

## OceanTeacher Global Academy: Delivering training for a sustainable ocean

Delgado Claudia, Reed Greg and Pissierssens Peter

UNESCO/IOC Project Office for IODE, InnovOcean site, Wandelaarkaai 7/61, 8400 Oostende, Belgium  
E-mail: [c.delgado@unesco.org](mailto:c.delgado@unesco.org)

Background Capacity development is an essential tenet of IOC's mission: it enables all Member States to participate equitably in, and benefit from, ocean research and services that are vital to sustainable development and human welfare on the planet. The OceanTeacher Global Academy (OTGA) Project builds upon the legacy of decades of training delivered by IODE for its data and information management stakeholder community. A key development of OTGA was the change in approach from a single Training Centre at the IOC Project Office for IODE, Belgium, to a network of Training Centres around the world. This approach enabled capitalizing on the technical capacity already existing in the regions (teachers, experts, facilities) as well as an increase in the number of courses organized and people trained in/from the regions. Additionally, it enabled the delivery of courses in languages other than English, namely Spanish, Portuguese and French. The use of ICTs also enabled the possibility of inviting experts to contribute to courses remotely and connecting classrooms. Between 2010-2020 the OTGA successfully delivered over 220 courses and instructed over 3,300 learners from 134 Member States. OTGA Approach IOC's OTGA is a network of Regional (geography focused) and Specialised (topic focused) Training Centres (RTCs and STCs respectively) delivering training on ocean sciences, services and ocean data and information management (including marine biodiversity data and ocean best practices) using the OceanTeacher e-Learning Platform. The OT e-Learning Platform, now with over 7000 registered users globally, enables the sharing of standardised, quality training content in a coordinated framework, whilst allowing the use of different languages as well as local/regional case studies. It is a comprehensive Learning Management System (LMS) that supports classroom training (face-to-face), blended (combining classroom and distance learning), and online (distance or e-) learning. Courses cover a wide range of topics across the IOC mandate and contributing to the implementation of the IOC Capacity Development strategy (2015-2021). Furthermore, OTGA supports the organisation of and hosts training courses for other international organisations and projects. OceanTeacher Quality Management In 2018, the IOC Project Office for IODE, host of the OTGA project, achieved ISO-29990 certification as a "Learning Services Provider" for non-formal education and training. This certification is a recognition of the quality of learning opportunities offered by OTGA and the high standard of quality learning services delivered. OTGA: ready for the Ocean Decade A new phase of OTGA was approved for funding late 2019 by the Flanders-UNESCO Science Trust Fund (FUST). The new project started in April 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Building on the experience accumulated, OTGA was able to quickly adapt to online training and delivered several training courses in 2020, and also hosted online training courses for other organisations. In 2021-2022 new, ready to deliver, course content will be made available online. The OTGA network of 16 Regional and Specialised Training Centres will provide a portfolio of courses in ocean sciences, spanning the physics, chemistry, and biology of marine systems, including aspects of ocean circulation, marine biology, ecology, biogeochemical cycles, ocean temperature and salinity, and marine carbon and carbonate chemistry. Topics will include tsunami warning and preparedness, marine spatial planning, ocean data management, ocean governance, transfer of marine technology and marine scientific research. OTGA will contribute to the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. Training topics will include tools that can help Member States achieving the SDGs as well as emerging topics such as Ocean Acidification and Blue Carbon, etc. OTGA will build partnerships with other national and international training organizations with the aim of (i) expanding global awareness of learning opportunities, (ii) increasing learning content, (iii) developing new cross-cutting learning services, and (iv) developing and implementing quality standards for delivery of learning services. Finally, OTGA will foster collaborations beyond UNESCO/IOC to position itself as the training platform for ocean-related topics within the UN and beyond. Furthermore OTGA will be a key partner in the implementation of the Capacity Development chapter of the implementation plan of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

Keywords: OceanTeacher Global Academy; SDGs; IOC; Ocean Sciences; Regional Training Centres (RTCs); Specialised Training Centres (STCs); Training platform; e-learning