

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION**  
(of UNESCO)

**Seventh Intergovernmental Session of the IOC Sub-  
Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States  
(IOCAFRICA-VII)**

15–17 March 2023, Nairobi, Kenya

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In accordance with Rule of Procedure 48.3, the IOC [Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States](#) (IOCAFRICA), as a primary Subsidiary Body of the IOC, is required to report to a Governing Body on its sessions.

The full summary report of the session and more information are available [online](#).

The IOC Assembly at its Thirty-second Session will be invited to consider this Executive Summary and the recommendations it contains.

1. The Seventh session of the IOC's Sub Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States was held in hybrid format from 15 to 17 March 2023, in Nairobi, Kenya and attended by more than 45 participants representing 20 Member States from the region and other partners. The session was preceded by an informal meeting of the delegates to deliberate on how to strengthen the Sub Commission.

**Report on IOCAFRICA Activities 2021–2023**

2. The reduction in the budgets during the current biennium had adversely impacted the implementation of the IOCAFRICA programmes adopted during the sixth session that was held online on 13–15 April 2021. This resulted in some activities not being implemented as planned.

3. There was good progress in the planning of activities in the framework of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030). The [Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap](#) was prepared through an inclusive consultative process, and the 'African Conference on Priority Setting & Partnership Development for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development' was hosted by the National Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries in Cairo (Egypt) on 10–12 May 2022

during which the roadmap was presented and opportunities for partnerships were discussed. The Africa Ocean Decade Task Force comprising 14 experts and representatives of 6 organizations was established and commenced its assignment of supporting the development of regional Ocean Decade Actions.

4. Collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC) was strengthened, in particular with the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) and Africa project, and the AUC's Division of Blue Economy. The 'Workshop on collaboration between GOOS-AFRICA and GMES & AFRICA' was held on 24–28 October 2022 in Kigali (Rwanda) and focused on developing partnerships between GOOS-AFRICA and GMES & AFRICA, including support for the implementation of the UN *Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap*. The AUC's Directorate for Blue Economy actively participated in the development of the *Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap* and is represented on the Africa Ocean Decade task Force. Joint events were organized with the Directorate during the Luanda Biennale (November 2021, Angola), and the 2022 UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon (Portugal).

5. The workshop on Ocean related hazards for the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) was organized (13–14 October 2021, online) in collaboration with the Nigerian Institute of Oceanography and Marine research. Presentations covered a myriad of topics including: impacts of coastal pollution in the GoG; the role of ocean literacy in preparing for ocean-related threats; partnering for safe and sustainable oceans and; use of high-resolution models in predicting extreme weather events. The National Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries (NIOF) in Egypt was an active partner of IOCAFRICA during the intersessional period and co-organized the activities on Resilience and safer coasts, World Oceans Day, Algal Blooms, Tsunami Awareness, Ocean Acidification, Ocean Decade etc.

6. A comprehensive survey of the status of the ocean observations platforms in Africa and the Adjacent Island States was undertaken and a webinar organized to review the report on 23 March 2022. The participants agreed on the publication of the report on the 'African Ocean Observations Network', taking into account the proposed changes discussed during the session.

7. The workshop on the reactivation of the Ocean Data and Information Network for Africa (ODINAFRICA) was held on 24 March 2022. Participants agreed on the reactivation of ODINAFRICA to contribute to the Ocean Information Hub (OIH) as a regional and multi-thematic node that will improve online access to and synthesis of existing regional and national data, information and knowledge resources, including existing clearinghouse mechanisms.

8. IOCAFRICA continued to work with the African Group of Negotiators Experts Support (AGNES) in enhancing integration of ocean-based adaptation and mitigation actions in addressing climate change. The implementation of the project on building capacity for ocean acidification research and observation, as well as detection and early warning for HAB is ongoing with the institutions in Côte d'Ivoire, Namibia, Nigeria, Madagascar and Morocco already participating.

9. The implementation of the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) continued with case studies on gender and poverty perspectives in Kenya, Madagascar and Tanzania implemented in collaboration with the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM). The results of the comparative Analysis of Gender and Poverty Perspectives in MSP in Kenya, Madagascar and Tanzania have also been finalized. A National MSP workshop was organized for Comoros and a report on MSP and the Blue Economy in Kenya published as IOC Technical Series, [177](#). Many IOCAFRICA Member States participated in MSP Global activities, including the 3rd International Conference on Marine/Maritime Spatial Planning (22–23 November 2022, Barcelona, Spain) (cf IOC Workshop report, [308](#)). The first Regional Marine Spatial Planning Forum for Africa and the adjacent Island States was held online in December 2022 (cf IOC Workshop Report, [304](#)).

10. Capacity development for marine science and technology continues to be a key area of focus for IOC in Africa. The development of the portal on training facilities and opportunities in the region is completed (<https://africa.marinettraining.org>) with continuous updates ongoing. Training workshops

were held on a wide range of topics, including: Earth Observation data and techniques for fisheries management (24 January–4 February 2022 hosted online by the University of Ghana); Oceanographic data collection techniques and access to free online data (9 May–31 October 2022, Mozambique, hosted online by the Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique); Vessel-based ocean monitoring with applications to R/V *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* surveys (30 May–17 June 2022, jointly organized with the FAO/EAFNANSEN programme and hosted by the National Marine Information Centre in Swakopmund, Namibia); Remote sensing applied to oceanography (21–25 November 2022, hosted by the Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny, in Côte d'Ivoire).

11. The Sub-Commission congratulated the IOCAFRICA Officers and the Secretariat on the good progress that has been made in the implementation of the planned activities.

12. The Sub-Commission expressed its gratitude to partners that have provided support for implementation of IOCAFRICA programmes, especially the Governments of Flanders (Belgium), China, Norway, Sweden, the African Union Commission, and the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association, and invited other Member States and organizations to partner with IOCAFRICA.

### MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE SESSION

13. The Sub-Commission unanimously re-elected the following members of the Bureau for the Sub-Commission to serve for the next inter-sessional period and the Eighth session of the IOCAFRICA:

- Chair : Prof. Kouadio Affian (Côte d'Ivoire)
- Vice Chair Group A: Dr Ir. Zacharie Sohoun (Benin)
- Vice Chair Group B: Cândida Inês Sete (Mozambique)
- Vice Chair Group C: Dr Suzan M. El-Gharabawy (Egypt)

14. The Sub-Commission decided to hold its next session in the first quarter of 2025 (preferably in February 2025) and welcomed the offer of Egypt to explore the possibility of hosting the eighth session. The Sub-Commission requested the Secretariat to ensure that the dates of the eighth session do not overlap with those of the UNESCO and IOC governing bodies and other relevant meetings.

15. The Seventh Session of IOC's Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States (IOCAFRICA-VI) adopted four Recommendations on:

1. **Regional Implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development:** focus on development and implementation of Regional Ocean Decade Actions, the establishment and running of a regional Decade Coordination Office, organization of a special session on Africa at the 2<sup>nd</sup> UN Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona, Spain in April 2024, and the organization of the Africa Ocean Decade Conference in 2025 to mark the mid-point of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the end of the Africa Decade of Oceans and Seas.
2. **GOOS–AFRICA:** focussing on implementation of the GOOS-Africa work plan, organization of joint regional cruises in the context of the Africa Decade of Oceans and Seas and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, support by Member States in the region for national ocean operational centres and observation systems, and strengthening of the GOOS-Africa coordination office hosted by CURAT (Centre Universitaire de Recherche et d'Application en Télédétection) in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire).
3. **Partnerships and Resource Mobilization:** The Secretariat and the IOCAFRICA Officers should focus on developing and strengthening partnerships with other organizations/programmes as well as resource mobilization as the funds available from the Regular Programme budget is limited. The work plan and budget adopted will provide a guide for resource mobilization.

4. ***IOCAFRICA Work Plan and Budget 2023–2025*** focussing on Ocean Observations and Data and Information Management; Ocean Sciences and Application to Management; Capacity Development for Marine Science and Technology; and Ocean Literacy, Public Awareness and Advocacy. The Sub-Commission requested the IOC Executive Secretary to explore opportunities for additional Regular Programme budget and Extrabudgetary resources for the implementation of these activities in line with the Global Priority status of Africa.
  
16. The Sub-Commission requested the Chair to present the Executive Summary Report and recommendations to the IOC Assembly at its 32nd session (21–30 June 2023, UNESCO HQ, Paris, France).