IOC Circular Letter No. 2398
(Available in English, French, Spanish, Russian)
10 August 2011

To: Official National Coordinating Body for liaison with the IOC of IOC Member States

Cc: IODE National Coordinators for Oceanographic Data Management
IODE National Coordinators for Marine Information Management
Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
National Commissions of IOC Member States
Officers of IOC Major Subsidiary Bodies

Subject: Nomination of Long-Term Members of the IODE Group of Experts on the Ocean Biogeographic Information System (GE-OBIS)

The IODE Group of Experts on the Ocean Biogeographic Information System (GE-OBIS) was established by the 21st Session of the IOC Committee on IODE (2011) through Recommendation IODE-XXI.3 and the 26th Session of the IOC Assembly (Resolution XXVI-10). The terms of reference are attached as Annex I.

It is the purpose of this letter to invite you to nominate a suitable national expert for long-term membership of the IODE Group of Experts on OBIS (GE-OBIS).

In order to enable the Group to meet for its first Session during the first semester of 2012, I will appreciate if you can send us your nominations, by e-mail to Mr Peter Pissierssens (p.pissierssens@unesco.org) not later than 1 November 2011.

Please accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

Wendy Watson-Wright
Executive Secretary, IOC
Assistant Director-General, UNESCO
Recommendation IODE-XXI.3

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IODE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON OBIS (GE-OBIS)

The IOC Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange,

Noting the great progress that has been made under the Global Census of Marine Life (CoML) programme and that this ten-year initiative, to assess and explain the diversity, distribution and abundance of marine life in the oceans, concluded at the end of 2010,

Recalling the decision, through Resolution XXV-4, to accept OBIS within the IODE Programme, and the request to the IOC Executive Secretary to make the necessary administrative arrangements necessary for OBIS activities to continue under the auspices of IOC and its IODE Programme,

Recommends the formation of a Group of Experts on OBIS, to operate in close collaboration with all IODE Groups of Experts, and responding to the needs expressed by the IODE Steering Group for OBIS;

Further recommends that the tasks of the Group of Experts should include to improve, optimize and streamline the Ocean Biogeographic Information System:

- By shaping the evolution of the architecture to keep it state-of-the-art, fit for a wide range of users and interoperable with other relevant international data networks
- By providing advice on relevant new technologies, including visualization and analysis tools
- By promoting, selecting or developing standards for data format, data exchange and data synchronization
- By providing guidelines for data practices including QC, data capture, integration, citation, metadata generation for marine biodiversity
- Identify needs and provide advice on training and education initiatives.

Invites the IOC Governing Bodies to support this Group of Experts;

Encourages IOC Member States to nominate experts having expertise in biogeographic and biodiversity data management and exchange to the Group of Experts;

Requests that the Group of Experts maintains close relations with GBIF and other relevant programmes;

Further requests that a progress report be submitted regularly to the IODE Officers and the IODE Committee.