

18th SESSION IOCARIBE



Sub-Commission for the Caribbean
and Adjacent Regions

Subcomisión para el Caribe y
Regiones Adyacentes

4.1 IOC AND THE FUTURE OF THE OCEAN

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IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation

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*

IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation 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

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 Globally & from IOCARIBE



Initial Feedback at Global Level

- Common themes emerged across all three issues => strengthened action will lead to multiple benefits
- Priority themes that are “mostly” or “fully met” and relatively “unproblematic”:
 - **Ocean hazard prediction and preparedness / early warning systems (tsunami focus)**
 - **Marine spatial planning**
 - **Marine scientific research support / coordination**
- Priority themes that are only “somewhat met” and “problematic”:
 - **Marine biodiversity including tools for MPAs and ABMTs**
 - **Ocean observation infrastructure and systems**
 - **Interoperability of data across disciplines and sectors**
- High level findings => need for increased access to and interoperability of data, expanded observing and monitoring coverage, and increased support to Member States to generate and apply scientific knowledge in areas where gaps persist





Initial Feedback from IOCARIBE

- Sustainable ocean economy is key for the region but inadequate ocean data and knowledge to inform decisions
- Knowledge on ecosystem restoration inadequate despite role of restored ecosystems for economic benefits (blue carbon, tourism etc.)
- Integrated / interoperable datasets lacking and undermining integrated management and action (e.g. pollution / ecosystems)
- Lack of accessibility to global datasets especially for SIDS (how, where to access?) and capacity development needed
- Need to build on strong regional mechanisms and initiatives in data coordination and governance and avoid duplication
- Support needed to sustain monitoring and observations programmes including equipment and maintenance of equipment
- More knowledge of interactions across land-sea interface and “upstream ocean literacy”
- Ocean literacy of decision makers and politicians essential
- Increased support on interactions between multiple MEAs and global initiatives – guidance on how datasets can be used for multiple purposes and synergistic benefits of engagement
- Increased analyses of how regional mechanisms could be used to fulfil global MEAs and how global commitments align with regional priorities





Next Steps

- Analysis of MS survey results including regional differences / context => if IOCARIBE Member States require an extension to submit the survey referred to in CL 3013 please advise the Secretariat
- Additional interviews with industry stakeholders and analysis of results
- Regional workshops at IOCAFRICA and IOCINDIO in May 2025
- Presentation of results to IOC Assembly in June and scoping of Phase 2 consultations to take place in 2025 – 2026



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**THANK YOU
MUCHAS GRACIAS
MERCI BEAUCOUP**

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