

Madame President

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission is following the development of these negotiations on a legally binding instrument very closely; since the issues under discussion are of our direct interest as UN body specialized in ocean sciences and competent international organization in the field for the promotion of international cooperation and the coordination of programmes on ocean research, related services and capacity building.

In July of this year, the IOC Assembly adopted a series of decisions that are directly linked to this process.

With regard to capacity development, our Member States took note of the results of the analysis of the first survey in which the main priorities were identified both at the level of regions and of different groupings of countries discriminating the results by countries of medium income, developing countries and small island developing states. Aware of the dynamics of capacity development in its holistic conception, including inter alia professional and technical development; sharing knowledge and expertise; access to physical infrastructure; institutional strengthening; communication between relevant stakeholders; exchange of scientific, technological development and innovation information; and awareness raising through public information and ocean literacy; the IOC Assembly decided to repeat the survey regularly, beginning in the year 2020, as well as to establish performance indicators for assessing the effectiveness of the proposed and / or adopted measures. It was also considered appropriate to link these surveys with the information obtained on capacities within the framework of the second edition of the Global Ocean Science Report, currently being prepared. Additionally, it was decided to convene in the coming months a first conference on capacity development with a focus on the Pacific SIDS. The intention is to replicate this methodology in other regions or groups of countries, in order to identify more precisely the specific needs and opportunities.

At the same time, a prototype of the IOC Clearing House Mechanism was presented to the Assembly, under a concept of scalability or modularity,

flexibility, interoperability, sustainability, exportability, mounted on existing structures and data and information within a hybrid management scheme. For that purpose, a cost assessment for the design and implementation of this tool will be carried out with a view to developing a CHM aimed to meet the global needs of ocean sciences, with direct relevance to BBNJ.

Keeping in mind that the proposed Article 51 of the Draft text of the agreement includes the possibility of a clearing-house mechanism managed by the IOC, in association with relevant organizations, the IOC Assembly agreed that the design and implementation of the tool should consider those functionalities arising from the negotiations that you are carrying, in order to meet the requirements of conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. IOC possesses the knowledge and expertise, and you can rest assured that we will contribute and deliver accordingly.

Both Capacity Building and Transfer of Marine Technology, including the CHM, will require the identification and allocation of appropriate resources (human, technical and financial) to ensure their functioning and sustainability. Such resources will have to be necessarily matched by a clear ownership by and continuous support and contributions from Member States and stakeholders.

In terms of access to oceanographic data and information, a catalog of information sources (called Ocean Data and Information System Catalog) has already been developed, and work continues on the maintenance and expansion of the Ocean Biogeographic Information System OBIS. Deliberations on accessibility and interoperability with other sources of data and information including the International Seabed Authority are also advanced, so as to provide better services to different stakeholders.

We would like to bring to your attention the preparation process for the UN Decade on Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030. This includes regional workshops with all stakeholders planned in all ocean basins that provide a unique opportunity to further identify, amongst others, science and capacity development needs in BBNJ areas.

Finally, this Wednesday noon we are organizing a side-event on capacity development and transfer of marine technology, including the latest developments. We look forward very much to counting on participation of many delegates. The side event will be a brainstorming to further discuss the actions and the support that will be needed to reach the goals of the Instrument, as well as those leading to a healthy and sustainable ocean.