



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION  
COMMISSION OCÉANOGRAPHIQUE INTERGOUVERNEMENTALE  
COMISIÓN OCEANOGRÁFICA INTERGUBERNAMENTAL  
МЕЖПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВЕННАЯ ОКЕАНОГРАФИЧЕСКАЯ КОМИССИЯ

اللجنة الدولية الحكومية لعلوم المحيطات

政府间海洋学委员会

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**IOC Circular Letter No 2858**  
(Available in English and French)

IOC/VR/MO  
7 October 2021

To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with the IOC

cc. : Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission  
Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO and  
National Commissions for UNESCO in Member States of IOCAFRICA  
Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of Major IOC Subsidiary Bodies  
(Scientific, Technical and Regional)  
Partner Organizations in the region

**Subject: Regional Kick-Off Conference for the UN Decade for Ocean Science for Sustainable Development for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, 13–15 December 2021 and Pre-Conference Workshop (online, 6–8 December 2021)**

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the Government of Egypt, through the National Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries (NIOF) are organizing the “[Regional Kick-Off Conference](#) for the UN Decade for Ocean Science for Sustainable Development for Africa and the Adjacent Island States”, 13–15 December 2021 in the hybrid format (online with limited physical presence in Alexandria, Egypt, with four-hour a day online plenary sessions from 6 to 8 December 2021 (11.00-15.00 UTC).

The conference will provide a forum to take stock of status of ocean science and technology in the region, deliberate on how ocean sciences in Africa should be supported and focused on delivering the required societal outcomes of the Decade, and seek interest and commitment of the oceanographic community to embark on a number of directions of research which are critical for the ocean sustainable management. In particular the conference will provide an opportunity to:

- Present the [Decade Implementation Plan](#) and to develop the framework of a regional plan and mechanisms to guide the development of priority Decade Actions in Africa and the Adjacent Island States and to respond to Call for Decade Actions;
- Present the current status of scientific knowledge of the marine and coastal ecosystems and services, including pressures, threats and priority issues, identify gaps that need to be addressed;

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- Synergize partnerships and collaborations around the Decade vision and mission across countries and various stakeholder groups, towards early shaping the Decade legacy; and
- Provide a forum for supporters of the Decade to announce commitments to the Decade including flagship regional Decade Actions or financial or in-kind support.

IOC's Sub-commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States (IOCAFRICA) together with the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) are working on a Regional Gap Analysis that will be presented and inform the discussions at the Conference. In order to augment this information, we would like to request IOCAFRICA Member States to prepare a **report on the national strategies and priorities for the Decade** using the attached template and **submit it** to Mr Mika Odido (m.odido@unesco.org) at your earliest convenience, but **not later than 31 October 2021**, to enable compilation and presentation at a Pre-Conference workshop scheduled for 6–8 December 2021 (online, from 11.00-15.00 UTC) where the common regional priorities will be identified for presentation at the Regional Kick-off Conference. Should you have any questions concerning the template, please contact Mika Odido.

We will shortly be sharing the links for both events and look forward to your active participation. The working languages for both events will be English and French.

I count on your participation and collaboration and remain,

Yours sincerely,

*[signed]*

Vladimir Ryabinin  
Executive Secretary

Enclosure (1): UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development – IOCAFRICA questionnaire

**UN DECADE OF OCEAN SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
IOCAFRICA QUESTIONNAIRE**

COUNTRY NAME:			
NAME OF RESPONDENT:			
INSTITUTION:			
EMAIL:		PHONE	
NATIONAL OCEAN DECADE FOCAL POINT:			
MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL DECADE COMMITTEE			

**PRIORITY AREAS UNDER EACH DECADE CHALLENGE**

In the table below, please rank the importance of each Decade Challenge from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important), and provide the following information for each Decade Challenge:

- (i) Priority areas that need to be addressed (maximum 3)
- (ii) Relevant recent or ongoing activities (maximum 3)
- (iii) Planned/proposed activities (maximum 3)

<p><b><i>Ocean Decade Challenge 1.</i></b> Understand and map land and sea-based sources of <b>pollutants and contaminants</b> and their potential impacts on human health and ocean ecosystems, and develop solutions to mitigate or remove them.</p>	<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important): _____</p>
<p>PRIORITY AREAS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED (MAX 3)</p>	
<p>RELEVANT RECENT OR ONGOING ACTIVITIES (MAX 3)</p>	

<p><b>Ocean Decade Challenge 1.</b> Understand and map land and sea-based sources of <b>pollutants and contaminants</b> and their potential impacts on human health and ocean ecosystems, and develop solutions to mitigate or remove them.</p>	<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>(Please include information on national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	
<p>PLANNED/PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (MAX 3): (Please include information on proposed national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	
<p><b>Ocean Decade Challenge 2.</b> Understand the effects of multiple stressors on ocean ecosystems, and develop solutions <b>to protect, monitor, manage and restore ecosystems and their biodiversity</b> under changing environmental conditions, including climate.</p>	<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>PRIORITY AREAS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED (MAX 3)</p>	
<p>RELEVANT RECENT OR ONGOING ACTIVITIES (MAX 3)  (Please include information on national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	
<p>PLANNED/PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (MAX 3): (Please include information on proposed national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	

<p><i>Ocean Decade Challenge 3.</i> Generate knowledge, support innovation, and develop solutions to optimise the role of the ocean to contribute to <b>sustainably feeding the world’s population</b> under changing environmental and social conditions.</p>	<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>PRIORITY AREAS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED (MAX 3)</p>	
<p>RELEVANT RECENT OR ONGOING ACTIVITIES (MAX 3)  (Please include information on national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	
<p>PLANNED/PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (MAX 3): (Please include information on proposed national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	

<p><i>Ocean Decade Challenge 4.</i> Generate knowledge, support innovation, and develop solutions to contribute to <b>equitable and sustainable development of the ocean economy</b> under changing environmental and social conditions.</p>	<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>PRIORITY AREAS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED (MAX 3)</p>	
<p>RELEVANT RECENT OR ONGOING ACTIVITIES (MAX 3)  (Please include information on national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	
<p>PLANNED/PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (MAX 3): (Please include information on proposed national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	

<p><b>Ocean Decade Challenge 5.</b> Enhance understanding of the <b>ocean-climate nexus</b> and use this understanding to generate solutions to mitigate, adapt and build resilience to the effects of climate change, and to improve services including improved predictions and forecasts for weather, climate, and the ocean.</p>		<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>PRIORITY AREAS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED (MAX 3)</p>		
<p>RELEVANT RECENT OR ONGOING ACTIVITIES (MAX 3)</p> <p>(Please include information on national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>		
<p>PLANNED/PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (MAX 3):</p> <p>(Please include information on proposed national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>		

<p><b>Ocean Decade Challenge 6.</b> Expand <b>multi-hazard warning systems</b> for all biological, geophysical, and weather and climate related ocean hazards, and mainstream community preparedness and resilience.</p>		<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>PRIORITY AREAS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED (MAX 3)</p>		
<p>RELEVANT RECENT OR ONGOING ACTIVITIES (MAX 3)</p> <p>(Please include information on national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>		
<p>PLANNED/PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (MAX 3):</p> <p>(Please include information on proposed national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>		

<p><b>Ocean Decade Challenge 7.</b> Ensure a sustainable <b>ocean observing system</b> that delivers timely data and information accessible to all users on the state of the ocean across all ocean basins.</p>		<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>PRIORITY AREAS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED (MAX 3)</p>		
<p>RELEVANT RECENT OR ONGOING ACTIVITIES (MAX 3)</p> <p>(Please include information on national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>		
<p>PLANNED/PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (MAX 3):</p> <p>(Please include information on proposed national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>		

<p><b>Ocean Decade Challenge 8.</b> Develop a comprehensive <b>digital representation of the ocean</b>, including a dynamic ocean map, through multi-stakeholder collaboration that provides free and open access to explore, discover, and visualize past, current, and future ocean conditions.</p>		<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>PRIORITY AREAS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED (MAX 3)</p>		
<p>RELEVANT RECENT OR ONGOING ACTIVITIES (MAX 3)</p> <p>(Please include information on national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>		
<p>PLANNED/PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (MAX 3):</p> <p>(Please include information on proposed national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>		

<p><b>Ocean Decade Challenge 9.</b> Ensure comprehensive <b>capacity development and equitable access to data, information, knowledge and technology</b> across all aspects of ocean science and for all stakeholders regardless of geography, gender, culture, or age.</p>	<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>PRIORITY AREAS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED (MAX 3)</p>	
<p>RELEVANT RECENT OR ONGOING ACTIVITIES (MAX 3)</p> <p>(Please include information on national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	
<p>PLANNED/PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (MAX 3):</p> <p>(Please include information on proposed national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	

<p><b>Ocean Decade Challenge 10.</b> Ensure that the multiple values of the ocean for human wellbeing, culture, and sustainable development are recognised and widely understood, and <b>identify and overcome barriers to the behaviour change</b> that is required for a step change in humanity’s relationship with the ocean.</p>	<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>PRIORITY AREAS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED (MAX 3)</p>	
<p>RELEVANT RECENT OR ONGOING ACTIVITIES (MAX 3)</p> <p>(Please include information on national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	
<p>PLANNED/PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (MAX 3):</p>	



<p><b>Ocean Decade Challenge 10.</b> Ensure that the multiple values of the ocean for human wellbeing, culture, and sustainable development are recognised and widely understood, and <b>identify and overcome barriers to the behaviour change</b> that is required for a step change in humanity’s relationship with the ocean.</p>	<p>RANKING: from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important):_____</p>
<p>(Please include information on proposed national and regional/international partners in implementation of the activities)</p>	

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

<p>MOST IMPORTANT OVERALL NATIONAL PRIORITY AREAS TO ADDRESS DURING THE DECADE</p>	
<p>CAPACITY GAPS THAT HAMPER THE ADDRESSING OF THE PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED.</p>	
<p>DETAILS OF MAIN NATIONAL TRAINING AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS (including contacts, email addresses and websites)</p>	
<p>DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION INTEND TO LEAD OR CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DECADE ACTION?</p> <p>Please provide details, including Challenge to be addressed. Where support is required in developing the Decade Action please indicate what sort of support.</p>	