

## Call for Applications

### IOCAFRICA Ocean-Climate Working Group

#### 1. Background and Rationale

Africa's coastal and marine ecosystems are among the most vulnerable to the accelerating impacts of climate change. With over 30,000 km of coastline and more than 1.5 million km<sup>2</sup> of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), the continent's populations and economies are deeply dependent on healthy ocean systems. Yet African nations continue to face compounding challenges rooted in extreme weather events, limited adaptive capacity, insufficient scientific capacity, and fragmented institutional coordination.

At its Eighth Session, the Sub-Commission endorsed the establishment of the IOCAFRICA Ocean-Climate Working Group through [Decision IOCAFRICA-VIII/4.6](#). The Working Group is established as a dedicated strategic and technical platform to support IOCAFRICA and its Member States in navigating the ocean-climate nexus – mobilising scientific expertise, strengthening regional coordination, enhancing knowledge exchange, and supporting evidence-based policy development at national, regional, and global levels.

The Working Group is aligned with the [IOC Medium-Term Strategy \(2022–2029\)](#), the Africa Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy (2022–2032), and the Ocean Decade Africa Roadmap.

#### 2. Objectives of the Working Group

The Working Group will:

- Advise the IOCAFRICA Secretariat and Member States on key ocean-climate issues, including climate impacts on ocean biogeochemistry, ecosystems, and coastal communities.
- Support Member States in integrating ocean-based solutions and blue carbon ecosystems into their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and Long-Term Low-Emissions Development Strategies (LT-LEDS).
- Support African delegations during mandated UNFCCC sessions by developing opinion papers and providing technical background papers to support submissions and country positions.
- Represent IOCAFRICA at key global processes including the UNFCCC COP and the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue.
- Develop and disseminate policy briefs, technical guidance documents, and synthesis reports for decision-makers.
- Facilitate peer learning and capacity building through webinars, workshops, and mentorship programmes.
- Identify and pursue funding opportunities for ocean-based climate action across the continent.

#### 3. Composition

The Working Group will be composed of up to 15 members selected through this open call for applications. Selections will ensure geographical, gender, and generational balance, and will reflect

diversity across the thematic areas listed below. Members will serve an initial renewable two-year term (2026–2028).

#### 4. Thematic Areas of Expertise

Applications are invited from experts with demonstrated expertise in one or more of the following thematic areas:

- **Ocean-Climate Science:** including the effects of climate change on the ocean such as ocean warming, acidification, deoxygenation and sea-level rise, ocean mitigation action, and their implications for weather systems
- **Marine Ecosystems and Blue Carbon:** including the role of coastal and marine ecosystems such as mangroves, seagrasses, and saltmarshes in climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration and storage, and ecosystem-based adaptation
- **Ocean Observations and Data:** including climate-relevant ocean monitoring systems, data infrastructure, and the application of ocean data to climate modelling and early warning systems
- **Coastal Adaptation and Livelihoods:** including climate-resilient coastal management, community-based adaptation, and the social and economic impacts of climate change on coastal populations
- **Policy, Governance and Negotiations:** including ocean-related climate policy, international climate negotiations, marine spatial planning, and the governance of ocean-based climate solutions
- **Ocean Finance and Ocean Economy:** including climate finance mechanisms for ocean and coastal sectors, blue bonds, insurance instruments, and the economics of climate risk and resilience in ocean-dependent industries.

Interdisciplinary backgrounds are strongly encouraged. The Working Group aims to bring together a balance of scientific and technical profiles alongside policy, governance, and applied expertise. Applicants should indicate clearly how their work is situated at the ocean–climate interface.

#### 5. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Have demonstrated expertise in at least one of the thematic areas listed in Section 4
- Hold an active institutional affiliation with a recognised government body, research institution, intergovernmental organisation, or civil society organisation
- Be available to commit to the full initial two-year term (2026–2028), including participation in quarterly meetings and at least one in-person meeting per year.

Prior engagement with formal UNFCCC processes such as the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies (SBs), the Conference of the Parties (COP), the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue, or equivalent regional and international platforms is desirable but not mandatory. Experts with strong scientific, technical, operational, or applied experience who engage with climate and ocean issues in other capacities are equally encouraged to apply.

Early-career researchers, women scientists, and experts from Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and underrepresented subregions are strongly encouraged to apply.

## 6. Expected Contributions from Members

Working Group members will be expected to:

- Participate in quarterly virtual meetings and at least one annual in-person meeting
- Contribute to the development of policy briefs, technical reports, and the annual flagship report on ocean-climate trends in Africa
- Contribute to the development of supporting technical material for African delegates at relevant regional and international events, including UNFCCC COPs and the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue
- Support the integration of ocean-based actions into national climate instruments such as NDCs, NAPs, and LT-LEDS
- Contribute to capacity development initiatives and thematic sub-groups as needed
- Submit a short activity report to the Secretariat on a quarterly basis.

Members may be invited to lead or co-lead specific outputs such as policy briefs or opinion papers based on their area of expertise. Advisory, peer review, and technical input roles are equally integral to the Working Group's functioning, and not all members will be expected to take on lead authorship responsibilities. The Secretariat will work with members to identify the most appropriate form of contribution.

Travel and participation costs for designated in-person meetings will be supported subject to resource availability.

## 7. Application Process

Interested experts are invited to complete an online application form available [here](#).

**Application Deadline: 29 May 2026**

## 8. Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by a selection panel convened by the IOCAFRICA Secretariat in consultation with relevant IOC programmes and partner institutions. Selection criteria will include demonstrated expertise, evidence of UNFCCC engagement, disciplinary and geographic diversity, and gender balance. Successful applicants will be notified by 10 June 2026.

## 9. Further Information

For the full Terms of Reference of the Working Group, please see [Decision IOCAFRICA-VIII/4.6](#).