

Extracted from [216 EX/51](#): Draft Decisions recommended by the Finance and Administrative Commission (FA) and the Programme and External Relations Commission (PX) at their Joint Meeting, 19–22 May 2023)

Followed by Comments by the Director-General (Extracted from [216 EX/DG.INF Rev.](#))

Item 44 Urgent requirement for increased and more stable resources to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) (216 EX/44; 216 EX/PG/1.INF.3; 216 EX/DG.INF Rev.)

16. After considering this item, the Finance and Administrative Commission and the Programme and External Relations Commission recommended that the Executive Board adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 216 EX/44,
2. Recalling IOC Resolution XXX-3, IOC Resolution A-31/2, Resolution EC-55/2, 214 EX/Decision 29, document 214 EX/19 and Recommendation 1 of the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) evaluation report (IOC/EC-55/3.2. Doc (1) and IOS/EVS/PI 197),
3. Underlining the fact that scientific knowledge is central to protecting the world's marine environment and resources, helping to understand, predict and respond to natural events and promoting the sustainable development of the oceans and seas,
4. Recognizing the important contribution of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including SDG 14 on the oceans,
5. Also recalling that the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO-IOC) is responsible for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators on ocean acidification (indicator 14.3.1) and capacity for marine scientific research (indicator 14.a.1),
6. Further recalling 41 C/Resolution 27 on the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO-IOC), which recalled that “the IOC plan of action for the period 2022-2025 contributes to Strategic Objective 2 of the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2029 and the related Outcomes 3 and 4, as translated into the IOC Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2029”,
7. Recalling that, in accordance with the Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO-IOC), the Commission's actions are focused on five thematic programme areas (high-level objectives),
8. Also recalling United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and the leading coordination role of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO-IOC),
9. Conscious of the critical role of the ocean in the climate, environmental, economic and social aspects of sustainable development and of the detrimental impacts of climate change, pollution and other stressors on ocean ecosystem health,

10. Also recognizing the threat to many island and coastal countries, and particularly developing countries, posed by the sea-level rise as reflected in the first Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),
11. Further recognizing that while the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO-IOC) represents a most productive and high-returning investment of Member States, this investment is drastically insufficient, and that UNESCO-IOC is too under-staffed and under-resourced to achieve its expanding mandate,
12. Recommends that the General Conference:
 - (a) agree an increase in the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO-IOC)'s share of the UNESCO regular budget of [1 %] to ensure it has adequate and equitable human and financial resources across all IOC functions in order to fully implement its responsibilities;
 - (b) determine that for UNESCO's regular budget for 2024-25 (42 C/5), this increase be identified within existing regular budget resources;
 - (c) invite UNESCO-IOC to take into consideration the budgetary necessities for capacity development, staff allocation and proper functioning of the regional subsidiary bodies, while planning for disbursement of the additional allocation;
13. Also recommends that the General Conference:
 - (a) agree that the budget appropriations for the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO-IOC) not be decreased by transfers of funds to other parts of the budget;
 - (b) decide that a baseline be identified and agreed for the IOC's share of UNESCO's regular budget under document 42 C/5 and future C/5 documents and that no reduction to this baseline be made in the future unless agreed by the General Conference;
 - (c) further decide that an increased regular budget for the IOC shall not discourage any existing financial support mechanism.

Comments by the Director-General on Items Presented by Member States which may have Administrative and Financial Implications (extracted from [216 EX/DG.INF Rev.](#))

Item 44 – Urgent requirement for increased and more stable resources to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) – item proposed by Albania, Australia, Bahrain, Cook Islands, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Oman, Palau, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Spain, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Yemen

31. The Director-General welcomes the proposed item highlighting the urgent need for the provision of predictable and sustainable financial resources allowing IOC's to fully assert its increasing global responsibilities in science-based ocean management, including by leading the United Nations Ocean Science Decade for Sustainable Development (2022-2029) and

acting as the United Nations custodian agency for reporting on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets 14.3 and 14.a.

32. The Director-General concurs that such an unprecedented global endeavor requires that we endow IOC with the resources that it needs to lead transformative change for sustainable, science-based, ocean management.

33. It is with this in mind and following up on the recommendations of the IOS Evaluation¹, that the Base Case scenario proposed in the Draft 42 C/5 foresees a strategic increase by 19.7% (a total of \$2.2 million) in the Regular Budget allocated to IOC compared with the 41 C/5 (11% increase under the Integrated Budget Framework compared with 41 C/5)². As a result, IOC's share of UNESCO's Regular Budget would increase from 2.1% to 2.4% (+0.3%), should the Base Case scenario be approved by the General Conference.

34. The Director-General would like to emphasize that a 1% increase of IOC's share of the UNESCO Regular Budget (i.e., from 2.1 to 3.1%), compared to the 41 C/5, as indicated in paragraph 12 (a) of the Draft Decision of document 216 EX/44, would require an additional \$4 million to be allocated to the IOC under the Base Case scenario. The Director-General would accordingly recommend a corresponding increase in the proposed regular budget under the Base Case scenario.

35. The Director-General further highlights that the proposed approach in paragraph 13 (b) of the draft decision of fixing the proportion of any appropriation line under the Regular Budget for future C/5 documents raises questions of financial sustainability and management.

36. The Director-General would like to underline that no increase for the IOC would be possible under the ZNG Scenario.

¹ [IOS Evaluation on the Strategic Positioning of the IOC](#), 2021.

² This increase includes \$1.3 million from the reallocations across budget lines to respond to priorities set out by Member States, as well as the strengthening of IOC's contribution to Intersectoral Programme 2 in the area of environmental and climate change education.