

Achievements for the period 1989-1998

Global perspectives

IOC participation in the climate research on climate change and ocean processes, jointly with SCOR-CCCO, and the role of oceans, regional seas in greenhouse gas balances, with preparations of state of the art overviews through several meetings hosted by the Government of Malta, also as contribution first to the INC for the UNFCCC, and later the Convention itself; associated participation in JGOFS with the joint IOC-JGOFS Panel on CO₂; co-sponsorship of and support to WCRP, contributing to the work of the IPCC, including on role of oceans and coasts with long-term monitoring of coastal and near-shore phenomena related to climate change, e.g. using OSNLR and GLOSS; convening of related International Conference on coastal change, Bordeaux 1995.

Support to the Convention on Biological Diversity through the OSLR and Harmful Algal Bloom programme, including cooperation with the LME activity, the marine module of DIVERSITAS, jointly with IUBS and SCOPE, and the participation in the International Coral Reef Initiative.

Participation in UNCED 1992 and its preparations, including through GESAMP evaluations; with specification of IOC Action Plan for follow-up; contributions to the related programmes on Small Island Developing States following the Barbados Conference 1994, and to the GPA-LBA after WDC Conference 1995, in cooperation with UNEP.

Initiation of GOOS in cooperation with WMO, UNEP and ICSU, and participation in GCOS; creation of IOC-WMO-UNEP Committee for GOOS and the IOC-GOOS Support Office; gradual strengthening of interaction with WMO, leading to the Joint WMO-IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology.

Creation of a programme on IOC and UNCLOS in 1995, following the entering into force of UNCLOS in 1994. The International Conference on Marine Scientific Research and Integrated Coastal and Ocean Management for Sustainable Development, Lisbon 1994; initiation of the book on 'Continental Shelf Limits: the Scientific and Legal Interface', following an invitation from UN-DOALOS.

Support to the Independent World Commission on the Oceans, and initiation of 1998 International Year of the Ocean, through the decision of the Assembly taken in 1993.

Regional perspectives

IOC regional presence and programmes expanded to Africa, the Caribbean, Western Pacific, Black Sea-Mediterranean, including through close cooperation with UNEP Regional Seas. Establishment of the IOC Regional Secretariat for the Sub-Commission for Western Pacific, hosted in Bangkok by Thailand; and creation of an IOC Black Sea Regional programme in marine sciences and services. Joint actions within GIPME and the associated Inter-agency Programme on Marine Pollution of UNEP, IAEA and IOC, established after UNCED 92.

Participation of OSLR, OSNLR, IODE, TEMA and other IOC programmes in regional capacity building efforts. Support of TEMA activities also through the Floating University Programme and the course at the World Maritime University.

Internal Developments

Evaluations of the IOC situation and status within UNESCO continued, including through the Study Group on Development, Structure and Statutes (DOSS) with final report in 1997, leading subsequently to new statutes.

Establishment of an Office for the IOC and Marine Science related issues, under the leadership of Secretary IOC.

Through the decision on New Arrangements for the IOC by the UNESCO Executive Board, creation of the Special Account of the IOC and associated financial regulations (1995), with a protected regular programme budget for the IOC.

Elevation of IOC Secretary post to level of ADG and change of title to Executive Secretary, 1995.

Financial support, in addition to the UNESCO contribution through the Trust Fund arrangements arrived from many Member States, e.g. from the USA, as well as from several Donor Agencies, e.g. Danish, supporting creation of the HAB Office; Flemish and Swedish programmes in particular in Africa; and contributions from partners to specific activities, e.g. UNEP, FAO, IMO. Several Associate Experts from Japan, Sweden, Denmark, and staff secondments including from France, Brazil, China, USA, Germany.

Inter-agency Cooperation

Inter-agency cooperation was maintained and strengthened, including with UNEP, WMO, IMO, FAO, IAEA, and ICSU. Co-sponsorship of WCRP was obtained and input to the Second World Climate Conference was provided as cosponsor, highlighting role of ocean. IOC participated in the INC for the Framework Convention on Climate Change and in COP sessions and supported the work of the Climate Change Secretariat.

Co-sponsorship of GIPME by UNEP, with a Joint intergovernmental panel on GIPME was achieved. Cooperation with FAO on harmful algal blooms was initiated involving also IMO and ICES.

Following UNCED 92 and Special session of ICSPRO, an inter-agency meeting was convened by the USG for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, hosted by the DG of UNESCO in fall of 1993. The session proposed creation of ACC Sub-Committee on Oceans and Coastal Areas, which was endorsed by the Interagency Committee on Sustainable Development and the ACC, with UNESCO providing the secretariat service through the IOC. This Committee served as the inter-agency mechanism for follow-up of chapter 17 of Agenda 21, and also constituted a mechanism for cooperation and coordination within the UN system on ocean programmes, supplementing the efforts of UN-DOALOS.