INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
2026 Meeting of the IODE Management Group
IOC Project Office for IODE, Oostende, Belgium
28-29 January 2026

REPORT (MAX 2 PAGES) - please answer in bullets where possible
1. Title of IODE Programme Component/Programme activity, IOC Programme or Decade activity (and acronym)
OceanTeacher Global Academy (OTGA), Programme Component
2. Report submitted by *(Name/Date/email)*
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3. Updates since IODE-28 (*)

Since IODE-28, the OceanTeacher Global Academy (OTGA) has successfully strengthened capacity development and knowledge sharing for IOC Member States and beyond through coordinated training in ocean research, services, and management.

- OTGA's fully accredited Learning Management System, tailored to ocean-related fields, provides comprehensive training support services, including course planning, development and delivery; course and alumni management; a shared e-learning platform; development of learning resources; expert and centre networking; quality standards and procedures; and mentoring, exchanges, and internships.
- During the fifth session of the SG-OTGA (November 2025), OTGA advanced on IODE-28 recommendations, notably by developing its Terms of Reference and updating core documents such as the OTGA Guidelines for Course Management.
- The OTGA Resource Mobilization Strategy (2025–2030) was structured, identifying priority funding pathways including voluntary contributions, trust and pooled funds, private sector and philanthropic engagement, government and multilateral partnerships, flagship and initiative-based funding, and strengthened internal governance.
- Concrete outcomes include multiple approved and submitted projects (e.g. Blue Carbon training, international traineeships, summer schools, university cooperation, EU Horizon, Nippon Foundation), with over USD 500,000 secured for 2026–2027 and more than USD 5 million under evaluation to 2030, excluding significant in-kind contributions from RTCs/STCs.
- OTGA is confirmed to support at least one training activity for the implementation of the IOC SOPM strategy, and collaborates closely with MSPglobal and regional and thematic training centres.
- Knowledge exchange activities addressed key topics such as data preservation, sustainability, FAIR data, and Indigenous data governance, while consistently highlighting IODE in all communications.
- OTGA maintained strong international visibility through strategic participation in UNOC-3, scientific conferences, IOC regional meetings, and Ocean Decade events, reinforcing its role as a global reference in ocean training.
- Overall, OTGA has evolved from intensive course delivery towards strategic consolidation, integrating high-impact technical training, regional strengthening, international outreach, and governance adjustments.
- In line with the IOC reform process, OTGA operations are transitioning under IOC Capacity Development Coordination, working closely with the Ocean Literacy and Capacity Development Unit for cross-cutting action.

4. How does your work align with the objectives of IODE, the UN Ocean Decade, and other multilateral agreements?

- The OceanTeacher Global Academy (OTGA) was created and hosted by IODE, building on decades of IOC-led training and knowledge exchange in ocean data and information management, initiated through the IOC Project Office for IODE in Oostende and Member State data centres.
- While OTGA has expanded to address all IOC high-level priorities in collaboration with IOC Programmes, Regional Sub-Commissions, and Member States, a core focus remains on data and information exchange, with continuously updated trainings responding directly to IODE needs.

- OTGA's development has been supported through successive project phases: the OceanTeacher Academy Project (2009–2013) and extended OTGA phases (2015–2018; 2019–2024), funded by the Government of Flanders through the FUST mechanism.
- Since 2015, OTGA has established a global network of Regional and Specialized Training Centres (RTCs/STCs), now comprising 17 organizations and dozens of affiliated partners worldwide.
- OTGA maintains a standardized Learning Management System, in operation since 1997, serving over 17,000 users through an open and free e-learning platform, and is supported by the ISO 29993:2017 certification of the IOC Project Office for IODE as a learning service provider.
- OTGA directly supports the IOC Capacity Development Strategy, enabling equitable participation across all Member States and contributing to the UN Ocean Decade, particularly through innovative "blue skills," global networks of ocean professionals, and regionally tailored capacity-building actions.
- Training courses cover a broad range of topics aligned with SDG 14 and the IOC mandate, including marine pollution, ecosystem management, ocean acidification, marine spatial planning, sustainable use of marine resources, and international ocean governance.
- OTGA trainings contribute substantially to Ocean Decade Challenges, notably digital ocean representation, global observing systems, skills and participation for all, ecosystem protection, pollution reduction, community resilience, and sustainable ocean economies.
- OTGA courses strongly support IOC high-level objectives, with measurable impacts across biodiversity and BBNJ implementation, early warning systems, climate change observations, sustainable ocean planning and management, and emerging science issues such as deep-sea mining, metagenomics, and artificial intelligence.
- Overall, OTGA plays a key role in implementing the IOC Capacity Development Strategy, aligning with the IOC Strategy for Ocean Planning and Management (SOPM) and contributing to capacity building for the BBNJ Agreement, particularly through science- and knowledge-based training for its operationalization.

5. Prioritised deliverables 2026-2027

OTGA is committed to prioritize training activities and courses that directly serve IOC high-level objectives, in agreement with results framework and action proposed by IOC Management Team, and OTGA 2025-2030 Vision. A list of proposed and requested trainings (by November 2025) is available with SG-OTGA-V final report, with ongoing updates as resources are confirmed.

6. GOALS 2030 (Where do you see your work / activities / outcomes in 5 years?)

OTGA has developed a 5-year Vision (2025-2030) as "a global network of Regional and Specialized Centres and affiliated partners creating unique innovative learning experiences, enhancing the capacity to share multiple knowledge systems, and offering instruction on the most up-to date ocean sciences, services, and management". See the brochure annexed.

OTGA 2025-2030 Vision is built on 4 pillars: BLUE SKILLS: Envisioning training programmes to cover the key competencies expected of highly qualified ocean professionals; SHARED SOLUTIONS: Promoting opportunities to develop and implement sustained ocean solutions based on collaborative experiences, support, frameworks, and cross-sectoral partnerships; CREATIVE EXPERIENCES: Preparing training infrastructure and learning resources to facilitate immersive and realistic practice; CORE SERVICES: Strengthen the capacity of the Regional and Specialized Training Centres to provide coordinated support and sustain high-quality impactful training programmes.

To be implemented, this vision includes learning services such as: coordination and management of training courses and alumni; e-Learning platform commonly used and shared; resources and activities uniquely created to serve the ocean community; connecting mechanisms for experts, facilitators, training centres, and learners; procedures and standards for guidance to learning service providers; and exchange and internships for training staff and alumni.

Outcomes in 5 years:
- Outcomes 1: Empowered training centres providing innovative learning services and ocean professionals prepared with the blue skills of the future
- Outcome 2: A globally connected community of practice cross-sector engaged in sharing innovative training solutions
- Outcome 3: Continued provision and development of core training services.

7. Considerations for / Requests to the IODE Management Group

As a result of the ongoing IOC reform, OTGA has been instructed to transition to IOC Capacity Development coordination, and no longer IODE Programme Component, however, some support to operations will remain in IODE Programme Office. OTGA Secretariat has been aligning and preparing for these changes with the Heads of Section. For a smooth implementation of this transition, we welcome additional guidance and support from IODE Management Group.

(*) See Action sheet: IOC/IODE-28/3 Annex V