IOC Circular letter No. 2418  IOC/WWW/MB/MO/ei
(Available in English and French)  19 January 2012

To:  Official National Coordinating Body for liaison with the IOC

cc:  Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission
Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
National Commissions for UNESCO of IOC Member States
Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of Major IOC Subsidiary Bodies
(Scientific, Technical and Regional)
Partner Organizations in the region

Subject:  Official dissolution of IOCEA and IOCWIO and Launching of the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Island States, Nairobi, Kenya, 2–3 May 2012

At the request of Member States in the region, the IOC Assembly at its 26th session (Paris, 22 June–5 July 2011), established, through Resolution XXVI-3, the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Island States as a framework to improve IOC visibility, facilitate coordination among Member States in the region, and to ensure the efficient implementation of IOC programmes in Africa. The Assembly requested the Executive Secretary to: (i) take the necessary measures for convening the First Session of the Sub-Commission before the Forty-fifth Session of the IOC Executive Council; (ii) establish an IOC Regional Office for Africa as the Technical Secretariat for the Sub-Commission; (iii) continue the implementation of the IOCEA and IOCWIO Work Plans pending the First Session of the Sub-Commission; and (iv) present to the Executive Council, at its Forty-fifth Session, a report on the implementation of this resolution.

The Assembly called upon all Member States, in particular from Africa, and the Adjacent Island States, to support and participate actively in the programmes of the Sub-Commission.

In accordance with Resolution XXVI-3, the IOC Regional Office for Africa has been established at UNESCO Regional Office for Science in Africa in Nairobi, Kenya. Mr Mika Odido, who is currently responsible for IODE Regional Activities, has been appointed as the IOC Coordinator for Africa and will be reporting to Nairobi from 1 March 2012. Mika Odido will act as the technical secretary for the Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Island States.

... / ...
I have the pleasure to invite IOC Member States, especially those from Africa and the Adjacent Island States, members of IOCEA and IOCWIO, to attend the First session of the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Island States, which is scheduled on 2–3 May 2012 in Nairobi, Kenya. The Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Island States will supersede the two existing Regional Committees which will be declared dissolved during the first session of the Sub-Commission in accordance with Resolution XXVI-3.

I remind you that the Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Islands is open to Member States of the Region concerned, and other interested Member States. Member States are expected to: (i) nominate to their delegations to the meetings thereof appropriately qualified persons, as called for in Rule of Procedure No. 26; (ii) cover the cost of the attendance and participation of their delegates in the meetings thereof; (iii) provide the essential means to the individuals (delegates) or national institutions concerned to give effect to the decisions/recommendations of a given subsidiary body of which they are a member.

It would be greatly appreciated if the names, official addresses and designations (i.e., Head of Delegation, Alternate, Representative or Adviser) of your delegates could be forwarded to the IOC Secretariat by 24 February 2012 at the latest (c/o Mr Mika Odido via e-mail: m.odido@unesco.org; cc: Ms Elena Iasyreva, e-mail: e.iasyreva@unesco.org), in order to allow preparation of a comprehensive list of participants in advance of the Session.

The Provisional Agenda (document IOC-Africa-I/1 Prov.) for the Session is enclosed herewith.

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

Wendy Watson-Wright
Executive Secretary, IOC
Assistant Director-General, UNESCO

Enclosures: Annex 1: Provisional Agenda
Annex 2: Resolution XXVI-3
Annex 3: Guidelines for the Structure and Responsibilities of the Subsidiary Bodies of the Commission (IOC/INF-1193, electronic copy only)
First Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and adjacent Island States
Nairobi, Kenya
2–3 May 2012

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. OPENING
2. ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS
   2.1 ADOPTION OF AGENDA
   2.2 DESIGNATION OF RAPPORTEUR
   2.3 CONDUCT OF SESSION
3. FINAL REPORT OF IOCEA
4. FINAL REPORT OF IOCWIO
5. FORMAL TERMINATION OF IOCEA AND IOCWIO
6. FUNCTIONING OF SUB-COMMISSION AND THE REGIONAL SCOPE
7. STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SUB-COMMISSION
   7.1 PROGRAMME MATTERS
   7.2 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT
   7.3 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION
8. PROGRAMME OF WORK 2012–2013
9. COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS
10. ELECTION OF SUB-COMMISSION OFFICERS
11. OTHER BUSINESS
12. DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION
13. ADOPTION OF DECISIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE SUMMARY REPORT
14. CLOSURE
ANNEX 2

Extracted from document IOC-XXVI/3: Twenty-Sixth Session of the Assembly (IOC)

Resolution XXVI-3

IOC SUB-COMMISSION FOR AFRICA AND ADJACENT ISLAND STATES

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

Noting with appreciation the priority given to Africa in the IOC Medium-Term Strategy 2008–2013,

Recalling the Resolutions adopted by the IOC Assembly, at its previous sessions, especially Resolution XXIV-3 on “Past, present and future of Africa within the IOC programmes”, calling for the priority given to Africa to be properly reflected in the IOC Programme and Budget, commensurate with its priority status,

Further recalling that Resolution EC-XLIII.8 requested:

(i) “the IOC Executive Secretary to include in the Agenda of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Assembly a proposal for the establishment of an IOC Sub-Commission for Africa, building on IOCEA¹ and IOCWIO², and in accordance with IOC Guidelines for the establishment of decentralized offices” and;

(ii) “the IOCEA and IOCWIO Chairpersons to prepare such a proposal, with the support of the IOC Secretariat, and to present it to the Assembly, at its Twenty-Sixth Session, for its consideration”,

Noting also that Member States in these regions are participating actively in various regional and international marine programmes, such as the Ocean Data and Information Network for Africa (ODINAFRICA), Global Ocean Observing System in Africa (GOOS-AFRICA), Global Sea Level Observing System (GLOSS), the Large Marine Ecosystems (LME), Capacity-Development, multi-hazard Early Warning Systems, and Climate Change, with good results,

Decides to establish the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Island States, as described in the Annex to this Resolution, as a framework to improve IOC visibility, to facilitate coordination among the Member States in the region, and to ensure the efficient implementation of IOC programmes in Africa;

Also decides that: (i) the existing IOCEA and IOCWIO Regional Committees will be dissolved during the First Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Island States, without prejudice to existing international cooperation in the regions; (ii) specific characteristics of the regions will be addressed through targeted programmes developed by thematic working groups to be created by the Sub-Commission.

Requests the Executive Secretary to:

(i) take the necessary measures for convening the First Session of the Sub-Commission before the Forty-fifth Session of the IOC Executive Council;

(ii) establish an IOC Regional Office for Africa as the Technical Secretariat for the Sub-Commission;

¹ IOC Regional Committee for the Central Eastern Atlantic.
² IOC Regional Committee for the Western Indian Ocean.
(iii) continue the implementation of the IOCEA and IOCWIO Work Plans pending the First Session of the Sub-Commission;

(iv) present to the Executive Council, at its Forty-fifth Session, a report on the implementation of this Resolution;

**Calls upon** all Member States, in particular those from Africa and the Adjacent Island States, to support and participate actively in the programmes of the Sub-Commission.

Annex to Resolution XXVI-3

**A New Governance Structure in Africa**

**IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the adjacent Island States**

**(IOC in Africa)**

**Mission**

The IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and Adjacent Island States is an intergovernmental subsidiary body of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO responsible for the promotion of regional and international cooperation, and the development and coordination of the Commission’s marine scientific and research programmes, the ocean services, the ocean observing systems, capacity development and related activities in the region by taking account of the specific interests and priorities of Member States from Africa.

**Objectives**

The Sub-Commission shall:

(a) Promote regional and international cooperation and coordinate programmes, projects and other activities adopted by governing bodies of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO among the interested Member States and the marine scientific community, as necessary, and make, if appropriate, recommendations to its parent body to this effect;

(b) Prepare a detailed plan of action for implementation of the adopted programmes, projects and other activities;

(c) Define regional problems, set priorities and look for solutions, which call for international cooperation, and coordinate marine-related activities;

(d) Stimulate cooperation with relevant organizations, agencies, and institutions with a view to ensuring complementarity; and

(e) Cooperate with other Subsidiary Bodies of the IOC on relevant matters of common interest.

**Background and justification**

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO has two Regional Committees in Africa:

- The IOC’s Regional Committee for the Western Indian Ocean (IOCWIO), established in 1979 by the Assembly at its Eleventh Session through Resolution XI-9 as the IOC’s Regional Committee for the Cooperative Investigations in the North and Central Western Indian Ocean (IOCINCWIO). The name was changed, at the request of
IOCINWIO-V, to IOCWIO by Resolution XXII-10 of the Assembly at its Twenty-second Session.

The IOC’s Regional Committee for the Central and Eastern Atlantic (IOCEA), established in 1984 by the Executive Council at its Seventeenth Session through Resolution EC-XVII.7.

The Regional Committees coordinate and facilitate the development and implementation of IOC activities in their respective regions. The focus of the two Committees is on enhancing national capabilities in marine science and ocean services through cooperation among the Member States from the region and with those from other regions.

The lack of regional Secretariats has been recognized as a hindrance to the development of IOCEA and IOCWIO. Project Offices were established for IOCWIO (at KMFRI, Mombasa, Kenya from 2000 to 2004; and the UNESCO Regional Office, Nairobi, Kenya, from 2004 to 2009), and for IOCEA (at NIOMR, Lagos, Nigeria, from 2002 to 2004).

The establishment of an IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, is fully in line with the African Union’s regional integration principle. It will strengthen IOC’s presence in Africa, increase the effectiveness of its actions, and give concrete effect to the priority accorded to Africa.

The existing IOCEA and IOCWIO Regional Committees will be dissolved during the First Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, without prejudice to existing international cooperation in the regions. Specific characteristics of the regions will be addressed through targeted programmes developed by thematic working groups to be created by the Sub Commission.

Structure

The key components of the structure of the Sub-Commission include:

(i) Member States
(ii) Bureau of Officers
(iii) Regional Secretariat
(iv) Thematic working groups or task teams, which will address specific oceanographic issues of sub-regional, regional or international concern.

Membership and Composition

Membership of the Sub-Commission is according to established IOC Guidelines for the Structure and Responsibilities of the Subsidiary Bodies of the Commission.

Member States will be required to nominate national focal points (administration/institution).

Officers of the Sub-Commission

The Bureau of the Sub-Commission comprises the Chair and three Vice-Chairs elected by the Sub-Commission, and shall serve in accordance with the Guidelines for the Structure and Responsibilities of the Subsidiary Bodies of the Commission.

Secretariat for the Sub-Commission

An IOC Regional Office shall be established to serve as the Secretariat for the IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, and assist with the implementation of all the programmes and activities of IOC in the regional context. It shall:
(i) Promote the development and use, at the regional level, of ocean observations and services and related supporting activities, coordinated or maintained by IOC;

(ii) Facilitate the exchange of scientific data and information and the transfer of knowledge resulting from marine scientific research;

(iii) Assist with the identification of capacity-development needs in the region, especially those related to the programmes of the Sub-Commission, when appropriate, and promote the required capacity-development activities;

(iv) Organize major scientific/technical conferences, including meetings of the Sub-Commission;

(v) Liaise and maintain links with all IOC programmes and projects;

(vi) Establish and maintain links with other relevant organizations, institutions, partners and programmes in order to promote regional and international cooperation.

**Programme and budget**

The IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States shall be funded from the IOC Regular Budget and extrabudgetary contributions. The IOC Sub-Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States, should actively explore the opportunities for raising additional resources for implementation of its programmes.