

INTRODUCTION to TOPICS AND QUESTIONS FOR GROUP I DISCUSSIONS

IOC Assembly Decision IOC-XXVII/Dec.(5.1) acknowledged the need for continued discussion on “The Future of IOC”; and requested Member States work with an IOC Officer during the intersessional period to develop a short background document to be presented to the 47th session of the IOC Executive Council, as a preparation to the 28th Assembly. The decision further suggested that the areas of deliberation covered by the above indicated documents should focus on sharpening IOC’s identity, as well as on rationalized cooperation and communication between IOC and other organizations, and enhanced flexibility and adaptability of IOC governance. Because of singular and plural references, it is unclear as to whether this should be done through one Officer with one report or with reports from Electoral Groups. Electoral Groups II, III, and IV have met to address some aspects of this Decision.

Representatives from eight Member States of IOC Executive Council from IOC Electoral Group I (Canada, France, Germany, Norway, Portugal, Spain, U.K., and U.S.A.) met in Utrecht, The Netherlands from 11-13 February to plan for a meeting of all Group I Member States. The meeting was conducted under the **Chatham House Rule** where participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speakers, nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

Attached are the results of that meeting plus the intermediate points in the development of the results. A full Group I meeting is being planned for 26 and 27 May in Utrecht. The Results are presented in the document “Topics and Questions for Group I Discussion.” These topics and questions encompass the concerns of the Member States represented in Utrecht but they are not meant to be restrictive to topics issues not represented in this document. Many of the questions may easily be answered “yes” or “no”, however, we Member States should formulate their thoughts about these questions and provide a reason behind the answer “yes” or “no”, for example ; If yes, why do you think so and if not, why not and do you have any recommendations about how to address the situation and/or improve it.

The process for developing the results began with a simple going around the table with each participant offering their thoughts, posing questions, etc. A total of 55 items were presented and these are presented in Appendix I either as they were given or as summaries of the ideas presented. Appendix II is a preliminary identification of general topics followed by a listing, by number, of the thoughts in Appendix I and where they would fit within these topics. Many items in Appendix I will fit in more than one topic. Once it was confirmed that all of the thoughts in Appendix I were represented in these topics Appendix III was developed where the topics were then broken down into sub-topics and, again, all of the issues in Appendix I were represented.

From Appendix III, the Topics and Questions being presented were developed.

There are five topics being presented. You will notice in Appendix II that six topics were identified. It was determined that the sixth topic contains issues that are relevant to Group I and not to the IOC in general.

Thank you for considering these topics and issues for discussion.

Topics and Questions for Group I Discussion

I. The Role of the IOC beyond the Medium Term Strategy

Ref: IOC/INF-1148 – Statutes (2000)

IOC/INF-1294 – Report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group for the IOC Ocean Sciences Programme (2012)

IOC-XXVII/2 Annex 3 - Draft IOC Medium-Term Strategy for 2014–2021

IOC/DOSS-III/3 – QUO VADIS IOC?, Third Session of the *Ad hoc* Study Group on IOC Development, Operations, Structure and Functions (1992)

IOC/INF-612 – Marine Science and Ocean Services for Development: UNESOC/IOC Comprehensive Plan for a Major Assistance Programme to Enhance the Marine Science Capabilities of Developing Countries (1985)

1. Is the IOC able to fulfill its role as stated in Article 2.1 of the IOC Statutes?
 - a. If no, what are our challenges?
2. What is the future role of the IOC as a global knowledge broker?
3. What is the future role of the IOC in the provision of operational services?
4. How can the IOC foster cooperation between IOC and other international and Member States ocean science programs?
5. Does the IOC have the capacity to deliver on its role?
 - a. Are the IOC resources mobilized effectively?
 - b. Are we setting priorities in an effective manner?
6. Are we optimizing the roles and functions of the IOC officers?

II. Opportunities for the IOC

1. Is the IOC driven by the Member States?
 - a. Are the Member States doing all they can to insure that the IOC is meeting its objectives?
2. The IOC is the competent UN agency for marine science. Is science the driving voice of Member States' delegations?
 - Do delegations have the competence and technical experience to decide in conferences about upcoming technical and/or scientific issues.
3. How can we improve capacity building through partnerships?
4. Does the IOC have a communications strategy?
5. Is the governance of the IOC fit for purpose?
 - Flexibility
 - Secretariat
 - Officers
 - Functional Autonomy
 - Structure and supporting services
 - Consequences of resolutions
 - Data systems
 - Observing systems

III. The Scope of the IOC

- 1) Does the IOC have a strategic direction?
- 2) Does the IOC fulfill its role in global and regional sustained ocean observations?
- 3) Is the IOC's data policy, its implementation and harmonization fit for its purpose?
- 4) How far should the IOC go in the continuum from acquisition of observations to delivery of products/services?
- 5) Are the IOC's management processes adequate to deliver on its objectives?
 - a. Priorities (What are they, how are they implemented)?
 - b. Core business?
 - c. How far do we venture into marine policy?
 - d. Do we live within our resources?
- 6) Is there an IOC role in research and observation infrastructure?

IV. Relationships

1. What are our expectations from our relationships with:
 - a. UNESCO
 - b. Other UN bodies
 - c. Non-UN bodies
 - d. Oceanographic programs
 - e. Member States/Delegations
 - f. Scientific Community (see IV. 2 next)
2. How can IOC reinforce its relationships with the scientific community?

V. **Funding**

1. Do we need to revisit the relationship with UNESCO with a view to:
 - a. secure an adequate budget?
 - B. improve funding autonomy
2. Do we have the capacity to meet the Medium-Term Strategy?
 - a. How do we mobilize additional resources?
3. Do we need to explore new funding models? (Australia-individual sponsorships for individual projects) [Article 10.4]
4. Does the IOC need a marketing strategy?
5. Does the IOC need to have a strategy to mobilize independent patrons?

Appendix I: Comments Offered by Participants

1. How to ensure the development of operational oceanography.
2. Relationship with UNESCO.
3. Keeping IOC “afloat”
 - a. Medium Term Strategy.
 - b. Move forward with IOC program in the context of a project model.
4. IOC as a knowledge-broker - many pies versus focus on core competence: Observations and data.
5. Is the IOC the place to go for operational oceanography? (If yes – must include biogeochemical observations.) Is the WMO the place to go for operational oceanography?
6. Operational oceanography.
7. Harmonization of data (international), data exchange.
8. Focus on long-term observations.
9. Is the IOC to be the WMO for the oceans – sharpen the focus of IOC!
10. Key to IOC’s future: observations and data
11. Autonomous systems!!
 - a. Legal framework not in place but should not be too restrictive.
12. Raising the profile of ocean infrastructure: Ships, ROVs, others?
 - a. International inventory
13. Ships are expensive to build and operate.
14. Are we a science organization?
 - a. The IOC should be an organization which i.a. tries to solve practical challenges about technical and scientific issues like oceanographic measurements and observation, data and science.
 - b. Delegations should consist of decision makers who are able to decide about technical and/or scientific necessities and priorities.
 - c. A corollary to (b) is that expertise in marine sciences is often under-represented in IOC delegations in general leaving non-technical members (e.g., foreign ministry officials, local Embassy officials) with little or no support to make informed decisions.
 - d. At times, political discussions having little or nothing to do with oceanography dominate discussions.
 - e. Is science being left to other bodies?
15. Capacity Building
 - a. Both technology and science
 - b. Strengthening local understanding.
16. Communicate on successes.
17. Oceans not limited to physics.
18. How to use infrastructure.
19. What are the gaps?
 - a. Coastal
 - b. Deep
20. Interoperability of data.
 - a. Role of IODE.

21. OFGE (oceanographic facilities exchange group) model.
22. Programmatic - send messages to group/member states
 - a. Advertise what is expected from delegations.
23. Need to be cognizant of medium-term strategy and lessons of the past.
24. What is the core business of IOC:
 - a. Run meetings?
 - b. Put instruments in the water?
25. Is there such a thing as intergovernmental science in light of national priorities?
26. Interaction of officers with the member states.
 - a. What about a Board of Directors model.
27. Do we have a Secretariat? Degradation of the secretariat.
28. Ships – Autonomous vehicles.
29. Back to back science meetings with international organizations.
30. Make-up of delegations to IOC.
31. Role(s) of the officers.
32. Communication between secretariat and member states.
33. Gaps in IOC operations: e.g., communication to decisions makers (subject for the Group I meeting).
34. Focus on scientific relevance to IOC delegations with a science meeting in conjunction with IOC meetings.
35. Types of voices to be heard at IOC meetings:
 - a. Reinstall a science focus versus political focus.
36. Focus on a few issues that will focus other states.
37. The role of officers and member states in the IOC: are we staff driven?
38. Funding: Foundation model.
 - a. Find sponsors for various projects.
39. Identity of IOC and the IOC is treated in other UN bodies;
 - i.e., IOC work taken over by other bodies
40. Mechanism for prioritization.
41. Limit activity(ies) to priorities.
42. Continuum of activities versus should we/shouldn't we.
43. Science versus services.
44. New capabilities: BGC (BioGeoChemical); Deep Argo – these may get into policy and resource issues.
 - a. How much should we get into marine policy?
45. Enhance capabilities in developing countries:
 - a. Ocean teach
 - b. GOOS
 - c.
46. Regional organizations and Local
47. Develop local capabilities
48. Relations with UNESCO
49. IOC Staff
 - a. Need to prioritize main topics.
50. Constituencies of IOC – who are they:

- a. Is the scientific community a constituency?
- 51. Academic training of ocean scientists.
- 52. IOC serving other organizations (e.g., IMO, WMO, etc.)
- 53. Does the IOC belong in UNESCO?
- 54. Coordinates oceanographic data
 - a. Governance;
 - b. Binding agreements on data collection and data dissemination
- 55. Stronger connection to the scientific community

Appendix II – Preliminary Identification of Topics and the Comments they Address

1) Role of IOC

4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 20, 24, 25*functionality, 39, 49, 52, 20, 27, 31, 33, 37, 40, 48, 54

2) IOC Short Falls/Remedies - Opportunities

14, 15, 16, 20, 23, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 44, 45, 46, 47, 51, 52, 54

3) Scope of IOC

1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 15, 17, 20, 24, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49, 54

4) IOC Relationships

2, 18, 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 39, 48, 50, 51, 53, 55

5) Capacity/Funding of IOC

3, 25*see above, 38

6) Group I – Internal

11, 13, 18, 19, 21, 22, 28

Appendix III: Breakdown of the Topics and Associated Comments

IOC Relationships

Relationships with UNESCO

2, 48, 53

Stronger connection to scientific community (constituencies)

35, 36, 50, 51, 55

How to use Member States infrastructure

18, 33, 36

Delegates role and makeup (communication)

22, 30, 35

Communication between secretariat and MS

32, 33, 37

Relationship with other UN and other bodies

39

IC Shortfalls/Remedies – Opportunities

“Rise of the Lawyers” (14, 33, 34, 35)

Capacity Building (15, 29, 34, 36, 45, 46, 47, 51)

Communication Strategy (16, 29, 32, 33, 34, 36, 44, 46, 52*)

Governance and Institutional Arrangements (23, 26, 27, 31, 32, 37, 44, 52*, 54)

Data (20, 54)

Article 11.3 in IOC / 7

Scope of IOC

Sustained Ocean Observations (1, 6, 8, 10, 11, 43, 44, 45, 55)

Strategic Direction – Return to Origins (4, 11, 15, 17, 24, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49)

Management Direction (3, 24, 40, 44, 49)

Data Policy (7, 8a, 10, 20, 45, 54)

Infrastructure (11)

Role of IOC

Knowledge broker (4, 9, 12, 15, 24)

Provision of Operational Services (5, 10, 20, 24, 54)

Foster cooperation between IOC, other international and MS global ocean science programs (25)

Review role of IOC offices (24, 26, 27, 31, 32, 33, 37, 40, 39, 48, 49, 52)

Capacity/Funding of IOC

Capacity

- Reference management direction under scope of IOC

Funding

- Revisit statutes re: relationship with UNESCO (3)

- Cooperation with other intergovernmental and international programs (25)

- Explore new funding models (38)

- Marketing strategy (38, CAP)