

IOC Circular Letter No 3025
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IOC/VH/IL/JB/AC/pbo
31 January 2025

To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with IOC/IOCARIBE and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean region

C.c. : Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States, and National Commissions for UNESCO of the above relevant countries
Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of Major IOC Subsidiary Bodies (Scientific, Technical and Regional)
Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission

Subject: United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030): Caribbean SIDS Ocean Decade Liaisons and Ocean Decade Roadmap for Tropical Americas and Caribbean Region

This Circular Letter is to invite nominations for National Ocean Decade Liaisons for Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and to notify Member States of the launch of the Tropical Americas and Caribbean (TAC) Roadmap for the Ocean Decade.

(i) Call for Nominations for the Role of National Ocean Decade Liaison for Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

In its capacity as the coordinator of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) (Ocean Decade), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC) is pleased to invite Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean region to nominate a National Ocean Decade Liaison. This initiative is part of the ongoing efforts to ensure the effective engagement of SIDS in the Ocean Decade, recognizing the unique challenges these countries face in establishing National Decade Committees (NDCs). While it is essential that all SIDS in the Caribbean region actively participate in the Ocean Decade, establishing full NDCs can be particularly challenging for many of these countries due to resource constraints and other factors.

To address this, the Ocean Decade is trialing a flexible and scalable approach within the IOCARIBE region, offering SIDS an opportunity to nominate an individual as a National Ocean Decade Liaison as a first step toward broader engagement. The nominated Liaison will play a critical role in the coordination of Ocean Decade activities, working closely with the Ocean Decade Taskforce for the Tropical Americas and Caribbean Region (TAC), the IOCARIBE Secretariat, the Ocean Decade Coordination Unit (DCU), other NDCs, and relevant Decade Collaborative Centres (DCCs) and Decade Coordination Offices (DCOs). This approach ensures that countries without the resources

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to establish a full NDC at this time will still be integrated into the broader framework of the Ocean Decade, and facilitate Caribbean SIDS engagement in regional and international Decade activities. It is also envisaged that this role can serve as an initial step towards the eventual establishment of a full National Decade Committee.

We encourage each Caribbean SIDS to nominate an individual who will serve as the National Ocean Decade Liaison from a government body, national research institution, or any other organization capable of fulfilling the role effectively. The National Ocean Decade Liaison will receive technical support from the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU) and be fully integrated into the global Ocean Decade stakeholder ecosystem, ensuring that their efforts are aligned with ongoing Decade activities.

Nominations should be submitted by 15 March 2025. Nominations should be submitted by the designated [IOC Focal Point](#) of each Member State. Nominations should be sent directly to the IOC Executive Secretary Vidar Helgesen (v.helgesen@unesco.org), with a copy (cc) to Lorna Inniss (l.inniss@unesco.org) and Alison Clausen (a.clausen@unesco.org).

For countries requiring further support or guidance on the nomination process, please do not hesitate to contact Lorna Inniss or Alison Clausen.

**(ii) Launch of the Tropical Americas and Caribbean (TAC)
Roadmap for the Ocean Decade**

Building on the priorities and recommendations of the Vision 2030 process, as summarized in [The Barcelona Statement](#) (2024 Ocean Decade Conference, 10–12 April 2024, Barcelona, Spain), I would like to formally inform Member States of the launch of the [Tropical Americas and Caribbean \(TAC\) Roadmap](#) for the Ocean Decade. The primary purpose of the Roadmap is to provide a coordinated framework for just, inclusive and impactful action within the framework of the Ocean Decade, that meets the strategic ambition of the Ocean Decade Challenges in the TAC region, while recognizing its diversity. This includes identifying and responding to regional priorities, addressing emerging issues, fostering collaboration and use of science and knowledge among partners and stakeholders.

Member States are kindly requested to widely circulate the above information within relevant networks and are encouraged to support implementation of the TAC Roadmap through national level action and engagement in regional processes and initiatives. Additional information on any of the above issues can be obtained from the IOC Secretariat j.barbiere@unesco.org or a.clausen@unesco.org.

With the assurances of my highest consideration, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

[signature]

Vidar Helgesen
Executive Secretary

Enclosure (1): 1/ Terms of reference for the National Ocean Decade Liaison for Caribbean SIDS

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Purpose of the Role

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) ('the Ocean Decade') to stimulate ocean science and knowledge generation that can reverse declines in the state of the ocean system while catalyzing new opportunities for sustainable ocean use. The vision of the Ocean Decade is 'the science we need for the ocean we want'. The Ocean Decade provides a convening framework for scientists and stakeholders from diverse sectors to develop the scientific knowledge and the partnerships needed to accelerate and harness advances in ocean science to foster a better understanding of the ocean system and deliver science-based solutions to achieve the global UN 2030 Agenda.

Recognizing that some States may not have the resources to establish a NDC, the role of the Ocean Decade Liaison has been created. The Ocean Decade Liaison will serve as a key liaison between the global Ocean Decade initiative and national stakeholders within their country as well as connect with all other National Decade Committees.

The National Ocean Decade Liaison will coordinate national participation in the Ocean Decade by acting as a primary communication channel between the global Ocean Decade Coordinating Unit, the Ocean Decade Task Force for the Tropical Americas and Caribbean Region (TAC), the Decade Coordination Office. The Liaison will engage key stakeholders and promote collaboration to help address critical ocean challenges through participating in opportunities presented by the Ocean Decade connecting them with national priorities.

Key Responsibilities

1. Liaison and Coordination

- Act as a bridge between national stakeholders (government, academia, private sector, civil society) and regional Ocean Decade efforts in the Caribbean feeding into international Ocean Decade efforts.
- Facilitate communication between national stakeholders, Decade Coordination Office, Ocean Decade Task Force for the Tropical Americas and Caribbean Region (TAC) and the Ocean Decade Coordination Unit at IOC-UNESCO
- Ensure that national needs, priorities, and contributions to the Ocean Decade are identified

2. Stakeholder Engagement and Networking

- Encourage and support partnerships with key national stakeholders, including government agencies, universities, research institutions, NGOs, and the private sector.
- Promote ocean literacy, scientific research, and sustainable ocean practices within the country.
- Where relevant, engage with Indigenous and local communities to support their involvement in the Ocean Decade including promotion of Indigenous-led Decade Actions.
- Support the identification and development of national and regional ocean science projects that align with the objectives of the UN Ocean Decade.
- Facilitate collaboration on cross-border or regional initiatives with other Caribbean SIDS.
- Identify potential funding opportunities and partnerships to support national ocean science activities.

3. Term and Commitment

- The position may be fulfilled as part of the individual's **current professional responsibilities** or as a **voluntary role**
- Participate in **global National Decade Committee Meetings** (online every 6 weeks)
- **Regional Coordination and Support:** The Liaison will actively contribute to and support the planning of regional initiatives. IOCARIBE and the Decade Coordination Unit (DCU) will facilitate regular meetings between NDCs to share experiences and discuss regional challenges and collaborate in the development of new initiatives with NDCs.
- **Regular Stakeholder Engagement:** The Liaison will participate in and help organize regular stakeholder meetings to discuss ongoing Ocean Decade priorities and related projects.
- **International Collaboration:** The Liaison will engage in international events and share experiences, collaborating with other NDCs during global conferences to advance the development of new initiatives.
- **Engagement in international events:** Exchange experiences and collaborate in the development of new initiatives with other NDCs during global conferences.
- **Monitoring and Documentation:** The Liaison will track and report on the impact of **ocean science projects** and initiatives within the country, ensuring they align with Ocean Decade goals.
- **Report** on challenges and successes, identifying areas for capacity-building or support.

4. Available Resources to support the functions of the National Liaison

- **Access to regional and international networks** and forums within the UN Ocean Decade framework.
- **Capacity-building opportunities:**
 - Kickoff workshop, in-person
 - Trainings and workshops
- **In-kind Support from the Decade Coordination Unit and IOCARIBE**, including guidance on project development, communications, and reporting.
- **Potential access to external funding** through partnerships, grants, or national programs to support specific projects aligned with the UN Ocean Decade objectives.

Nomination Process

The National Ocean Decade Liaison will be nominated by the IOC Focal Point. Please submit your nominations by **15 March 2025**. Nominations should be submitted by the designated **IOC Focal Point** of each Member State. Nominations should be sent directly to the IOC Executive Secretary Vidar Helgesen (v.helgesen@unesco.org), with a copy (cc) to Lorna Inniss (l.inniss@unesco.org) and Alison Clausen (a.clausen@unesco.org).

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