



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 2974

(Available in English, French, Russian and Spanish)

IOC/VR/XY

9 November 2023

To : IOC Member States (Official Coordinating Bodies for Liaison with the IOC)

C.c. : Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
National Commissions for UNESCO of IOC Member States
IOC Officers
Officers of Major IOC Subsidiary Bodies (Scientific, Technical and Regional)
Partner organizations of the IOC

Subject: Appointment of the new Executive Secretary of IOC and Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Vidar Helgesen, as of 1st March 2024

I am pleased to inform you that the Director-General of UNESCO has appointed Mr Vidar Helgesen (Norway) as Executive Secretary of the IOC, at the level of Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, with effect from 1 March 2024.

Mr Helgesen holds a master's degree in law from the University of Oslo (Norway), obtained in 1998.

From 1998 to 2001, he was Special Adviser to the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Geneva (Switzerland).

He was Norway's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2001 to 2005.

From 2006 to 2013 Vidar Helgesen was Secretary-General of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance in Stockholm (Sweden). He then returned to Oslo to take up the post of Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister and Minister for European Affairs of Norway from 2013 to 2015.

From 2015 to 2018, he was Minister for Climate and the Environment in the Norwegian Government. During this period, he led the international climate negotiations on behalf of Norway.

He was then appointed Norway's Special Representative for the Oceans at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from 2018 to 2020. During this period, he advocated and worked for more sustainable use of the ocean, always using scientific research and knowledge as the basis.

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Since 2021 he has been Executive Director of the Nobel Foundation in Stockholm (Sweden), playing a key role in the recognition and promotion of scientific knowledge and innovation.

Many of you know Vidar as the initiator and leader of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy process and as co-chair the Advisory Board of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, 2021–2030.

With absolute confidence that Vidar's leadership will lead the IOC to new successes, I invite you to warmly welcome him on board.

Sincerely,

[signed]

Vladimir Ryabinin
Executive Secretary

Enclosure: DG/Note/23/26 dated 2 November 2023 (English and French only)

The Director-General

DG/Note/23/26

Original: French

Deputy Director-General
Assistant Directors-General
Directors of Bureaux, Offices and Divisions at Headquarters
Directors and Heads of Established Offices and Institutes
away from Headquarters

Subject: **Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental
Oceanographic Commission (IOC)**

1. Former Minister Vidar Helgesen (Norway) has been appointed Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), with the rank of Assistant Director-General.
2. Since 2021, he has held the position of Executive Director of the Nobel Foundation in Stockholm, Sweden, playing a key role in the recognition and promotion of scientific knowledge and innovation.
3. Vidar Helgesen has a master's degree in law from the University of Oslo, Norway, obtained in 1998.
4. From 1998 to 2001, he was Special Advisor to the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Geneva, Switzerland.
5. From 2001 to 2005, he was the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Norway.
6. Vidar Helgesen was Secretary-General of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) in Stockholm, Sweden, from 2006 to 2013. He then returned to Oslo, Norway, to take up the position of Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister and Minister of European Affairs of Norway from 2013 to 2015.
7. From 2015 to 2018, he served as Minister of Climate and Environment in the Norwegian Government. During that period, he led international climate negotiations on behalf of Norway.
8. He was subsequently appointed Norway's Special Representative for the Ocean, within the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from 2018 to 2020. He advocated and worked for a more sustainable use of the ocean, always relying on scientific research and knowledge.
9. This decision shall take effect on 1 March 2024.

Audrey Azoulay