

Online meeting between IOC Officers & Subsidiary Body Chairs and Co-Chairs

21 January 2026

13.30 – 15.30h CET

Agenda

1. Update on the Programme & Budget 2026 – 2027 (Draft 43 C/5)
2. Review of the working methods of IOC Governing Bodies
3. New IOC Communications Strategy
4. IOC and the Future of the Ocean Consultation Process
5. Draft Programme & Budget 2028 – 2029 (Draft 44 C/5)

1. Update on the Programme & Budget 2026-2027 (Draft 43 C/5)

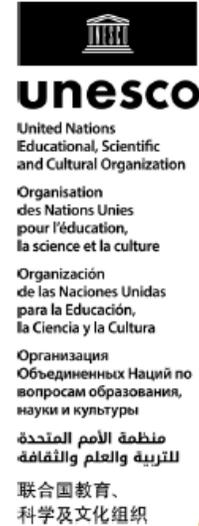
Outcomes of 43rd UNESCO General Conference

5. *Recalls* that by means of 216 EX/Decision 44 the Executive Board recommended that the General Conference at its 42nd session agree to an increase in the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission's (IOC) share of the UNESCO regular budget of [1%], not to be decreased by transfers of funds to other parts of the budget and that a baseline be identified and agreed for IOC's share of UNESCO's regular budget under document 42 C/5 and future C/5 documents and that no reduction to this baseline be made in the future unless agreed by the General Conference; and *recommits* to 216 EX/Decision 44 in order to ensure that IOC receives no less than 3% of the available overall regular budget;

II

Recognizing that the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) is established as a body with functional autonomy within UNESCO, with the IOC Assembly being the principal organ under the IOC Statutes adopted by the General Conference at its 30th session,

1. *Takes note* of IOC Resolution A-33/3.II on the Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–2027 and *decides* to include in document 43 C/5 Approved the relevant elements of the IOC Results Framework, as determined by the IOC Assembly and presented in Part II of document IOC/A-33/5.1.Doc(1);
2. *Also takes note of IOC Resolution A-33/3.III on the assessment of governance and management processes;*



[Item 3.4 of the revised agenda](#)

43 C

General Conference
43rd session, Samarkand 2025

43 C/64
10 November 2025
Original: English

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ON THE DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2026–2029 (43 C/5) AND FUTURE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET CYCLES

OUTLINE

Source: 222 EX/Decision 21, 43 C/6 Add.

Background: This item has been included in the revised agenda of the 43rd session of the General Conference following a request by Canada addressed to the President of the General Conference on 1 November 2025.

Purpose: The present document submits a draft resolution for the General Conference reflecting the relevant paragraphs from the 43 C/6 Add. concerning the Draft Programme and Budget for 2026–2029 (43 C/5) and future Programme and Budget cycles.

Decision required: paragraph 2.

Outcomes of 43rd UNESCO General Conference

3. *Invites the Director-General to contribute to the full implementation of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission's (IOC) functions as established in its Statutes as well as the tasks assigned to the IOC Secretariat, including by the delegation of authority to the Executive Secretary of IOC, when applicable;*
4. *Invites the Executive Secretary of IOC to submit draft sections relating to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) in Volumes 1 and 2 of future Draft Programme and Budget documents (Draft C/5 documents) to the IOC Assembly;*
5. *Invites the Director-General to forward the IOC Assembly's recommendations concerning the sections relating to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) in Volumes 1 and 2 of future Draft Programme and Budget documents (Draft C/5 documents) to the Executive Board for transmission to the General Conference as part of the C/6 document.*



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Update on 43 C/5 Budgeting process

IOC at 3% minimal baseline

Total UNESCO Expenditure Plan: \$ 534.6 M

IOC at 3% : \$ 16.2M which is down 23% vs 42 C/5



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联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Joint meeting of Commissions

[Item 3.2 of the revised agenda](#)

43 C

General Conference
43rd session, Samarkand 2025

43 C/13
10 November 2025
Original: English

ADOPTION OF THE APPROPRIATION RESOLUTION FOR 2026–2027



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of Ocean Science
2030 for Sustainable Development

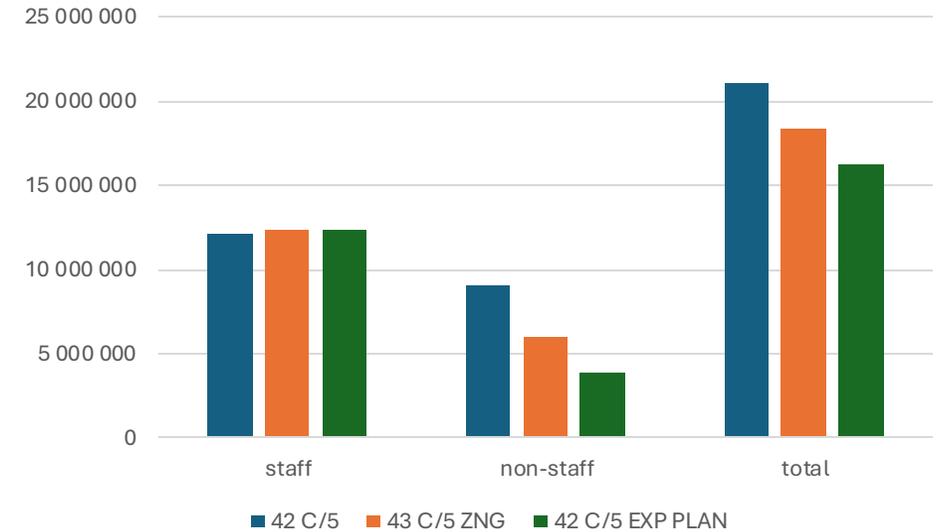
From 42 C/5 to 43 C/5 Rev. Expenditure Plan – key figures

42 C/5:

Staff	\$ 12 102 087 = 57%
Non-staff	\$ 9 032 599 = 43%
Total	\$ 21 134 686

43 C/5 Expenditure Plan:

Staff	\$ 12 422 197 = 76%
Non-staff	\$ 3 827 872 = 24%
Total	\$ 16 250 069



IOC Expenditure Plan Proposal

Assembly resolution: maintain 42C/5
Regular Budget Staff of **34.5 posts**

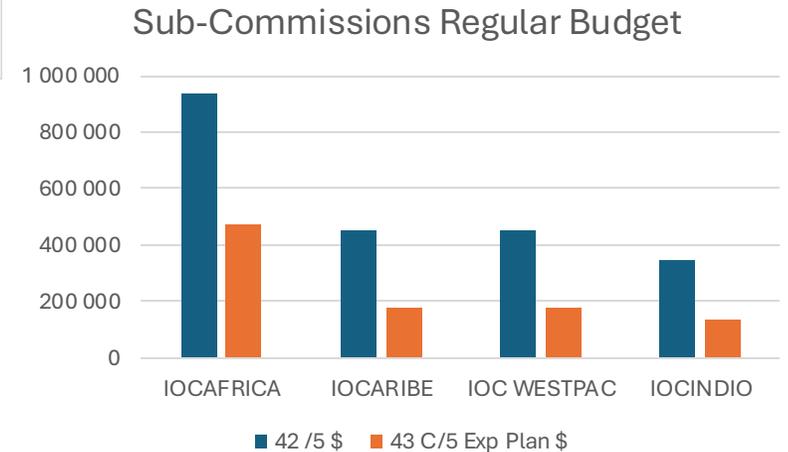
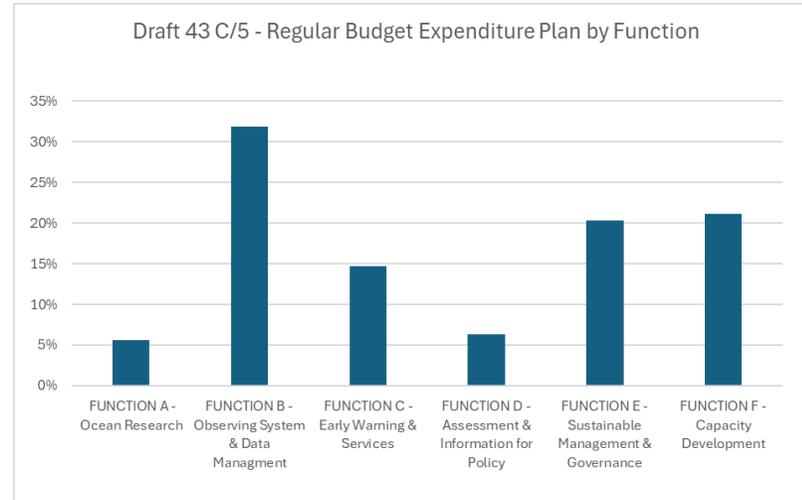
Staff cost – **12.4 M**
Non-Staff – **3.8 M**

Overall ratio **77/23**

Keep prioritization determined by
Assembly in 42 C/5

Reallocating IOC contribution to
Intersectoral output (Ocean Literacy)
to RSB core capacity development
budget

Keeping priority to IOCAFRICA and
contribution to SIDS/EWS
intersectoral output



Regular Budget situation as of today

- UNESCO Regular budget & Expenditure Plan to be approved by the UNESCO Executive Board in April
- \$ 100 M advance approved by the General Conference will cover 4 months of salaries, fixed and incompressible costs (ex. Operating costs, Statutory meetings etc)
- \$ 152 K were allocated to IOC for Executive Council preparations and HQ & Sub-Commissions operating costs
- Out of the total of 34.5 regular budget posts, 8.5 are currently vacant (25% vacancy rate)
- Recruitment will be launched asap, appointments will only be possible after the budget is approved

2. Review of the working methods of IOC Governing Bodies

Improving efficiency and effectiveness in IOC governance

The Assembly requested “the IOC Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Officers and IFAG, to review the working methods of the IOC Governing Bodies, in order to ensure greater effectiveness, efficiency and inclusiveness in the governance of the Commission, and to present to the IOC Executive Council at its 59th session concrete recommendations that could be implemented at the 34th session of the IOC Assembly;

Highlights the critical importance of continuing and strengthening a clear and comprehensive consultation process with IOC Member States on governance, programming and budgetary matters of the Commission;

Welcomes, in this context, the IOC Executive Secretary’s proposal to better align the schedules of IOC subsidiary bodies meetings with those of primary IOC Governing Bodies and the entire UNESCO programming and budgeting cycle;”

The Secretariat has developed **proposals for discussion with IFAG and Officers** in relation to:

- Planning and execution of governing body meetings
- Processes and operation of regional and technical subsidiary bodies
- Resolutions, decision and reports
- Sub-groups (working groups, expert groups, committees etc.)
- Increased inclusivity / participation in governance by Member States

Proposals aligned with objectives and initial findings of UN80 process.

Improving efficiency and effectiveness in IOC governance: summary of proposals (*refer to discussion paper for details)

Governing body meetings

Strategic agendas
linked to RF

Limit length of EC &
Assembly &
optimize time

Streamline RSB &
TSB reporting

Shorter reports &
oral presentations

RSBs & TSBs

Updated cycle of
meetings to inform
programme &
budgeting inc. link
to Results
Framework

Guidelines on role
of RSBs and TSBs

Explore use of
hybrid & online
meetings in case of
resource shortages

Resolutions, decisions, reports

Quantitative
assessment of
financial & staff
costs of all
decisions

Clearer rationale for
each decision &
enhanced editing

Shorter reports that
refer to RF

Sub-groups

Clear & rigorous
criteria (including \$)
for creation of new
groups

Systematic analysis
of existing groups to
reduce number

Increased inclusivity

MS information
sessions before GB
meetings &
enhanced
information on GB
roles & processes

Shorter reports &
shorter meetings
with timely
preparation

Up to date
information on MS
focal points



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Improving efficiency and effectiveness in IOC governance: key reflections during IOC Officers meeting

Support for proposals, including for streamlining of sub-groups & some additional suggestions:

- Focus RSB and TSB sessions on priorities and needs that can inform programming discussions at EC & Assembly
- Quantitative financial assessment of implications of all decisions and resolutions during RSB, TSB, EC and Assembly. Secretariat and MS should use this information to align decisions to available resources. Should include consideration of MS resources needed to participate in sub-groups.
- Hold voting during Assembly in parallel to plenary sessions to take less time from plenary
- Make better use of online meeting options including options for online voting (although not for secret ballots)
- Information for Member States on mandate and benefits of being part of IOC to encourage participation



Improving efficiency and effectiveness in IOC governance: key reflections during IOC Officers meeting

(continued)

- Hold dedicated sessions for RSB/TSBs before GB meetings for detailed reporting and discussion and make recordings available online
- Retain option for online editing of decisions by MS during GB meetings
- Clear, advance guidance to MS on interventions during GBs to reduce length and focus on issues
- When considering reducing length of Assembly, consider need to fit in Committee meetings
- Update IOC Manual including definitions and parameters of sub-groups.



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Improving efficiency and effectiveness in IOC governance: next steps

- IOC Officers to consult within their electoral groups on proposed measures
- Drafting of concrete proposals for presentation to IFAG based on feedback received, including in relation to sub-groups ----->
- Working document for 59th Session of Executive Council

Proposed Process for Assessing & Streamlining Sub-Groups

- Complete inventory and categorization of all sub-groups (working groups, expert groups, Committees, task teams, donor mandated groups etc.)
- Apply criteria to all sub-groups e.g. impact & outputs relative to IOC mandate & priorities, cost (staff & \$), duration, status cf. Governing Bodies' decisions for creation or termination, donor obligations
- Consult with relevant partners on proposals to remove, merge or adapt sub-groups
- Include proposals in documentation to 59th Session of Executive Council

3. New IOC Communications Strategy

Strengthening visibility, coherence and impact

The new IOC Communications Strategy responds to Assembly decisions and Member State guidance to restore IOC visibility, unify its voice, and reinforce its role as the UN's lead body for ocean science.

It sets a clear direction for coherent, impactful communications across all levels, ensuring stronger positioning within UNESCO, greater global recognition, and alignment with IOC's Medium-Term Strategy and its implementation plan.

Turning ocean science into action

This Communications Strategy sets a long-term direction to:

- 1. Elevate IOC's global leadership and credibility, positioning it as the UN's trusted voice for ocean science.*
- 2. Communicate IOC's mandate, priorities, and impact more clearly to diverse audiences, including Member States, partners, and the public.*
- 3. Ensure consistency of messaging across HQ, regions, programmes, and sub-commissions, while promoting inclusivity and multilingual accessibility.*
- 4. Support advocacy and resource mobilization by showcasing results and value for money.*



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Officers meeting January 20th 2026

What is in the Communication Strategy

1. Who we are
2. Our purpose and vision
3. Communications objectives
4. Our tagline
5. Our work, impact, and key messages
6. Our targets for 2026-2030
7. Audiences and channels
8. Member States engagement with IOC communications
9. Internal communications
10. Governance, roles and processes
11. Visual identity
12. Ocean Decade synergy

Also complemented by COMS Action Plan defining processes, internal coordination and Annual Roadmap (Priority activities)



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One unified IOC identity

To reinforce recognition and coherence:

*One name,
one acronym,
one visual
identity**

*One team,
one voice,
one impact*

*One
centralized
digital
ecosystem*

*One common
narrative and
shared
key messages*

**applied across the IOC ecosystem with tailoring for IOC Sub_Commissions*



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Member States: leveraging IOC as your platform

IOC communications aim to serve not only the institution, but also its Member States.

In 2026, IOC will:

- Work closely with Member States to understand their communications needs, ambitions, and priorities.*
- Explore how Member States can leverage IOC platforms to amplify their national initiatives, achievements, and contributions to ocean science.*
- Develop tailored visibility tools and mechanisms for meaningful MS participation in IOC campaigns and storytelling.*



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4. IOC and Future of the Ocean Consultation Process

7.4.1 IOC and the Future of the Ocean: Phase 2 Consultation Process

Phase 2 of the consultation process will:

- Finalize a shortlist of priority issues and develop detailed evaluation methodology (based on Phase 1 consultation, UN80 process and the outcomes of the 33rd IOC Assembly, the Results Framework, and Ocean Decade priorities)
- Map key providers of ocean-related science, data, services, and tools in each priority area at global and regional levels /
- Undertake online regional dialogues with MS & in-depth partner interviews
- Assess IOC's current and potential scope of action in each priority area & identify strategic opportunities and challenges including in regions.
- Develop forward-looking options and scenarios for IOC engagement including focused analytics for each RSB and including consideration of 'optimal staffing' to inform reporting on 'Vision for strengthening IOCAFRICA and other IOC RSBs (Resolution A-33/DR.[3.3.1])
- Report periodically to IFAG and the 59th Session of the IOC Executive Council

7.5 Draft Programme & Budget 2028-2029 (Draft 44 C/5) – Preliminary Proposals by the Secretariat

44 C/5 - Draft Programme and Budget for 2028-2029

- Preliminary proposals by the IOC Executive Secretary to be presented to the Executive Council in June 2026, building on :
 - Feedback from Subsidiary Bodies
 - IOC & the Future of the Ocean Consultation Process
- IOC Executive Council's decisions will guide the Secretariat's submissions in the UNESCO process (November 2026 – January 2027), in consultation with IFAG in the intersessional period
- IOC Assembly will do the final review in 2027