making, on a quadrennial basis, possibly in connection with the IOC Assembly	Summer 2023	IOC ES and DC <i>a.i.</i>
1.d.	Develop strategic messaging around an IOC-wide guiding framework of Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management and strongly position this framework within the Ocean Decade	End 2022	IOC ES and DC <i>a.i.</i>

Implementation Plan (2)

	Proposed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
	Recommendation 2: By June 2022 – Develop in partnership with other agencies a Results Framework for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, clearly identifying the objectives, intermediate objectives, indicators, and indicative owners across the UN System and wider in order to monitor and evaluate progress against the Decade’s objectives.		
2.a.	Commence rollout of the first iteration of the Results Framework for the Ocean Decade	Summer 2022	IOC ES and DCU
2.b.	Set in place a process for collectively developing with UN-Oceans partners and all relevant stakeholders’ strategic ambitions and targets across the ten Ocean Decade Challenges and progressively integrate these into the Results Framework for the Ocean Decade	End 2023	IOC ES and DCU
2.c.	Operationalize the review mechanisms envisaged in the Implementation Plan for the Ocean Decade, including the series of international and regional Ocean Decade Conferences every 3 year, to provide the platform for stocktaking and adaptive management of Decade priorities	End 2022	IOC ES and DCU

Implementation Plan (3-1)

	Proposed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
	Recommendation 3: By June 2022 – Determine how UNESCO can support the Decade.		
3.a.	Develop clear, targeted messaging to different donor group on the benefits and means of investing in the Ocean Decade	End 2022	DCU in consultation with the IOC Management Team
3.b.	Further assess resource needs for IOC programmes and structures to effectively support the implementation of the Decade (beyond the coordination functions assumed by DCU)	End 2022	IOC ES in consultation with the IOC Management Team
3.c.	Building on decision 29 of the 214 th UNESCO Executive Board, work with other UNESCO sectors to make the Ocean a transversal priority theme and position the Ocean Decade as the primary vehicle through which Member States can support it	Summer 2023	IOC ES and DCU
3.d.	Develop a clear and structured ‘ask’ for financial or in-kind resources for partners’ support of the Decade Coordination Unit	End 2022	DCU

Implementation Plan (3-2)

	Proposed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
	Recommendation 3: By June 2022 – Determine how UNESCO can support the Decade.		
3.e.	Undertake a detailed mapping and analysis of the activities and interests of UN Oceans partners to identify existing or potential Decade-related initiatives, identify gaps and make recommendations for strong engagement and resource provision	Summer 2023	DCU
3.f.	Encourage UN partners to establish and resource Decade Coordination Offices to lead coordination around regional or thematic priorities	ASAP and ongoing throughout Decade	DCO
3.g.	Ensure that financial or in-kind support to the Decade Coordination Unit is a prerequisite to membership of the Ocean Decade Alliance	ASAP and throughout the admission process	DCU

Implementation Plan (4)

	Proposed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
	Recommendation 4: By June 2024 – Consider options for further exploiting IOC-UNESCO’s data and knowledge base		
4.a.	Institute a Working Group (WG) across the Commission’s sections to develop a list of socio-economic indicators – e.g. for use in the State of the Ocean Report. If necessary, expand the WG to involve other actors such as the UN-Oceans agencies	End 2022	ES and IOC Management Team
4.b.	Develop processes for streamlining and facilitating the IOC data pipeline so it can support the development of indicators proposed above	Summer 2023	ES and IOC Management Team
4.c.	Accelerate the development of the Ocean Data and Information System (ODIS) and its contribution to the UN Ocean Decade	Summer 2023	IOC and IOC Management Team
4.d.	Seek funding to prepare the first State of the Ocean Report by the 32 nd session of the IOC Assembly in 2023	Summer 2023	ES and IOC Management Team

Implementation Plan (5)

	Proposed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
	Recommendation 5: By June 2022 – Explore means of attracting additional senior policy engagement in the work of IOC-UNESCO		
5.a.	Implement a mapping exercise with key national and regional organisations across diverse sectors with a role in policy making to identify priority entry points for reinforced engagement via the Ocean Decade and IOC’s programmatic work	Summer 2023	ES and IOC Management Team
5.b.	Effect a step change in communications effectiveness beginning with developing an <i>IOC Communication Strategy</i> with assistance from a communications expert	Summer 2023	ES and IOC Management Team
5.c.	Produce an annual or biannual bulletin on the Commission’s ‘Top Outcomes’, highlighting its major achievements and demonstrating its continued value	January 2023	ES and IOC Communications Team
5.d.	Clarify IOC’s <i>Logo Policy</i> to ensure that the Commission has a consistent brand	End 2022	ES and IOC Communications Team

Implementation Plan (6)

	Proposed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
	Recommendation 6: By June 2022 – Assume a leadership role in the area of gender equality and women’s empowerment in marine science, supporting its existing data efforts such as the Global Ocean Science Report with dedicated action.		
6.a.	Request advice of UNESCO Division of Gender Equality to develop Gender Guidelines for IOC expert committees and other bodies, as applicable. Submit the proposal to the IOC Assembly at its 32 nd session	Spring 2023	IOC Gender Focal Point and EO
6.b.	Continue to encourage IOC Member States to ensure gender equality in their delegations to IOC Governing Bodies. Provide statistics after each session to monitor progress.	June 2022	ES, IOC Gender Focal Point and EO
6.c.	Institute a Working Group to develop a roadmap through which gender equality can be better mainstreamed throughout the Ocean Decade	End 2022	DCU and IOC Gender Focal Point
6.d.	Scope out partners that may be interested in supporting a ‘Women in Ocean Science Award’, including through UN Global Compact	Summer 2023	DCU and IOC Gender Focal Point
6.e.	Work with HR experts to target qualified female candidates for senior management positions within the Commission and to improve geographical distribution	ASAP and continuously	ES and EO

Decision Proposed in Action Paper

Dec. EC-55/3.2

Internal Oversight Service Evaluation of the Strategic Positioning of IOC

The Executive Council,

1. Taking note of the Draft Interim Action Plan in response to the IOS evaluation (212 EX/9, IOS evaluation report (IOS/EVS/PI/197)) as presented in document IOC/EC-55/3.2.Doc(1),
2. Invites the Secretariat to reflect the discussions under this agenda item [or, if needed – and address the following specific points] in preparing the final version of the Action Plan for consideration and adoption by the IOC Assembly.