

**IOC Circular Letter No 3064**  
 (Available in English only)

IOC/VH/JP/wk  
 12 December 2025

To : Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with IOC (IOC Member States)

C.c. : Permanent Delegations/Observer Missions to UNESCO and  
 National Commissions for UNESCO in IOC Member States  
 Officers of the Commission  
 Officers of IOC Subsidiary Bodies

**Subject: IOC Ocean Best Practice System (OBPS) Steering Group:  
 Call for nominations for members**

The IOC Ocean Best Practices System (OBPS) Project was established in 2019 through [Decision IOC-XXX/7.2.1\(III\)](#) and was further extended in 2025 as an IOC-wide initiative supporting all IOC programmes and regional sub-commissions by Assembly [Decision A-33/3.4.4](#) with revised Terms of Reference and the establishment of a revised Steering Group. The focus of the IOC Ocean Best Practice System (OBPS) strengthens interoperability, fosters coordination across IOC bodies, and supports the full ocean data value chain, from observation to data management, analysis, product generation, and services.

With this letter, Member States are invited to nominate experts to the OBPS Steering Group, as outlined in Annex 1 to this Circular Letter, by 21 January 2026.

Recognizing the importance of best practices to the [IOC Medium-term Strategy 2022–2029](#), the OBPS Steering Group will play an important role in evolving the work of OBPS to become a universal and accessible IOC platform for best practices, supporting all ocean-related methodologies, standards, and operational guidance.

Experts should be interested in the development and sharing of best practices, across the ocean value chain and the communities that the IOC serves. Nominees will be assessed against skills and knowledge on best practices in the following areas:

- Ocean observing, data management, modelling, research, or operational marine services;
- Interoperability frameworks, digital infrastructures, and methodological standardization;

Chairperson	Vice-Chairpersons		
Yutaka MICHIDA, Prof. Special Presidential Envoy for UN Ocean Decade The University of Tokyo (Atmosphere and Ocean Research Institute) Kashiwanoha 5-1-5 2778564 Kashiwa JAPAN	Ms Allison D. REED Foreign Affairs Officer U.S. Department of State Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs Washington, DC USA	Capt Carlos ZUÑIGA ARAYA Director of the Chilean Navy Hydrographic and Oceanographic Service (SHOA) Casilla 324, Valparaíso, 237-0168 CHILE	Prof. Amr Zakaria HAMOUDA President of Marine Hazards Mitigation Center (MHMC) National Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries (NIOF) Qaitbay, Al-Anfosh Alexandria EGYPT
Executive Secretary	Dr Atanas PALAZOV Former Director, Professor Institute of Oceanology Bulgarian Academy of Sciences 40 Parvi May Str. 9000 Varna BULGARIA	Dr Hansan PARK Principal Research Scientist, Korea Institute of Ocean Science & Technology (KIOST) Director general of the Korea–Indonesia Marine Technology Cooperation Research Center 385, Haeyang-ro, Yeongdo-gu, Busan REPUBLIC OF KOREA	

- Capacity development, community engagement, and knowledge dissemination;
- Strategic planning, coordination across programmes or institutions, and resource mobilization;
- Communications expertise, including websites and effective dissemination of information to diverse audiences.

English is the working language for all Steering Group meetings, and nominees are requested to consider a two-year commitment, renewable once.

The IOC Secretariat will thoroughly review all submissions, and the Executive Secretary will appoint members, based on expertise, geographic, generational, and gender balance by 31 January 2026.

There will be a maximum of 10 national experts selected to become OBPS Steering Group members. Members serve voluntarily and are expected to attend the annual Steering Group meeting, held either online or in person, regular Steering Group advisory calls, and to read relevant documentation and/or support evolving work plan actions as appropriate.

The IOC Secretariat thanks you for your continued commitment and looks forward to your nominations and active participation in the advancement of OBPS by 21 January using the nomination form in attachment.

Yours sincerely,

*[signature]*

Vidar Helgesen  
Executive Secretary

Enclosures: 1) OBPS Steering Group objectives and membership (Annex 2 to [Decision IOC-3.4.4](#))  
2) Ocean Best Practice System Steering Group – Nomination Form

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## **1/ OBPS Steering Group objectives and membership**

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### **Annex 2 to Decision IOC-3.4.4**

#### **IOC Ocean Best Practices System Steering Group**

#### **Terms of Reference**

##### **Objectives**

- (i) Propose the vision, strategy, biannual workplan and associated budget for consideration by Member States;
- (ii) Advise on technical, operational and user aspects;
- (iii) Report on progress against the biannual workplan, as part of overall IOC reporting to the IOC Assembly, and to other components of IOC and partners as relevant;
- (iv) Provide advice to the OBPS Manager as relevant;
- (v) Assist in identifying extra-budgetary funding sources to further develop the OBPS;
- (vi) Advocate for the OBPS as a preferred resource for adopted methodologies and best practices within the IOC mandate;

##### **Membership**

- (i) Representatives from IOC programmes and regional sub-commissions;
- (ii) OBPS Manager;
- (iii) IODE IT Manager;
- (iv) OBPS Co-Chairs;
- (v) Invited Experts, through circular letter to Member States;
- (vi) Representatives of partner organizations, projects or programmes as relevant;
- (vii) Representatives of the IOC Secretariat.

The Steering Group will meet annually and will elect its (Co-) Chair(s) for a period of two years, preferably from amongst its members, renewable once.

## 2/ Ocean Best Practice System Steering Group (OBPS-SG) – Nomination Form

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Nomination forms, duly completed and signed, along with a motivation letter, should be sent not later than 21 January 2026 by email to the OBPS Co-Chair Dr. Rebecca Zitoun (rebecca.zitoun@utas.edu.au) with copy to Patricia Martin Cabrera ([p.cabrera@unesco.org](mailto:p.cabrera@unesco.org)) (except nominations originating from national focal points, which should be sent to Olena Titorchuk at [o.titorchuk@unesco.org](mailto:o.titorchuk@unesco.org)) through one of the following channels:

1. The national coordinating body for liaison with IOC (see the [list](#))
2. GOOS National Focal Points (see the [list](#))
3. The Head of the National Commission for UNESCO
4. The Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Please include in the submission a short motivation letter containing a description of the candidate's relevant experience and motivation for the role, as well as any previous involvement with OBPS (maximum 400 words). The letter should also include a statement confirming institutional support from the nominee's employer, indicating that the employer has formally agreed to the nominee undertaking this role and supports their participation in any required in-person meetings.

### Nominee information:

First Name	
Last Name	
Position	
Institution	
Country	
(Mobile) phone	
Email address	
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F
Career Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Early Career (less than 10 years post higher education) <input type="checkbox"/> Mid-level <input type="checkbox"/> Senior level

Sector of work	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Intergovernmental organization <input type="checkbox"/> Non-governmental organization <input type="checkbox"/> Research Institution <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector <input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropy <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
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**Nomination Submitted by:**

First Name	
Last Name	
Position	
Government Department/Agency	
Date	
Signature	

Note: Any questions can be addressed to Patricia Martin Cabrera ([p.cabrera@unesco.org](mailto:p.cabrera@unesco.org))