

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION**

**(of UNESCO)**

**First Meeting of the Open-ended intersessional Working Group on the Status of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean**

**Monday, 28 February 2022, 11:30 to 13:30 (CET/Paris time)**

**REPORT**

The first meeting of the Open-ended intersessional Working Group (OEIWG) on the Status of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO) was organized online on the 28th February 2022, from 11:30 to 13:30 (CET).

In response to IOC Circular Letter No 2872, 24 Member States nominated national representatives by 28 February 2022. The IOCAFRICA nominated its Chair as its representative. WESTPAC nominated its Co-Chair as its representative. The Regional Coordination Operations Centre (RCOC) based in Seychelles nominated its international liaison officer as an observer to the Working Group.

35 participants in the meeting represented 15 IOC Member States, IOCAFRICA WESTPAC and RCOC (list of participants is in Annex 5).

1. **Welcome and introduction to the Working Group meeting**

The acting Technical Secretary of IOCINDIO, M. Justin Ahanhanzo welcomed participants and provided technical notifications, also informing participants that the meeting was being recorded.

The Executive Secretary welcomed and thanked participants for attending the meeting. He stressed the importance of the meeting as a follow up to the IOC Decision A-31/3.5.6, which requested the Executive Secretary to establish an open-ended intersessional Working Group and to invite interested Member States to participate in the working group with the view to report the progress of implementation to the Executive Council, at its 55th session. He recalled that the results of the Working Group will contribute to determine the future of the IOC activities in the Indian Ocean and to a big extent will contribute to achieving priorities of Member States in the region. It is expected that Member States from the region would express commitments towards the work of IOCINDIO. The UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) provides a good framework to develop and implement strong programmes and activities in the region. He thanked both the IOC Chair Captain Ariel Troisi and the IOCINDIO Chair Rear Admiral (Retd) Khurshed Alam who kindly and very responsibly accepted to cochair the working Group, exemplifying its importance. He assured participants that the IOC Secretariat, including Executive Secretary, is committed to create a great momentum in the Indian Ocean which is very important for the IOC. As such, he will personally participate in all meetings of the Working Group,

The IOC Chair and Co-Chair of the Working Group welcomed participants and thanked the Executive Secretary for convening the Working Group. He also thanked Member States for their participation in the Working Group. He recalled the core purpose of the IOC, which is to coordinate international cooperation in ocean sciences and capacity development, not only at global level, but also at regional level. Indian Ocean is one of the good successful examples of international cooperation with the first Indian Ocean Expedition at the time of inception of the IOC. The first Expedition developed a strong ocean science base with capacity development at the highest quality level which delivered important ocean services in the region.

He recalled that the status of IOCINDIO has been a matter of discussion for many years, including a proposal made in 2008 by Dr Neville Smith. More recently the past Chair of IOCINDIO, Dr. Atmanand, following the Decision IOC-XXX/3.3.4 of the 30th Session of the IOC Assembly, prepared the proposal for changing the status of the Committee into Sub commission. This proposal was presented by the current IOCINDIO Chair at the 31st Session of the Assembly of IOC. This Working Group has the mandate from the Thirty first Session of the Assembly of the IOC, which decided to pursue further towards the establishment of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean, as a framework to improve coordination of IOC Member States in the region and to ensure implementation of IOC programmes in the Indian Ocean with a view to presenting a draft resolution to the Assembly of IOC at its 32nd Session. Subsequently, the Group will undertake the remaining steps towards the establishment of the IOCINDIO Sub-Commission including the terms of reference; determination of the geographic scope; programme of work; the proposed projects and funding support; and mechanisms for coordination with adjacent Sub-Commissions. He stated that the work of the Working Group is not just an administrative matter, but a fundamental work for the IOC and the region to achieve the IOC mandate with efficiency. He believed that using best practices with a spirit of consensus, the Working Group shall come to good conclusions for reporting to the Executive Council at its 55th Session towards a vibrant regional body.

The IOCINDIO Chair and Co-Chair of the Working Group expressed appreciation to the Executive Secretary for initiating the Working Group. He also thanked the IOC Chair for his involvement in the work. He recalled that a good work has been accomplished on the ground with India and Australia spearheading ocean sciences and technology in the region. There is a strong interest in the IOCINDIO Member States to work together towards the establishment of the Sub Commission for the implementation of the IOC programmes in the region and to achieve the objectives of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. He informed the meeting that together with the IOC Vice Chair for Group IV (Asia and Pacific), they would present the existing programmes and activities in the region to enable participants to understand the advances and interests of Member States from the region in ocean sciences. He stressed that the region needs a Sub Commission to move to a higher level of delivery of results for the benefits of the IOC Member States in the region. He indicated that the remaining work could be concluded for submission to the 55th Session of the Executive Council because the proposal discussed at the 31st Session of Assembly was well drafted with Terms of Reference, geographical scope, ongoing programmes in the region. He requested the IOC Chair and IOC Executive Secretary to reconsider the period for submission of the draft resolution, not to the Assembly in 2023, but rather to the next Executive Session in June this year 2022, taking into consideration the fact that the Committee was formed since 1982 with pending transformation into Sub Commission back to 2008. He paid tribute to the past Chair of IOCINDIO, Dr. Atmanand together with the Officers who completed a good proposal for the transformation of IOCINDIO into a Sub Commission.

He informed Member States that Bangladesh is willing to organize the kickoff meeting of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development for the Indian Ocean at the end of May 2022. He has already sent the information to the Executive Secretary and the IOC Chair as an invitation. As soon as the dates are confirmed with the Executive Secretary, invitation will be sent to all Member States for participation.

Both the IOC Chair and the Executive Secretary responded that the Decision of the 31st Session of Assembly requested a submission of the draft resolution to the 32nd Session of the Assembly in 2023. Subsequently, the Working Group would have to fulfil its mandate in compliance with the decision of the Assembly. The establishment of a Sub Commission is a very important Decision that, in keeping with IOC Manual IOC/INF-785, can be taken only by the Assembly.

1. **Adoption of the Agenda**

The IOC Chair as a Co-Chair of the meeting introduced the provisional agenda and requested comments. The IOCINDIO Chair suggested a shift in the order of the agenda, bringing the proposed item 4 to be discussed before the item 3, to allow first the presentation of existing programmes, projects, and activities in the IOCINDIO region by the IOCINDIO Chair, and the IOC Vice-Chair for Group IV. Thus, the early proposed item 3 shall come later with the Introduction and discussions of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the OEIWG by the co-Chairs.

The Group adopted the agenda with this amendment. It is given in Annex 1.

1. **Presentation of existing programmes, projects, and activities in the IOCINDIO region**

The IOCINDIO Chair, Rear Admiral (Retd) Khurshed Alam introduced this agenda item with a first part of presentation focused on IOCINDIO. He first recalled the vision and mission statement, scientific objectives and expected deliverables of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) in relation with the needed reinforcement of the IOC programmes in the Indian Ocean towards the establishment of the IOC Sub Commission in the region. He further recalled the historical background of IOCINDIO including the establishing resolution, membership, and mandate, as well as the root causes of the unsustainability of the Committee.

The IOCINDIO is a primary intergovernmental subsidiary body of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO responsible for the promotion of regional and international cooperation, and the development, coordination and implementation of the Commission’s marine scientific and research programmes, the ocean services, the ocean observing systems, data, information and knowledge management, capacity development and related activities in the region by taking into account the specific interests and priorities of Member States in the Central Indian Ocean. The Committee strives to enhance national capabilities in marine science and ocean services through cooperation between the Member States from the region and with those from other regions.

His presentation highlighted the value of ocean “blue” economy above 24 US$ trillion which may be lower than the factual number because many key ecosystems services are difficult to quantify. The saliant points of his presentation are the following:

* Management and policies towards healthy oceans contribute to most SDGs, for example food security, healthy lives, creation of jobs and incomes, sustainable resource use and coastal resilience.
* Sustainable blue economy is increasingly regarded a key step towards achieving many sustainable development goals overall.
* Global shipping in the Indian Ocean tracked by satellites shows increased illegal activities.
* Exploration and exploitation of the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction involves seabed polymetallic nodules, massive seafloor sulfide, cobalt rich ferro-manganese crusts as great ocean assets. Biological research and chemical synthesis of sea floor ecosystems fosters the development of medical oceanography enabling the use of w-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids for heart disease, polymerase recombinant for cancer treatment, Halaven for cancer treatment derived from a Japanese deep-water sponge, etc. Several countries developed hydrate exploration programme including in the IOCINDIO region such as India.
* Nearly 300 submarine cables spanning more than 1 million km of cablesacross the world’s seabed are the primary pipeline of transcontinental Internet with about 98% of international internet traffic, responsible for $10 trillion worth of transactional value every day greater than the GDP of Japan, Germany, and Australia combined.

There is an increased interest for blue economy in the Indian Ocean including marine fisheries, mariculture, oil, gas, and minerals; salt production; trades, shipping and transport, tourism; renewable energy; biotechnology; carbon sequestration; maritime spatial planning; education and research; maritime domain awareness with a greater concern for marine plastic/litter.

The IOCINDIO Chair stressed that root causes impeding IOCINDIO to tackle the challenges of coordination with Member States towards the full implementation of all IOC programmes include mainly the lack of regional Secretariat which has been identified and recognized as a hindrance to the development of IOCINDIO.

The other IOC Regional Subsidiary Bodies went through a similar malaise. For instance, the two African Regional Committees, namely the IOC Regional Committee for the Eastern and Central Atlantic (IOCEA) and the IOC Regional Committee for the Central and Western Indian Ocean (IOCWIO), were dissolved and merged to form a single IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Islands (IOCAFRICA) with a supportive full time IOC staff heading a regional secretariat with seed funds for operations and activities from the IOC regular budget. After decades of dormancy, the IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (WESTPAC) and the IOC Sub-Commission for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (IOCARIBE) became operational only after the establishment of a regional Secretariat with a full-time staff supported with the IOC regular budget.

With a part time staff from the IOC Headquarters supporting the IOCINDIO, Member States are fully engaged as they are supporting regular intergovernmental Sessions of the Committee since 2016.

Finally, he insisted that the region needs the transformation of the IOCINDIO into a Sub Commission. He finally presented the overview of the proposed Sub Commission as submitted to the 31st Session of the Assembly of IOC, based on IOC Guidelines for the Structure and Responsibilities of the Subsidiary Bodies of the Commission including: (i) membership, composition, and geographic scope; (ii) Regional Secretariat for the Sub-Commission; and (iii) resources mobilization. The establishment of the Sub Commission for the Indian Ocean will contribute to achieve the capacity development objectives of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development towards distributed capacity around the globe, generations and genders and reverse the asymmetry in knowledge, skills, and access to technology, with the focus on capacity to do the needed science, to understand its relevance to society; and to use it for informed decisions for sustainable development.

The IOC Vice Chair for Group IV, Dr Tummala Srinivasa Kumar made the second part of the presentation on existing programmes, projects, and activities in the IOCINDIO region. The presentation was based both on the IOCINDIO Workplan (Annex 2) with respect to the IOC functions and partners programmes, and the activities in the region conducted by or under the framework of other international organizations/programmes.

*The Ocean Research includes the following themes:*

1. Boundary current dynamics, interactions, and impacts.
2. Dynamic variability of the equatorial zone, southern tropics and Indonesian Throughflow and their impacts on ecological processes and biogeochemical cycling.
3. Physical, biogeochemical, and ecological contrasts between the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal.
4. Controls and fates of phytoplankton and benthic production in the Indian Ocean.
5. Climate and anthropogenic impacts on the Indian Ocean and its marginal seas.
6. The role of higher trophic levels in ecological processes and biogeochemical cycles.

The second International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE-2) aims at advancing the understanding of the Indian Ocean and its role in the Earth System in order to enable informed decisions in support of sustainable development and the well-being of humankind. The Joint Sponsors/Patrons are the IOC, SCOR and IOGOOS with a Joint Program Office (JPO) in Australia (formerly) and India. IIOE-2 endorsed 46 scientific projects that align with the IIOE-2 objectives (<http://www.iioe-2.incois.gov.in/IIOE-2/Endorsed_Projects.jsp>).

A series of International Indian Ocean Science Conferences (IIOSC) is underway. The IIOSC – 2 (2022) is scheduled during 14 – 18 March 2022 to discuss new scientific results emerging from the highly successfully IIOE-2 campaign that was launched in 2015.

*Indian Ocean Global Ocean Observing System (IOGOOS)*

The aims and objectives of IOGOOS are the following: (i) enhance the Ocean Observing System in the Region; (ii) promote and facilitate efficient and effective management, exchange and utilisation of oceanographic data; (iii) Promote programmes and projects in operational oceanography and ocean services in the region meeting the requirements of end-users; (iv) strengthen capacity building for enhancing the capabilities in the region; (v) encourage research to support the needs of users; (vi) develop synergies with other ocean programmes and regional GOOS bodies; (vii) contribute to international planning and promotion of GOOS.

The Governance of IOGOOS is well established since November 2002 after the Indian Ocean Conference in Mauritius. The membership is constituted by 29 Marine institutes from 18 Countries. The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) hosts the IOGOOS Secretariat since its inception in 2002. The IOGOOS bureau of officers includes a Chair and four Officers representing partners programmes including Central Indian Ocean (CIO), Western Indian Ocean (WIO), Eastern Indian Ocean (EIO), Indian Ocean Regional Panel (IORP), Sustained Indian Ocean Biogeochemical and Ecological Research (SIBER). Until recently, the IOC Perth Regional Programme Office co-hosted IOGOOS which is a key member of the GOOS Regional Alliances.

Major IOGOOS activities focus on the cooperations of implementation of the Indian Ocean Observations System (IndOOS), which is coordinated by the CLIVAR/GOOS Indian Ocean Regional Panel, supporting societal needs in the Indian Ocean Region involving the following: (i) 50 Nations (mostly developing ones with 1.5 Billion Population); (ii) rapid growth of blue economy with untapped opportunities to harness ocean resources and services; (iii) agriculture farming dependent on Monsoon; (iv) marine fisheries dependent on ocean conditions; (v) coastal populations vulnerable to extreme weather events and climate change. IndOOS is supported with solid science drivers including research on: (i) Oxygen Minimum Zones (OMZs); (ii) Upwelling and Subduction Zones, (iii) Major Heat flux components; (iv) Tropical modes of the Monsoon Intra-seasonal Oscillation; (v) Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) and Indian Ocean Basin Mode (IOBM); (vi) Subtropical modes of Ningaloo Nino and Subtropical IOD; (vii) Cyclogenesis and Climate Change.

The operational drivers are the need for accurate and timely ocean forecasting services; the improvement of Surface Fluxes; Ocean data Assimilation Systems and Operational Sub seasonal-to-Seasonal Forecasting.

*Ocean Data Management*

There are several national ocean data centres (NODCs) in the Indian Ocean region at BORI, IMOS, INCOIS, etc. IndOOS and IIOE-2 data portals, making oceanographic data from the region discoverable and widely accessible; IIOE-2 Metadata Portal enables search and discovery of metadata of completed and forthcoming/planned cruises under IIOE-2; NOAA-MoES joint Data portal for RAMA-OMNI Moorings.

*Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/IOTWMS)*

Ocean Forecasting and Services including the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/IOTWMS) was formed in response to the tragic tsunami on 26 December 2004. The system is under the responsibility of the IOC/UNESCO and coordinated by its ICG/IOTWMS with the objectives to provide Tsunami advisories to all Indian Ocean rim countries through 3 TSPs (Australia, India, and Indonesia). The Intergovernmental Coordination Group meets regularly to establish and implement working plans in the Indian Ocean region to address specific technical issues. The working groups and task teams are the following:

* + Working Group 1 - Tsunami Risk, Community Awareness and Preparedness
	+ Working Group 2 - Tsunami Detection, Warning and Dissemination
	+ Subregional Working Group for the Northwest Indian Ocean
	+ Task Team on Tsunami Preparedness for a Near-Field Tsunami Hazard
	+ Task Team on Scientific Tsunami Hazard Assessment of the Makran Subduction Zone
	+ Task Team on Exercise Indian Ocean Wave.

*Ocean modelling and forecasting*

Several countries in the region generate national and regional ocean forecast products: Ocean State, High Waves, Swell Surges, Storm Surges, Oil Spills, Search and Rescue, Currents, Climate Indices, Fisheries, etc.

The pilot concept of Modelling and Ocean Forecasting and Process Studies (MOFPS) pursues the following objectives:

* + To enhance ocean forecasting capacities for the Indian Ocean and modelling applications at sub-regional and local scales
	+ Identifying the key priority user requirements in respect to parameters that models can focus on regions requiring model products
	+ Capacity building in the use, and applications of models
	+ Organised Virtual Training Workshop in Dec 2021 to re-engage MS.

Other related activities in the domain of operational oceanography are:

* ChloroGIN-IO IOGOOS Project
* Near-real-time satellite products to member states India, Iran, Kenya, Maldives, Oman, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand.
* Products: CHL, SST, K490, ANGSTROM, AOT, BRS, CDOM, FLH, IPAR, PAR, PIC, POC.

*Capacity Development*

* Two Category-2 Training Centres under the auspices of UNESCO and operated by IOGOOS Member institutions in India and Iran:
	+ - ITCOocean: <https://incois.gov.in/ITCOocean/index.jsp>
		- RCOWA: <http://www.inio.ac.ir/Default.aspx?tabid=2768>
* UNESCO Chairs in Iran, Oman, Qatar in the fields of competence of the IOC.
* Several Training Programmes – IOGOOS + UNESCO C2C + UNESCO CHAIRS + DBCP + Ocean Teacher Academy.

*Highlights of IOCINDIO Activities from the Reactivation Session (2016) till date 2022:*

* Regular periodical IOCINDIO Governing Body Sessions in line with IOC Manual and Guidelines (Reactivation Session: IOCINDIO-V, 2016, India; IOCINDIO-VI, Kuwait, 2017; IOCINDIO-VII, India, 2019; IOCINDIO VIII, online, 2021).
* IOCINDIO in search for a consensus: IOCINDIO Consultation meeting, 16th April 2021.
* IOCINDIO Projects identification workshop, Kuwait, 2017.
* IOCINDIO Scientific, Technical, and Institutional Innovations Workshop for National and Regional Framework on Coastal Vulnerability Assessment and Monitoring for Sea-Level Rise and Storm Surges in the Indian Ocean Region 27-30 May 2019 at ITOocean, INCOIS, Hyderabad, India.
* IOCINDIO Leadership Workshop for regional framework for coastal vulnerability, January 6-7, 2020, NIOT, Chennai, India.
* Regional Planning Workshop for the Northern/Central Indian Ocean countries as well as ROPME sea area towards the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), 8-10 January 2020 NIOT, Chennai, India
* Indian Ocean Blue Economy Summit – Webinar on Blue Economy in the Indian Ocean region towards United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainability (2021-2030) held on May 6, 2021, online.
* The First Webinar on the Effects of Climate Change on the Indian Ocean Marine Environment, (Online) 10 May 2021, Iran.
* Regional Training Course on Data Analysis and Ocean Observing Instruments, (Online) 29 - 31 August 2021, Iran. Regional Training Course on Coastal Desalination Intake and Brine Disposal System- Planning, Design, and Implementation, (Online) 27 -29 October 2021, Iran.
* IOCINDIO Training Workshop on Methodologies and Approaches of Coastal Vulnerability, Sea Level Rise and Advances in Operational Oceanography Science and Technology in the Indian Ocean, Hyderabad, India, 13–17 December 2021.
* Oceans’2022 Chennai, 21-24 February 2022.

*Inter-Regional Cooperation with the IOC Sub-Commissions*

• WESTPAC Technical Secretary attended the IOCINDIO Reactivation Session in 2016.

• Mutual attendance of Conferences and Workshops between IOCINDIO and IOCAFRICA, 2020, 2021, upcoming in 2022.

1. **Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the OEIWG: Ultimate goal, programme of work, expected deliverables, procedures, and working methods, schedule of the OEIWG meetings.**

The IOC Chair and Co-Chair introduced the item and requested participants to provide comments and amendments to the proposed ToRs.

The IOCINDIO Chair and Co-Chair expressed the view that there is good plan for the transformation of IOCNDIO into an IOC Sub Commission with defined objectives, geographic scope, programme of work. New projects will come with more support of Member States as the Sub Commission will be established. He informed the meeting that IOCINDIO has invited IOCAFRICA and WESTPAC to its meetings, and attended the IOCAFRICA meetings. Proposed mechanisms for working with the other Sub Commissions would need to be defined jointly with the other Sub Commissions. Thus, IOCINDIO would like to hear the IOCAFRICA and WESTPAC.

The IOC Chair and Co-Chair responded that all the points raised are the tasks ahead the Working Group. He recalled that participation in the Working Group is subject to Member States representation based on the intergovernmental nature of the IOC, subsequently, participants are not attending the meeting in their personal capacity.

The Executive Secretary clarified the point that this specific item of the agenda called for discussions on the ToRs of the Working Group and not the ToRs of the potential IOCINDIO Sub Commission. He recalled that the report of the Working Group should be sent to Member States two months prior the 55th Session of the Executive Council scheduled for June 2022. He invited participants to express official national views as country representatives.

The Representative of Australia wondered how the Sub Commission would deliver against targets.

The IOCAFRICA Chair suggested that the Working Group should focus on the duty assigned to it by the 31st Session of the Assembly with a view to fulfil the remaining steps. What are the steps for the transformation of IOCINDIO into a Sub Commission?

There was a discussion on the interpretation of the communication from Dr Neville Smith to the Chairperson of IOC on “Toward an Indian Ocean Sub-Commission” dated July 2008, with regards to a desk study for IOCINDIO. The IOCINDIO Chair expressed a disagreement on this particular aspect, stating that a desk study is not needed.

The IOC Chair and Co-Chair presented a timeline schedule (Annex 4) for the work of the Working Group suggesting a second meeting of the Working Group end of March with a draft report prepared in April for submission to the 55th Session of the Executive Council in June 2022. The Group could meet in May and during Executive Council in June. He explained that the proposed timeline is based on existing rules and procedures of the IOC with mandatory deadline for submission of documentation to the governing bodies of the IOC two months prior the Session.

Although the IOCINDIO Chairman expressed reservation about the proposed deadline, intervening participants considered that due respect to the rules and procedures related to the deadline for submission of working documents to the governing bodies is critical because Member States need time to study the documents in order to make their views.

The immediate past Chair of IOCINDIO, Dr. Atmanand thanked the Executive Secretary and the Co-Chairs for inviting him to the meeting. He expressed concerns about the difficulty of getting Member States to attend meetings. He therefore suggested that a number of meetings should be reduced to a reasonable number only needed to achieve timely results.

The ToRs of the Working Group were approved with the proposed timeline schedule.

1. **Discussions on programmatic perspectives in the region.**

Due to time constraints, there was no discussion following the presentation on the programmatic perspectives in the region.

1. **Conclusions by the Co-Chairs.**

The Co-Chairs thanked participants for their attendance and contribution to the discussions and requested the Secretariat to inform Member States on the date of the second meeting as soon as possible.

**ANNEXES**

**Annex 1: Adopted agenda**

**Annex 2: IOCINDIO Workplan**

**Annex 3: Adopted Terms of Reference of the Working Group**

**Annex 4: Timeline schedule of the Working Group**

**Annex 5: List of participants**

**Annex 1**

**Adopted agenda**

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Presentation and adoption of the agenda
3. Presentation of existing programmes, projects, and activities in the IOCINDIO region
4. Introduction and discussions of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the OEIWG: Ultimate goal, programme of work, expected deliverables, procedures and working methods, schedule of the OEIWG meetings
5. Discussions on programmatic perspectives in the region
6. Conclusions by the Co-Chairs

**Annex 2**

**IOCINDIO Work plan based on the IOC Functions**

* **IOC Function A: Ocean Science and Research**
	+ Effects of human induced changes: Ocean acidification, eutrophication, hypoxia, harmful algal blooms (HABs) in coastal waters of the North-western Indian Ocean.
* **IOC Function B: Observing Systems & Data**
	+ Ocean observations, coastal zone management, circulations, and fisheries.
* **IOC Function C: Ocean Hazards**
	+ Coastal vulnerability assessment for sea level rise and storm surges.
	+ Monitoring with Responsible Response of Oil Spill in inner ROPME Sea.
* **IOC Function D: Assessments & information for Policy**
	+ 2050 Integrated Ocean Policy Advice for Proactive Planning and Managements for IOCINCIO Member States.
* **IOC Function E: Governance**
	+ Blue Economy Business opportunities in the context of climate change adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction.
* **IOC Function F: Capacity Development**
	+ “IOCINDIO Networking Research Infrastructures, Facilities and Human Resources” project proposal is a direct contribution to this function taking into account specificities in needs and capacities of Member States.
	+ IOCINDIO-IEEE partnership programme.

• **Engagement with the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)** and resources mobilization including the Ocean Decade regional enabling activities sponsored by the Government of Norway.

**Annex 3**

**Adopted Terms of Reference of the open-ended intersessional Working Group on the Status of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO)**

**Nature of the Working Group**

The open-ended intersessional Working Group on the Status of IOCINDIO will follow up on the IOC Decision A-31/3.5.6 on the Status of the IOC Regional Committee for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO) based on the discussions at the 31st Session of the IOC Assembly.

**Objectives**

Taking into account the proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission, the Working Group will:

- identify necessary steps remaining for the establishment of the IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean,

- present a written progress report for discussion by the Executive Council at its 55th session,

- prepare a proposal for the establishment of an IOC Sub-Commission for the Indian Ocean including: its title and terms of reference; geographic area of responsibility; programme of work with the proposed projects and funding support; mechanisms for coordination with adjacent sub-commissions, and other necessary specifications, and submit it to the IOC Assembly at its 32nd Session as a working document as well as a draft resolution on the above subject.

**Membership and co-chairs**

The Working Group members will be composed of representatives of IOC Member States whose names were submitted to the IOC Secretariat in the response to the corresponding circular letter. In addition, the working group will include current and past IOC and IOCINDIO Officers willing to take part in the group’s work. Chairs of WESTPAC and IOCAFRICA are invited to participate personally or appoint their representatives from the Officers of the Sub-Commissions. The Group will be cochaired by the IOC Chair and the IOCINDIO Chair.

**Organization of work**

The Group shall first review and adopt its Terms of Reference based on this draft and conduct its work through a series of online meetings.

**Annex 4**

**Tentative timeline of the Working Group work**



**Annex 5: List of participants**