



UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

Expert Roster Terms of Reference

1. Background

The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 (referred to as ‘the Ocean Decade’) was proclaimed by the 72nd Session of UN General Assembly (UNGA) on the 5th of December 2017. The Decade is being coordinated by a small team (referred to as the Decade Coordination Unit - DCU) within the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) in an effort to promote transformational, large-scale change to advance urgent action on moving from the ‘ocean we have’ to the ‘ocean we want’.

The [Ocean Decade Implementation Plan](#) will guide the Ocean Decade and will be supported by contributions from Member States, specialized agencies, funds, programmes and bodies of the United Nations, as well as other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and relevant stakeholders. The Decade Action Framework is built on ten challenges and three objectives that will contribute to creating the “ocean we want”. Throughout the Decade, Decade Actions will be solicited from actors around the world and grouped into (i) “Decade Programmes”, long-term regional or global actions towards one or more challenges, (ii) “Decade Projects”, discrete and focused undertaking at regional, national or subnational scales, that typically contributes to a Decade Programme, and (iii) “Decade Activities”, on-off standalone initiative that contributes to a Project or Programme.

Decade Actions will be solicited through twice annual Calls for Decade Actions (CFDA), on the 15th of October and April each year. The CFDA will solicit new programmes that fill an identified gap in addressing the ten Decade Challenges and will serve as the mechanism for endorsed Programmes to solicit projects.

2. Purpose of the Expert Roster

The purpose of the Expert Roster is to assist the DCU/IOC Secretariat on three components:

1. Strategic Ambition Setting
 - a. Target setting for Decade Challenges including indicators for the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
2. Alignment of Decade Actions with Ambitions
 - a. Review and provide feedback on programme submissions to Calls for Decade Actions
 - i. The feedback of the reviewers will be used to prepare the documents for the Decade Advisory Board who will make recommendations on endorsement of

the Programmes, before a final decision on endorsement by the IOC Executive Secretary.

3. Review, Reporting and Adaptive Management
 - a. Contribute to State of the Decade reports via case studies, narratives, and analyses
 - b. Scoping and preparation for the Ocean Decade conference series.

Members of the Expert Roster will not need to participate in all three roles, or during every round of activity. Participating will be on an invitational, opt in volunteer basis.

3. Functions of the Expert Roster

The Expert Roster will meet its objectives by carrying out the following functions in close collaboration with the DCU/IOC Secretariat:

- To review a small number of programmatic submissions from the Calls for Decade Actions and analyse them against the criteria for both categorisation as a Decade Programme and demonstration of Ocean Decade endorsement criteria (see Annex for criteria)
- To provide feedback on endorsement for each submission reviewed via an assessment form provided by the DCU/IOC Secretariat.
- To provide feedback on the review process to the DCU
- To provide feedback on proposed monitoring and evaluation indicators, particularly those linked to the Decade Challenges
- To provide ideal targets for each Decade Challenge
- To write case studies, narratives, and analyses for the State of the Decade reports
- To scope the foci of Ocean Decade conferences
- To prepare documentation for the Ocean Decade conferences

Membership of the Expert Roster is on a voluntary basis.

4. Organization and Duration of the Expert Roster

Meetings

The expert panel will have the opportunity to meet for an online training and Q&A session ahead of any round of activity. The time and details of these sessions will be provided in due course to individuals invited to each round of activity. If needed, office hours will be made available for additional Q&A throughout the activity periods.

Milestones and Duration

Ambition setting for the Ocean Decade is an ongoing process. As the monitoring and evaluation framework is finalised, experts will be invited to support target setting.

Calls for Decade Actions will be launched twice a year on April 15th and October 15th, with review periods falling approximately in August – September, and February – March.

The State of the Ocean report launches every three years, the first being in 2023. The Ocean Decade conferences will be held in the same years. The first preparation period will start in 2022.

5. Registration on the Roster

Interested individuals who would like to participate in the Expert Roster are kindly asked to complete the online form at the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ExpertRoster>

Registration is open on a rolling basis. Registered individuals will be invited periodically to review and scoping processes.