**APPENDIX 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EXECUTIVE PLANNING GROUP**

1. **Purpose**

The overall formulation of the Decade’s Implementation plan will be supported through two interlinked mechanisms, namely an Executive Planning Group (EPG) composed of appointed experts, and a Stakeholder Forum (SF) composed of institutional members representing various interest groups. The purpose of the EPG is to serve as an expert advisory body to the IOC governing bodies to support the development of an Implementation Plan for the Decade and the delivery of other activities needed to establish the Decade.

1. **Functions of the Executive Planning Group**

The EPG will meet its objectives through carrying out the following functions, in consultation with the SF:

* Provide recommendations on the form and structure of the Decade;
* Propose governance arrangements for implementing and for providing oversight of the Decade and its Programmes and Projects;
* Engage and consult relevant communities regarding contributions to the objectives of the Decade, with priority given to engaging early career scientists and disadvantaged groups and regions and to the science-policy interface, building on the outputs of regional and global consultations undertaken;
* Lead and coordinate communication, including around the intended purpose and expected results of the Decade, to all stakeholders and gather feedback, as appropriate;
* Develop a resource mobilization (business plan) for the Decade, including principles for handling the contributions to the Decade;
* Develop a high-level description of a Science Plan, aligned and in harmony with the goals of the Decade;
* Develop high-level plans for other objectives of the Decade, including potential actions, outputs and outcomes (benefits to be realized);
* Provide a draft Implementation Plan for the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development to the IOC governing bodies and, based on their decisions and directions, finalize the plan for consideration by the UNGA;
* Provide regular reports on progress through the Executive Secretary of IOC;
* Engage/consult with States and other stakeholders through relevant mechanisms;
* Any other activity referred by the IOC governing bodies.

1. **Establishment of an Executive Planning Group**

The core Planning Group will be an expert group composed of 16 to 20 experts. In addition, the IOC Chair and Executive Secretary will serve as ex-officio members.

The Executive Secretary will coordinate the work of the Planning Group. The Planning Group may appoint leaders to conduct specific tasks as relevant.

Members will be nominated through an open call for nominations. The call will be circulated through the following means:

* to IOC Member States via Circular Letter
* to relevant UN bodies via UN-Oceans
* to scientific networks using formal and informal communication mechanisms (for e.g. social media)
* to dedicated ocean policy, business, SD networks through announcements, e.g. news fora.

With the agreement of the Executive Planning Group, the Coordinator may invite on an ad hoc basis other experts representing a specific knowledge or experience that may be missing within the group to contribute to discussion of an agenda item of a given Planning Group meeting or specific task.

All members shall serve for the full term of the preparation phase. In case of resignation, inactivity or other issues affecting the performance of the Planning Group, the process used to select members of the Planning Group will be used to consider replacements or additions.

*Candidatures*

A Selection Panel (with the technical support of the IOC Secretariat), convened by the IOC Chair and composed of the IOC elected Officers, will be tasked with selecting members of the Planning Group.

The Selection Panel will ensure that the proposed members have sufficient skills, knowledge, authority and influence regarding the key objectives of the Decade and are able to undertake the work outlined in the terms of reference. Their skills and expertise should cover:

1. Intergovernmental processes and coordination;
2. The ocean aspects of sustainable development;
3. Ocean science as outlined in the Decade strategy;
4. The science-policy / decision / user interface;
5. Capacity building, training and technology transfer, and education; and
6. Development of large programmes / projects.

Consideration should be given to gender, age and regional balance (balancing developed and developing Member States interests), with the objectives of balancing knowledge and experience with new ideas and maintaining representativeness while maximizing overall effectiveness.

In the conduct of their selection work, the Vice-Chairs may consult as necessary with other expert bodies, networks, (IOC) Member States to assess the expertise of a candidate and ensuring additional positive endorsement in the concerned field of expertise. The Vice-Chairs will be under no obligation to follow the opinion issued.

1. **Terms of appointment**

The Planning Group and its membership will be appointed for the duration of the work with the Implementation Plan, and is not anticipated to be active beyond 2020, after the presentation of the Implementation Plan to the United Nations General Assembly for consideration during its seventy-fifth session. Experts nominated to the group will serve in their **personal capacity** and do not represent their institutions.

A candidature form will be prepared, specifying areas of relevant expertise of individual experts. By signing up, it is understood that the expert has received the authorization of his or her employer to dedicate time to the work of the Planning Group.

1. **Meetings**

The Planning Group will meet at least twice during its term, once during each of the IOC intersessional periods 2018–19 and 2019–20. Resources will be identified to support mission costs related to these meetings.

The Planning Group may convene further meetings [e.g. Skype meetings] after consultation with the IOC. Specific sub-groups may be established and mandated for conducting technical tasks relevant to the implementation plan as decided by the Planning Group. These technical working groups may meet as often as required by their members. The Executive Secretary or in his absence a designated representative will chair the Planning Group meetings.

Finally, the selected experts should be able to commit sufficient time to the work of the Planning Group and will take the responsibility to request the authorization of their employer to participate in this process.

1. **Decision-making process**

The Planning Group strives for consensus on all issues in providing recommendations and advice to the IOC governing bodies. Where no consensus can be reached, the IOC governing body at its next session will be informed of the situation.

1. **Secretariat**

The IOC Secretariat will provide administrative, technical and editorial support as required by the Planning Group.

1. **Review and reporting**

The output of the meetings will be checked against key strategic planning actions and timeframes.

The summaries of the planning group meetings will be made available on the Decade website. Each year, starting in 2019, the Planning Group will submit a report of its activities to the IOC Governing Bodies, as well as to UN-Oceans