‘IOC and Future of the Ocean’
Phase 1 Consultation – IOCARIBE Workshop

Alison Clausen

unesco
Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission

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IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation – Phase 1: Background & Rationale

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The "big picture" – external factors:

The ocean is rapidly changing => new global policy frameworks and approaches are emerging => needs and priorities in ocean science and knowledge are changing => role for IOC should evolve to meet these needs

The "big picture" – internal factors:

Statutes of IOC include both international cooperation for **generation** of knowledge and CD, and **application** of knowledge for sustainable development, protection & management of the ocean and MS decision making

Focus to date has been largely on first part of statutes with significant achievements but with remaining needs (persistent & dynamic)

Less investment to date cf. second part of statutes despite growing needs due to rapidly evolving policy framework, growing focus on SOP, and growing demands and opportunities of sustainable ocean economy

IOC Assembly decision in 2023 requested a consultation to define optimal role of IOC in facilitating Member State and partner activities in *science based sustainable ocean planning, ocean science support to implementation of UN environmental conventions and frameworks, and development of a sustainable ocean economy*

PHASED CONSULTATION PROCESS

- In 2024, based on a proposal from the IOC Secretariat, IOC Resolution EC-57/2 Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission
- 3-year consultation process with three main phases:
  i. Phase 1: June 2024 – June 2025: Needs in knowledge, decision-making and action presented to IOC Assembly => "demand side assessment"
  ii. Phase 2: June 2025 – June 2026: Dialogue on the effectiveness of supply via multilateral ocean frameworks, processes and other partners presented to Executive Council => "supply side assessment"
  iii. Phase 3: June 2026 – June 2027: IOC and the Future of the Ocean presented to IOC Assembly => "integrated assessment"
- Exercise will be carried out in consultation with IOC programmes, Regional Subsidiary Bodies, Member States (including through IFAG & IOC working group on sustainable ocean planning and management), and other relevant stakeholders as necessary
- Executive Council requested the Executive Secretary to start the consultation process with regular reporting to IFAG, and reporting of the results of the first phase to 33rd Session of the IOC Assembly

OVERALL METHODOLOGY

Objective: Review of activities relevant to the role of IOC in assisting MS and other stakeholders, including identifying gaps and needs in IOC programmes, to optimally facilitate current and emerging activities in **science-based sustainable ocean planning**, ocean science support to **implementation of relevant UN conventions and frameworks**, and **development of a sustainable ocean economy**.

Core consultation question:

"What are the perceived under-served needs of IOC's stakeholders (Member States & partners) in relation to the three pillars of:

1. Science based sustainable ocean planning
2. Ocean science to support implementation of relevant UN conventions & frameworks (BBNJ, CBD, UNFCCC etc.)
3. Development of a sustainable ocean economy

Key methods of data collection:

- Interviews x 20, Focus group discussions x 5, Member State survey

IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation – Phase 1: Preliminary Results

IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation – Phase 1: Initial Results & Analyses

SUSTAINABLE OCEAN PLANNING

- Gaps in accessibility, integration and operationalisation of ocean data and science to underpin Sustainable Ocean Planning
- Lack of baseline and integrated biological and ecosystem observations and data (e.g. marine pollution, invasive species, acidification, HAB, marine geology and geophysics, marine biodiversity, food security)
- Poor integration of data across sectors (fisheries, energy, coastal infrastructure) and across scales
- Need for ecosystem-based, climate-responsive planning models co-developed with decision makers reflecting dynamic nature of the ocean
- Demand for actionable guidance for MPAs, ABMTs and ocean hazard prediction and preparedness integration in spatial planning (e.g., MSP global-style toolkits)
- Improved coordination structures, particularly at regional levels

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UN CONVENTIONS & FRAMEWORKS

- Limited readiness for BBNJ => marine biodiversity, marine geology and geophysics, and planning for MPAs and Area Based Management Tools
- Inadequate integration of national ocean strategies and UNFCCC objectives / obligations (e.g., coastal carbon)
- Siloed ocean observing/data systems and lack of standardization
- Weak alignment among global agencies (e.g., ISA, IEA, OECD)
- Need for clearinghouse mechanisms and interoperable data and tools to facilitate national reporting and monitoring to global conventions
- Need for investment in national scientific institutions

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SUSTAINABLE OCEAN ECONOMY

- Underserved needs in scientific information for marine biodiversity and marine geology, including data to monitor long term ecosystem impacts
- Uneven capacity for risk-informed decision making
- Lack of shared definition of 'sustainability' in ocean economy & need for science-based sustainability indicators across sectors
- Limited scientific cooperation with / for infrastructure and industry development (e.g., offshore wind)
- Weak linkages between ocean science and economic policy => collaboration with national statistics offices and innovation sector
- Opportunities for tech innovation: smart sensors, open-source tools

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CROSS-CUTTING / FOUNDATIONAL ISSUES

- **Science-Policy Interface:** scientific outputs often abstract or untimely, absence of standing advisory mechanisms for rapid policy support and need for agile, co-designed products linked to policy cycles
- **Ocean literacy:** Critical lack of ocean literacy in both public and political domains including for decision makers & need for IOC-led global initiatives targeting education systems and broad sectors of society
- **Capacity Development:** Local capacity often exists but lacks resources/support, shift from 'capacity building' to 'building on capacity' and build long-term, sustainable investment models (e.g., ECOPs, OTGA)
- **Visibility and Autonomy of IOC:** IOC visibility and functional autonomy need reinforcement
- **Sustained Investment:** GOOS and other foundational systems underfunded hence undermining global monitoring efforts
- **Technology & Innovation:** Better use of technology & innovation, and role for IOC as a convener for ocean tech R&D

IOCARIBE Informal Member State Dialogue

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR MEMBER STATES

In the context of your:

i. Existing & emerging activities in Sustainable Ocean Planning
ii. National commitments to UN conventions and frameworks (e.g. BBNJ, CBD, UNFCCC)
iii. Existing and emerging national goals, policies and ambitions for a sustainable ocean economy

Through this dialogue we are seeking feedback about a **regional vision** on:

- What are the most important needs when thinking about the ocean science value chain from observations, data to knowledge and applications? As well as the cross-cutting issues such as capacity development or ocean literacy to support the value chain?
- Of these, which are being met – by IOC or partners?
- Of these, which are being under-served?
- Of the under-served needs, which are the most problematic?

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PART 1 – EXISTING & EMERGING ACTIVITIES IN SUSTAINABLE OCEAN PLANNING

- What are your most important needs for the region across the ocean science value chain to support existing or emerging activities on sustainable ocean planning?
- Of these, which are being met – by IOC or partners?
- Of these, which are being under-served?
- Of the under-served needs, which are the most problematic?

Ocean Observations and Data Infrastructure *e.g.*
- Ocean Observation Infrastructure and Systems
- Remote Sensing and Satellite Systems
- Ocean Data Collection Systems
- Ocean Prediction and Forecasting
- Ocean Data Management
- Ocean Data Repositories and Platforms
- Marine Data Dissemination
- Data Reporting and Standardization
- Marine Scientific Research Support

Data, Science and Knowledge *e.g.*
- Marine Biodiversity
- Marine Ecosystem Functions and Processes
- Marine Geology
- Economic Values of Marine Resource Utilization
- Ocean Climate Interactions
- Ocean Health
- Ocean Hazards
- Human Health and Well-being
- Cultural and Social Values of the Ocean

Applications, Products & Services
- Planning for MPAs and Area Based Management Tools
- Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)
- National Climate Policy Support
- National Biodiversity Policy Support
- Knowledge Synthesis and Assessment Products
- Ocean Hazard Prediction and Preparedness
- Climate Projections
- Vulnerability and Resilience Analyses and Adaptation Planning
- EWS / DRR
- Ocean Technology

Supporting Elements *e.g.*
- Institutional strengthening
- Capacity development for individuals
- Ocean literacy

PART 2 – UN CONVENTIONS AND FRAMEWORKS (e.g. BBNJ, CBD, UNFCCC, plastics treaty, regional conventions etc.)

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PART 3 – NATIONAL GOALS FOR A SUSTAINABLE OCEAN ECONOMY

- What are your most important needs for the region across the ocean science value chain to support existing or emerging activities on sustainable ocean planning?
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