IOC Circular Letter No. 2503
(Available in English only)
10 January 2014

To: Official National Coordinating Body for liaison with the IOC Member States in the WESTPAC region

IODE National Coordinators for data management in the WESTPAC region

IODE National Coordinators for information management in the WESTPAC region

cc: WESTPAC Officers

IODE Officers

Other Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with the IOC Member States

Permanent Delegations to UNESCO and National Commissions for UNESCO of IOC Member States

Subject: Ocean Data and Information Network for the Western Pacific Region (ODINWESTPAC) Planning Workshop, 4-7 March 2014, Tianjin, China

As you may recall the ODINWESTPAC pilot project was established by the 19th Session of the IODE Committee in March 2007 following the recommendation made during the 3rd International workshop on GODAR-WESTPAC (Japan, 2006). The objectives of ODINWESTPAC were then identified as follows: "to provide an effective capacity building framework, to promote regional collaboration in marine data and information and products sharing, to develop cooperation with other ODINs and international regional projects/programmes, and to provide data and information services mainly for the WESTPAC Member States and other users". In 2008, during the 7th Session of the IOC Sub-Commission for WESTPAC, Prof. Shaohua Lin (China) was designated as ODINWESTPAC Coordinator, assisted by Mr Wenxi Zhu (IOC/WESTPAC Secretariat). IODE-XX (Beijing, China, 2009) and IODE-XXI (Liège, Belgium, 2011) adopted work plans for the implementation of ODINWESTPAC activities but few were realized mainly due to lack of funds as well as difficulties identifying national focal points for data and information management in the region. During IODE-XXII (Ensenada, Mexico, 2013) it was agreed that ODINWESTPAC should continue and a work plan was adopted. China offered to host (and support) a meeting to further discuss the development of a strategy for the ODINWESTPAC project, identify activities for the region and develop a work plan. During the 2013 Session of the IOC Assembly a meeting was organized (4 July 2013) regarding ODINWESTPAC involving WESTPAC Member States. Participants in that meeting re-iterated the importance of establishing an ODIN network in the region in order to promote the exchange of oceanographic data and information.

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As a follow-up to the July 2013 meeting a survey (country profile) was developed in order to obtain a full picture on human resources in the region and to assess the current arrangements, resources and needs in all countries. This survey was sent by email to the countries that participated in the July 2013 meeting, i.e. Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. If you did not receive the survey then please contact us (p.pissierssens@unesco.org). If you received the survey but did not yet submit the replies then please do so as soon as possible. Each participating Member State will be invited to make a 15 minute presentation on their survey results during the workshop.

Through this Letter we now wish to invite you to the ODINWESTPAC Planning Workshop organized in Tianjin, China on 4-7 March 2014. The workshop will be supported financially by China National Marine Data and Information Service (NMDIS) and IOC/IODE.

We would also like to invite you to designate not more than three (3) suitable experts to represent your country in the workshop. In view of the topic of the workshop we would recommend one expert in oceanographic data management (e.g. the Director of your NODC, if existing), one expert in marine information (library) management (e.g. head of marine library) and one expert dealing with your country’s marine research and observation strategy with emphasis on national coordination of ocean research and observation.

We are pleased to inform you that China has kindly offered to sponsor the participation of 5 (five) experts, covering the cost of their air ticket, local accommodation and all meals. For other participants China will cover the cost of accommodation, coffee breaks, lunch and dinner (so only air tickets need to be covered by the participant). Applications for full support (tickets + accommodation + meals) should be submitted as soon as possible as this support will be provided on a first come, first served basis.

In order to enable the local organizers and IOC (IODE and WESTPAC) Secretariat to make the necessary arrangements we will be grateful if you can send us the names of your designated experts and participation support needs not later than 21 January 2014. Please provide, for each expert, full contact information including email address.

Further information on the workshop (agenda, timetable, practical information) will be made available through the web page http://iode.org/index.php?option=com_oe&task=viewEventRecord&eventID=1381

We look forward to your country’s participation in the workshop.

Yours sincerely,

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

Enclosure : Provisional agenda
PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP
   a. Words of welcome by the Host
   b. Words of welcome by WESTPAC Co-Chair(s)
   c. Words of welcome by the representative(s) of the IOC Executive Secretary
   d. Introduction of the participants
   e. Introduction of the NMDIS/SOA/China

2. INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATIONS (60 min)
   a. Activities of the IOC in the WESTPAC region
   b. Presentation on IODE and its capacity development activities
   c. Presentation on the IODE Ocean Data Portal, OceanDocs and OceanExpert

3. NATIONAL PRESENTATIONS
   Member States who submitted answers to the survey will be invited to make a presentation of up to 30 minutes each.

4. OCEAN DATA AND INFORMATION PRODUCT AND SERVICE NEEDS
   The results of the national surveys will describe the current capacity in the WESTPAC member states in terms of ocean data and information management (availability of NODCs, ADUs, marine libraries, products and services delivered etc). These will be compared with the products and services identified as needed by the member states. Capacity gaps will be discussed under the next agenda item.

5. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS RELATED TO OCEANOGRAPHIC DATA AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND EXCHANGE
   Based upon the survey results the Secretariat and ODINWESTPAC coordinator will present the capacity development needs as identified by the member states. These will be discussed in plenary to identify common requirements that will form the basis for the ODINWESTPAC capacity development plan.

6. DEVELOPMENT OF AN ODINWESTPAC STRATEGY AND WORK PLAN
   Based upon the discussions under previous agenda items the workshop will develop a long-term (4-6 years) strategic plan towards the development of a regional ocean data and information network that will enhance national capacities to manage and exchange oceanographic data and information, develop products and services required by national stakeholders, as well as mechanisms to exchange and share data and information to address regional and global ocean related issues. The workshop will furthermore develop a short-term (2014-2015) work plan and identify (as possible) required financial and other resources.

7. CLOSING OF THE WORKSHOP
   Closing words by the Host, WESTPAC Co-Chair(s) and representatives IOC.