



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

Thirty-third Session of the Assembly
UNESCO, Paris, 25 June–3 July 2025

Item 3.2 of the Provisional Agenda

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ON THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED
SINCE THE THIRTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY (June 2023–May 2025)**

INFORMATION

Progress on planning for the 2026 *State of the Ocean Report (StOR)*

This note is intended to provide IOC Member States with a short overview of activities coordinated by the Secretariat associated with planning for the 2026 State of the Ocean Report.

Background

The focus on the world's ocean and appreciation of its crucial role for life on Earth, the global climate, food security, human health and wellbeing, as well as its contribution to the global economy, have led to an increased demand by decision-makers for relevant, strategic, current, and easily accessible information on the state of the ocean.

At its 53rd session in February 2021, the IOC Executive Council (EC) considered the proposal to prepare a periodic 'IOC State of the Ocean Report (StOR)' as a response to increased demand for key information on the state of the ocean (see [IOC/INF-1393](#)). The [State of the Ocean Report 2022 – Pilot edition](#) was presented to the Executive Council in June 2022. This first edition was structured around the ten initial Challenges of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, 2021–2030,

and identified an urgent need for a quantitative description of the state of the ocean and the capacity to report changes.

Following the 55th session of the Executive Council, the IOC Secretariat invited Member States to provide further views on the pilot edition of the StOR and recommendations on how to improve future editions, focusing on its scope and publication frequency (IOC Circular Letter, [2899](#)). A StOR Advisory Board was established in the first quarter of 2023 to support the preparation of revised StOR concept note and to actively guide the preparation of the next StOR edition, launched in 2024.

The StOR Advisory Board is composed of approximately ten experts from IOC Member States and the IOC Secretariat, taking into account the representation of the different electoral groups.

The [2024 StOR](#) built on the pilot edition providing updates on physical, chemical and biological aspects of the ocean, the threats posed to the ocean, access to ocean observing and data infrastructure and insights into ocean literacy and Indigenous and traditional knowledge systems. Lessons learned in developing the 2024 StOR were reflected in the *Report on the Second Edition of the 'IOC State of the Ocean Report' (StOR) (2024) and Guidance for Future Editions* ([IOC/EC-57/4.5.Doc\(1\)](#)), which outlined an updated concept note. The Executive Council noted that there is an ongoing role for the Advisory Board with the following Terms of Reference:

1. *Guide the ongoing development of the Concept Note of the State of the Ocean Report to ensure the further refinement of the purpose, frequency, scope, target audience, and alignment of the StOR with other UN assessment reports.*
2. *Provide advice to the Secretariat in support of the production of the StOR, including:*
 - *defining themes relevant for the different Ocean Decade Outcomes,*
 - *identifying the respective topics for the storylines.*
 - *identifying authors and reviewers for each storyline which reflect diversity in expertise, gender, geographic representation, career status and Indigenous Peoples and other coastal communities.*
3. *Provide regular reports on the concept and production of the StOR to IOC governing bodies.*

Nominations of Member State experts to the 2026 State of the Ocean Report Advisory Board

As a first step in planning the 2026 StOR, members of the Advisory Board for the 2024 StOR were requested to identify if they would like to continue as members for the 2026 StOR Advisory Board. Continuation of at least some of the members from the 2024 StOR Advisory Board would ensure that historical context and experience could contribute to the 2026 StOR Advisory Board and planning of activities in developing the report. Of the eight members of the 2024 StOR, Advisory Board, four members agreed to continue to contribute to advising on the planning and deliver of the 2026 StOR.

To fill the further vacancies on the Advisory Board and achieve a membership of ten members the IOC Secretariat, through [CL-3032](#), requested Member States to nominate experts to the StOR Advisory Board in March 2025. A total of 12 nominations were received, covering all electoral groups of the IOC. A summary of the total nominations (renewing 2024 StOR Advisory Board members and new nominations) per electoral group is provided in Table 1. Nominations comprised six females and ten males. Following closure of nominations, an assessment of nominations was undertaken by the Secretariat, taking into account the geographic, gender and disciplinary distribution of nominations.

Table 1. Number of nominations per electoral group for the 2026 StOR Advisory Board

Electoral Group 1	Electoral Group 2	Electoral Group 3	Electoral Group 4	Electoral Group 5
3	3	4	3	2

All nominations were advised of the outcome of this assessment in April 2025. A list of the members of the 2026 StOR Advisory Board is provided in Annex 1.

First meeting of the StOR Advisory Board

The first virtual meeting of the 2026 StOR Advisory Board was held in May 2025. The aims of this meeting were to:

1. Introduce all members of the Advisory Board to each other and to the Secretariat
2. Provide new members with further information on the StOR and their role in providing advice on the planning and delivery of the report
3. Review the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board
4. Discuss the operational modalities of the Advisory Board

During the meeting the Advisory Board agreed to:

- That no changes to the Terms of References were required,
- Convene monthly virtual meetings of the Advisory Board,
- Prepare a short information paper to be submitted to the 33rd Session of the IOC Assembly,
- Focus, as a first task, on updating the concept note for the *IOC State of the Ocean Report' (StOR) (2024)*, taking into account the *Guidance for Future Editions* ([IOC/EC-57/4.5.Doc\(1\)](#)) produced as part of activities associated with the 2024 StOR.

Annex 1: Membership of the Advisory Board

Name	Institution	Member State
<i>IOC Electoral Group I</i>		
Aldo Drago	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology	Malta
Rafael González-Quirós	Centro Oceanografico de Gijon/Xixon	Spain
<i>IOC Electoral Group II</i>		
Viktor Komorin	Ukrainian Scientific Center of the Ecology of the Sea	Ukraine
Daniela Turk	Slovenian Environment Agency, Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy	Slovenia
<i>IOC Electoral Group III</i>		
Leandra Regina Gonçalves	Marine Institute of the Federal University of the State of São Paulo	Brazil
Gastón Vidal Santana	Fisheries Development Institute	Chile
<i>IOC Electoral Group IV</i>		
Yutaka Michida	The University of Tokyo	Japan
Louise Wicks	Bureau of Meteorology	Australia
<i>IOC Electoral Group V</i>		
Manal Al-Kandari	Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research	Kuwait
Jean Michel Andriantsilavo Rabary	Ministère de la Pêche et de l'Économie Bleue	Madagascar