

IOC Circular Letter No 3005
(Available in English and French)

IOC/VR/JB/eh
20 September 2024

To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with the IOC (IOC Member States)
Chair and Vice-Chairs of IOC and Major Subsidiary Bodies (Scientific, Technical and
Regional)

C.c. : Permanent Delegates / Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
National Commissions for UNESCO in IOC Member States

**Subject: Nomination of Experts to serve on the IOC Working Group on
Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (IOC/WG-SOPM)**

Building on the IOC's long-standing technical work in supporting Member States' efforts to develop and implement science-informed Integrated Coastal Area and Marine Spatial Plans, the IOC Assembly at its 31st session highlighted the importance for IOC to develop a comprehensive framework to deliver knowledge and capacities to meet the needs of IOC Member States for sustainable ocean planning and management, in accordance with its Statutes, and launched the process of developing an IOC Wide-Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management.

The Draft Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (SOPM) ([IOC/EC-57/4.3.Doc\(1\) Rev.](#)) was presented and further discussed at the IOC Council session in June 2024. By decision EC-57/4.3 (in annex), the IOC Executive Council established the IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management and charged it with the following tasks:

1. Revise the draft SOPM Strategy in line with the discussions at the 57th session of the IOC Executive Council, as reflected in the report and annexes, and present a revised version for consideration by the IOC Assembly at its 33rd session;
2. Identify activities related to ocean planning and management across all IOC programmes, addressing specific programme-related issues as well as emerging issues;
3. Propose a SOPM implementation plan to be considered by the IOC Assembly at its 33rd session;
4. Ensure coordination with the Decade Programme of Sustainable Ocean Planning, and its interim advisory group.

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With this letter, I invite IOC Member States and the Officers of the IOC programmes and regional subsidiary bodies to nominate suitable experts to serve on the above group. I would appreciate receiving nominations no later than 25 October 2024, accompanied by a CV and brief biography highlighting relevant expertise and experience at the interface of ocean science and ocean management (marine spatial planning, sustainable ocean planning, ecosystem-based management approaches). Nominations should be sent by e-mail to Mr Julian Barbrière (j.barbriere@unesco.org) with a copy to Mr Enrique Hernandez Lopez (e.hernandez-lopez@unesco.org).

Most of the work of the Working Group will be conducted online and by correspondence, but a face-to-face meeting is expected to take place in the first quarter of 2025. National experts should receive support from their national authorities and institutes to cover their expenses related to participation in the face-to-face meeting of the Working Group.

Looking forward to your prompt reply and to your participation in this process, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

[signature]

Vidar Helgesen
Executive Secretary

Enclosure: Decision EC-57/4.3 (Draft IOC-wide Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (2024–2030))

**Draft IOC-wide Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning
and Management (2024–2030)**

The Executive Council,

Having examined document IOC/EC-57/4.3.Doc(1) Rev.,

Recognizing the importance for the IOC to develop a comprehensive framework to deliver knowledge and capacities for sustainable ocean planning and management needs of IOC Member States, in accordance with its Statutes, and in support of the IOC Medium-Term Strategy (2022–2029), and adopted Programme and Budget 2024–2025 (42 C/5),

Welcomes the draft IOC wide-Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management;

Decides to establish the IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management with the Terms of Reference in the annex to this decision;

Requests the Working Group to report to the IOC Assembly at its 33rd session.

Annex to Decision EC-57/4.3

**Terms of Reference the IOC Working Group on
Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (WG-SOPM)**

The IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management is composed of experts nominated by IOC Member States responding to a call by circular letter and representatives of IOC regional subsidiary bodies and governing bodies of IOC programmes (where applicable).

The Working Group will elect two co-chairs from its members.

The IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management (WG-SOPM) is responsible for the following tasks:

1. Revise the draft SOPM Strategy in line with the discussion in the 57th session of the IOC Executive Council as reflected in the report and annexes, and present a revised version for consideration by the IOC Assembly at its 33rd session;
2. Identify activities related to ocean planning and management across all IOC programmes, addressing specific programme-related issues as well as emerging issues;
3. Propose a SOPM implementation plan to be considered by the IOC Assembly at its 33rd session;
4. Ensure coordination with the Decade Programme of Sustainable Ocean Planning, and its interim advisory group.