Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
Reports of Governing and Major Subsidiary Bodies

Twenty-eighth Session of the Assembly
Paris, 18–25 June 2015
Recognizes that the current financial situation strongly limits the implementation of the tasks of the Group, ICGs and Inter-ICG Task Teams; and strongly urges the Member States to increase their extra-budgetary contributions to the IOC to provide the needed resources for the priorities identified by TOWS-WG and the Intergovernmental Coordination Groups (ICG);

Notes with concern that the Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre’s core financial resources to cover its operational expenses (including salaries) beyond December 2015 are currently non-existent;

Agrees that the regular budget for ICG activities will be identified as part of the overall IOC Programme and Budget resolution XXVIII-3.

8.3 HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS: 12TH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS (IPHAB), 28–30 APRIL 2015, UNESCO, PARIS

The Chair of the IOC Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms (IPHAB), Mr Gires Usup (Malaysia), introduced this item and presented the report, work plan, eight decisions and two recommendations of the 12th Session of the IOC Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms Paris, 28–30 April 2015.

The Chair IPHAB emphasized the decisions and recommendations made regarding: an international strategy for ciguatera fish poisoning, for the joint IOC-SCOR research initiative on HABs in a changing world to meet societal needs; the development of the Global HAB Status Report; long-term capacity building; and the regional development of the Programme. He also stressed the unique role IOC can play in resolving scientific issues and management solutions to the problems encountered by the desalination industry due to HABs, provided that the adequate extra-budgetary funds are identified for the Complementary Additional Programme.

The Chair advocated for participation of Member States in IPHAB sessions and recognition of the HAB programme in the appropriate national agencies and institutions.

The Chair IPHAB urged the IOC Member States to carefully match the HAB Programme work plan with national priorities and potential funding in order to actively interact with and support its implementation.

The Assembly expressed appreciation of the progress made and the priorities set for the biennium 2016–2017. Member States referred to the continuous, and in several cases, increasing major public health threats from neurotoxins, impact on aquaculture, massive fish kills, damage to coastal ecosystems, and impacts of Ciguatera Fish Poisoning (CFP). The Assembly acknowledged that HAB occurrences may be determined by both natural and anthropogenic factors and that the IOC should continue to pursue the science for improved management and mitigation through GlobalHAB. Particular importance was given to the interagency strategy on CFP under development and implementation. The Assembly recognized that the Global HAB Status Report will be important for informing public opinion and the broader international community.

The Assembly stressed the need for effective and continuous coordination between regional and global IOC activities on HAB to ensure benefits of complementarity and synergy.

Several Member States expressed their willingness to directly support work plan implementation; Spain expressed its willingness to support the continued publication of the IOC newsletter Harmful Algae News; the USA expressed it willingness to provide scientific expertise and financial resources to address CFP; Malaysia offered to host a workshop on biotoxins for South East Asia; and Colombia expressed commitment to contribute to capacity development activities on HAB. India expressed its wish to associate with IPHAB.
The representatives of 12 Member States took the floor. The following Member States chose to provide records of their plenary intervention on this agenda item for the informational annex to the meeting report: Australia, Canada, Colombia, France, India, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand.

**Decision IOC-XXVIII/8.3**

The Assembly,

- Recalling IOC Resolution XVI-4, which established the Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms,
- Having considered the Executive Summary Report of the 12th Session of the IOC Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms (IPHAB), its eight Decisions and two Recommendations and the work plan for 2016–2017 adopted at the Session (IOC/IPHAB-XII/3),
- Expresses its appreciation for the support for the HAB Programme provided by Member States through regional HAB groups, the IOC Science and Communication Centre on Harmful Algae, provision of experts, and through the provision of HAB data, and financial and in-kind contributions to IOC;
- Noting with satisfaction that IPHAB has continued to provide an efficient mechanism to respond to new HAB-related problems experienced by Member States, to leverage resources from diverse sources to focus on priority needs, and to establish partnerships with relevant organizations,
- Endorses the Executive Summary Report of IPHAB-XII and the recommendations contained therein (IOC/IPHAB-XII/3s);
- Agrees to the HAB Work Plan for 2016–2017 (Recommendation IPHAB-XII.2) and to consider it in the overall IOC Programme and Budget resolution XXVIII-3;
- Urges funding agencies and institutions in IOC Member States to assist in the mobilization of funding that will ensure the implementation of the IPHAB Work Plan for 2016–2017 (~US$ 460,000 for full implementation).

9. **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

9.1 REPORT OF THE INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IOC CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Chair of the Intersessional Working Group for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy, Prof. Adoté Blim Blivi introduced this item. He recalled that the IOC Executive Council, at its 47th session, through Decision EC-XLVII/Dec. 6.1, had decided to reconstitute the Intersessional Working Group for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy and had instructed the Chair of the Group to submit the final draft of the IOC Capacity Development Strategy and associated documentation to this session of the Assembly.

He reported that in response to IOC Circular Letter, 2531 (August 2014) 36 Member States designated members to the Intersessional Working Group. A first draft of a revised Strategic Plan was circulated to the members of the Group as well as to IOC programme managers by email on 1 December 2014. This resulted in 16 responses and a revised version of the Strategic Plan. A face-to-face meeting of the Intersessional Working Group was held at UNESCO Headquarters on 16–18 February 2015. The meeting was attended by 18 participants from 13 Member States. The meeting further revised the Strategic Plan document, “IOC Capacity Development Strategy for 2015-2021” including extensive background information in annexes. In order to ensure the widest possible awareness of the document amongst IOC