



2021 United Nations Decade  
2030 of Ocean Science  
for Sustainable Development

# Decade Collaborative Centres and Decade Implementing Partners

**OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES**

April 2021

**GUIDELINES**




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**Decade Collaborative Centres and Decade Implementing Partners  
OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## A. PURPOSE OF OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE NOTE

This Operational Guidance Note has been developed to build on information contained in the Implementation Plan for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development ('the Ocean Decade') that was adopted on the 31 December 2020 by the United Nations General Assembly as part of Resolution A/75/239.

It contains detailed information and guidance in relation to the establishment and operation of two forms of decentralized coordination support that could be provided by non-United Nations entities to the implementation of the Decade i.e. Decade Collaborative Centres and Decade Implementing Partners. It provides contextual information on a third form of coordination support that could be provided by United Nations entities or Member States i.e. Decade Coordination Offices, but further guidance on those structures will be provided in a separate document.

This note will form part of a series of documents that are being developed as part of the overall comprehensive partnership strategy to be developed for the Decade.

## B. THE OCEAN DECADE

The [Ocean Decade Implementation Plan](#) will guide the operationalisation of the Ocean Decade over the next 10 years. The Plan describes the desired characteristics of the 'ocean we want' via a series of seven Decade Outcomes. The Plan provides a non-prescriptive framework for diverse stakeholders to collaborate in the design of Decade Actions and delivery of results that will be organised around a series of Decade Objectives, and implemented to address a series of ten Ocean Decade Challenges, which represent the most pressing and immediate priorities for the Decade (refer Figure 1).



Figure 1: Ocean Decade Action Framework

The Implementation Plan describes the governance and coordination structures of the Decade, including the roles of the Decade Advisory Board, Decade Coordination Unit and decentralized coordination structures (which include Decade Coordination Offices and Decade Collaborative Centres), as well as the way in which stakeholder entities and engagement networks can provide support to specific aspects of the Ocean Decade, i.e. through acting as Decade Implementing Partners.

### C. OVERVIEW OF OCEAN DECADE GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION STRUCTURES

The key elements of the formal Ocean Decade governance and coordination structures are shown in Figure 2 below and briefly described in the text underneath.

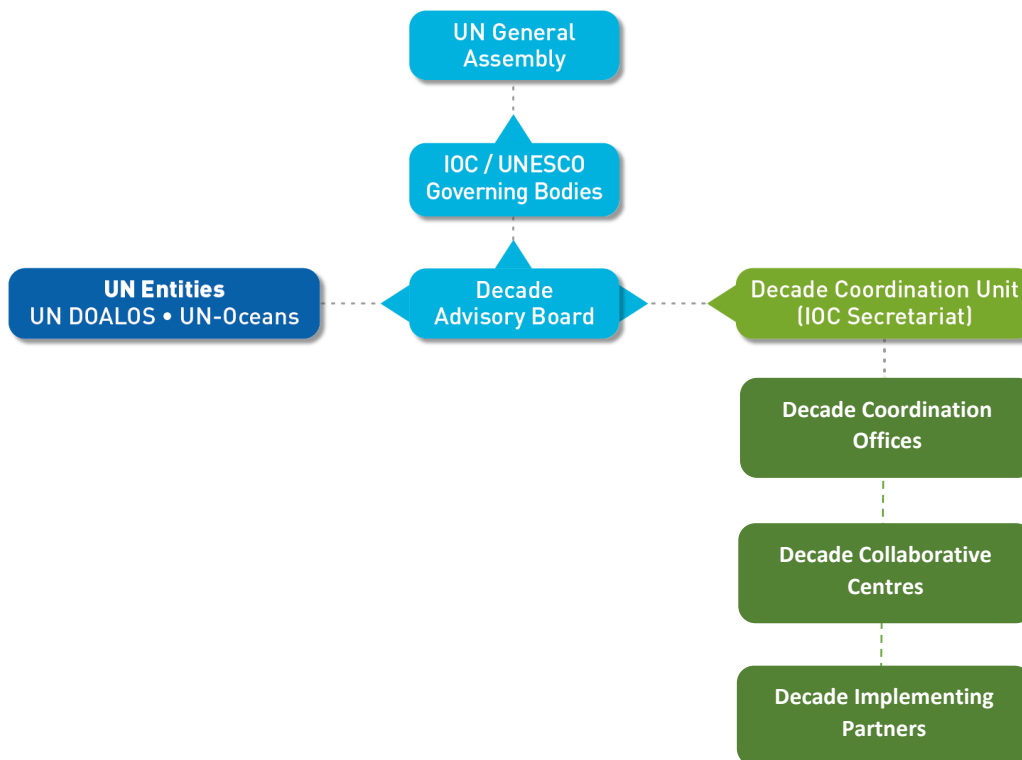


Figure 2: Ocean Decade Governance and Coordination Structures

The **Decade Advisory Board** is a multi-stakeholder advisory body to the IOC Governing Bodies that will provide strategic advice on Decade implementation.

The **Decade Coordination Unit** is the central coordination unit for the implementation of the Decade that will be housed within the IOC Secretariat. The Decade Coordination Unit will work in close collaboration with the Secretariats of other UN entities and may include seconded staff from UN entities and programmes to ensure a well-coordinated inter-agency approach. In addition, a more decentralized approach may be explored by appointing personnel within UN entity Secretariats to support the coordinating functions of the Decade.

The Decade Coordination Unit will be supported by Decade Coordination Offices which will collaborate closely with the Decade Coordination Unit and play an important role in coordination of the Decade at a decentralized level and with a focus on a specific region or theme (i.e. linked to one or more Ocean Decade Challenge). Initial guidance for the establishment of IOC/UNESCO-based Decade Coordination Offices is provided through [IOC-CL 2785](#) of 2019. These offices will be located in existing UN or Member State structures or in newly established structures, and staffed with UN employees. Decade Coordination Offices

will act as regional or thematic sub-units of the central Decade Coordination Unit and may coordinate Decade Collaborative Centres and Decade Implementing Partners, depending on the geographical and thematic mix of these structures. Specific tasks of these structures will include:

- a. Coordinate, monitor and report on specific Decade programmes or regional portfolios of actions.
- b. Review requests for endorsement of Decade Actions falling under their mandate and provide recommendations to the Decade Coordination Unit.
- c. Organize and participate in Decade implementation review meetings and other relevant meetings and discussions linked to the Decade implementation.
- d. Promote cooperation with relevant IOC programmes, related projects, other relevant UN entities and stakeholder groups in order to advance the implementation of the Decade.
- e. Raise awareness and visibility of the Decade amongst diverse stakeholder groups and coordinate targeted communications activities in line with branding and messaging guidelines provided by the Decade Coordination Unit.
- f. Seek partnerships and potential voluntary commitments to strengthen implementation and impact of the Decade.

*N.B. the above information on Decade Coordination Offices is provided here for contextual purposes. Decade Coordination Offices are not addressed in detail in this operational guidance note but will be addressed in the overall partnership strategy being developed for the Decade.*

*In addition,*

- i. Decade Collaborative Centres, will be proposed by Member States, international or major regional non-UN organizations. They will provide support to the Decade Coordination Unit and to Decade Coordination Offices by catalysing and coordinating Decade Actions at the regional or thematic level.

*N.B. These structures, along with Decade Implementing Partners, are the main focus of this operational guidance note and details of their mandate and role are provided in Section 2.*

- ii. Decade Implementing Partners will be non-UN regional or international stakeholder organisations that sit outside the formal governance and coordination structures, but that provide targeted support to the Decade Coordination Unit and decentralized coordination structures – including both Decade Coordination Offices and Decade Collaborative Centres - in relation to different facets of Decade implementation.

*N.B. These structures, along with Decade Implementing Partners, are the main focus of this operational guidance note and details of their mandate and role are provided in Section 3.*

Table 1 summarises the key features of these three types of structures.

	<b>Decade Coordination Offices</b>	<b>Decade Collaborative Centres</b>	<b>Decade Implementing Partners</b>
<b>Type of institution eligible to play this role</b>	UN entity and/or UN Member State acting as host of a UN Secretariat	International or major regional organization working in relevant area of marine science e.g. research institutes or centres, NGOs, philanthropic Foundations, private sector entities or universities.	International or regional organization working in relevant area of marine science e.g. research institutes or centres, NGOs, universities, existing networks or platforms, or informal or formal working groups.
<b>Main roles</b>	Acts as sub-unit of the central Decade Coordination Unit. Catalysis and coordination of Decade Actions including of Calls for Decade Actions, organise and coordinate Decade review processes, promote cooperation amongst UN and Member State partners, communications, monitoring, and resource mobilisation.	Catalysis and coordination of Decade Actions and partners, communications, monitoring and resource mobilisation.	Selected, specific support tasks to activities of central or decentralized coordination offices
<b>Geographic or thematic scope</b>	Ocean basin or thematic priority related to one or more Ocean Decade Challenge	Ocean basin or thematic priority related to one or more Ocean Decade Challenge	Regional or thematic focus (e.g. sub-basin, land based region or one or more elements of an Ocean Decade Challenge)
<b>Expected resource commitment</b>	Small team of dedicated UN staff, premises and office operational costs	Small team of dedicated staff, premises and operational costs	Part-time staff time allocated to specific tasks, operational costs

Table 1: Key features of Decade coordination and support structures

Decade Collaborative Centres and Decade Implementing Partners will have mandates that are focused either thematically (i.e. the Ocean Decade Challenges) or geographically (i.e. ocean basins or land-based regions). The ultimate aim of the Ocean Decade is to have a full and coordinated matrix of partners covering all major themes and geographies, and operating in a

way that enhances collaboration and avoids overlap. Each Decade Action will have designated primary and secondary point of contact within this matrix (e.g. a Decade Implementing Partner or Collaborative Centre). If there is overlap between thematic and geographical coverage for a specific Decade Action, a secondary point of contact may be nominated.

Figure 3 outlines the proposed reporting lines for the Decade Collaborative Centres and Decade Implementing Partners.

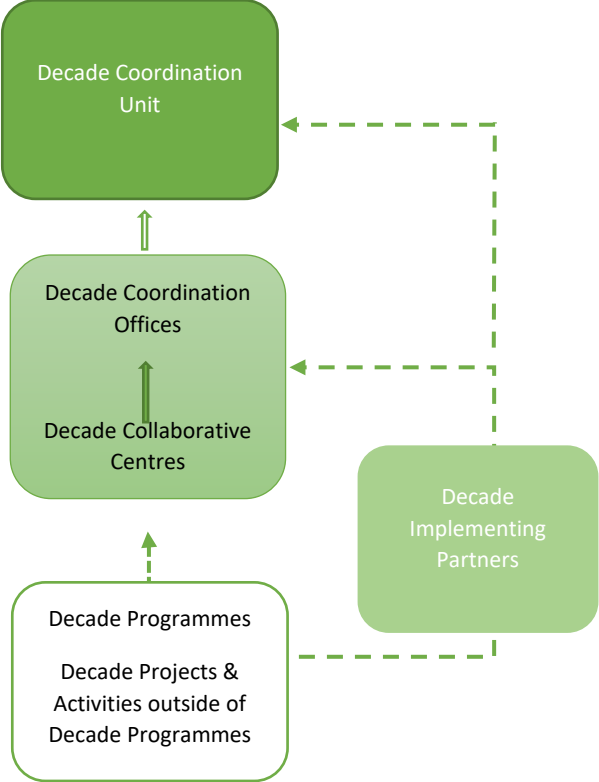


Figure 3: Reporting lines for Decade Collaborative Centres and Decade Implementing Partners

Decade Collaborative Centres and Decade Implementing Partners may be established under the framework of the IOC, or by another UN entity engaged in the Decade. In this latter case, the UN partner would use its own procedures to establish the centre and discussions would be held with the Decade Coordination Unit within the IOC Secretariat to ensure coherence and coordination in activities and reporting lines of the structure.

**2. DETAILED OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR DECADE COLLABORATIVE CENTRES**

**A. ROLE OF DECADE COLLABORATIVE CENTRES**

**Decade Collaborative Centres** would play a coordination and catalysis role for Decade Actions at the regional or thematic level by providing technical, logistical, and financial support for: (i) scientific coordination and planning; (ii) the identification of collaboration opportunities; (iii) awareness raising and stakeholder engagement; and (iv) technical and scientific capacities to support Decade Actions. They will provide advice to the Decade Coordination Unit (via the Decade Coordination Offices where they exist for that theme or region) on requests for endorsement of Decade Actions that fall within their purview. Decade Collaborative Centres will be legally separate from the IOC or the UN agency under which they are established, and operate under the complete responsibility of the establishing entity (ies).



Decade Collaborative Centres will have a central role to play as part of the Decade governance and coordination framework that is described in the Ocean Decade Implementation Plan. The scope and mandate of Decade Collaborative Centres is expected to address one or more Ocean Decade Challenges (i.e. thematically focused Centres) or one or more ocean basins (i.e. geographically focused Centres).

Each Centre's mandate will eventually cover multiple Decade Actions. They will be the main interface between Decade Actions - in the form of programmes, as well as any relevant projects and activities that fall outside Decade programmes but that fall within the Centre's mandate - and the Decade Coordination Unit.

In some cases, they will also be the main interface between Decade Implementing Partners

Decade Collaborative Centres will play a diverse range of roles as described below.

#### *Stakeholder Coordination, Facilitation and Engagement*

Centres will facilitate the structuring and engagement of communities of practice within their scope and mandate and will play an important role in the coordination of Decade Actions being proposed and implemented by stakeholders. A Global Stakeholder Forum will be operationalised in 2021 and will provide a convening and exchange mechanism for all stakeholder engagement networks. Decade Collaborative Centres will use this Forum to play an active and leading role in facilitating dialogue and exchange between other Decade stakeholders via this Forum.

#### *Calls for Action*

Centres will assist the Decade Coordination Unit to develop, launch and process Calls for Decade Actions for programmes and projects. They will contribute to the scoping of Calls for Decade Actions including gap analyses on the basis of monitoring data to propose areas for focused Calls for Actions. They will aid in the identification of potential financial partners to sponsor relevant Calls for Decade Actions. In the lead up to the Calls and during the submission period, Centres will play a strong coordination and convening role to facilitate collaboration and synergies between initiatives under development. Once submissions are received, they will aid in collating, synthesizing, soliciting input from programmes on project level endorsement decisions, and providing comments to the Decade Coordination Unit on endorsement decisions. They will also provide advice on applications for endorsement of Decade Activities received on a rolling basis.

#### *Monitoring*

Centres will provide advice to the Decade Coordination Unit on the most appropriate means of collecting monitoring and evaluation data. Centres will collect annual monitoring data from programs, projects and activities under their responsibility, as well as Decade Implementing Partners where relevant, and will provide this data to the Decade Coordination Unit. Centres will contribute to Decade annual reporting, including the preparation of programmatic / geographic summaries of Decade Actions under their responsibility. Centres will also provide specific inputs to the triennial State of the Decade Report such as case studies, or more in depth thematic or geographic analyses.

### Communications

Centres will play an important role in communications both by diffusing content and assets created by the Decade Coordination Unit and by creating content tailored to the interests of their constituencies. All communications activities will be carried out in accordance with the Ocean Decade Branding Guidelines and in close collaboration with the Decade Coordination Unit communications team. Centres will be encouraged to develop communications plans that align with the overall Decade Communications Strategy.

### Mobilisation of Resources

Centres will contribute to the identification of potential partners, including resource providers, for the Decade and support the Decade Coordination Unit to foster partnerships with these individuals, institutions or groups. Decade Collaborative Centres may mobilise resources that they will administer to support Decade Actions relevant to their scope and mandate.

### Coordination

Through virtual and in-person meetings, Centres will regularly interact with the Decade Coordination Unit, other Collaborative Centres and Decade Implementing Partners, as well as relevant National Decade Committees.

## B. ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF DECADE COLLABORATIVE CENTRES

### Eligibility Criteria

Existing or newly established institutions, groups, or networks (or partnerships thereof) that are working internationally or regionally in relevant aspects of ocean science; who can demonstrate that their vision, mission or mandate align with the priorities of the Ocean Decade; and who can demonstrate that they have the experience, resources and capacity to fulfill the roles identified above can apply to be a Decade Collaborative Centre. The types of institutions or groups that could be eligible include, but are not limited to, research institutes or centres, NGOs, philanthropic Foundations, private sector entities or universities.

### Process and decision making for establishment

The application guideline for Decade Collaborative Centres is contained in [Appendix A](#).

Interested parties should first contact the Decade Coordination Unit to discuss their interest and their proposed role as a Decade Collaborative Centres.

The Decade Coordination Unit will undertake an initial assessment of the application. Based on the results of the initial assessment, the Decade Coordination Unit will liaise with the applicant to conduct a more detailed Feasibility Study of their capacity and skills to fulfill the envisaged role<sup>1</sup>.

The results of the Feasibility Study will be used by the IOC Executive Secretary to make a decision on the establishment of the Centre. An agreement will then be signed between the applicant and the IOC Secretariat.

Information on Decade Collaborative Centres to be established will be reported to IOC Governing Bodies and will also be shared amongst UN-Oceans members.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that any costs associated with the Feasibility Study will be covered by the applicant.

Should other UN entities establish Decade Collaborative Centres under their own procedures, discussions would be held with the Decade Coordination Unit within the IOC Secretariat to ensure coherence and coordination in activities and reporting.

### Expected Resource Requirements

It is expected that the Centre will put in place a dedicated team of qualified personnel to carry out the tasks identified above. The composition of each team will be discussed with the Decade Coordination Unit during formalization of the Agreement but it may include personnel dedicated to scientific advice, partnerships and stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation, and communications.

Collaborative Centres are expected to be able to commit the required human, infrastructure, technical and other resources for a period of at least five years. After the first five year period a joint review of the Centre's operation would be carried out and based on the results of that review a second period of five years operation could be envisaged, if desired by both the Centre and the Decade Coordination Unit.

#### C. USE OF OCEAN DECADE LOGO BY DECADE COLLABORATIVE CENTRE

The Decade Collaborative Centre will be able to use the logo of the Ocean Decade in accordance with the terms of the Agreement signed with the IOC Secretariat (or the relevant UN entity in the case the Decade Implementing Partner is established under the auspices of a UN partner) and the provisions of the Ocean Decade Branding Guidelines. The use of the logo will be allowed uniquely in the context of its agreed mandate as a Decade Collaborative Centre (e.g. to communicate or raise awareness about its role as part of the Ocean Decade). The Centre cannot approve or delegate use of the logo to other parties for any purpose. Any other use of the logo, for example for specific Decade Actions that the Partner may wish to develop, would be subject to the relevant operational procedures of the Decade.

### 3. DETAILED OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR DECADE IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

#### A. ROLE OF DECADE IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

**Decade Implementing Partners** are described as stakeholder institutions, networks or groups that are committed to the vision and mission of the Decade, and that are making significant and sustained efforts to support the Decade through the implementation of specific tasks. This can be either through alignment of partners' strategic priorities and work programs, to Decade priorities and/or through the provision of support to implementation of various elements of the Decade.

Decade Implementing Partners will make significant and sustained efforts to support the Decade by: (i) implementing a coordinated and long-term series of Decade Actions; and/or (ii) support to the implementation of various aspects of the Decade.

Registration as a Decade Implementing Partner is not an obligatory step for institutions wishing to engage in the Decade or to submit a Decade Action for endorsement. There are numerous other avenues and mechanisms for partners to engage in the Decade. Registration as a Decade Implementing Partner is a specific role for those institutions that wish to make a significant and sustained effort to support Decade implementation.

Each of the potential roles of Decade Implementing Partners are described in more detail below.

### Commitment to contribute to the achievement of Decade objectives

Decade Implementing Partners would need to demonstrate their sustained commitment to the Ocean Decade by aligning key elements of their strategic planning and programming with Ocean Decade priorities in the form of one or more Ocean Decade Challenges. This could be via: (i) the integration and recognition of Ocean Decade priorities in existing planning and work programs, or (ii) through the development of a standalone strategy, roadmap or work program for support to the Decade, as long as a multi-year and significant commitment is envisaged.

The Decade Implementing Partner would need to seek endorsement of each proposed Decade Action via the processes outlined in the Decade Implementation Plan.

### Support to the implementation of various aspects of the Decade

In addition to the above, Decade Implementing Partners may also choose to make a sustained and significant commitment to the implementation of the Decade through one or more tailored support, communication and/or monitoring tasks. Such tasks could be focused on a particular geography (e.g. an ocean basin or land based region), or theme (e.g. one of more the Ocean Decade Challenges). The specific support tasks that could be carried out would depend on the mandate, location and resources of the Decade Implementing Partner and the needs of the Ocean Decade coordination structures, but could include one or more of the following:

- **Convening of Ocean Decade partners** via existing networks and the Global Stakeholder Forum (once operational), including raising awareness about the Decade and facilitating new partnerships and collaborations for co-design of Decade Actions.
- **Incubating Decade Action co-design processes** through support to working groups or meetings of diverse groups of actors.
- **Communications and outreach** via the Partner's existing communications networks including sharing of Ocean Decade communications, translation and adaptation of communications assets to local languages and contexts, and providing local or thematic content for use in global communications.
- **Support to meetings / conferences** including support to regional or national workshops or events or convening of Decade events on the sidelines of other major conferences or meetings.
- **Tracking and reporting of Decade Actions** by carrying out mapping of planned and ongoing Decade Actions and assisting the Decade Coordination Unit and decentralized coordination structures with identification of gaps and areas where further action is required (e.g. to inform Calls for Decade Actions) and/or collection and aggregation of monitoring data from proponents of Decade Actions.

Through these activities, the Decade Implementing Partner will support and complement the roles played by formal governance and coordination structures, including the Decade Coordination Unit (and DCOs) and decentralized coordination centres. While they will play a fundamental role in supporting Decade implementation and will form an essential element of the stakeholder engagement network for the Decade, Decade Implementing Partners will not form part of the governance and coordination structures for the Ocean Decade. Their scope and mandate, and thus the required resource investments, are expected to be significantly less than those required for a Decade Collaborative Centre or Coordination Office. Partners may register their interest to be a Decade Implementing Partner for a minimum of three years. Over time, the status of the Decade Implementing Partner could evolve to become a Decade Collaborative Centre if they meet the requirements described above.

### Reporting to Ocean Decade Coordination Structures

A main liaison structure for each registered Decade Implementing Partner will be identified. Depending on the location and mandate of the partner, this could be either the Decade Coordination Unit or a decentralized coordination structure. A secondary liaison structure may also be identified (e.g. a second relevant geographic or programmatic decentralized coordination structure). The Decade Implementing Partner will work closely with its primary liaison structure during the implementation of its mandate and will collaborate with any secondary liaison structure as required. It will provide a simple annual monitoring report on its activities and progress to the primary liaison structure that will be aggregated into overall Decade reporting.

### Links to Global Stakeholder Forum

A Global Stakeholder Forum will be operationalised in 2021 and will provide a convening and exchange mechanism for all stakeholder engagement networks. Registered Decade Implementing Partners will be members of the Global Stakeholder Forum and will use this Forum to maintain close and regular contact with key stakeholder groups including National Decade Committees or thematic and sectoral platforms relevant to their mandate. They will also be encouraged to play an active and leading role in facilitating dialogue and exchange with and between other Decade stakeholders via this Forum.

### Scope and Mandate

As noted, Decade Implementing Partners can be focused thematically or geographically. The scope and mandate of Decade Implementing Partners is expected to address one, or part of one, of the Ocean Decade Challenges (thematically focused partners) or a well-defined region, group of countries or part of an ocean basin (geographically focused partners).

## B. ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF DECADE IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

### Eligibility as a Decade Implementing Partner

Existing or newly established institutions, groups, or networks (or partnerships thereof) that are working in relevant aspects of ocean science; who can demonstrate that their vision, mission or mandate align with the priorities of the Ocean Decade; who can demonstrate their experience and capacity to fulfill one or both of the roles identified above; and who have available resources and expertise to contribute in a sustained and significant manner to the implementation of the Decade can apply to be a Decade Implementing Partner. The types of institutions or groups that could be eligible as a Decade Implementing Partner include, but are not limited to, research institutes or centres, NGOs, universities, existing networks or platforms, or informal or formal working groups. Decade Implementing Partners will work predominantly at the international or regional scale, but proposals for national Decade Implementing Partners will also be considered.

### Registration Process

Institutions or groups with an interest in becoming a Decade Implementing Partner will need to request registration with the Decade Coordination Unit. Before sending registration requests, interested parties should contact the Decade Coordination Unit to discuss their interest and their proposed role. In advance of the establishment of an online system, registration requests can be made via written correspondence that should be accompanied by:

1. A brief overview of the vision and/or strategy of the institution or group including alignment with the Ocean Decade vision and mission.

2. A brief description of the role and specific tasks that the institution or group proposes to undertake during the Ocean Decade (cf. Section 2 above), and the alignment with the Decade Action Framework, including the endorsement criteria contained in the Implementation Plan.
3. A brief description of the institution or the group including (as relevant) information on experience in global, regional and national initiatives, the legal status, governance and management structure, available funding and resources, and membership.

For interested parties that wish to play a role that includes specific tasks to support Decade implementation, the request for registration should also include:

4. A draft Terms of Reference for the tasks that they propose to undertake, and an indication of the proposed duration of their support.
5. A description of the human, technical, infrastructure, financial or other resources that the institution or group will dedicate to the performance of the proposed tasks. If resources are not yet secured this should be indicated.

Registration requests can be sent at any time from 1 January 2021 onwards.

#### Decision Making and Formalisation of Agreement

Once the request has been received it will be reviewed by the Decade Coordination Unit and discussions will be held with the institution / group to clarify any outstanding issues or request additional information. In accordance with existing policies, due diligence procedures will be followed and where relevant, the advice of the IOC National Focal Point and/or UNESCO National Commission will be sought before a decision is made.

The Decade Coordination Unit will work with the partner to finalise the Terms of Reference, and where it is necessary (i.e. in the case that the Partner provides support to the implementation of the Decade) establish an Agreement in line with UNESCO procedures governing partnerships<sup>2</sup>.

Should other UN entities establish Decade Implementing Partners under their own procedures, discussions would be held with the Decade Coordination Unit within the IOC Secretariat to ensure coordination of activities and reporting.

#### Resource Requirements

Decade Implementing Partners will be expected to allocate the necessary staff on a part-time or full-time basis to fulfill the agreed mandate. Typically, registration will be for an initial period of three years (renewable).

#### C. USE OF OCEAN DECADE LOGO BY DECADE IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

The registered Partner will be able to use the logo of the Ocean Decade in accordance with the Partnership Agreement signed with the IOC Secretariat (or the relevant UN entity in the case the Decade Implementing Partner is established under the auspices of a UN partner) and the provisions of the Ocean Decade Branding Guidelines. The use of the logo will be allowed uniquely in the context of its agreed mandate as a Decade Implementing Partner (e.g. to communicate or raise awareness about its role as part of the Ocean Decade). The Decade Implementing Partner cannot approve or delegate use of the logo to other parties for any

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<sup>2</sup> Partnership Agreements are envisaged for Decade Implementing Partners playing a major support role under the Decade.

purpose. Any other use of the logo, for example for specific Decade Actions that the Partner may wish to develop, would be subject to the relevant operational procedures of the Decade.

## APPENDIX A: APPLICATION PACKAGE FOR DECADE COLLABORATIVE CENTRES

### I. INTRODUCTION

Decade Collaborative Centres will be important elements of the governance and coordination structure of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (the Ocean Decade). The table below describes the different steps in the process required to establish a Decade Collaborative Centre as part of the Ocean Decade. Links to needed documentation are provided in the table.

APPLICATION PROCESS	
1. Expression of Interest	Submission of an initial expression of interest through an online questionnaire: <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WCB9TCP">https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WCB9TCP</a> . This will serve to notify the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU) <sup>3</sup> about the intention to propose a Collaborative Centre.
2. Contact and discussion with the DCU	Open dialogue with a representative from the DCU to clarify the intended commitment to establish a Collaborative Centre. This instance is key for discussing the scope, activities and requirements for the Centre, and to avoid duplication of efforts within the Ocean Decade.
3. Due diligence	In line with UNESCO's Comprehensive Partnership Strategy, proponents of Decade Collaborative Centres may be required to undergo a due diligence process. Further information on this process will be provided during the initial discussion with the DCU.
4. Submission of Application Form	Please refer to the template Application Form, in <a href="#">Annex 1</a> of this document which will serve as the proposal to host a Collaborative Centre. It is submitted directly to the DCU (see contact emails below), including relevant annexes. The submission of this form represents a commitment to continue with the application process and to finance the Feasibility Study for the proposed Collaborative Centre. The application form should be accompanied by a letter of support from the IOC national focal point.
5. Revision of application	The DCU will perform an initial review of the proposal and may request additional information from the proponent. If the DCU identifies problems with the proposals, an officer will get in touch with the proponent to discuss modifications and/or updates to the Application Form. When approved, an officer from the DCU will get in touch with the proponents to coordinate the Feasibility Study.
6. Feasibility Study	A Feasibility Study is required before establishing a Collaborative Centre. The objective of this Feasibility Study is to collect or clarify any additional information needed to confirm that the proponent can perform the tasks required from a Collaborative Centre, and to determine whether any special arrangements would be required to support its implementation. The Feasibility Study will inform the mandate of the Collaborative Centre in collaboration with the proponent. The Feasibility Study will be financed and contracted by the proponent. The selection of the consultants is made by the DCU. The consultants will report directly to the DCU, and the

<sup>3</sup> The Decade Coordination Unit is located within the IOC Secretariat.



	review and approval of the consultant deliverables will be carried out by the DCU based on the Terms of Reference contained in <a href="#">Annex 2</a> . A key output of the Feasibility Study will be the proposed detailed mandate of the Decade Collaborative Centre. A model mandate is contained in <a href="#">Annex 3</a> . This mandate will be incorporated into the Agreement between the application and the IOC (see 8. below) if the Decade Collaborative Centre is approved.
7. Endorsement	The results from the Feasibility Study will be reviewed by the DCU and a final decision on the establishment of the Decade Collaborative Centre made by the Executive Secretary of the IOC.
8. Agreement	An agreement will be established between the IOC-UNESCO and the proponent. The agreement will specify the mandate of the Centre, adapted to the expected scope and activities to be performed. The Centre can start operations after the agreement is duly signed by each party.

## II. GUIDING DOCUMENTATION

Table 2 summarises the documents that should be referred to by the applicant throughout the process.

<b>GUIDING DOCUMENTATION</b>	
<i>Please refer to official Ocean Decade documentation in <a href="https://oceandecade.org/resources#resources">https://oceandecade.org/resources#resources</a></i>	
Ocean Decade Implementation Plan	<a href="https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377082.locale=en">https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377082.locale=en</a>
Operational Guidelines for the Establishment of Decade Collaborative Centres and Implementing Partners	<a href="https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377222.locale=en">https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377222.locale=en</a>
<i>Please refer to the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU) to request other documents that may be useful for supporting the application.</i>	

## III. CONTACTS

Any questions from applicants on the process should be referred to:

Julian Barbière  
Ocean Decade Focal Point  
Head of Section, Marine Policy and Regional Coordination  
[j.barbiere@unesco.org](mailto:j.barbiere@unesco.org)

Alison Clausen  
Programme Specialist  
Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section  
[a.clausen@unesco.org](mailto:a.clausen@unesco.org)

## IV. ANNEXES

[Annex 1: Application Form](#)

[Annex 2: Model Terms of Reference for the Feasibility Study](#)

[Annex 3: Model Mandate of Decade Collaborative Centre](#)

## ANNEX 1: APPLICATION FORM

### APPLICATION FORM FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN OCEAN DECADE COLLABORATIVE CENTRE

To be submitted electronically to the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU), including annexes as relevant, for consideration for endorsement as an Ocean Decade Collaborative Centre by the Decade Advisory Board.

1. PROPONENT INSTITUTION DATA	
Lead Institution name <sup>4</sup> :	Focal point(s) contact name(s):
Lead Institution Type:	Focal point(s) contact email(s):
Country and City:	Focal point(s) phone number(s):
Address:	Legal representative name (if different from above):
Webpage:	Legal representative email (if different from above):
<b>Institution background:</b> (Please state the objective or mission of the institution, inform the technical field in which the institution operates, the years of operation, and describe any parent institution if applicable).	
<b>Institution structure:</b> (Please Inform if the institution's activities are international, national, or regional, the operational structure – centralized or decentralized-, number of permanent and temporary personnel linked to the institution, budget mobilized and managed by the institution in the last 3 years and the sources of these funds, existing internal and external capacities for administrative support, and infrastructure)	
<b>Legal Status:</b> (Please select the legal status of the institution, or select "other" to provide additional information) <input type="checkbox"/> Public Research Centre / University <input type="checkbox"/> Private Research Centre / University <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Governmental Institution <input type="checkbox"/> Public Service / Institution <input type="checkbox"/> International Development Agency / Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please describe below)	
<b>Partners:</b> (Please list partners, if any, including their institutional information, location, legal status, objectives, and capacities)	

<sup>4</sup> Decade Collaborative Centres can be proposed by a group of partners. The lead partner should complete this form on behalf of all the partners. If the application is successful the lead partners will sign the agreement with the IOC-UNESCO and will be responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the agreement are respected.

**IOC National Focal Point:** *(Please indicate if you have contacted and received a letter of support from the IOC National Focal Point. This letter should be attached to the application)*

I confirm that, if selected, the proponent(s) will finance a Feasibility Study for the proposal as per UNESCO's standards, and that the institution(s) involved will provide all required information for this process

The latest Operational Guidelines for Collaborative and overarching Ocean Decade Implementation Plan can be found [here](#).

## 2. PROPOSAL SCOPE

**Please mark the scope(s) that align with the proposed Centre**

*Collaborative Centres will target defined scopes of work as established in the Operational Guidelines, while avoiding duplication of efforts. Thematic scopes will address a Decade Challenge (see Implementation Plan) globally. Geographic scopes will address all Decade Challenges for a specific Basin.*

*Proponents can mark as many Thematic and Geographic scopes as considered relevant and appropriate to the proponent's capacity. If more than one option is marked, the Centre will be recommended to a Theme or Geographic area from the options marked based on the Decade's priorities, the proponent's capacities, and the availability of Themes and Geographic areas. In exceptional cases, a Centre can be assigned to more than one of these, or to both a Theme and a Geographic area.*

<u>Thematic</u>	<u>Geographic</u>
<b>Challenge 1:</b> Understand and map land and sea-based sources of pollutants and contaminants and their potential impacts on human health and ocean ecosystems and develop solutions to remove or mitigate them.	<b>Southern Ocean</b>
<b>Challenge 2:</b> Understand the effects of multiple stressors on ocean ecosystems, and develop solutions to monitor, protect, manage and restore ecosystems and their biodiversity under changing environmental, social and climate conditions.	<b>Arctic Ocean</b>
<b>Challenge 3:</b> Generate knowledge, support innovation, and develop solutions to optimize the role of the ocean in sustainably feeding the world's population under changing environmental, social and climate conditions.	<b>Indian Ocean</b>
<b>Challenge 4:</b> Generate knowledge, support innovation, and develop solutions for equitable and sustainable development of the ocean economy under changing environmental, social and climate conditions.	<b>North Atlantic Ocean</b>
<b>Challenge 5:</b> Enhance understanding of the ocean-climate nexus and generate knowledge and solutions to mitigate, adapt and build resilience to the effects of climate change across all geographies and at all scales, and to improve services including predictions for the ocean, climate and weather.	<b>North Pacific Ocean</b>
<b>Challenge 6:</b> Enhance multi-hazard early warning services for all geophysical, ecological, biological, weather, climate and anthropogenic	<b>South Atlantic Ocean</b>

related ocean and coastal hazards, and mainstream community preparedness and resilience.			
<b>Challenge 7:</b> Ensure a sustainable ocean observing system across all ocean basins that delivers accessible, timely, and actionable data and information to all users.		<b>South Pacific Ocean</b>	
<b><u>Thematic</u></b>		<b><u>Geographic</u></b>	
<b>Challenge 8:</b> Through multi-stakeholder collaboration, develop a comprehensive digital representation of the ocean, including a dynamic ocean map, which provides free and open access for exploring, discovering, and visualizing past, current, and future ocean conditions in a manner relevant to diverse stakeholders.		<b>Other</b> (Please describe – this may include sub-regional areas (for eg the Carribbean Sea) or enclosed/semi-enclosed seas such as the Mediterranean or Black Sea)	
<b>Challenge 9:</b> Ensure comprehensive capacity development and equitable access to data, information, knowledge and technology across all aspects of ocean science and for all stakeholders.			
<b>Challenge 10:</b> Ensure that the multiple values and services of the ocean for human wellbeing, culture, and sustainable development are widely understood, and identify and overcome barriers to behavior change required for a step change in humanity's relationship with the ocean.			
Please explain your choices and provide additional information on the proposed scope of the Centre, including preferences, detailed geographical scope proposed, or other information as relevant.			
<b>3.PROPOSAL OF HOSTING A COLLABORATIVE CENTRE (CC)</b>			
<b>Collaborative Centre profile:</b> (Please provide a summary description of the profile and activities proposed for the CC) (250 words limit).			
<b>Justification &amp; alignment with proposed scope:</b> (Please inform the institutional motivation for participating in the Ocean Decade, and how the proposal aligns with the selected scope(s) and the Decade's Implementation Plan) (500 words limit).			
<b>Expertise and Experience:</b> (Please describe the expertise and experience of the host organization in coordinating ocean science programmes or activities at the regional or global level. Please include a description of how the potential gaps will be complemented by any partner(s)). Please, upload any relevant supporting documents (500 words limit).			
<b>Expected operational start date</b>		<b>Initial timeframe commitment (years)</b>	

		<i>Please note that long-term proposals will be prioritized (4-5 years)</i>
<b>Expected duration of the Centre</b> <i>(Please describe any periodical revision of funding expected and other considerations that may be relevant for defining the duration of the Centre)</i>		
<b>PARTNER ENTITIES</b> <i>(Please fill this section if the proposal is being submitted by a group of partners)</i>		
<b>Justification and experience:</b> <i>(Please justify the value added by the proposed partners for the proposal, and the relevant experience that they offer)</i>		
<b>Organizational structure:</b> <i>(Please indicate the expected roles for each partner, and if any of the partners will take responsibilities over the activities of the CC)</i>		
<b>4.RESOURCES FOR THE PROPOSAL</b> <i>Please provide a detailed budget proposal as per the worksheet template which can be downloaded here: <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/102zBjaleY1NYbvVZB8o8_pCLhT8u-ySU/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/102zBjaleY1NYbvVZB8o8_pCLhT8u-ySU/view?usp=sharing</a></i>		Budget USD (Yearly average)
<b>Estimated total budget for the CC proposed.</b> <i>(In addition to the information provided in the worksheet template, please, provide below an overview of the financial and in-kind resources that have been secured or are expected for the timeframe proposed initially, including a description of the sources for these. Please differentiate in-kind and financial resources, as well as resources executed by the lead entity from those executed by partners)</i>		
<b>Human resources:</b> <i>(In addition to the information provided in the worksheet template, please, describe the existing or proposed human resources that will be made available for the Decade Collaborative Centre and the estimated budget. Please provide information on existing versus new staff, their type of contract and time allocation, their roles, and their expected physical work location. Please differentiate in-kind and financial resources and indicate any resources executed by the lead entity from those executed by partners). Please, upload any relevant supporting documents (i.e., CVs of key staff if already identified, organizational chart).</i>		
<b>Other resources:</b> <i>(In addition to the information provided in the worksheet template, please, describe the physical infrastructure that will be made available for the CC –buildings and their location, equipment, vehicles, communications, etc.- and the estimated budget. Please differentiate in-kind</i>		

and financial resources, as well as resources executed by the lead entity from those executed by partners) Please, upload any relevant supporting documents.

**5.OVERVIEW ACTION PLAN FOR THE MAIN TASKS OF A COLLABORATIVE CENTRE THAT FALL WITHIN THE CENTRE'S SCOPE OF WORK**

*Please refer to the Operational Guidelines for the Establishment of Decade Collaborative Centres and Implementing Partners and any other documentation be provided by UNESCO, such as the Resource Mobilization Framework and Monitoring & Evaluation Framework.*

**Stakeholder Coordination, Facilitation and Engagement:** *(Please provide below an overview of the proposal for stakeholder coordination, facilitation and engagement, including the experience and capacities that already exist within the institution and partners) (500 words limit)*

**Calls for Action:** *(Please provide below an overview of the proposal for supporting the Decade Coordination Unit to develop, launch and process Calls for Decade Actions that fall within the Centre's scope of work, including the experience and capacities that already exist within the institution and partners) (500 words limit):*

**Monitoring and reporting:** *(Please provide below an overview of how the Decade Collaborative Centre will approach monitoring and reporting on Decade Actions that fall within the Centre's scope of work, including the experience and capacities that exist within the institution and partners. Note that monitoring and reporting responsibilities of DCCs will be detailed in the Ocean Decade Monitoring and Evaluation Framework which is in preparation) (500 words limit):*

**Communications:** *(Please provide below an overview of the proposal for communicating Decade Actions that fall within the Centre's scope of work to the general public, including the experience and capacities that already exist within the institution and partners) (500 words limit):*

**Mobilisation of Resources:** *(Please provide below an overview of the proposal for mobilizing resources for supporting Decade Actions that fall within the Centre's scope of work, including the experience and capacities that already exist within the institution and partners) (500 words limit):*

**Coordination of Decade Actions:** *(Please provide below an overview of the proposal for coordination of Decade Actions that fall within the Centre's scope of work, including the experience and capacities that already exist within the institution and partners). (500 words limit):*

Please provide any complementary information that you may consider relevant (500 words limit):

**Annexes and supporting documentation.** *Please attach all relevant supporting information. It is especially relevant to include a support letter from the IOC National Focal Point, legal information on the institution(s) involved, their statutes and objectives, institutional and individual experience, and operational procedures already in place. Further information may be requested by the Decade Coordination Unit and/or Advisory Board. If the proposal is selected, additional information could be requested during the Feasibility Study, and for the preparation and signature of the Collaboration Agreement.*



## **ANNEX 2: MODEL TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE OCEAN DECADE COLLABORATIVE CENTRES**

#### **1. Background**

The United Nations (UN) Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 (referred to as 'the Decade') was proclaimed by the 72nd Session of UN General Assembly (UNGA) on the 5th of December 2017. The Decade is led by the Decade Coordination Unit which is located in the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC) in an effort to promote transformational, largescale 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 Decade, which 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". This includes a series of Decade Actions 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 implemented voluntarily by any interested partner, following guidance from the Decade Advisory Board (DAB) and coordinated by the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU), a centralized coordination body within the IOC; Decade Coordination Offices (DCO), decentralized offices that support the work of the DCU; Decade Collaboration Centres (DCC), decentralized independent organizations that support Decade Programmes for specific challenges or basins; and Implementing Partners, entities that contribute support Decade Actions work through specific tasks.

Decade Collaborative Centres will be hosted by one or more countries in an existing or newly established centre, or by an international or regional organization engaged in Decade activities. Financing for these centres may be provided by the host country or organisation or via a third party, for instance to facilitate the operation of these centres in countries or regions with fewer available financial resources. These Centres will be legally separate from the IOC/UNESCO and operated under the complete responsibility of the establishing entity(ies). They will catalyse Decade Actions at the regional or thematic level by providing technical, logistical, and financial support for: (i) scientific coordination and planning; (ii) the identification of collaboration opportunities; (iii) communications, awareness-raising and stakeholder engagement; and (iv) technical and scientific capacities to support Decade Actions. They will provide advice to the Decade Coordination Unit on requests for endorsement of Decade Actions that fall within their purview.

Proposals for establishing Decade Collaborative Centres emanating from non-UN entities, with an informed Feasibility Study, will be decided by the IOC Executive

Secretary. Once approved, the Decade Coordination Unit will establish on behalf of IOC/UNESCO an agreement with the hosting institution to frame the collaboration-

## **2. Proposal to be assessed**

Applicant institution: [name of the institution]

Date of the proposal: [dd mm yyyy]

Date of the review by the DCU: [dd mm yyyy]

Proposed scope of work: [include the thematic or/and geographic scope proposed by the institution]

Expected duration of the Centre: [years]

## **3. Purpose of the Feasibility Study**

The main objectives of this evaluation are to assess the applicant institution's, and any relevant partner's, capacity and skills to fulfill the envisaged role for the Collaborative Centre proposed, as well as its contribution to Ocean Decade's strategic programme objectives and priorities. The consultants will also facilitate the discussion with the applicant and Decade Coordination Unit, in order to help tailor, the scope of the proposal based on the expertise of the institution.

Based on the results of the feasibility study, the consultant will prepare the draft mandate of the proposed Decade Collaborative Centre, that will form part of the agreement with the IOC documenting the agreed functions of the Collaborative Centre.

## **4. Scope of the study**

The study will have a special focus on the institution's ability to fulfill the diverse range of roles assigned to the Collaborative Centres and the detailed analysis of its proposal. The evaluation will apply to the institution and the informed implementation partners, if applicable.

The scope of the evaluation is determined by the following parameters:

- a) The relevance of the Institution's programmes and activities to achieving the Decade strategic programme objectives and priorities, as defined in the UN Decade of Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 Implementation Plan;
- b) The compliance of the proposal with the criteria contained in the Ocean Decade Implementation Plan for Decade Actions,
- c) The capacity, experience and expertise of the Institution, at the regional or global level, to comply with the thematic or geographic scope of work proposed for the Collaborative Centre;
- d) The nature and quality of the Institution organizational arrangements, including management, governance and accountability mechanisms, including those proposed for the operation of the Collaborative Centre;
- e) The human and financial resources proposed for the Collaborative Centre and the quality of mechanisms and capacities, as well as context-specific

opportunities and risks for ensuring sustainable institutional capacity and viability;

- f) The quality and extension of the collaboration networks with relevant stakeholders for the proposed Collaborative Centres;
- g) The quality of the action plan proposed for the main tasks of the Collaborative Centre, which includes a. Stakeholder Coordination, Facilitation and Engagement, b. Call for Actions, c. Monitoring and reporting, d. Communications, e. Mobilization of resources, d. Coordination of Decade actions.
- h) The inclusiveness of the proposal, ensuring linguistic, geographic, gender and age balance, making the Collaborative Centre more effective and relevant to different beneficiaries, regional and thematic needs.
- i) The Institution's adherence to ethical values including procedures for addressing fraud, corruption, sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.
- j) The quality, adequacy and expertise of the partners (if applicable) and the collaboration agreements signed with them.

In addition to the findings on each topic, the expert(s) shall offer four types of recommendations:

- 1) A general recommendation whether the Institution qualify to host the Collaborative Centre proposed, including proposals for improvements, if applicable;
- 2) A specific recommendation on the Institution technical capacity and skills, including proposals for improvements, if applicable;
- 3) A specific recommendation on the Institution operational capacity and skills, including proposals for improvements, if applicable.
- 4) A tailored draft mandate of the proposed Decade Collaborative Centre.

## **5. Methodology**

The evaluation of the applicant Institution will include:

- A desk study of relevant documents, provided by the applicant Institution and the DCU;
- An in-person or virtual visit to the Institute, including interviews with the Institution management and staff. The visit will be coordinated with the IOC national focal point if the evaluation team is located in a different city than the Institution.
- Interviews (telephone, online and/or via e-mail) with the members of the Decade Advisory Board, UNESCO National Commissions, IOC National Focal Point(s), institution's stakeholders, collaborators, and beneficiaries as well as relevant stakeholders;
- Preparation of the evaluation report.

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

The evaluation will be conducted by a team comprising one or two independent experts. Local travel expenses, materials, administrative support, and office space will be covered by the Institution during the field visit, if it is applicable.

The evaluator(s) will be responsible for communicating with the institution and any printing of documentation as relevant.

The DCU will facilitate and oversee the evaluation process, to the extent possible, by providing any relevant information, and will be responsible for reviewing and approving the final report.

## **7. Background documents**

The DCU shall make the following documents available to the evaluation team in electronic form:

- UN Decade of Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 Implementation Plan;
- Application Guideline for the Ocean Decade Collaborative Centre;
- Institution proposal and the documentation associated;
- Template of Mandate and Collaboration Agreement for Decade Collaborative Centres;
- Relevant correspondence concerning the proposal between IOC/DCU and the Institution.

The Institution shall make, at least, the following documents available to the evaluation team in [complete language], in electronic form:

- Annual reports;
- Financial reports;
- List and profiles or CVs of staff;
- Key publications;
- List of donors and project partners, including contact information if relevant;
- Report of support provided to or received from national IOC Focal Point, Member States or donors;
- Available audit and evaluation reports;

## **8. Deliverables**

### ***i. Draft evaluation report***

A draft report will present findings, conclusions and recommendations, with a draft executive summary. The DCU and the applicant institution itself will have the opportunity to comment and give feedback to the evaluation team. The language of the deliverables shall be English or French.

### ***ii. Final evaluation report***

The final report (max. 20 pages, excluding annexes) should be structured as follows:

- Executive summary (maximum [X] pages, including recommendations);
- Introduction (background, purpose and scope);
- Methodology;
- Technical and Operational Findings;
- Technical and Operational Recommendations;
- Annexes (including interview list, data collection instruments, key documents consulted, Terms of Reference).

**iii. Draft Mandate for proposed Collaborative Centre**

It will be presented a tailored draft mandate of the proposed Decade Collaborative Centre following the template available for this document. The mandate includes the detailed operational arrangements for the implementation of the Collaborative Centre (scope of work, implementation period, function and responsibilities, organizational structure, resource commitment, etc).

## **9. Evaluation team**

### ***Team***

The evaluation team will consist of one or more independent expert/evaluator(s). A single proposal/expression of interest must be submitted on behalf of the team, whether it is one or several persons, and a single contract will be executed.

### ***Qualifications***

- An advanced degree in a relevant field.
- At least 5-7 years of professional experience in policy and programme evaluation in the context of international development;
- Professional experience in science, research or other relevant discipline is desired. [include technical field under evaluation];
- Fluency in [Languages required] (written and spoken);
- Knowledge of the role and operation of the Ocean Decade.
- Personal and professional integrity, self-motivation, and proven ability to work independently
- Ability to travel (if required).
- Ability and technically equipped to work remotely and organize virtual meetings

## **10. Schedule**

The Feasibility Study shall be completed no later than [dd mm yyyy]. The schedule for the evaluation is as follows:

- A desk study of background documents (*to be completed prior to the visit to the Institute, if this is defined as required*);
- A mission to visit the Institute (*if defined as required*);

- Writing and submission of the draft evaluation report no later than [dd mm yyyy];
- Submission of the final evaluation report (before [dd mm yyyy]).

### **ANNEX 3: MODEL MANDATE FOR DECADE COLLABORATIVE CENTRE**

#### **MANDATE FOR THE [NAME] OCEAN DECADE COLLABORATIVE CENTRE**

The following document details the agreed mandate and functions for the [name of the CC] Decade Collaborative Centre, in accordance with the Agreement signed on [date] between [Approved Institution] and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO). The Centre was proposed on the [dd mm yyyy] by [Institution]. Following revision and a feasibility study, the proposal was endorsed by the IOC Executive Secretary on the [dd mm yyyy].

#### **1. Introduction to the Ocean Decade**

The United Nations (UN) Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 (referred to as ‘the Decade’) was proclaimed by the 72nd Session of UN General Assembly (UNGA) on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December, 2017. The Decade is being coordinated by IOC-UNESCO in an effort from to promote transformational, large-scale change to advance urgent action on moving from the ‘ocean we have’ to the ‘ocean we want’. It includes a focus on least developed countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and land-locked developing countries (LLDCs).

The Decade aims to catalyze the human behavior change required, and to be inter-generational, recognize and redress gender disparities in ocean science, and be of sufficiently long duration to deliver lasting change. Guided by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Decade will generate the data, information and knowledge needed for more robust science-informed policies and stronger science-policy interfaces at global, regional, national and even local levels, leading to improved integrated ocean management and development of a sustainable ocean economy. It represents an opportunity to build scientific capacity and knowledge to contribute to the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Decade will support numerous UN entities to fulfil their ocean-related mandates. In our information-centred, internet-linked society, the Decade will support ocean data, information, and knowledge systems to evolve to a much higher level of readiness, accessibility, and interoperability. The scale of such efforts will need to be exponentially greater than anything seen to date.

The Ocean Decade will be implemented in accordance with the Implementation Plan 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”. This includes a series of Decade Actions 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 implemented voluntarily by any interested partner, following guidance from the Decade Advisory Board (DAB) and coordinated by the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU), a centralized coordination body within the IOC; Decade Coordination Offices (DCO), decentralized offices that support the work of the DCU; Decade Collaborative Centres (DCC), decentralized independent organizations that support Decade Programmes for specific challenges or basins; and Decade Implementing Partners, entities that contribute support Decade Actions work through specific tasks.

## **2. Rationale for the Ocean Decade Collaborative Centres**

Decade Collaborative Centres provide support to the DCU and to DCOs by catalyzing and coordinating Decade Actions thematically (Ocean Decade Challenges) or geographically (ocean basins or land-based regions), as established in their endorsed scope. They will be equipped with a small team of dedicated staff, premises, and operational resources.

The ultimate aim of the Ocean Decade is to have a full and coordinated matrix of partners covering all major themes and geographies and operating in a way that enhances collaboration and avoids overlap.

Decade Collaborative Centres play a coordination and catalysis role for Decade Programmes, and related Decade Actions, at the regional or thematic level. They provide technical, logistical, and financial support for scientific coordination and planning; the identification of collaboration opportunities; awareness-raising and stakeholder engagement; and technical and scientific capacities to support Decade Actions. Specifically, Collaborative Centres will support, within their scope, (i) Stakeholder Coordination, Facilitation and Engagement; (ii) Calls for Action; (iii) Monitoring & Reporting the advancement of the Decade; (iv) Communications; (v) Resource Mobilization; and (vi) Coordination of Decade Actions.

Decade Collaborative Centres can be proposed by Member States, and international or major regional non-UN organizations. Decade Collaborative Centres should be led by major International or regional organizations working in relevant area of marine science such as research institutes or centres, NGOs, philanthropic Foundations, private sector entities or universities.

## **3. Name, duration, and extension.**

The Centre will be named [Name] (or “the Centre”).

The Centre will be operational from the [dd mm yyyy] to the [dd mm yyyy].

The Centre’s lead institution is [Input name of lead institution here].

The Centre duration may be extended if an official request is submitted to the DCU at least one year before the end of the agreement. The request should include an updated proposal, including the new proposed resources, duration, and any other changes. Following the request, a continuation feasibility study will be procured, and the DAB will advise on endorsement for the Centre’s extension.

#### **4. Scope of work**

The Centre will coordinate Decade Actions within the following thematic and geographic scopes<sup>5</sup>.

Thematic scope: [Fill and describe the Challenge, for example “Challenge 1. Understand and map land and sea-based sources of pollutants and contaminants and their potential impacts on human health and ocean ecosystems and develop solutions to remove or mitigate them.”]

Or,

Geographical: [Fill and describe the Basin, for example “Mediterranean Ocean”]

#### **5. Functions and Responsibilities**

A detailed description of the functions and responsibilities of the Centre can be found below. These functions and responsibilities build on the general functions and responsibilities described in the *Operational Guidelines for the Establishment of Decade Collaborative Centres and Implementing Partners* and the *Decade Implementation Plan*, as well as any further guidance on specific topics prepared and officially communicated by the DCU (e.g., Communications, Resource Mobilization, Monitoring & Reporting, and others).

##### **A. Decade Action Coordination and management**

The Centre shall be responsible for coordinating Decade Programmes, and their related Decade Actions, when these fall within their scope of work. This work will be done in direct collaboration with the DCU, the DCOs [*Name relevant DCOs*], other Collaborative Centres [*Name relevant Centres*], relevant National Decade Committees [*Name relevant Committees*], and Decade Implementing Partners [*Name relevant Implementing Partners*], to ensure the implementation of the Ocean Decade within its scope, avoid duplication of efforts, and promote synergies. The Centre shall primarily communicate with the relevant DCO when this is available. When a relevant DCO is not available, they will communicate directly with the DCU. When Implementing Partners contribute directly to the specific activities that fall within the responsibilities of the Centre, their work will be coordinated by the Centre. In these cases, the DCU will notify the Centre and discuss coordination arrangements as needed.

Coordination work includes regular direct interactions with the Focal Points of the mentioned organizations, as well as virtual and in-person meetings. Meetings with these organizations will be held at least every two months. The Focal Point or a representative of the Centre will attend meetings held by the DCU and relevant DCOs. Additionally, the Centre can meet directly with potential Implementing Partners, National Committees, and other stakeholders relevant for Decade Actions that fall within the Centre’s scope of work. These meetings will be notified to the DCU to facilitate coordination and avoid duplication of efforts.

##### **B. Coordination of Decade Programmes**

The Centre shall coordinate and follow-up on the implementation of all Decade Programmes, including their Decade Projects and Activities, that fall within the Centre’s scope of work. The objective of this work is to enhance collaboration, promote concrete action and avoid duplication of efforts among the diverse stakeholders that contribute to the Ocean Decade. This includes maintaining communication with proponents and institutions implementing Decade Actions.

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<sup>5</sup> When Decade Actions are also covered by other Centre’s scope of work, the DCU or corresponding DCO will define a primary and a secondary Centre.



The Centre will maintain an updated list of relevant Decade Programmes, Projects, and Activities, as well as Decade Contributions, when they are relevant for the Centre's scope of work, including information on relevant contacts, status, partners, and its expected activities and outcomes. The Centre will be required to contribute to updating the central database of Decade Actions, following guidance from the DCU (as per section c. Monitoring & Reporting).

### ***C. Facilitation and Engagement of Communities of Practice***

The Centre will proactively facilitate the structuring and engagement of Communities of Practice via the Global Stakeholder Forum within their scope of work and mandate. This will complement its role in the coordination of Decade Actions being proposed and implemented. The Centre will utilize the Global Stakeholder Forum for convening and exchanging information among relevant stakeholder engagement networks, and to play an active and leading role in facilitating dialogue and exchange between other Decade stakeholders.

### ***D. Focal Point & responsibilities***

The Centre shall designate a Focal Point, who will be responsible for maintaining communications with other Decade organizations. The initial Focal Point will be as informed in the Application Form. The Focal Point may be modified at any moment through a formal email from the previous Focal Point or a Legal Representative of the lead institution. When a Focal Point will not be available (for example, due to sick leave or vacations), a temporary replacement must be informed to the DCU and relevant DCOs.

### ***E. Calls for Action***

The Centre shall assist and advise the DCU and relevant DCOs to develop, launch and process Calls for Decade Actions for programmes and projects within the Centre's scope of work. This includes contributing to the proposing and scoping Calls for Decade Actions through gap analyses (i.e. analysis based on existing data to propose areas for focused Calls for Actions). The Centre will also aid in the identification of potential financial partners to sponsor relevant Calls for Decade Actions. In the lead up to the Calls and during the submission period, the Centre be responsible for the coordination and convening of potential parties interested, and to facilitate collaboration and synergies between initiatives under development. Once submissions are received by the DCU, the Centre will collate, synthesize, solicit input from programmes on project level endorsement decisions as necessary, and provide recommendations to the DCU and relevant DCOs on endorsement decisions.

### ***F. Monitoring & Reporting***

Following the directions from the Decade Monitoring & Reporting Strategy, the Centre shall provide advice to the Decade Coordination Unit on the most appropriate means of collecting monitoring and evaluation data for its scope of work. The Centre is responsible for collecting annual monitoring data from Decade Programs, Projects and Activities under their scope of work, as well as Decade Implementing Partners where relevant, and will provide this data to the DCU and DCOs. The Centre will be able to work together with the lead organizations implementing Decade Programs to prepare monitoring & reporting information.

Following requests from the DCU, the Centre will contribute to Decade annual reporting, including the preparation of programmatic/geographic summaries of Decade Actions under their scope of work. The Centre will also provide specific inputs to the triennial State of the Decade Report such as case studies, or more in depth thematic or geographic analyses.

The Centre shall prepare an annual workplan for the following year, which will be submitted yearly to the DCU for each calendar year. The annual workplan will set out the agreed priorities and timing, following discussions with the DCU and other relevant Decade stakeholders.

Additionally, the Centre will present an annual financial and activity reports for the previous calendar year, to be presented during the first trimester of the following year.

### **G. Communications**

The Centre will develop a communication plan in alignment with the directions from the Decade Communications Strategy. Specifically, the Centre will contribute to diffusing content and assets created by the DCU and relevant DCOs, and will create content tailored to the interests of the general audience within their scope of work. All communications activities will be carried out in accordance with the Ocean Decade Branding Guidelines and in close collaboration with the DCU and relevant DCOs communications team. that align with the overall Decade Communications Strategy.

### **H. Mobilization of Resources**

The Centre will contribute to the identification of potential partners that could provide resources for the Decade, and support the DCU in liaising with these individuals, institutions, or groups, in alignment with the Decade Resource Mobilization Strategy. The Centre will identify and maintain constant communication with these, following DCU and relevant DCOs guidance.

### **I. Other agreed activities**

Additionally, the Centre will *[Fill in with any additional activities, if applicable]*.

## **6. Organizational structure**

The Centre's core team (full time staff) includes a Coordinator (who may also be the Focal Point), who will manage the Centre and provide high level support for its activities; a communications/engagement specialist; a technical specialist *[fill in depending on the scope of work]*; and an administrative assistant. Other supporting staff and experts include *[fill in depending on the structure proposed, indicating work time allocation]*. For more detail, please refer to the organizational chart below.

*[Paste org. chart here]*

## **7. Other Supporting Institutions**

The lead organization is responsible for all the activities established in this mandate. However, partner organizations will support the implementation of the Centre. The following organizations will provide support to the Centre's activities *[list proposed partners – as per application form and include information on key tasks and resources provided]*. Additional partners may support the implementation of the Centre through specific Decade Actions, or may be incorporated as permanent partners to the Centre following formal notification to the DCU.

To guide the collaboration, the following agreements have been signed with partners that will contribute to the Centre's objectives: *[Fill in agreements]*. Any modification, cancelation, or new agreements with partners shall be agreed upon with the DCU.

Additionally, approval and consent for the proposed Centre were obtained from *[Fill in parent institution(s)]* following an agreement from *[dd mm yyyy]*.

## **8. Resource commitments**

The Centre shall finance its operation as per Table 1. Committed Budget for Centre's Implementation and will not request financial support from UNESCO or IOC. The Centre declares that the funding committed is expected to be obtained from *[fill in institutional funding]*,

public grants, private donations... Recommended to incorporate % - such as 50% will be obtained from public grants]. The budget may be increased, reduced, or modified prior agreement with the DCU.

**Table 1. Committed Budget for Centre Activities and Operation**

Resource s	Estimated amount in US\$											
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total	
Human Resources	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Workspaces	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Communications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Operational Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total yearly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

## 9. Use of the Ocean Decade Logo

The Decade Collaborative Centre will be able to use the logo of the Ocean Decade in accordance with the terms of the Agreement signed with the IOC and the provisions of the Ocean Decade Branding Guidelines. The use of the logo will be allowed uniquely in the context of its agreed mandate as a Decade Collaborative Centre (e.g. to communicate or raise awareness about its role as part of the Ocean Decade). The Centre cannot approve or delegate use of the logo to other parties for any purpose. Any other use of the logo, for example for specific Decade Actions that the Partner may wish to develop, would be subject to the relevant operational procedures of the Decade.

## GLOSSARY

<b>Action</b>	The tangible initiatives that will be carried out across the globe over the next ten years to fulfil the Decade vision.
<b>Activity</b>	A Decade Activity is a one-off standalone Action (such as an awareness-raising event, a scientific workshop, or a training opportunity). It enables a programme or project, or directly contributes to an Ocean Decade Challenge.
<b>Community of practice</b>	Communities of Practice are mechanisms to allow coordination amongst partners working on similar themes or in similar geographies to optimize the collective impact throughout the Decade. They will be facilitated through the Global Stakeholder Forum.
<b>Contribution</b>	Supports the Decade through provision of a necessary resource (e.g. funding, resource mobilization, data, or an in-kind contribution, including staff, provision of infrastructure, or equipment). A contribution can support either the implementation of a Decade Action or the coordination functions of the Decade
<b>Decade Advisory Board</b>	A multi-stakeholder advisory body to the IOC Governing Bodies that will provide strategic advice on Decade implementation.
<b>Decade Collaborative Centre</b>	Centre established by one or more partners engaged in Decade activities that will catalyze Decade Actions at the regional or thematic level by providing technical, logistical, and financial support for: (i) scientific coordination and planning; (ii) the identification of collaboration opportunities; (iii) awareness raising and stakeholder engagement; and (iv) technical and scientific capacities to support Decade Collaborative Centres will be legally separate from the IOC and operated under the complete responsibility of the establishing entity(ies).
<b>Decade Coordination Office</b>	Offices hosted by UN Member States and requiring the establishment of a Seat Agreement with the host Member State and the provision of financial resources through IOC/UNESCO or other UN frameworks. Offices will act as ‘decentralized’ Decade Coordination Units, being organically attached to the central Decade Coordinating Unit, and will be responsible for a regional portfolio of Decade Actions and/or specific thematic initiatives
<b>Decade Coordination Unit</b>	Central coordination unit for the implementation of the Decade that will be housed within the IOC Secretariat.
<b>Decade Implementing Partner</b>	Stakeholder institutions (e.g. research institutes, NGOs, universities) that are committed to the vision and mission of the Decade and that are making significant and sustained efforts to support the Ocean Decade.
<b>Decentralized coordination structure</b>	Decade Coordination Offices, Decade Collaborative Centres, and/or Decade Implementing Partners.
<b>Global Stakeholder Forum</b>	A convening mechanism for all Decade stakeholder engagement networks. The Forum will have both virtual and physical elements.
<b>National Decade Committee</b>	Existing or new structures that coordinate actors at the national level. Committees are inclusive multi- agency and multi-stakeholder platform for the co-design and co-delivery of Actions and facilitate access to benefits such as data, products, science-policy advice, or capacity development.
<b>Objective</b>	Process objectives that describe the steps in the science value-chain that are needed to meet the Ocean Decade Challenges and thus contribute to achieving the Decade Outcomes.
<b>Ocean Decade Alliance</b>	Resource mobilization mechanism focused on voluntary, large-scale commitments from governments, UN entities, private sector, foundations or other Decade supporters.

<b>Ocean Decade Challenge</b>	Most pressing and immediate priorities of the Decade. Used to unite stakeholders around common action. May evolve throughout the Decade.
<b>Ocean science</b>	Encompasses natural and social science disciplines, including interdisciplinary approaches; the technology and infrastructure that supports ocean science; the application of ocean science for societal benefit, including knowledge transfer and applications in regions that are lacking science capacity; and the science-policy and science-innovation interfaces. Ocean science embraces local and indigenous knowledge as a fundamental source of knowledge. It recognizes the central role of the ocean in the earth system, and includes consideration of the land-sea interface and ocean-atmosphere and ocean-cryosphere interactions.
<b>Outcome</b>	Describes the 'ocean we want' at the end of the Decade. Outcomes describe both the desired state of the ocean, and the desired state of society's use of, and interaction with, the ocean.
<b>Programme</b>	A Decade Action that is typically global or regional in scale and will contribute to the achievement of one or more of the Ocean Decade Challenges. It is long-term (multi-year), interdisciplinary and multi-national. A programme will consist of component projects, and potentially enabling activities.
<b>Project</b>	A Decade Action is a discrete and focused undertaking that is typically of a shorter duration. It may be regional, national or sub-national and it will typically contribute to an identified Decade programme.
<b>Proponent</b>	An institution who proposes and implements a Decade Action, Collaborative Centre, Implementing Partner or other forms of contributions to the Decade.
<b>UN entity</b>	United Nations agencies, funds, and programmes.

## United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)

Proclaimed in 2017 by the United Nations General Assembly, the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), provides a convening framework to develop the scientific knowledge and partnerships needed to catalyse transformative ocean science solutions for sustainable development, connecting people and our ocean. The Ocean Decade is coordinated by UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC).

Established during the Preparatory Phase and to continue throughout implementation until 2030, the IOC's Ocean Decade Series will provide key documentation about this global initiative and aims to serve as a primary resource for stakeholders seeking to consult, monitor and assess progress towards the vision and mission of the Ocean Decade.



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intergovernmental  
Oceanographic  
Commission



2021 United Nations Decade  
of Ocean Science  
2030 for Sustainable Development

<https://oceandecade.org/>