



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intergovernmental
Oceanographic
Commission

Entity: Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO

Meeting: BBNJ IGC-2

Agenda item 5: General exchange of views

Dear Madame President, distinguished delegations,

There is a continuous and recognised need to ensure that the best available scientific knowledge is generated and used to support the elements of a future BBNJ instrument, requiring the establishment of a robust science-policy interface at the core of the governance structure of the instrument. Moreover, through science, new knowledge to address current gaps and uncertainty will be generated. Therefore, ocean science could be a unifying focus. In this context, ocean science should be interpreted broadly as including social sciences and human dimensions; the infrastructure that supports ocean science (observations, data systems); the application of those sciences for societal benefit, including transfer/application in regions/situations that hitherto have not benefited; and the science-policy/user interface.

Several Member States have identified the IOC Criteria and Guidelines for the Transfer of Marine Technology as a guiding principle that could be applied in the context of a new BBNJ instrument – recognizing that marine technology includes more than physical infrastructure –, but also access to data and information, technical know-how, manuals, guides, standards and best practices.

The development of capacity and the transfer of marine technology are fundamental tenets of IOC of UNESCO, and we continuously strive to assist Member States. In that sense, possible and/or already available IOC contributions to the instrument include through the establishment of clearing house for transfer of marine technology, of which a prototype has been developed, IOCs permanent work in training and capacity building, including regularly surveying the requirements of different regions and Members States, as well as the Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS) as an effective global platform involving a network of national authorities for the sharing of marine biodiversity data and information.

A side event organised for this Wednesday will therefore focus on articulating the science requirements underpinning BBNJ issues and exploring how the IOC, its partners, and the UN Decade of Ocean Science could facilitate and coordinate marine scientific research to advance our scientific knowledge, contribute to science-policy applications, including area-based management tools, to support effective monitoring, assessment and regulation.

IOC of UNESCO wishes to reiterate that it remains ready to assist Member States throughout this process to elaborate the text of an international legally-binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.