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OVERVIEW OF IOC'S PARTNERSHIPS

Summary. A partnership is an arrangement where parties agree to cooperate to advance their mutual interests. Through partnership, IOC aims to increase its knowledge and funding base, launch development and education programmes and increase awareness of IOC. IOC has built up over the years a valuable network of cooperation in its fields of competence with international organizations, science and research institutes and Member States. In order to strengthen and implement IOC cooperation with different types of partners, the Commission has signed agreements and memoranda of understanding. This document contains an overview of the agreements signed by the IOC with partners during the last almost 15 years. It provides information on main categories of partners and state of agreements with them, as well as main areas of partnership activities. It also recommends the ways of making partnerships more sustainable and effective.

Background for an IOC Partnership Strategy

Introduction

With the mission of contributing to ocean and coastal zone research, monitoring and protection, IOC considers partnership as a necessity. Due to the complexity of ocean and coastal zone processes, there is a need for partnership at all levels: global, regional and national. Partners may include governmental and non-governmental organizations, international or national research and science institutions, and educational establishments, industries and Member States, provided they share the IOC mission, have common interests and are able and willing to achieve the IOC strategic objectives.

Partnership presents involved parties with special challenges which should be translated into agreements. Agreements can take the form of a Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement, a letter of Agreement or Intent, a Consortium Agreement or any other appropriate type of cooperation. It is up to the applying organization in conjunction with IOC to determine the type of agreement that is appropriate and judicious within the context of its organizational structure. In the IOC database of agreements for 2000-2013 16 different types of agreements have been used.

It is not necessary, from the legal point of view, for IOC to use the same format for every single agreement into which it enters with external partners. Independently of the format of the agreement it should contain some principal segments which set forth terms and conditions for the partnership. Usually they include: introduction, presenting the parties and their responsibilities; overarching goals or objectives of the partnership; description of what each party expects to bring to the alliance; funding sources for the partnership, if applicable; duration of the partnership; reporting and termination procedures; means of dispute settlement; privileges and immunities.

All agreements that do not follow an established template need to be reviewed by UNESCO Legal Affairs. UNESCO has established Directives concerning partnership with governmental and non-governmental organizations which can be found in the UNESCO portal.

History of Partnership

The IOC Mission is established in Article 2.1 of the IOC Statutes. Among other things it states:

The Commission will collaborate with international organizations concerned with the work of the Commission, and especially with those organizations of the United Nations system which are willing and prepared to contribute to the purpose and functions of the Commission and/or to seek advice and cooperation in the field of ocean and coastal area scientific research, related services, and capacity building.

Member States of the IOC agree to contribute to the cooperation process. They consider IOC as a forum with an opportunity to express collectively their concerns for the future of the ocean, and partnership between themselves and with other international organizations as one of the priority issues, and an opportunity for governments to work together with much greater effectiveness and efficiency.

IOC, established in 1960, has been the pioneering agency within the UN system for intergovernmental marine scientific cooperation.

One of the most important agreements signed during the first 20 years of IOC existence was that known as the ICSPRO (Inter-Secretariat Committee on Scientific Programmes relating to Oceanography) Agreement, developed in 1969 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UNESCO, World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and some other international organizations. The purpose of the Agreement was *“to contribute to the development*

of effective forms of co-operation between organizations of the UN system substantially concerned with ocean programmes...” and “...to contribute to the Secretariat of IOC to sustain the work of IOC...”.

Even before this, an agreement had been signed with the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) of the International Council for Science (ICSU) on the partnership for planning of the International Indian Ocean Expedition, where SCOR was in charge of scientific oversight of the project and IOC of intergovernmental coordination, communication, training and management of the project. Since then, there have been many other agreements signed with SCOR which have made the cooperation between our organizations successful and mutually beneficial.

The IOC/SCOR agreement was followed by other agreements with international governmental and non-governmental organizations aimed at joint implementation of many scientific programmes. Among those there were some signed in the 1970's with the WMO to make global atmospheric research such as GARP Atlantic Tropical Experiment (GATE) and the First GARP Global Experiment (FGGE), and later in the 80's to implement the World Climate Research Programme through Tropical Ocean and Global Atmosphere (TOGA) and World Ocean Circulation Experiment (WOCE); with the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) to facilitate ocean mapping through the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO); with FAO and some other international organizations to carry out global investigation of pollution in the marine environment (GIPME) and with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in the development of the MARPOL Convention; and with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in regional research and development within its Regional Seas programmes and relevant Regional Conventions.

In 1994 the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea entered into force where it was emphasized that IOC as an intergovernmental body rests on the mechanism of cooperation among States, and to a greater extent among marine scientific research stakeholders. Article 247 of the Convention called for greater cooperation among States through the competent organizations that promote, facilitate and coordinate research projects.

A concrete outcome of international partnership was the identification of common goals and ways to achieve them, development of common research and data collection and management policies and provision of training opportunities.

Present

In the new millennium, IOC continues to work with a wide range of partners to benefit from the experience gained by them in different areas of common interest. To make an overall summary of existing partnership agreements with different groups of partners and within different types of agreements, an available database of IOC agreements for the period from 2000 – 2013 was reviewed. The results of the review are presented below.

The database was designed to shed light over IOC partnership and cooperation with different groups of partners or, in UNESCO terminology, communities. At present the database includes almost 150 agreements with this number being increased almost every month. Among them are agreements with almost 30 international organizations, more than 60 agreements with Member States and six agreements with foundations/industries.

Agreements fall into the following categories: 1) cooperation of common interest promoting IOC programme implementation; 2) voluntary funding contributions, including secondment or non-reimbursable loans of staff; 3) support to programme/project offices and 4) partnerships contributing to enhanced IOC visibility and outreach.

Complete information on agreements for funding contributions and main extrabudgetary donors are reported as part of the statutory financial reporting to the IOC Governing Bodies.

This review mainly aims fill in the gap by providing a comprehensive overview of all other types of agreements in order to reflect the full range of IOC partnership activities.

In the area of programme implementation, the main groups of partners include:

- (i) Member States with governmental interfaces, a variety of national science, research, educational and social institutions , libraries, museums, archives, aquaria, etc., which have given notification of their willingness and interest of becoming an IOC Member in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Statutes of the Commission. Relations with Member States are effected through the Permanent Delegations of UNESCO, National Oceanographic Commissions and Focal Points as well as the IOC Regional and Programme Offices.

There are now 145 Member States of IOC. Of them, more than 30 have signed agreements with IOC during the last 13 years, with some MS having signed more than one agreement. A few agreements were signed with national scientific institutions like University of Copenhagen, University of Bergen, Instituto Español de Oceanografía.

- (ii) Intergovernmental Organizations within and outside the UN family from the beginning of the IOC existence constituted an important component of successful partnership. IOC has long-standing collaborative experience and working relations with those organizations and strives to further reinforce its operational relations with them in understanding that working together creates the benefit of combined strength.

Between 2000 and 2013, IOC signed new and prolonged agreements with WMO, UNEP, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), UNDP/GEF, International Seabed Authority of the UN family as well as with IHO, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES), Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS), International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centres (IAMSLIC) to name a few. During the last two to three years, efforts have been made to formalize collaboration with the European Commission (EC) in a sustained way. It should be noted that the EC has been one of the main donors to the IOC in the last few years.

- (iii) Non-Governmental Organizations were recognized by the IOC as its main partners since its inception (e.g. ICSU/SCOR) and are now involved in many of IOC's fields of competence. They are not affiliated to member states' governments and represent civil society, but are able to make an effective contribution to meeting the IOC objectives and to assist in implementing its programmes

NGOs with which IOC has a long successful history of collaboration and with which we have operational agreements today include (but are not restricted to) ICSU, International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG), International Ocean Institute (IOI), World Ocean Network (WON), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and Conservation International.

To this category of partners we may also refer UNESCO Chairs and IOC Regional Training and Research Centres on Marine Science which work with IOC to pursue common goals. Seven UNESCO Chairs have been established to address capacity-building activities of the IOC programme. They range from Marine Science Focused on Integrated Coastal Management (in Mozambique) to Physical Oceanography (in Chile and Georgia) and Marine Geosciences (in Russia). One IOC Regional Training and Research Center on Ocean Dynamics and Climate was established in the First Institute of Oceanography, State Oceanic Administration of China. This year the first time in the IOC history the establishment of a Category II Regional Center on Oceanography in the Islamic Republic of Iran is under discussion.

- (iv) The Private Sector which encompasses private enterprises, foundations and business organizations/associations, has begun working with the IOC to pursue common goals. Currently the most important private sector funding contribution is provided by the Moore Foundation in support of Marine Spatial Planning. Some of the agreements are targeted to programme implementation (Moore Foundation, Collect-Localisation Satellites (CLS)), others on the IOC visibility/outreach (Multi-One Foundation, Barcelona World Race, etc.). Cooperation with this group of partners is at the beginning, but has big potential and should be strengthened.

The Private Sector has strong resources of expertise, services, equipment and funding in support of IOC activities and can be a powerful ally.

Cooperation with all above mentioned partners has one common feature in that it is aimed at facilitating and supporting the implementation of the IOC programme in the following main areas:

Climate: IOC participates in the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) and the International Ocean Carbon Coordination Project (IOCCP), thus contributing to increasing the understanding of the ocean's role in climate change and variability. GCOS (Global Climate Observing System) is a joint undertaking of IOC/UNESCO, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Council for Science (ICSU). Its goal is to provide comprehensive information on the total climate system, involving a multidisciplinary range of physical, chemical and biological properties, and atmospheric, oceanic, hydrological, cryospheric and terrestrial processes. IOC/UNESCO is a partner with WMO in the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) whose main goal is to enable better management of the risks of climate variability and change, and adaptation to climate change, through the development and incorporation of science-based climate information and prediction into planning, policy and practice on the global, regional and national scale. IOC partners with the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) in a number of programmes. The Blue Carbon Initiative is the first integrated program focused on mitigating climate change by conserving and restoring coastal marine ecosystems globally. The initiative is led by Conservation International (CI), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and works with partners from national governments, research institutions, NGOs, coastal communities, intergovernmental and international bodies and other relevant stakeholders. The aim of the initiative is to ramp up and centralize our understanding of the science, economics and required policies needed for countries to properly manage, value and account for the carbon sequestered in their coastal ecosystems, and provide guidance on mechanisms for doing so.

Biodiversity: IOC/UNESCO is an active participant in matters relating to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and in particular in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), in which it plays an important role together with UNEP, FAO and UNDP. Through the Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS), IOC/UNESCO is active in the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) and in the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEOBON).

Ecosystem Health: IOC works in close collaboration with the London Convention and the London Protocol (LC/LP) and is a founding member of the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP) along with IMO, FAO and presently including IAEA, UN, UNEP, UNIDO and UNDP; it partners with SCOR on the research programme on the Global Ecology and Oceanography of Harmful Algal Blooms (GEOHAB).

Disaster Risk Reduction: IOC/UNESCO works closely with WMO, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) for access to its global seismograph network, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Maritime Organisation, the International Hydrographic Organisation and the European Union.

Governance: IOC/UNESCO's partners are the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES), the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS, in Spanish), the various Large Marine Ecosystem programmes, the International Council for Science (ICSU), the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) and the European Commission

Way Forward

Collaboration, through a recursive process where two or more Member States or organizations work together to realize shared goals by using deep, collective, determination to reach an identical objective(s) by sharing knowledge, learning and building consensus, will be strengthened. As part of the ocean community, IOC must work hard and actively with all groups of partners and look for new partnership opportunities.

Partnerships with Member States, governmental and non-governmental organizations will continue and be extended in order to increase the likelihood of each achieving their interests and missions and amplifying their reach. It will be based on such criteria as competence and capacities, professionalism, respect of the IOC mission, transparency and accountability and balance of interest.

Negotiations with the EC are underway with the objective of defining a formal agreement on a joint programme of work to include collaboration in the implementation of Rio+20 recommendations and of the UN Regular Process for regular reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, and of such programmes as Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS), to name a few.

Successful cooperation exists at the regional level in several parts of the World through IOC regional sub-commissions and committees. In this regard, the establishment of the IOC Subcommission for Africa and Adjacent Island States is already showing dividends in terms of improved collaboration with and among African Member States.

Partnership will be facilitated with private industries and foundations within such areas of cooperation as mobilizing business partners for national initiatives and supporting and participating in international partnerships. It can be achieved by inviting the private sector to be represented in National Oceanographic Commissions, to participate in the work of different IOC technical and regional bodies, and to take part in IOC national events and World Ocean Days.

The list of groups of partners can be extended by including mass media as an important partner in providing improved visibility and public profile for IOC.

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