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INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

**JOINT WMO-IOC COLLABORATIVE BOARD
SELF-EVALUATION REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE**

Summary. IOC Assembly Decision A-32/4.9 requested the IOC Executive Secretary to oversee the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board self-evaluation review of performance, and report back with the findings to IOC Executive Council in 2024. This information document provides the report of these findings.

Background

The Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board (JCB) was created by a harmonised decision of WMO Cg-18 and the 20th Assembly of the IOC ([IOC Resolution XXX-2](#)) to maximise opportunities to co-design, co-develop and implement joint scientific and technical work, across oceanography and meteorology, that ultimately will improve the provision of information and services for societal benefit. Its terms of reference direct it to coordinate collaborative development of activities carried out by the IOC and WMO, to provide WMO and IOC governing bodies with strategic advice including preparing coordinated draft resolutions or decisions, to review workplans and provide recommendations for subsidiary bodies and programmes including proposing cross-cutting projects, and to engage in stakeholder liaison activities. The JCB produced the [WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy](#) that was adopted by Resolution 28 (EC-73) in 2021. For various reasons the JCB did not meet between March 2022 and February 2024.

Summary report of the 3rd Meeting of the JCB (online, 27–29 February 2024)

Responding to IOC Assembly Decision A-32/4.9 which requests the Executive Secretary to “*oversee the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board self-evaluation review of performance, and report back with the findings to IOC Executive Council in 2024*” and WMO Decision 10 (EC-78) which “*requests... the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board to undertake a self-assessment, ... review its terms of reference and recommend amendments as needed*”, the JCB developed a self-assessment found in the [Addendum](#), and agreed to use it as the basis for forward work.

Building on previous work identifying potential priority focus areas for the JCB, with gaps, priorities and opportunities identified in different areas of the value chain linking observations, data management, prediction, service delivery, and the innovation potential of research, the JCB agreed to further develop these in a series of online meetings and a first in-person meeting on 4–6 September 2024, hosted by UNESCO-IOC in Paris.

The JCB agreed to aim to develop a Plan of Action in support of the above-mentioned WMO-IOC Collaborative Strategy, identifying the groups/programmes represented on the JCB for action, with a tracking mechanism; and preparing for the September in-person meeting with potential online meetings to address some key topics ahead of time, exchanging information, and working to develop a joint view on priority action.

The membership of the JCB is being updated to respond to its TOR and length of appointment of relevant serving members.

Addendum Self-evaluation of the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board

This self-evaluation made by former and present members of the Joint WMO-IOC Collaborative Board is presented as a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis, with a number of suggestions for priorities in procedure and substance. It is based on input from the secretariat, a survey of past and present JCB members, and discussion at the online meeting of the JCB held on 27–29 February 2024 (JCB-3 part 1).

SWOT analysis

Strengths

- Power to suggest harmonised decision of the WMO and IOC;
- Possibility to create a high-level strategic (long-term) joint view between the organizations;
- Can advise Members/Member States of joint opportunities;
- JCB members represent a broad community covering the entire value chain (observations, data management and exchange, prediction, service delivery; underpinning research and

capacity development), and all the links between meteorological and ocean communities – the JCB can cover cross-cutting (across value chain) issues;

- Unique body that works between two United Nations specialized organizations.

Weaknesses

- The mechanism for influence on work plans of the WMO and IOC bodies not clear (and not activated);
- The connection between the JCB and INFCOM and SERCOM was not clear, but could be made clearer through existing members;
- Lack of visibility and clarity of the role of the JCB with WMO and IOC communities and governing bodies;
- Works through meetings only, not so much happening in between;
- Confusion of roles with INFCOM's [Advisory Group on the Ocean](#) (AG-Ocean);
- Not all internal (secretariat, Member/Member State) audiences in IOC and WMO understand the value of JCB;
- No regularity in meetings and no face-to-face meetings—this was identified as a major weakness;
- The JCB hasn't empowered its members to act on behalf of the Board;
- Less ability than the former JCOMM to enable collaboration at the national level (where this collaboration was forced to come to common positions on Commission decisions);
- Has not defined priorities, or a workplan, or ways of measuring advancement;
- Heavy internal coordination required on the secretariat side (on both sides), with a lack of clear mechanism for coordination.

Opportunities

⇒ External to JCB:

- Use priority initiatives led by IOC and WMO (i.e., EW4ALL, Ocean Decade, G3W, IOC ODIS, climate re-analysis and resilience etc.);
- Being able to advise / advocate / receive feedback from Members/Member States with respect to ongoing initiatives led by WMO or IOC;
- Having common messages into relevant political fora (UNFCCC, UNCLOS, ...);
- A relaunch that enables communication on value and unique role—taking advantage of new IOC and WMO leadership;
- JCB can be more specific about proposed actions, with identified responsibilities and timelines;
- Indicate and emphasise the value of the JCB.

⇒ More internal to JCB:

- A clearly defined methodology for implementation and checks for advancement and impact;
- Potential for JCB members from both sides to build engagement and trust between bodies and Members/Member States.

Threats

- Lack of relevance to Members/Member States;

- Disappointment from JCB members and the bodies they represent on the lack of progress or relevance;
- Lack of clear funding lines for work in both WMO and IOC secretariats;
- Unique role not well defined;
- Functions/bodies are working without the JCB, so a perceived lack of relevance, can be ignored.

Practical and substantive ways forward

The JCB members proposed several procedural and substantive ways forward to achieve IOC and WMO objectives with improved efficiency and effectiveness, based on the analysis above.

Procedural

- Set a regular meetings schedule (virtual and 1 in person per year), dependent on resources, with meetings to focus on specific topics;
- Focus on specific strategic actions;
- Develop clear reporting mechanisms to and from the JCB to relevant governing bodies (with actions and timelines);
- Foster better communication and understanding between IOC and WMO;
- JCB can choose to invite experts to advise on specific actions.

Substantive

- Strengthen and accelerate marine and coastal services such as operational prediction, developing multi-hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS);
- Strengthen engagement with the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development;
- Tackle interoperable data systems and standards;
- Address coordination on the High Seas (areas of global commons) including for observations (GBON, G3W), EW4ALL;
- Work with non-governmental and non-UN organizations;
- Perform a gap analysis along the WMO and IOC value chain.

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