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**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)**

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

OVERVIEW OF WORK OF DECADE ADVISORY BOARD 2022/2023

Summary

This document provides a brief overview of the process that was used to establish the Decade Advisory Board, identifies the key issues discussed by the Board, provides links to the detailed meeting notes of each Board meeting, and sets out the process to establish the new Board when the current term of expert members comes to an end in December 2023.

The IOC Assembly at its 31st session approved the Terms of Reference for the Decade Advisory Board based on Document [IOC-31/3.7.Doc\(1\)](#), including the selection process of its 15 members. Between 5 July and 22 September 2021, a call for nominations was opened for members of the Board. Via this process 243 nominations were put forward either by Member States of IOC-UNESCO, United Nations, United Nations entities, or intergovernmental organizations, as well as self-nominations. A Selection Panel was convened by the IOC Executive Secretary and composed of the IOC Chair and IOC Officers representing the five IOC electoral groups. With the technical support of the Decade Coordination Unit, this Panel selected 15 expert members from 13 countries to be members of the Decade Advisory Board. Expert members were notified and accepted their nominations in December 2021.

In its evaluation the Panel undertook to ensure that the expert members have sufficient skills, knowledge, influence and impartiality regarding the vision and objectives of the Decade and are able to undertake the work outlined in the terms of reference. Diversity across sectors was a key consideration including a mix of members from the scientific community, the private sector, philanthropy, and government. Expert members were also selected with due consideration to expertise, geographic, generational, and gender balance.

In addition to the 15 expert members, UN Legal Counsel/DOALOS, which is the Secretariat and focal point of UN-Oceans and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, will have one permanent seat on the Decade Advisory Board. The IOC Secretariat as coordinator of the Decade will also have a permanent seat on the Board. Three more seats were reserved for UN Agencies.

In January 2022, following a process agreed with UN-Oceans that called for Expressions of Interest from UN Agencies for a rotating seat on the Board, the United Nations Environment Programme, World Meteorological Organization, and the International Seabed Authority were all confirmed as UN Agency representatives for 2022. A similar process was launched in January 2023, and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, the International Maritime Organisation, and the World Meteorological Organization were confirmed as the UN Agency representatives in 2023.

The Decade Advisory Board has met five times since its establishment. It held its first meeting in-person in March 2022. Three online meetings followed in 2022 and early 2023, and the second in-person meeting of the Board was held in May 2023. The full list of meeting reports can be accessed via the following links:

- [Meeting No. 01/2022, March 2022](#)
- [Meeting No. 02/2022, September 2022](#)
- [Meeting No. 03/2022, November 2023](#)
- [Meeting No. 01/2023, February 2023](#)
- [Meeting No. 02/2023, May 2023](#)

The bulk of the work of the first four meetings of the Board related to review of applications for endorsement of Decade Programmes. Board has discussed and made recommendations related to the endorsement of Decade programmes from Calls for Decade Actions No. 2/2021, 03/2022 and 04/2022. This has included recommendations to endorse seven programmes convert some regional programmes to the status of regional decentralised coordination structures in the form of Decade Collaborative Centres. The Board has also made recommendations related to the scoping of Calls for Decade Actions No. 03/2022, 04/2022 and 05/2023.

The Board has made recommendations to streamline the application and endorsement process for Decade programmes, to increase the relevance of and synergies between Decade programmes, and to improve monitoring of and support to endorsed Decade Actions. The Board has held detailed discussions and provided advice to the Decade Coordination Unit on the

conceptualisation and roll-out of the Vision 2030 process, planning for the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference and the optimisation of the Ocean Decade Capacity Development Facility.

The Board has established Task Teams related to resource mobilisation, the role of indigenous and local knowledge in the Decade, and the means of increasing engagement of Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries. The priority actions resulting from the discussions of these Task Teams which met for the first time in person in 2023 are documented in the Meeting Report No. 02/2023.

As per the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure, the individual experts who are Board members were selected for a two-year term which is renewable one time, and that staggering of the expert members will take place to ensure continuity within the Board. The current two-year term of the expert members will end in December 2023, and Members have been request to in writing to the IOC/UNESCO Executive Secretary if they wished to be considered for a second term on the Board.

An open call for nominations for new expert members will commence in July 2023 following the process contained in the Terms of Reference, and the new expert members of the Board, which will include at least five serving members, will be announced in December 2023. As in previous years, the expert members will be complemented by UN Agency representatives that will be identified through the annual Expression of Interest process via UN-Oceans.

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