

Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO

WESTPAC 16th INTERGOVERNMENTAL SESSION

WORKSHOP ON REGIONAL PRIORITY SETTING 2030 - 2037

Workshop objectives

Overall objective – to provide WESTPAC's initial input to development of the next Medium Term Strategy

Anticipate the future

Explore changes in ocean conditions, governance, technology that will influence Member States' needs and WESTPAC's capacity to deliver during 2030–2037.

Set strategic priorities for 2030 - 2037

Identify what WESTPAC should maintain, strengthen, transform or initiate.

Prepare for delivery in 2028 - 2029

Identify actions, partnerships, capacities and resources needed in 2028–2029 and beyond.

Inform IOC strategy

Consolidate regional messages for the next IOC Medium-Term Strategy.

How we will work

1. Look ahead

What will shape the Western Pacific and Member States' needs in 2030–2037? E.g. ocean health, ocean governance, emerging technologies and issues, other social and economic issues

2a. Identify priorities and strategic directions

Use current IOC High-Level Objectives and WESTPAC thematic areas as a starting point to identify strategic directions and priorities for WESTPAC from 2030 - 2037. Here you can think about where do we want to be in 2037?

2b. Work backwards

What must Member States and the Secretariat put in place during 2028–2029 to set WESTPAC up for success?

3. Share conclusions

Each facilitated group records its discussion and presents concise key messages.

WESTPAC REGIONAL STRATEGIC WORKSHOP | 11 NOVEMBER 2026

Time	Session	
09:00–09:10	Introduction to workshop objectives	IOC Secretariat
09:10–09:25	IOC and the Future of the Ocean: Overview of the initiative and key messages emerging so far for the WESTPAC region	IOC Secretariat
09:25–09:35	Workshop methodology including Q&A	IOC Secretariat
09:40–10:15	Groupwork 1: What will the Western Pacific look like in 2030 and 2037 in terms of ocean health, threats, governance etc.?	Facilitated small groups
10:15-10:45	COFFEE BREAK	
10:45–11:30	Groupwork 2: Given these changes, what strategic directions should WESTPAC Member States pursue by 2030 and 2037 and what needs to be put in place now to achieve that?	Facilitated small groups
11 :30 – 12 :15	Report back from each group: 1. Three most important influences on Member States' needs and WESTPAC's regional role in next MTS period. 2. Top three strategic directions for WESTPAC in the next MTS period taking into account these influences. 3. Top three conditions to put in place now for the success of the expected strategic directions of the next MTS. N.B Each group will also document its discussions in a Word document that will be made available by the Secretariat so that all important elements of the discussion can be captured.	Report back from each group & discussion
12:15–12:30	Wrap-up and conclusions: Group reports, synthesis of common priorities and next steps	Rapporteurs / IOC Secretariat

Groupwork 1 | Looking ahead

Consider the changing regional context

Ocean health and climate impacts; ocean uses and economic needs; technologies; governance and institutions.

Ask two questions

How will these changes affect Member States' priority needs? How might they affect WESTPAC's regional role and capacity to deliver?

Record your conclusions

Identify 3–5 major changes, risks or opportunities shaping 2030–2037.

Groupwork 2 | From priorities to action

Review the current areas of work

Across the five IOC High-Level Objectives, plus cross-cutting issues (i.e. Ocean Decade legacy, capacity development and ocean literacy).

Decide what to do

For each area: STOP, CONTINUE, GROW or START. Identify the highest-priority activities and emerging needs.

Identify enabling conditions

What partnerships, resources, capacities and ways of working are needed for success? This should look internally and externally.

Bridge the two periods

Specify practical actions to begin in 2028–2029 to prepare for priorities in 2030–2037.

Groupwork 3 | Key messages and next steps

Each group: 3-minute report

Share the three most important influences, three strategic directions and three enabling conditions.

Capture the full discussion

Complete the worksheet / Word record, including priority areas and preparatory actions.

Collective synthesis

Identify common priorities, areas of convergence and issues for further consideration.

After the workshop: IOC Secretariat consolidates findings and a draft report is circulated to WESTPAC Member States for comment.