



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
COMMISSION OCÉANOGRAPHIQUE INTERGOUVERNEMENTALE
COMISIÓN OCEANOGRÁFICA INTERGUBERNAMENTAL
МЕЖПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВЕННАЯ ОКЕАНОГРАФИЧЕСКАЯ КОМИССИЯ
اللجنة الدولية الحكومية لعلوم المحيطات
政府间海洋学委员会

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IOC Circular Letter No 3033
(Available in English and French)

IOC/VH/IA/JB
25 March 2025

To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with the IOC (IOC member States of IOCAFRICA)

C.c. : Other IOC Member States
Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO and
National Commissions for UNESCO in Member States of IOCAFRICA
Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of IOC and Major IOC Subsidiary Bodies (Scientific, Technical and Regional)
Partner organizations in the region

Subject: Eighth Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States (IOCAFRICA-VIII), 7–9 May 2025, Mombasa, Kenya

On behalf of Prof. Kouadio Affian, Chairperson of IOCAFRICA, I am pleased to invite the Member States of the Sub-Commission and any other interested IOC Member States and partner organizations to the Eighth Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, scheduled for 7 to 9 May 2025 in Mombasa, Kenya. Further information and session documentation are available at <https://oceanexpert.org/event/4677>. The provisional agenda and timetable are attached.

The IOCAFRICA-VIII Session will be preceded on 5 and 6 May 2025 by the 'Scientific Conference on Advancing the Blue Economy in Africa', which will focus on bridging the gap between science, policy, and practice in Africa's blue economy. This conference will bring together scientists, policymakers, industry representatives, and civil society to exchange insights, present innovative approaches and create partnerships that support the sustainable blue economy development in Africa.

The Scientific Conference will enable IOCAFRICA members and guests to discuss new challenges and opportunities, present cutting-edge research, promote technological innovations and develop evidence-based policy recommendations. A call for abstracts will be circulated shortly. For any questions regarding the submission of abstracts or the proposal of items for the conference agenda, please contact the Head of the IOCAFRICA Office at i.adewumi@unesco.org. The conference details will appear at <https://oceanexpert.org/event/4719>.

Chairperson

Yutaka MICHIDA, Prof.
Special Presidential Envoy
for UN Ocean Decade
The University of Tokyo (Atmosphere
and Ocean Research Institute)
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Qaitbay, Al-Anfoshi
Alexandria
EGYPT

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Mr Vidar HELGESEN
Intergovernmental Oceanographic
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7 Place de Fontenoy
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Bringing together representatives of IOC Member States and regional and international organizations concerned with marine science and coastal management in Africa, IOCAFRICA encourages collaborative efforts to understand and manage Africa's oceanic and coastal ecosystems, promoting sustainable development and the safety of coastal populations. During this session, Member States will review the status of the current IOCAFRICA-VII workplan 2023–2025 (Recommendation [IOCAFRICA-VII.4](#)), consider strategic and programmatic priorities in oceanography, blue economy and management, and will address governance, budgeting, and the formation of working groups responsible for improving ocean data, information management and capacity development. The Sub-Commission will examine intersessional reports, adopt decisions for future actions, and plan activities within the framework of the UNESCO-IOC Programme and Budget framework for 2025–2027. Member States are encouraged to propose firm national commitments to IOCAFRICA's programmes in the region, guaranteeing adequate resources for their effective implementation.

IOC focal points are kindly requested to provide the composition of their national delegations (for both the session and the conference) no later than 5 April 2025, including full names, official email addresses, designations in the delegation (Head of Delegation, Representative), and, if possible, OceanExpert identifiers (e.g. <https://oceanexpert.org/expert/6552>). Members of delegations who are also linked to an International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) structure, Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Focal Points, or members of the IOC Working Group on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management or any other IOC group should also be indicated in the composition of the delegation. Please submit this information to Mr Ibukun Adewumi, Head of the Sub-Commission Office (i.adewumi@unesco.org). Please note that costs related to attendance at IOCAFRICA-VIII are borne by national delegations, though limited funding may be available for participation in the preceding scientific conference.

Elections for the IOCAFRICA Officers (one Chairperson and three Vice-Chairpersons, for a two-year term) will take place during the session. The current Officers, elected in 2023, have served two intersessional period and are not eligible to re-election. The relevant information, including nomination forms, lists of geographical groups and the list of current IOCAFRICA Officers, is attached. Candidatures, accompanied by a CV, must reach the IOCAFRICA Secretariat no later than 7 May 2025 (close of business). In this regard, we encourage consultation within geographical groups to promote gender balance and allow for election by acclamation, as much as possible.

We further invite IOCAFRICA Member States to:

- Check the contact detail of the IOC national IOC focal points and coordinating bodies for liaison with IOC at <https://oceanexpert.org/doclist/78> and use the form attached to IOC Circular Letter [2634](#) to communicate any updates.
- Provide information on national ocean programmes and plans, including at least one key issue that IOCAFRICA should prioritize. The Secretariat will consolidate these inputs into the IOCAFRICA workplan for 2025–2027, aligning them with national priorities. Please submit your information to Mr Ibukun Adewumi (i.adewumi@unesco.org) no later than 5 April 2025, so it can be collated and distributed before the session. In order to facilitate the submission of your national ocean programmes and plans, a report template is attached below. Member States are encouraged to adapt this concise, optional template as needed.

The Provisional Agenda (document IOCAFRICA-VIII/2.1 Prov.1) is attached. Additional details and documentation will be posted at <https://oceanexpert.org/event/4677> as soon as they become available. The working languages of the session will be English and French. The draft report will be prepared in English only during the session for adoption by the Sub-Commission. IOCAFRICA Officers will present the outcomes of IOCAFRICA-VIII to the IOC Assembly at its 33rd session at UNESCO-IOC Headquarters, Paris (25 June–3 July 2025).

For logistical information—such as visa requirements, accommodation, and local transportation—please refer to the event website or any additional guidance that the Secretariat may provide.

We look forward to your active participation and thank you for your continued cooperation.

With the assurances of my highest consideration, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

[signature]

Vidar Helgesen
Executive Secretary

Enclosures (6): IOCAFRICA-VIII Provisional Agenda
IOCAFRICA-VIII Provisional Timetable
Procedure for Elections
List of Current IOCAFRICA Officers
Nomination Form – Chairperson
Nomination Form – Vice Chairs
National Ocean programmes and plans (template report)

Restricted Distribution

IOCAFRICA-VIII/2.1 Prov.1

Nairobi, 4 March 2025

Original: English



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INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION (of UNESCO)

**Eighth Session of the IOC Sub Commission for Africa and
Adjacent Island States**
Mombasa, Kenya, 7–9 May 2025

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. OPENING

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

- 2.1 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
- 2.2 DESIGNATION OF THE RAPPORTEUR
- 2.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF SESSIONAL WORKING GROUPS
- 2.4 INTRODUCTION TO TIMETABLE AND DOCUMENTATION

3. INTERSESSIONAL REPORTS

- 3.1 STATEMENT OF THE IOCAFRICA CHAIRPERSON
- 3.2 REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL SECRETARY ON THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED SINCE THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE SUB-COMMISSION
- 3.3 RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN UNESCO AND IOC AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO IOCAFRICA
 - 3.3.1. Report of the Executive Secretary on the Implementation of 42 C/5 Programme of Work (2022–2024)
 - 3.3.2. IOC and the Future of the Ocean: Consultation Process
 - 3.3.3. IOC-wide Strategy on Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management
 - 3.3.4 Reports on IOC Programmes and Initiatives
 - 3.3.4.1 *International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange Programme (IODE)*
 - 3.3.4.2 *IOC-FAO Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms (IPHAB)*
 - 3.3.4.3 *IOC Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme*
 - 3.3.4.4 *IOC Ocean Literacy Programme*

3.3.2.5 Marine Spatial Planning Global Initiative (MSPGlobal)

3.4 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

- 3.4.1 Overview of National Ocean Programmes and Plans
- 3.4.2 Partners Report on Ocean Science, Management and Blue Economy
- 3.4.3 Scientific Conference on Advancing the Blue Economy in Africa Report

4. PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENTS

- 4.1 IOCAFRICA STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2030
- 4.2 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE OCEAN DATA AND INFORMATION NETWORK FOR AFRICA 2022–2030
- 4.3 REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN DECADE OF OCEAN SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP FOR AFRICA (2021–2030)
- 4.4 REPORT ON GLOBAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM (GOOS-AFRICA)
- 4.5 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IOCAFRICA OCEAN DATA AND INFORMATION WORKING GROUP
- 4.6 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IOCAFRICA OCEAN-CLIMATE WORKING GROUP
- 4.7 REVITALISATION OF THE IOCAFRICA GROUP OF EXPERTS ON HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS
- 4.8 PROPOSAL FOR OCEAN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOR AFRICA PROGRAMME
- 4.9 PROPOSAL FOR HOSTING THE GLOBAL OCEAN ACCOUNTS AFRICAN COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
- 4.10 FOSTERING THE DEVELOPMENT OF OCEAN SCIENCE PLANS AND STRATEGIES IN MEMBER STATES
- 4.11 DEVELOPING A ROLLING PLAN FOR OCEAN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

5. GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING

- 5.1 DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2026–2027 (Draft 43 C/5, first biennium 2026–2027)
- 5.2 DEVELOPMENT OF IOCAFRICA WORK PLAN FOR 2026–2027 REPORT OF SESSIONAL WORKING GROUPS
 - 5.2.1 Ocean Observations and Monitoring
 - 5.2.2 Ocean Sciences, Biodiversity and Assessments
 - 5.2.3 Ocean Data and Information Management
 - 5.2.4 Capacity Development, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization
- 5.3 ELECTIONS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE SUB COMMISSION
 - 5.3.1 Elections of the Chairperson of the Sub-Commission
 - 5.3.2 Elections of the Vice-Chairpersons of the Sub-Commission

5.4 DATES AND PLACE OF THE 9th SESSION OF THE SUB COMMISSION

5.5 OTHER BUSINESS

5.6 ADOPTION OF THE IOCAFRICA WORKPLAN AND BUDGET FOR 2026–2027

**6. ADOPTION OF THE DECISIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS AND MODALITIES
FOR THE FINALISATION OF THE SUMMARY REPORT**

7. CLOSURE

Limited distribution

IOCAFRIKA-VIII/2.1 Add.Prov.
Nairobi, 4 March 2025
Original: English



**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)
First IOCAFRIKA Ocean Science Conference
(IOCAFRIKA-OSC-1, 5–6 May 2025)
and
Eighth Session of the IOC Sub Commission for Africa and
Adjacent Island States (IOCAFRIKA-VIII,7–9 May 2025)
Mombasa, Kenya**

Provisional Timetable

	Monday 05 May	Tuesday 06 May	Wednesday 07 May	Thursday 08 May	Friday 09 May
08:30-0930	Registration		Registration	GOOS-AFRICA SC MEETING	GOOS-AFRICA SC MEETING
09:30-11:00 (90 min)	Scientific Conference	Scientific Conference	1. OPENING 2. ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS 3. REPORT ON THE PAST INTER-SESSIONAL PERIOD	4. IOCAFRIKA PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENTS	5. GOVERNANCE, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGETING
11:00-11:30	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK and meeting with PermDels	BREAK	BREAK
11:30-13:00 (90 min)	Scientific Conference	Scientific Conference	3. (CONTINUED)	4. (CONTINUED)	5. (CONTINUED)
13:00-14:30	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH (Sessional working groups)	LUNCH (IOC and the future of the ocean: consultation process)	LUNCH
14:30-16:00 (90 min)	Scientific Conference	Scientific Conference	3. (CONTINUED)	4. (CONTINUED)	5. (CONTINUED) 6. ADOPTION OF THE DECISIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS AND MODALITIES FOR THE FINALISATION OF SUMMARY REPORT 7. CLOSURE
16:00-16:30	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	
16:30-18:00 (90 min)	Scientific Conference	Scientific Conference: Conclusions	3. (CONTINUED)	4. (CONTINUED)	
		RECEPTION			

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
(of UNESCO)

ELECTIONS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE IOC SUB-COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
AND THE ADJACENT ISLAND STATES

Nominations

Nominations of individuals to either the post of Chairperson or the posts of Vice-chairpersons shall be submitted by Member States through the officially designated national coordinating body specified for liaison with the Commission (Rule 9.2), namely through the IOC Focal Point in the Member State or the Permanent Delegations to UNESCO.

Nominations shall be submitted in writing using **Form A** (Chairperson) or **Form B** (Vice-chairperson) and **must reach the Nominations Committee not later than 17:30 on 7 May 2025.**

Each nomination shall contain a declaration from the candidate that he/she is prepared to stand for the post for which has been nominated and is willing to take on the obligations that would devolve upon him/her, should he/she be elected.

Each candidate for chairperson must be seconded by two Member States of the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, from different electoral groups than that of the nominating Member State. In the case of nominations for Vice-Chairperson, the two seconders should be of the same Electoral Group as that of the nominee's Member State.

Elections

Should voting be necessary, decisions shall be made by a simple majority of the valid votes cast ([Technical arrangements](#) 20(iv)), by secret ballot.

GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C
Angola	Comoros	Algeria
Benin* (Vice Chair)	Djibouti	Cabo Verde
Cameroon	Eritrea	Egypt* (Vice Chair)
Congo	Ethiopia	Gambia
Côte d'Ivoire** (Chair)	Kenya	Guinea-Bissau
DR Congo	Mauritius	Libya
Gabon	Madagascar	Mauritania
Ghana	Mozambique* (Vice Chair)	Morocco
Guinea	Seychelles	Senegal
Namibia	South Africa	Tunisia
Nigeria	Tanzania	
Togo	Somalia	
Sierra Leone	Sudan	

LIST CURRENT IOCAFRICA OFFICERS

Prof. Kouadio AFFIAN (*Elected 2021 and 2023, ineligible for re-election*)
IOCAFRICA Chair
Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny
Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Dr Ir. Zacharie SOHOU (*Elected 2021 and 2023, ineligible for re-election*)
IOCAFRICA Vice-Chair Group A
l'Institut de Recherches Halieutiques et Océanologiques du Bénin (IRHOB)
Cotonou – Benin

Ms Cândida Sete (*Elected 2021 and 2023, ineligible for re-election*)
IOCAFRICA Vice-Chair Group B
Mozambique Oceanographic Institute
Maputo – Mozambique

Dr Suzan M. El-Gharabawy (*Elected 2021 and 2023, ineligible for re-election*)
IOCAFRICA Vice-Chair Group C
National Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries
Alexandria – Egypt

IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States

Elections

Form A – Chairperson

Name of Member State:

Name of Nominee:

I declare that I am prepared to stand for election to the post of Chairperson of the IOC Sub Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States and, if elected, to take an active part in the work of the Sub Commission.

Signature of the Nominee:

Secunder 1

Secunder 2

Member State of the IOCAFRICA

Name in capitals

Position

Signature

Date sent to the IOC Secretariat Date and time received by the IOC Secretariat

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IOC Sub Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States

Elections

Form B – Vice-chairperson

Name of Member State:

Name of Nominee:

Electoral Group:

I declare that I am prepared to stand for election to the post of Vice-chairperson of the IOC Sub Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States and, if elected, to take an active part in the work of the Sub Commission.

Signature of the Nominee:

Seconder 1¹

Seconder 2*

Member State of the IOCAFRICA

Name in capitals

Position

Signature

Date sent to the IOC Secretariat Date and time received by the IOC Secretariat

..... ..

¹ should be of the same regional group as that of the nominee's Member State.

National Ocean programmes and plans (template report)

Cover Page

**Title: National Ocean Programmes and Plans for
IOCAFRICA (2025–2027)**

Date: [Date of Submission]

Symbol/Code: [If applicable]

1. Introduction

1.1 Context and objectives

- Provide a brief overview of the country's overarching ocean policies or strategies that frame the reported activities.
- State the objectives of this report (e.g., to share updates and align future plans with IOCAFRICA priorities).

2. Activities and initiatives (2023–2025)

2.1 Overview of key programmes

- List and describe major ocean-related programmes, projects, or initiatives undertaken between 2023 and 2025.
- Include any partnerships, funding sources, and relevant stakeholders (e.g., government agencies, universities, NGOs).

2.2 Achievements and lessons learned

- Highlight notable outcomes, milestones reached, or successes achieved.
- Summarize major challenges encountered and lessons learned for improvement.

3. Planned activities and initiatives (2025–2027)

3.1 Upcoming programmes

- Outline the main initiatives or projects planned for 2025–2027, focusing on areas such as marine research, conservation, pollution control, capacity building, or technology transfer.

3.2 Expected outcomes

- Specify the anticipated benefits or impacts of the planned initiatives on national and regional ocean governance.
- Indicate any implementation timelines or benchmarks, if available.

4. Key issue(s) for IOCAFRICA to prioritize

4.1 National priority issue(s)

- Identify **at least one** critical challenge (e.g., marine pollution, climate change impacts, overfishing, data sharing) that IOCAFRICA should consider in its 2025–2027 workplan.
- Briefly explain the significance of this issue for your country and the region.

4.2 Proposed solutions or actions

- Suggest possible actions, partnerships, or policy measures that could address the identified issue(s).
- Specify how IOCAFRICA and other stakeholders could facilitate or support these interventions.

5. Recommendations and alignment with IOCAFRICA

5.1 Alignment with national priorities

- Link your country's planned activities to broader national development goals or policies.
- Emphasize any areas where IOCAFRICA support or coordination would add the most value.

5.2 Potential synergies

- Identify opportunities for regional collaboration, knowledge exchange, or resource mobilization within IOCAFRICA's framework.

6. Conclusion and next steps

6.1 Summary of key points

- Recap the main takeaways regarding past achievements, future plans, and priority issues.

6.2 Next steps

- Indicate any immediate follow-up or expected coordination with IOCAFRICA and other partners.
- Provide any forthcoming deadlines or milestones for project proposals and collaborations.

Contact Information

- **Focal point name:** [Full Name]
- **Position/Title:** [Position/Title]
- **Institution/Organization:** [Ministry/Institute]
- **Email:** [Email Address]
- **Phone:** [Optional]