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**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION**  
(of UNESCO)**Fifty-third Session of the Executive Council**  
UNESCO, Paris, 3–9 February 2021**Covers all items of the Third Revised Provisional Agenda****LIVE**  
virtual meeting**SECOND REVISED PROVISIONAL ACTION PAPER**

This document has been prepared following the consensual response of Member States to the proposal of the IOC Chairperson ([Circular Letter 2813](#)) to hold the 53rd session of the IOC Executive Council online due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with the revised agenda limited to essential issues requiring guidance or decisions prior to the 31st IOC Assembly currently planned for June 2021.

This Revised Action Paper provides the information necessary for effective participation in the discussion of the agenda items. This information includes: (i) identification of relevant documentation; (ii) identification, under each substantive agenda item, of the issue before the Executive Council and the expected decision or draft resolution, when available to date; (iii) background information.

This Action Paper also provides the basis for the draft summary report of the session and is therefore written in the past tense. A summary of the discussion under each agenda item will be prepared by the Secretariat and the Rapporteur and will complete the draft summary report. Draft decisions and resolutions are proposed in the document in order to focus the discussion on decisions during the discussion of each agenda item without prejudice to the prerogatives of any Member State, partner organization, Officer or the Executive Secretary.



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## 1. OPENING

1. The Chair, Mr Ariel Hernan Troisi, opened the 53<sup>rd</sup> session of the IOC Executive Council at 13:00 Paris time on Wednesday 3 February 2021. He expressed his appreciation to the IOC Member States for accepting to meet online due to the persistence of the Covid-19 pandemic. He welcomed the new officers elected in the ICG/NEAMTWS. He congratulated the Commission on its 60th anniversary and delivered his personal reflections on his 19 months as Chairman of IOC and the new challenges imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic on all aspects of social and economic life, with consequences on the oceanographic activity and policy that are difficult to fully evaluate at this stage. He reminded the Council that the choice of limiting the agenda of this session to the issues requiring action before the Assembly meeting in June 2021 is due to the multiple challenges related to conducting sessions of an intergovernmental body by virtual means. In this connection, he stressed the need to find solutions to ensure that Member States are able to provide effective and timely guidance to the Secretariat and suggested that the Executive Council may wish to entrust the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group to start the process of reviewing and updating the Commission's Rules of Procedure and submit a set of preliminary proposals to the IOC Assembly at its 31<sup>st</sup> session in June 2021.
2. The Chair expressed the wish to empathise with families that have been affected by the pandemic in the tribute the Council was paying to distinguished individuals who had participated in the work of the Commission and have passed away during the past year. The participants stood for a minute of silence to honour: Art Alexiou (US, –2020), Dr Biliana Cicin-Sain (US; 1945–2020), Ms Paula Dunbar (US, –2020), Prof. Eduardo D. Gomez (Philippines, 1938–2019), Sidney Holt (UK, 1926–2019), Dr George Maul (US, 1938–2020), Prof. Trevor Platt (UK, 1942–2020) and Yves Tréglos (France, –2020).
3. The representatives of \_\_\_ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: \_\_\_\_\_.

## 2. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

### 2.1 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA [Rule of Procedure 8]

<u>Working documents:</u>	IOC/EC-53/2.1.Doc Rev.4	Fourth Revised Provisional Agenda
	IOC/EC-53/2.1.Doc Add. Rev.3	Third Revised Provisional Timetable
	IOC/EC-53/AP Rev.2 and Add.	Second Revised Provisional Action Paper
<u>References:</u>	<a href="#">IOC-XXX/3</a>	Summary Report of the Thirtieth session of the IOC Assembly, Paris, 26 June–4 July 2019

4. The Chair reminded that the agenda of the Council, held under exceptional circumstances, was voluntarily limited to issues requiring a decision of the governing bodies before the Assembly meets in June 2021. At the programmatic level, it mainly focused on the follow-up to the 75<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly decision regarding the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021–2030, the IOC contribution to the Decade and the preparation of the draft IOC Medium-term Strategy for 2022–2029 (IOC/EC-53/5.1Doc(1)) and draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 ([IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc\(2\)](#)). Several reporting items requested by the Assembly at its 30<sup>th</sup> session in 2019 are therefore addressed in the report of the Executive Secretary on the work

accomplished during the intersessional period (IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(1) Part 1 & 2). The documentation initially prepared for the session scheduled in June 2020 was available for the information of the Executive Council at <http://ioc-unesco.org/ec53>. PowerPoint presentations were made available on the webpage of the virtual session (<https://oceanexpert.org/event/2805>) in advance of the session in the four working languages of the Commission. In order to preserve plenary time to the expression of the views of Member States, administrative issues were anticipated to the extent possible and the deadline for submission of draft resolutions by Member States was set to two weeks in advance of the session.

5. Plenary discussions were scheduled from 1.00 to 4.00 p.m. Paris time over a period of five days to allow the participation of Member States representatives from various time zones. The online session benefitted from simultaneous interpretation in English, French, Russian and Spanish provided by UNESCO services. Additional meetings of the Financial Committee were organised with English-French interpretation, as usual.

Dec. EC-53/2(I)

The Executive Council,

**I. Agenda**

1. Adopts the agenda and the timetable of work as set out in documents IOC/EC-53/2.1.Doc Rev.4 and Addendum [with the following additional modifications:]

6. The representatives of \_\_\_ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: \_\_\_\_\_.

2.2 DESIGNATION OF THE RAPPORTEUR  
[Rule of Procedure 25.4]

Dec. EC-53/2(II)

**II. Rapporteur**

2. On a proposal of [country], seconded by [countries],
3. Designates \_\_\_\_\_ of [country from electoral group III] Rapporteur for its present session to assist the Chairperson and the Executive Secretary in the preparation of the draft provisional report of the session;

2.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF SESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS  
[Rule of Procedure 12]

7. The Chair invited the Executive Council to form two sessional committees, the Resolutions Committee and the Financial Committee, and invited proposals for sessional working groups. *[Member States were invited to express their interest to participate in the sessional committees in advance of the session. Similarly, the need for working/drafting groups during the session were not encouraged but were assessed carefully by the Officers. The lists of participating Member States in the committees were to be published in the report.]*

Dec. EC-53/2(III)**III. Sessional Committees and Working Groups**

1. Establishes the following sessional open-ended committees and \_\_\_ working groups and referred to them the following agenda items and responsibilities:

*Financial Committee:* to finalise a resolution under items 5.1 and 5.2; under the chairship of Dr Karim Hilmi (Morocco, Vice-chair) with the following Member States participating: \_\_\_\_\_. Ms Ksenia Yvinec provided the Secretariat support to the Financial Committee.

*Resolutions Committee:* to report on all draft resolutions duly presented for consideration at the session by 25<sup>th</sup> June and on the draft resolution covering financial matters drafted during the session; under the chairship of Prof. Yutaka Michida (Japan) [to be confirmed] with the following Member States participating: \_\_\_\_\_. Julian Barbière provided the Secretariat support to the Resolutions Committee.

5. Establishes also \_\_\_ sessional working groups on:

#### 2.4 INTRODUCTION OF TIMETABLE AND DOCUMENTATION [Rule of Procedure 11]

<u>Working documents:</u>	IOC/EC-53/DocList	Provisional List of Documents
<u>Information:</u>	IOC/EC-53/2.4.Inf.	Working arrangements for the session

8. The Executive Secretary briefly introduced this item. He reminded the Council that the new referencing of the IOC governing bodies' documentation adopted by the Assembly through [Resolution XXX-3](#) was applied to the documentation for this session. The Executive Secretary also reminded that draft decisions were to be adopted at the end of the discussion of each agenda item. The Action Paper was intentionally drafted as a pre-report and contained two draft resolutions on the UN Decade and on Governance, Programming and Budgeting Matters of the Commission that were examined for adoption under agenda item 7. Pursuant to Decisions [EC-LII, Dec.3.3](#) and [IOC-XXX/13](#) on organizational matters, the narrative part of the report was drafted in English by the Secretariat during the session. The translation and the adoption of the report in four languages would be done by correspondence after the session. Member States wishing to have specific plenary interventions recorded were invited to provide written records thereof, using a dedicated template to [iocgovbody@unesco.org](mailto:iocgovbody@unesco.org) (IOC/EC-53/2.4.Inf.Add.)

No decision is proposed under this item. [Any changes to the timetable would be reflected in Dec. EC-53/2(II).]

9. The representatives of \_\_\_ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ON THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED SINCE THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY AND ON BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION

[Rule of Procedure 49.1; Dec. IOC-XXX/3.3.4]

<u>Working documents:</u>	<a href="#">IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(1)</a>	Report of the IOC Executive Secretary on the work accomplished since the Thirtieth session of
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		the Assembly
	IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(1)Part2	Brief update by the IOC Executive Secretary on the work accomplished since the Thirtieth session of the Assembly
	<a href="#">IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(2)</a>	Report on Budget Execution 2018–2019 and outline of 2020–2021 budget
<u>Information:</u>	IOC/INF-1393	Concept Proposal for a “State of the Ocean Report”
	IOC/EC-53/3.1.Inf(1)	Draft Memorandum of Understanding between the IOC of UNESCO and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)
	IOC/EC-53/3.1.Inf(2)	Draft Memorandum of Understanding between the IOC of UNESCO and the Pacific Community (SPC)
	<a href="#">IOC/INF-1387</a>	Non-Paper on existing and potential future services of the IOC-UNESCO in support of a future ILBI for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) (September 2020)
	IOC/INF-1394	The Case for a new governance for IOCINDIO: A proposal for changing the status of IOCINDIO in a Sub-Commission of IOC for the Indian Ocean

10. The Executive Secretary introduced this item using a PowerPoint presentation.
11. He recalled that the main focus of the Commission in the past year was on the preparation of the *Implementation Plan for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021–2030*. IOC spared no effort in engaging all Member States, United Nations partners and key civil society stakeholders in regional and global consultations to seize this once-in-a-life-time opportunity to harness advances in ocean science to achieve a better understanding of the ocean system and deliver science-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda. Maintaining the UN-Oceans consultations helped to facilitate collaborative approach in the United Nations system and ensure a meaningful division of labour among the IOC’s UN partners.
12. He also highlighted the IOC efforts deployed in all regions in order to provide the ground for using the tremendous opportunity that the Decade represents for all Member States, and in particular for Africa, LDCs (Least Developed Countries) and SIDS (Small Island Developing States), leaving no one behind. The IOC’s regional subsidiary bodies continue to play a critical role in this regard. Specific attention was given to SIDS, as well as to the youth involvement and the value of indigenous knowledge. The 2nd International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE-2) has engaged in various Indian Ocean-related UN Decade planning meetings, aiming to ensure that the IIOE-2 is well positioned to make a tangible contribution to the Decade’s implementation.
13. Furthermore, the Implementation Plan for the Decade fosters synergies between SDG-5 and SDG-14 by focusing on the role of women in ocean science, improving global ocean knowledge and supporting informed and inclusive decision-making. The *Global Ocean Science Report* (GOSR), and its 2020 edition (GOSR) with its gender-disaggregated data will continue to serve as a progress monitoring mechanism.
14. On the subject of key regional developments, he noted the intensive planning of the Decade in WESTPAC, IOCARIBE, and IOCAFRICA and particularly highlighted the importance of



Member States political commitment to the success of the Decade kick-off conference for Africa to be hosted by Egypt in 2021.

15. The Executive Secretary informed the Executive Council about continuing consultations with the IOC Chair, the IOCINDIO Chair and Officers and the IOC Vice-Chair for electoral group IV regarding the development of IOCINDIO into an IOC Sub-Commission. He thanked the officers for their commitment and mentioned an overall agreement to further consult IOC Member States on this issue. The first round of consultations was planned for early 2021 in order to further improve the proposal and seek engagement and support. To be truly effective and efficient, the new sub-commission should offer Member States a wider scope for their participation in regional activities according to their priorities and needs. Its work would also be of interest and have implications for some countries of IOCAFRICA and WESTPAC. In this respect, the Executive Secretary reminded the Executive Council that the 8<sup>th</sup> session of IOCINDIO in the first quarter 2021 would be an opportunity to rally Member States of the entire Indian Ocean rim and beyond. The fully developed proposal could then be presented to the IOC Assembly at its 31<sup>st</sup> session in June 2021 for decision.
16. The Executive Secretary informed the Executive Council of the active involvement of the IOC in the negotiation process on an International Legally Binding Instrument (ILBI) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). In October 2020, with a view to informing interested participants in the negotiation process, the Secretariat published a Non-Paper on existing and potential contributions of IOC-UNESCO to the BBNJ process ([IOC/INF-1387](#)).
17. He also highlighted that significant progress was made in the development of the methodology to support Member States' implementation of and reporting on the two SDG target indicators 14.3.1 and 14.a, for which the IOC has been assigned the custodianship role.
18. Having stressed main IOC achievements, successes, and issues faced by the Commission during the reporting period, Dr Ryabinin then provided an update on highlights of each of the six IOC Functions, including the work of the regional and technical subsidiary bodies of the Commission, and relevant UNESCO Category 2 Centres.
19. The Executive Secretary presented Member States with a non-exhaustive list of programmatic milestones. It included the *GOOS 2030 Strategy* ([IOC/BRO/2019/5 rev.2](#)), "OceanObs'19 Conference", progress achieved in the planning of data and information management through ODISCat and OceanInfoHub, continuing expansion of OBIS, advances in research coordination with regard to ocean carbon, the *Global Ocean Science Report 2020*, launched on 14 December 2020 on the occasion of the IOC 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, advances in the work on ocean acidification, deoxygenation, harmful algal blooms, long-time series, expanding work on tsunami preparedness and new service providers, contribution to the IPCC [Special Report on Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate](#), guidance to the co-sponsored World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) on research on ocean and climate, major progress in community engagement and practice of maritime spatial planning and preparations for the new phase of the Ocean Teacher Global Academy.
20. In informing Member States on the progress in relation to GEBCO, the Executive Secretary explained that, while the IOC Regular Working Group on User Requirements and Contributions to GEBCO Products has been formed through a call for membership circulated via IOC [Circular Letter 2791](#) of 21 January 2020, the assessment to be conducted by the Working Group and subsequent report were delayed as a result of the responsible IOC staff being affected by Covid. In consultation with the IOC Chair, the Report will be brought to the IOC Assembly at its 31<sup>st</sup> session in 2021.
21. He also spoke about the main developments in integrated ocean management. A vision of the ocean management based on science and involving a broad range of stakeholders, bearing in

mind national accounting and economic considerations, human relations with the ocean, considerations of equity, would take the possibilities of sustaining the ocean to a new level. Major progress in thinking and prototyping of this new level of work for sustainability came from the work of the High Level Panel (HLP) for a Sustainable Ocean Economy. Consultation and joint brainstorming of the Advisory Panel for HLP with IOC and the Decade team will shape the research for sustainable ocean management under the Decade. Based on the high interest in ocean science at the 2019 UNFCCC 25<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties in Madrid, a Dialogue on Climate and Ocean was established. The Decade's potential for intensifying ocean research, solidifying ideas on ocean management, fostering interest in the sustainable ocean economy, and increasing understanding of the role of ocean in adaptation to and mitigation of climate change sets for the IOC a new, much more important agenda for the future.

22. Dr Ryabinin also briefly introduced the idea and the concept of a potential future *State of the Ocean Report* (StOR, IOC/INF-1393). Such a report, coordinated by IOC, would present to the world on the annual basis a summary of key changes in the ocean's state, in terms of its physical, biogeochemical, biological and ecological variables, supplemented by a strategic summary of developments with regard to integrated ocean management, such as percentage of area covered by area management tools, observations, etc. It would facilitate general public's understanding of ocean-related issues and serve as a monitoring mechanism for the Decade's contribution towards its sustainable management.
23. The Executive Secretary explained that due to the cancellation or postponement of many important events due to the Covid-19 pandemic – including the “2020 UN Ocean Conference” – the Secretariat had to explore alternative approaches to the launch of both the Draft Implementation Plan for the Decade and the 2nd edition of the *Global Ocean Science Report* (GOSR). He informed Member States that the implementation of the Commission's programme in 2020 experienced some difficulties and delays, similar to all programme sectors of UNESCO, but the Secretariat was actively looking for solutions. In this context, he also presented the main initiatives of the Secretariat to assess the influence of the pandemic on IOC's areas of competence: surveys and assessments of impact on ocean observation and tsunami warning services, as well as the longer-term effect on investment in ocean sciences and Member States capacities to achieve the SDG target 14.a, to be measured through GOSR.
24. With regard to the Commission's financial situation, he confirmed that the Secretariat implemented 2018–2019 workplans in accordance with the budgetary allocations and resource mobilization targets approved by the IOC Executive Council's [Resolution EC-LI.2](#) and developed 2020–2021 workplans in accordance with [Resolution XXX-3](#), as presented in document [IOC/EC-53/3.1\(2\)](#).
25. The Executive Secretary concluded by pointing out that the main challenge for the Commission's small Secretariat continued to be the dual task to raise not only extrabudgetary resources necessary to maintain its core operational programmes but also significant additional resources to lead and coordinate the Decade preparation phase and contribute to an expanding ocean agenda. He expressed his high appreciation of the consistent and generous support of many Member States. Belgium (Flanders), Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Sweden and United Kingdom provided financial contributions towards the preparation of the Decade Implementation Plan. Norway continued to be the main donor of non-earmarked funds to the IOC Special Account, facilitating implementation with focus on collectively agreed priorities and stepped up its contribution to a new high through the new agreement with its agency for international aid (NORAD). Belgium (Flanders), China and Australia continued to support key IOC offices and their programmes in, respectively, Ostend, WESTPAC and Perth. GOSR2020 was generously supported by the Republic of Korea, Belgium, Kenya, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. In addition, Belgium (Flanders) renewed the UNESCO/Flanders Fund-in-Trust for the support of UNESCO's activities in the field of Science (FUST) and approved three large scale projects submitted by IOC, to be implemented between 2020 and 2022.

26. However, he also expressed concern that IOC programme delivery continues, to a large extent, on an unsustainable basis, with chronic understaffing and shortage of resources. A new approach to fund-raising and outreach, based on highlighting the societal benefits of IOC's work and demonstrating the return on investment in ocean science and observation is being developed. In this context, the Executive Secretary highlighted the key role of ocean literacy, outreach and communication, both to the Commission's core constituencies but also to the society at large, and the increased need to invest in this area in the context of a truly inclusive and transformative approach to the Decade.

Dec. EC-53/3.1

**Report of the Executive Secretary**

The Executive Council,

1. Having examined documents IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(1) and IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(2),
2. Takes note of the comprehensive report of the Executive Secretary on the work accomplished, including the strategic analysis and summary assessment of programme implementation and progress in the delivery of outputs in the biennium 2018–2019, the detailed report on achievements by IOC Functions since the 30<sup>th</sup> session of the IOC Assembly (July 2019–May 2020);
3. Welcomes the Secretariat's initiatives to evaluate and/or address where possible the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on ocean observations, tsunami detection and warnings and on strategic investments for ocean science;
4. Specially acknowledges the continuous support of the IOC Secretariat with respect to the development of methodologies for SDG indicators 14.3.1 and 14.a.1 (IOC/INF-1385), for which IOC is the designated custodian agency, as well as for indicators 14.1.1a and 14.2.1, for which IOC is supporting the work of UN Environment in its capacity as custodian agency for the indicators; and in this context encourages Member States to mobilize support to the IOC Secretariat for the completion of the methodology related to indicator 14.1.1a on an index of coastal eutrophication, in collaboration with UN Environment;
5. Takes note of the discussions to develop a complete proposal on the possible transformation of IOCINDIO into a sub-commission through further consultation of IOC Member States during the inter-session period and welcomes the discussion and decision on this issue by the Assembly at its 31<sup>st</sup> session;
6. Notes with interest the Executive Secretary's proposal and initial steps to develop an "IOC State of the Ocean Report" (StOR) to reflect, on a regular basis, main findings in ocean research and observations and latest evidence on the state of the ocean and related trends, in support of the knowledge base for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

27. The representatives of \_\_\_ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: \_\_\_\_\_.

#### 4. PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENTS

##### 4.1 REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECADE ROADMAP AND DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF OCEAN SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT [39 C/Resolution 25; Res. XXIX-1, XXX-1]

<u>Working documents:</u>	IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(1) Rev.	Updated progress report on the implementation of the Decade Roadmap of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development including results of the review of the zero draft Implementation Plan
	<a href="#">IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(1) Add.</a>	Report on the outcome of the consultation process during the development of the Implementation Plan of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable development before its presentation to the UN General Assembly at its 75th session
	<a href="#">IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(3)</a>	Revised Terms of Reference of the Decade Executive Planning Group to act as interim Decade Advisory Board in 2021
	<a href="#">Implementation Plan Version 2.0</a>	Implementation Plan for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (version 2.0)
<u>Information:</u>	IOC/EC-53/3.1.Inf(2)	Draft Operational Guidelines for the establishment of Decade Collaborative Centres and Implementing Partners
	The Ocean Decade Series, 15	Engaging and Empowering Regional Stakeholders: Synthesis of Regional Consultation Workshops (2019–2020) – UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)
	<a href="#">IOC Brochure 2020-5 Prov.</a>	Implementation Plan for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (version 2.0) – Summary
<u>References:</u>	<a href="#">A/RES/74/19</a>	UN General Assembly Resolution: Oceans and the law of the sea (20 December 2019)
	<a href="#">A/75/L.39 (provisional reference)</a>	UN General Assembly Resolution: Oceans and the law of the sea (2 December 2020)

28. The IOC Executive Secretary introduced this item recalling that in December 2017 the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) had proclaimed the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development from 2021 to 2030, responding to the proposal of IOC. The period from 2018 to 2020 focused on the preparation of the Decade Implementation Plan. IOC led this work through the Secretariat, with strategic advice initially by an interim group and later by the established Executive Planning Group, in close contact with Member States and reaching out to many relevant stakeholders. He recalled that the IOC Executive Council in 2018 took note of the *Roadmap* document ([IOC/EC-LI/2 Annex 3 & Corr.](#)) as an initial guide to the steps and processes to develop a Decade Implementation Plan.

29. Preparation of the UN Decade continued throughout the preparatory period in a highly participatory manner. Over 1,000 stakeholders participated in 11 regional planning meetings across 9 ocean basins between June 2019 and April 2020, as well as other thematic meetings organised around the world. These meetings generated comprehensive information on the scientific research and capacity development priorities for each ocean basin and catalysed discussions between stakeholders regarding regional partnerships to advance implementation of the Decade.

30. Building on the Decade foundations meeting that brought together 25 philanthropic and corporate foundations in Copenhagen in February 2020, a Decade foundations network was established and resulted in several foundations expressing interest in supporting the Decade and in establishing formal partnership agreements with IOC.
31. An informal working group of Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPS) was established to coordinate the engagement of this stakeholder category in the Decade. The group as well as the UN-Oceans Contact Group for the Decade met regularly throughout the preparatory period.
32. The “Second Global Planning Meeting”, which was originally planned for March 2020, was cancelled due to the Covid-19 situation and was replaced by two webinars where the Draft Implementation Plan was presented. The webinars gathered more than 550 participants from various horizons. The list of communications activities includes a regular presence in social media, the use of the Decade logo in a range of approved events and publications, and a Decade newsletter which have increased visibility of the Decade to a wider audience. In September 2020, a Decade Virtual Series was launched. These high-level and scientific interactive virtual dialogues are aimed at mobilizing the global ocean community and fostering transformative partnerships and innovative solution-oriented actions to achieve the Decade Outcomes. The series is organized around the Decade Challenges and relevant cross-cutting issues, which represent common priorities that can be translated into Decade Actions at all scales by different stakeholders. Each session is convened jointly with a regional or international partner.
33. Mr Barbière, Head of the Marine Policy and Regional Coordination Section and IOC focal point for the Decade, provided additional details on the preparatory phase and its consultative process.
34. The key output of the preparatory phase during that period was the Draft Implementation Plan for the Decade, the first version which was released for peer review to Member States, UN-Oceans members and key Decade partners in March 2020 by [Circular Letter 2798](#). The draft Implementation Plan explained the rationale for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the desired state of the ocean at the end of the Decade. It contained a framework to guide the design and implementation of actions throughout the Decade including a set of scientific objectives for the Decade. It presented the criteria and process for the endorsement of Decade Actions and the principles to guide data management, capacity development, and engagement with stakeholders. It also described the proposed governance and coordination arrangements of the Decade, including for example through the establishment of programmatic or regional Decade Coordination Offices and Collaborative Centres, the mechanisms for resource mobilization, and the process to measure progress. The active discussion of the draft Decade Implementation Plan in March/April 2020 allowed the Secretariat to revise the document and prepare the Decade Implementation Plan (version 1, June 2020).
35. Mr Barbière recalled that prior to the transmission of the Decade Implementation Plan to the UNGA for its consideration at its 75th session, IOC Member States, as well as members of UN-Oceans, were invited through [Circular Letter 2804](#) to review the Implementation Plan in its version 1 (document IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(2)). The review lasted one month and was also supplemented by a virtual session organized on 9 July 2020. Overall, broad support was expressed by Member States, and 45 Member States provided comments in response to the circular letter. In the spirit of transparency, document IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(1) Add. provides an overview of all comments received and how these were addressed. Based in that input, the Secretariat again revised the Plan and came up with Version 2.0 of the Implementation Plan. As announced through [Circular Letter 2808](#), the Implementation Plan (Version 2.0) was transmitted on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2020 by the IOC Chair to the UN Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, for further consideration by UNGA at its 75th session, in the framework of the annual Omnibus Resolution on Ocean and Law of the Sea. The Secretariat organized on 15 October 2020 a virtual event to present the Implementation Plan to UN Member States. On \_\_\_ December 2020, the UNGA adopted Resolution

A/RES/75/\_\_\_ that, *inter alia*, welcomed the Implementation Plan of the UN Decade, hence paving the way for the launch of the Decade based on the structural elements of the Implementation Plan.

36. In order to prepare the international community towards the development and submission of large scale transformative actions early on in 2021, a Call for Action was launched on 15 October 2020 through [Circular Letter 2811](#) and communications via social media. This Call is the first of a series of Decade Actions Calls that will be rolled out over the next ten years. Via this Call, Member States and other partners were invited to request endorsement under the Ocean Decade for transformative Decade Actions that contribute to the Decade vision. This Call focused specifically on: (i) large-scale, multi-country, transformative Decade programmes; and (ii) large-scale contributions of in-kind or financial resources for Decade Actions or coordination costs. Mr Barbière reported on the outcome of this first Call for Action.
37. Throughout the preparation phase, the support of the Executive Planning Group (EPG) was essential in advising on the preparation of the Implementation Plan, the engagement of stakeholders, the development of the 1<sup>st</sup> Call for Action and in supporting the development of a Decade communication strategy. The Decade Executive Planning Group members met physically in January 2020 and worked through the rest of the year through regular virtual meetings.
38. The Implementation Plan foresees that a Decade Advisory Board will be established in 2021 with amongst its responsibility, the formulation of recommendation for the endorsement of programmes under the Decade. Mr Barbière informed that the Terms of Reference of the Decade Advisory Board will be presented to the Assembly at its 31<sup>st</sup> session for its consideration, with a view to establish the Board in the second half of 2021.
39. As scientific and technical guidance is very much required to assist the IOC Secretariat with its coordinating functions from the start of the Decade, particularly with regards to the review of programme proposals received through the first Call for Action, it is proposed that the Decade Executive Planning Group established in 2018 to guide the development of the Implementation Plan, be extended and act as Interim Decade Advisory Board until the Board is formally established in 2021. To reflect this new function, the IOC Executive Council is therefore invited to review and adopt the new terms of reference of the EPG as presented in document IOC/EC-53/4.1.Doc(3).
40. Mr Barbière highlighted the plan to establish a Decade Coordination Unit within the IOC Secretariat in line with the governance elements described in the Implementation Plan. Its three main functions are to act as the: (i) primary coordination office for the implementation of Decade Actions; (ii) Secretariat for the Decade Advisory Board; and (iii) Secretariat for the Ocean Decade Alliance. The Coordination Unit will work in close collaboration with the Secretariats of other UN entities and may include seconded staff from UN entities and programmes as well as from Member States. He emphasized that the provision of extra-budgetary in-kind and financial resources will be required for the Decade Coordination Unit to be adequately staffed. He also highlighted steps toward the establishment of a Decade Alliance bringing together supporters and institutional partners that are contributing resources towards the Decade Actions. The Secretariat is developing operational guidelines for the establishment of Decade Implementing Partners, as well as decentralised Coordination Offices and Collaborative Centres. These were presented in draft form to the IOC Executive Council for information.
41. The Executive Council adopted Resolution EC-53/\_\_\_ below submitted by \_\_\_.

Draft Resolution EC-53/[4.1]

Submitted by [to be drafted following the adoption of Omnibus resolution by UNGA-75]

## Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030)

The Executive Council,

1.

42. The representatives of \_\_\_ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: \_\_\_\_\_.

### 5. GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING

- 5.1 DRAFT IOC MEDIUM TERM STRATEGY FOR 2022–2029 (41 C/4)  
AND DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2022–2025 (41 C/5)  
[Resolution XXX-3]

<i>Working documents:</i>	<a href="#">IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(1)</a>	Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029
	<a href="#">IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(2)</a>	Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025
<i>Information:</i>	IOC/INF-1383	IOC's programmatic contribution to the Decade, 2021–2030
<i>References:</i>	<a href="#">IOC/INF-1314</a>	IOC Medium-term Strategy, 2014–2021

43. The Executive Secretary introduced this item. He started with the Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 (41 C/4) and reminded Member States that the document, already reviewed by the IOC Assembly at its 30th session in 2019, builds on the current *IOC Medium-term Strategy, 2014–2021* ([IOC/INF-1314](#)), preserving the comprehensive framework of six functions for its implementation, while at the same time attempting to further clarify and sharpen the proposed vision statement and five High-Level Objectives of the Commission. The version proposed for Member States consideration in document IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(1) was revised in accordance with [Resolution XXX-3](#) and following a review by the Officers of the Commission at their annual meeting, Paris, 13–14 January 2020. It was also subject to examination by the open-ended Intersessional Financial Advisory Group.
44. The Executive Secretary stressed the importance of a constructive and inclusive discussion of these preliminary proposals, both in the plenary and in the Financial Committee, with a view of guiding the future work of the Secretariat on this key document that will define the Commission's strategy in the next eight-year period, largely concordant with the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.
45. The Executive Secretary further explained that the Secretariat's proposed approach to the preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 is substantiated in two parts of the Document IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(2). The first part contains the IOC Strategic Results Report (SRR) 2020 designed to provide both UNESCO and IOC Member States with an analysis of the programme outcomes over the period from 2016 to 2019. The report highlights to UNESCO Member States the importance of IOC achievements and provides to IOC Member States a basis to review and reassess the programmatic objectives, including possible reorientation, reinforcement or downscaling/termination (*'lessons learned and emerging trends'*). The second part of the discussed document contains the proposal for one IOC Expected Result in the UNESCO Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (41 C/5), in accordance with Assembly

[Resolution XXVIII-3](#), as well as the proposed guiding principles to be followed by the Secretariat in elaborating further proposals in the course of the UNESCO Programme and Budget (41 C/5) preparation process.

46. In referring to [Resolution XXX-3](#) that invited him to ‘*provide Member States with an estimate of the necessary budget to effectively operate the IOC at an optimum level, to help identify how and what additional resources might be secured*’, the Executive Secretary informed the Executive Council that the Secretariat has conducted an initial analysis in response to the resolution and proposed to consider two levels of the fit-for-purpose IOC in terms of resources and staffing: the “**healthy IOC**” that is able to sustainably perform its current duties, and the “**optimal IOC**” that is able to deliver in accordance with current and anticipated future requirements of the world in terms of ocean science. The Executive Secretary briefly introduced to Member States his preliminary considerations on the two levels of IOC resources and welcomed Member States guidance as to the level of ambition they wished to set for the Commission in the context of the need to start managing the ocean sustainably and capitalize on tremendous opportunities presented by the UN Decade. This critically important guidance will inspire future drafting work of the Secretariat with regard to the Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 and the supporting programme and budget for the first quadrennium 2022–2025.
47. With the IOC having turned 60 years old on 14 December 2020, the IOC strategy, programme and budget for 2022–2025 require deep reflection of Member States keeping in mind IOC Statutes Articles [11.3](#) and [10.4](#). He further recalled that Article 11.3 outlines the possibility for IOC to act as a joint specialized mechanism in the UN system and Article 10.4 allows IOC to establish additional financial arrangements for implementation of its programme of work.
48. The Executive Secretary concluded by reminding the Executive Council that the most recent drafts of both documents will be circulated to Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (IFAG) in the intersessional period leading to the final adoption of the IOC Medium-Term Strategy 2022–2029 by the IOC Assembly at its 31st session in 2021.

Dec. EC-53/5.1

**Draft IOC Medium Term Strategy for 2020–2029 (41 C/4)  
and Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (41 C/5)**

The Executive Council,

1. Having examined documents IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(1) and IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(2),
2. Thanks the Executive Secretary for the preliminary proposals developed by the Secretariat for the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025;
3. Expresses its appreciation that the document could benefit from inputs of the IOC Officers at their annual meeting, 13–14 January 2020, and from intersessional consultations through IFAG;
4. Takes note of the documents IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(1) and IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(2) subject to further examination by the Financial Committee with a view of formulating a draft resolution for discussion and adoption in plenary.



49. The representatives of \_\_ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: \_\_\_\_\_.

## 5.2 REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE [Resolution XXX-3]

<i>Working documents:</i>	<a href="#">IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(1)</a>	Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029
	<a href="#">IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(2)</a>	Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025
	<a href="#">IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(2)</a>	Report on Budget Execution 2018–2019 and outline of 2020–2021 budget
<i>Information:</i>	IOC/INF-1383	IOC's programmatic contribution to the Decade, 2021–2030

50. The Chair of the Financial Committee, Vice-Chair of IOC Karim Hilmi (Morocco), reported to the Executive Council on the results of the Committee's examination of the items entrusted to it by the plenary in addition to the statutory ones foreseen in the Rule of Procedure 8.1(c) ([IOC/INF-1166](#)). He informed that the Financial Committee's discussions had been extremely constructive and thanked all Member States that participated in the work of the Committee for their commitment and collaboration. He then proceeded to a detailed presentation of the draft resolution prepared by the Financial Committee for consideration by the Executive Council.

51. The Executive Council expressed its high appreciation to the Chair of the Financial Committee Karim Hilmi for his effective and efficient way of leading the work of the Financial Committee in a truly inclusive and collegial spirit. Once again, this constructive approach allowed the Committee to complete its challenging mandate in a very limited period of time.

52. The Executive Council adopted Resolution EC-53/\_\_\_ below submitted by \_\_\_\_.

### Draft Resolution EC-53/[5.2]

*Currently under review by the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group*

#### **GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING MATTERS OF THE COMMISSION**

The Executive Council,

1. Having examined documents:

- (i) [IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc\(2\)](#) – 'Report on budget execution 2018–2019 and outline of 2020–2021 budget',
- (ii) [IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc\(1\)](#) – 'Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029',
- (iii) [IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc\(2\)](#) – 'Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025',

#### **I**

#### **Report on budget execution 2018–2019 and outline of the 2020–2021 budget**

2. Confirms that the IOC budget for 2018-2019, as reported on in Part I of IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(2), has been executed in accordance with the approved Programme and Budget for 2018–2019 (39 C/5, US\$518 M Expenditure Plan) and the budgetary allocations approved by the IOC Assembly at its 29th session (IOC-XXIX/2 Annex 5 Rev.2) through

Resolution XXIX-2;

3. Notes that the extrabudgetary resource mobilisation targets set for the 2018–2019 biennium have been achieved to the level of 73% overall, but with considerable variances between the Commission’s Functions;
4. Thanks Member States who have contributed extrabudgetary funds for the 2018–2019 programme implementation and committed to contributing in 2020–2021;
5. Expresses its satisfaction that the Approved Integrated Budgetary Framework for 2020–2021 presented in Part II of IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(2) is consistent with the budgetary allocations approved by the IOC Assembly at its 30th session (IOC-XXX/2 Annex 9) through Resolution XXX-3, following the adoption by the 40th session of the General Conference of UNESCO of the budget scenario for 2020–2021 (40 C/5), based on the appropriated regular programme budget of US\$534.6 M (US\$11,075,500 for the IOC);
6. Acknowledges the information on the financial situation of the Commission provided in Part II of IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(2), including the 2020–2021 expenditure forecast for the IOC Special Account, as well as the information on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on 2020 programme implementation, as provided by the IOC Executive Secretary in the update to his report;
7. Encourages all Member States to provide voluntary contributions to ensure full achievement of the collectively agreed extrabudgetary resource mobilization targets for 2020–2021, preferably to the IOC Special Account;
8. Requests the IOC Executive Secretary to continue efforts to obtain further voluntary contributions, including from private sector donors and other partners and to achieve full implementation of the Commission’s programmatic targets for 2020–2021;

## II

### Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029

9. Welcomes the revisions and improvements introduced by the Secretariat in the Commission’s Draft Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for 2022–2029 in response to the recommendations of the IOC Assembly at its 30th session through Resolution XXX-3, as contained in document IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(1);
10. Expresses its appreciation that the document could benefit from inputs of the IOC Officers at their annual meeting, 13–14 January 2020, and from intersessional consultations through IFAG;
11. Recalls that the final version of the MTS for 2022–2029 will be further reviewed and adopted by the IOC Assembly at its 31st session in 2021;

[optional

Recommends that the following comments be considered in developing a revised version of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 for review by the IFAG in the intersessional period leading to the 31st session of the IOC Assembly:

- (i) xxx;
- (ii) yyy; ]

12. Requests the IOC Executive Secretary to prepare a further revised version of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 taking into account Member States’ views and

concerns expressed at this session, for review by IFAG in the intersessional period and the Officers at their annual meeting in 2021, prior to submitting it for consideration and adoption by the Assembly at its 31<sup>st</sup> session in 2021;

### III

#### Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025

13. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretariat for the useful and pertinent analysis of programme outcomes presented in the IOC Strategic Results Report, as contained in Part I of document [IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc\(2\)](#), allowing Member States to review and reassess the Commission's programmatic objectives, including possible reorientation, reinforcement or termination of programmes;
14. Endorses the approach to the preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 proposed in document [IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc\(2\)](#) as consistent with the priorities set in Resolution XXVIII-3 of the IOC Assembly and the high level objectives defined in the Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029;
15. Adopts the following wording of the IOC Expected Result for 2022–2025: 'Member States generate knowledge, establish and implement science-informed policies and develop capacity for sustainable management of ocean-related opportunities and risks and for keeping the ocean ecosystems healthy';
16. Highlights the importance of ensuring that the Commission has the adequate strategy and the necessary resources, both in terms of regular programme budget and voluntary contributions, to fulfil its role in the implementation of the Decade;
17. Requests the IOC Executive Secretary to:
  - (i) prepare a fully developed Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (Draft 41 C/5), including a comprehensive implementation strategy through a conceptual framework of functions, performance indicators and benchmarks, to be submitted to the IOC Assembly at its 31<sup>st</sup> session, based on discussions and decisions of this session of the Executive Council and in close consultation with the Officers of the Commission;
  - (ii) provide the IOC Assembly at its 31<sup>st</sup> session with an estimate of the necessary budget to effectively operate the IOC at an optimum level, to help identify how and what additional resources might be secured;
  - (iii) keep the IOC Officers and Member States updated on the 41 C/5 adoption process by UNESCO;
  - (iv) support the work of the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (IFAG) by providing timely information on the UNESCO programming and budgetary planning process;
18. Invites the Director-General of UNESCO to:
  - (i) continue every effort to enhance the resources available to the IOC in the 41 C/5, to enable the Commission to fulfil its increasing mandate and to address current and emerging priorities, including those related to the implementation of the SDGs and the Decade;
  - (ii) ensure that the budgetary appropriation for the IOC approved in the 41 C/5 shall not be decreased by transfers of funds to other parts of UNESCO's budget;
19. Urges IOC Member States to:
  - (i) continue to advocate to the Director-General of UNESCO and the Governing Bodies

of UNESCO on the importance of the IOC as a body with functional autonomy within UNESCO, focusing in particular on the value that the IOC provides to the Organization and to sustainable development;

- (ii) support the reinforcement of the IOC in the consultation process for the UNESCO Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (Draft 41 C/5);
- (iii) increase their voluntary contributions to support the Commission in the face of its increasing responsibilities, preferably to the IOC Special Account;

#### IV

#### Governance and Working Methods

20. Recalls that the IOC Assembly at its 30th session through Resolution XXX-3 invited the IFAG ‘to continue reflecting on the best practices to further enhance the efficiency of the IOC Governing Bodies’ meetings’;
21. Acknowledges that the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the need to review and possibly update the Commission’s Rules and Procedure in order to align them with the prevailing United Nations’ best practices in order to facilitate informed and timely decision-making by Member States;
22. Invites the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group to initiate the reflection on this matter, in close consultation with the Officers of the Commission and the UNESCO Legal Advisor, with a view of presenting a set of preliminary proposals for consideration by the IOC Assembly at its 31st session in 2021.

53. The representatives of \_\_\_ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: \_\_\_\_\_.

#### 6. NEXT SESSIONS OF THE IOC GOVERNING BODIES

[Statutes Art. 7.C.8; Rule of Procedure 8.3 & 21.2(c); Rule of Procedure 19.2]

54. Dr Ryabinin reminded the Council of the decisions of the Assembly at its 30th session ([Decision IOC-XXX/12.7](#)) on the dates and duration of its next session in 2021. There was consensus among Member States of the Council on the recommendation to keep the duration of 3.5 days of the next regular session of the Executive Council (55th session) in 2022.

#### Dec. EC-53/6

#### Next Sessions of the IOC Governing Bodies

The Executive Council,

1. Recalling [Decision IOC-XXX/12.7](#) of the Assembly to hold its 31st session for a duration of 6.5 plus one Ocean Science Day, at UNESCO Headquarters, over the period from 14 to 25 June 2021, preceded by a one-day session of the Executive Council (54th session) acting as the steering committee of the Assembly,
2. Having considered potential conflicting dates with important meetings to take place in June 2021 and 2022, in particular *[to be completed]*,

3. Taking into consideration the uncertainty the Covid-19 pandemic may still pose on the holding of the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the Assembly in June 2021, particularly in presentia,
4. Requests the IOC Executive Secretary to consult Member States on the perspective to hold the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the Assembly according to schedule in Paris three months in advance of the session,
5. Decides to hold the 55th session of the Executive Council for a duration of 3.5 days in June 2022.

55. The representatives of \_\_ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: \_\_\_\_\_.

## 7. **ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND MODALITIES FOR THE FINALISATION OF THE REPORT**

56. The Chairperson thanked the Rapporteur Mr/Ms \_\_\_\_\_ from [country] for his/her excellent work in support of the work of the session.

57. The Chair of the Resolutions Committee reported to the Council on the work of the Committee during the session (Annex \_\_ to the present report).

58. The IOC Chair then invited the Executive Council to adopt, in plenary, the draft decisions that were still pending after discussion in plenary and \_\_ resolutions. Parts of the draft summary report of the discussions at the present session were presented to the Council in English only for information.

### Dec. EC-53/7

#### **Adoption of Resolutions and modalities for the finalisation of the report**

The Executive Council,

1. Recalling the recommendations of the Executive Council at its 52nd session (EC-LII, Dec.3.3) on organization matters,
2. Adopts the decisions and \_\_\_ resolutions of the session;
3. Takes note of the draft summary report of the session and the compilation of the decisions adopted during the session (IOC/EC-53/Decisions Prov.);
4. Requests the Executive Secretary to circulate the narrative part of the report to Member States in the four working languages of the Commission by 1st March 2021 at the latest for its adoption by correspondence by 15 April 2021.

59. The representatives of \_\_ Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: \_\_\_\_\_.

**8. CLOSURE**

60. The Chair of the Commission closed the 53rd session of the Executive Council at \_\_\_\_\_ Paris time on 9 February 2021.



**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION**  
(of UNESCO)

**Fifty-third Session of the Executive Council**  
UNESCO, Paris, 3–9 February 2021

**LIVE**  
virtual meeting

**SECOND REVISED PROVISIONAL ACTION PAPER**  
**(ADDENDUM AND CORRIGENDUM)**

1. Note that the Second Revised Provisional Action Paper ([IOC/EC-53/AP Rev.2](#)) published on 27 November 2020 has been completed and corrected as follows:

2.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF SESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2. With regards Dec. EC-53/2(III), the IOC Chairperson will propose IOC Vice-chair Monika Breuch-Moritz to chair the Resolutions Committee.

**4 PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENTS**

4.1 REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECADE ROADMAP  
AND DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE  
OF OCEAN SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Draft Resolution EC-53/[4.1]

Submitted by Germany and Norway

**Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable  
Development (2021–2030)**

The Executive Council,

1. **Recalling** Assembly [Resolution XXIX-1](#) proposing the establishment of an International (UN) Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and Assembly Resolution XXX-1 on Progress Report on the Preparation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development,
2. **Noting** the proclamation by the UNGA at its 72nd session of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), through Resolution [A/RES/72/73](#) (therein the Decade), and the invitation to the IOC to prepare an implementation plan for the Decade in consultation with Member States, specialized

agencies, funds, programmes, and bodies of the United Nations, as well as other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and relevant stakeholders,

3. **Further recalling** the invitation made to the IOC by the UN General Assembly through Resolution [A/RES/74/19](#) to:
  - (i) continue to provide information on the development of the implementation plan and present it to the General Assembly at its 75<sup>th</sup> session,
  - (ii) regularly consult with, and report to, Member States on the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and its implementation,
4. **Noting with satisfaction** that the Draft Implementation Plan (version 2.0) prepared by the Secretariat with the support of the Executive Planning Group was extensively reviewed by IOC Member States, ocean stakeholders and members of UN-Oceans, prior to its submission for consideration by the 75<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly,
5. **Further noting** that the UN General Assembly through Resolution [A/RES/75/239](#) welcomed the steps taken by IOC in the preparation of the Implementation Plan and took note with satisfaction of that Plan (para 304),
6. **Welcomes** the progress achieved during the intersessional period, and in particular, the outcomes of the global consultation meetings, regional workshops, as well as engagement activities with UN and non-UN ocean stakeholders, as well as the launch of the 1<sup>st</sup> Call for Action under the Decade;
7. **Expresses** confidence in the IOC Secretariat's ability to continue coordinating the Decade during its implementation phase (2021–2030) in consultation with Member States, specialized agencies, funds, programmes, and bodies of the United Nations, as well as other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and relevant stakeholders;
8. **Takes note** of the Implementation Plan as the basis for launching the Decade and establishing the governance arrangements and engagement mechanisms described therein;
9. **Thanks** the members of the Decade Executive Planning Group (EPG) for their work in support of the preparation of the Implementation Plan in accordance with the terms of reference of the group ([IOC/EC-LI/2 Annex 4](#), Appendix 1);
10. **Requests** the Executive Planning Group to serve as Interim Decade Advisory Board on the basis of the Revised Terms of Reference presented in Document IOC/EC-53/4.1Doc(3) [or as presented in Annex...., if amendments], until the establishment of the Decade Advisory Board;
11. **Further requests** the IOC Executive Secretary:
  - (i) to disseminate widely to UN and non-UN stakeholders the finalized Decade Implementation Plan and its summary;
  - (ii) to present to the 31<sup>st</sup> IOC Assembly for its consideration the draft Terms of Reference of the Decade Advisory Board;
  - (iii) to pursue the establishment of Decade arrangements as described in the Implementation Plan, in particular the Decade Coordination Unit within the IOC Secretariat,



- (iv) to report back on the progress of operationalising the Implementation Plan and the endorsement of Decade Actions to 31<sup>st</sup> IOC Assembly and thereafter to subsequent IOC Governing Bodies meetings;
12. **Invites** institutional partners to act as Decade Collaborative Centres or Decade Implementing Partners on the basis of the draft guidance provided in Document IOC/EC-53/3.1.Inf(2) and **requests** the Secretariat to report to IOC Governing Bodies on the establishment of such arrangements;
13. **Invites** UN-Oceans partners, UN Member States, international scientific and academic organizations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders to support the Decade, contribute to its implementation by proposing Decade Actions in accordance with the Implementation Plan;
14. **Invites** Member States and partners to:
- (i) provide voluntary financial contributions to support the work of the IOC Secretariat in coordinating the Decade including in-kind support such as staff loans to the Secretariat;
  - (ii) offer to host and fund Decade actions and Decade Collaborative Centres as described in the Implementation Plan,
  - (iii) establish national multi-stakeholder Decade coordination mechanisms with a view to stimulating national activities and international cooperation;
15. **Thanks** the Governments of Canada, the Republic of Korea, Japan, the Kingdom of Belgium (Government of Flanders), Norway, Sweden, Portugal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland, as well as REV-Ocean for their financial contribution to the Decade;
16. **Further thanks** the Governments of Brazil, Canada, Denmark, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Norway and Mexico as well as the Secretariats of the UN Environment Programme (Nairobi Convention, Mediterranean Action Plan, Caribbean Environment Programme), the European Commission, the Ocean Frontier Institute (Canada), the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES), the National Institute of Ocean Technology (India), the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS), the Mediterranean Science Commission (CIESM), the Danish Centre for Marine Research, the Autonomous National University of Mexico (UNAM), the Research Council of Norway, Arctic Frontiers, the Pacific Community (SPC), the UN Global Compact, the Western Indian Ocean Science Association (WIOMSA), Velux Foundations, and the Carlsberg Foundation for their contribution to the organization of regional and global workshops during the preparatory phase of the Decade, as well as Egypt, for offering to host the African kick-off conference of the Decade in 2021 and Germany for offering to host the global kick-off events in 2021 and 2022.

## 5. GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING

### 5.2 REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE

3. Paragraph 45 of document [IOC/EC-53/AP Rev.2](#) and Draft Resolution EC-53/[5.2] should read as follows with corrections highlighted in red:

45. The Executive Secretary further explained that the Secretariat's proposed approach to the preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 is substantiated in two parts of the Document IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(2) **and Corr.** The first part contains the IOC Strategic Results

Report (SRR) 2020 designed to provide both UNESCO and IOC Member States with an analysis of the programme outcomes over the period from 2016 to 2019. The report highlights to UNESCO Member States the importance of IOC achievements and provides to IOC Member States a basis to review and reassess the programmatic objectives, including possible reorientation, reinforcement or downscaling/termination (*'lessons learned and emerging trends'*). The **corrected** second part of the discussed document contains the proposal for one IOC **Output Expected Result** in the UNESCO Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (41 C/5), in accordance with Assembly [Resolution XXVIII-3](#), as well as the proposed guiding principles to be followed by the Secretariat in elaborating further proposals in the course of the UNESCO Programme and Budget (41 C/5) preparation process.

### Draft Resolution EC-53/[5.2]

*Currently under review by the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group*

## **GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING MATTERS OF THE COMMISSION**

The Executive Council,

### 1. **Having examined** documents:

- (i) [IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc\(2\)](#) – 'Report on budget execution 2018–2019 and outline of 2020–2021 budget',
- (ii) [IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc\(1\)](#) – 'Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029',
- (iii) [IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc\(2\)](#) **and Corr.** – 'Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025',

### I. **Report on budget execution 2018–2019 and outline of the 2020–2021 budget**

2. **Confirms** that the IOC budget for 2018-2019, as reported on in Part I of IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(2), has been executed in accordance with the approved Programme and Budget for 2018–2019 (39 C/5, US\$518 M Expenditure Plan) and the budgetary allocations approved by the IOC Assembly at its 29th session (IOC-XXIX/2 Annex 5 Rev.2) through Resolution XXIX-2;
3. **Notes** that the extrabudgetary resource mobilisation targets set for the 2018–2019 biennium have been achieved to the level of 73% overall, but with considerable variances between the Commission's Functions;
4. **Thanks** Member States who have contributed extrabudgetary funds for the 2018–2019 programme implementation and committed to contributing in 2020–2021;
5. **Expresses its satisfaction** that the Approved Integrated Budgetary Framework for 2020–2021 presented in Part II of IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(2) is consistent with the budgetary allocations approved by the IOC Assembly at its 30th session (IOC-XXX/2 Annex 9) through Resolution XXX-3, following the adoption by the 40th session of the General Conference of UNESCO of the budget scenario for 2020–2021 (40 C/5), based on the appropriated regular programme budget of US\$534.6 M (US\$11,075,500 for the IOC);
6. **Acknowledges** the information on the financial situation of the Commission provided in Part II of IOC/EC-53/3.1.Doc(2), including the 2020–2021 expenditure forecast for the IOC Special Account, as well as the information on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on 2020 programme implementation, as provided by the IOC Executive Secretary in the update to his report;
7. **Encourages** all Member States to provide voluntary contributions to ensure full

achievement of the collectively agreed extrabudgetary resource mobilization targets for 2020–2021, preferably to the IOC Special Account;

8. **Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to continue efforts to obtain further voluntary contributions, including from private sector donors and other partners and to achieve full implementation of the Commission’s programmatic targets for 2020–2021;

## II. Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029

9. **Welcomes** the revisions and improvements introduced by the Secretariat in the Commission’s Draft Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for 2022–2029 in response to the recommendations of the IOC Assembly at its 30th session through Resolution XXX-3, as contained in document IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc(1);
10. **Expresses its appreciation** that the document could benefit from inputs of the IOC Officers at their annual meeting, 13–14 January 2020, and from intersessional consultations through IFAG;
11. **Recalls** that the final version of the MTS for 2022–2029 will be further reviewed and adopted by the IOC Assembly at its 31st session in 2021;

[optional

Recommends that the following comments be considered in developing a revised version of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 for review by the IFAG in the intersessional period leading to the 31st session of the IOC Assembly:

- (i) xxx;
- (ii) yyy; ]

12. **Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to prepare a further revised version of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 taking into account Member States’ views and concerns expressed at this session, for review by IFAG in the intersessional period and the Officers at their annual meeting in 2021, prior to submitting it for consideration and adoption by the Assembly at its 31<sup>st</sup> session in 2021;

## III. Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025

13. **Expresses its appreciation** to the Secretariat for the useful and pertinent analysis of programme outcomes presented in the IOC Strategic Results Report, as contained in Part I of document [IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc\(2\)](#) and **Corr.**, allowing Member States to review and reassess the Commission’s programmatic objectives, including possible reorientation, reinforcement or termination of programmes;
14. **Endorses** the approach to the preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 proposed in document [IOC/EC-53/5.1.Doc\(2\)](#) and **Corr.** as consistent with the priorities set in Resolution XXVIII-3 of the IOC Assembly and the high level objectives defined in the Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029;
15. **Adopts** the following wording of the IOC **Output** ~~Expected Result~~ for 2022–2025: ‘Member States **supported in** generating knowledge, **establishing** and **implementing** science-informed policies and **strengthening** ~~develop~~ capacity for sustainable management of ocean-related opportunities and risks and for keeping the ocean ecosystems healthy’;
16. **Highlights** the importance of ensuring that the Commission has the adequate strategy and the necessary resources, both in terms of regular programme budget and voluntary contributions, to fulfil its role in the implementation of the Decade;

17. **Requests** the IOC Executive Secretary to:

- (i) prepare a fully developed Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (Draft 41 C/5), including a comprehensive implementation strategy through a conceptual framework of functions, performance indicators and benchmarks, to be submitted to the IOC Assembly at its 31st session, based on discussions and decisions of this session of the Executive Council and in close consultation with the Officers of the Commission;
- (ii) provide the IOC Assembly at its 31st session with an estimate of the necessary budget to effectively operate the IOC at an optimum level, to help identify how and what additional resources might be secured;
- (iii) keep the IOC Officers and Member States updated on the 41 C/5 adoption process by UNESCO;
- (iv) support the work of the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group (IFAG) by providing timely information on the UNESCO programming and budgetary planning process;

18. **Invites** the Director-General of UNESCO to:

- (i) continue every effort to enhance the resources available to the IOC in the 41 C/5, to enable the Commission to fulfil its increasing mandate and to address current and emerging priorities, including those related to the implementation of the SDGs and the Decade;
- (ii) ensure that the budgetary appropriation for the IOC approved in the 41 C/5 shall not be decreased by transfers of funds to other parts of UNESCO's budget;

19. **Urges** IOC Member States to:

- (i) continue to advocate to the Director-General of UNESCO and the Governing Bodies of UNESCO on the importance of the IOC as a body with functional autonomy within UNESCO, focusing in particular on the value that the IOC provides to the Organization and to sustainable development;
- (ii) support the reinforcement of the IOC in the consultation process for the UNESCO Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022–2029 and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022–2025 (Draft 41 C/5);
- (iii) increase their voluntary contributions to support the Commission in the face of its increasing responsibilities, preferably to the IOC Special Account;

#### **IV. Governance and Working Methods**

20. **Recalls** that the IOC Assembly at its 30th session through Resolution XXX-3 invited the IFAG 'to continue reflecting on the best practices to further enhance the efficiency of the IOC Governing Bodies' meetings';

21. **Acknowledges** that the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the need to review and possibly update the Commission's Rules and Procedure in order to align them with the prevailing United Nations' best practices in order to facilitate informed and timely decision-making by Member States;

22. **Invites** the Intersessional Financial Advisory Group to initiate the reflection on this matter, in close consultation with the Officers of the Commission and the UNESCO Legal Advisor, with a view of presenting a set of preliminary proposals for consideration by the IOC Assembly at its 31st session in 2021.