The presentation on the IOC’s Sub Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States will cover the following:

- Background information on the Sub Commission
- Areas of focus identified by the Sub Commission
- Examples of Activities planned/implemented by IOCAFRICA
- Opportunities for collaboration.
The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO was established in 1960 as a specialized mechanism of the United Nations system to coordinate ocean scientific research and services worldwide. The purpose of the Commission is to promote international cooperation and to coordinate programme in research, services, and capacity building in order to learn more about the nature and resources of the oceans and coastal areas and to apply that knowledge for the improvement of management, sustainable development, the protection of the marine environment, and the decision making processes of its Member States.
The IOC has a long tradition of implementing regional programmes and regional components of its global programmes through Regional Subsidiary Bodies and IOC Decentralized Offices. These can be classed into the following categories:

(i) Regional Sub Commissions
(ii) Regional Committees
(iii) Programme and Project Offices

IOC also has a network of UNESCO Chairs that contribute to its capacity development programmes.

We have three Sub Commissions covering the following regions:

(i) IOCAFRICA – Africa and the Adjacent Island States, with secretariat in Nairobi, Kenya
(ii) IOCARIBE – covering the Carribean and Adjacent regions, with secretariat in Cartagena, Colombo
(iii) IOC/WESTPAC – covering the Western Pacific region, with secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand.
IOCAFRICA was established by in 2011 as a framework to improve IOC visibility to facilitate coordination among Member States in the region, and to ensure the efficient implementation of IOC programme in Africa.

IOCAFRICA aims to promote scientific research and understanding of the ocean and coastal environment and resources, and provide the science-base necessary for the development of the Blue Economy in Africa as outlined in the African Union’s Agenda 2063 (“The Africa We want”), and the 2050 African Integrated Marine Strategic Plan of Action (AIMS2050).
IOCAFRICA Member States have identified five thematic areas that need to be addressed to enable the Sub Commission achieve its objectives. These are:

1. Ocean Observations and Monitoring
2. Ocean Sciences and Assessments
3. Ocean Data and Information Management
4. Capacity Development in Marine Science and Technology
5. Public Awareness and Science-Policy Interface.

I will briefly outline some of the activities that are implemented or planned under each of these themes.
The following activities were identified under Ocean Observations and Monitoring
(i) Surveys and monitoring of essential oceanographic and meteorological parameters, to develop tools in support of ocean modelling and forecasting, early warning for ocean related hazards, as well as food security and sustainable development
(ii) Inventory of previous ocean related hazards and extreme events (frequency, intensity, etc.) and mapping of vulnerable areas
(iii) Survey and mapping of marine ecosystems to facilitate and support the development of ecosystem services
(iv) Establishment the IOCAFRICA Group of Experts on Ocean Observations and Monitoring to develop a detailed proposal for Ocean Observations and monitoring
For Ocean Sciences and Assessments the following activities were proposed:
(i) Climate change and vulnerability, ocean acidification
(ii) Ocean modelling and forecasting (including extreme weather events such as storm surges)
(iii) Monitoring trends in ecosystem degradation
(iv) Monitoring of Harmful Algal Blooms and biomarker indicators
(v) Marine Biodiversity and baseline surveys
(vi) Marine Spatial Planning to zone different activities (fishing, tourism, aquaculture, mining, dredging, dumping etc)
(vii) Establishment the IOCAFRICA Group of Experts on Ocean Sciences and Assessments to develop a detailed proposal for Ocean Sciences and Assessments taking into account IOCAFRICA programme for Harmful Algal Blooms and the need to collect standardized baseline information for relevant parameters
IOCAFRICA intends to build on the achievements of ODINAFRICA by implementing the following activities:

(i) Improving access to ocean data and information
(ii) Updating the African Coastal and Marine Atlases
(iii) Developing a marine biodiversity and biogeography programme
(iv) Preparation of ocean data and information products for Sustainable Development of the Ocean and Coastal regions (including the use/implementation of marine spatial planning)
(v) Updating of the databases created (experts, institutions, and projects)
(vi) Developing an African Ocean Data portal
(vii) Establishment of the IOCAFRICA Group of Experts on Ocean Data and Information Management
Capacity development continues to be an important plank of the IOCAFRICA work plan with the following priorities identified:

(i) Development of an IOCAFRICA Capacity Development portal
(ii) Continuous professional development for marine scientists from the region
(iii) Strengthening and development of regional training centers
(iv) Strengthening ocean science programmes in African Universities, Mentorship and programmes targeting youth and female scientists
(v) Mentorship and programmes targeting youth and female scientists
(vi) Organize training courses and workshops on the following topics: Operational oceanography, Ocean modeling and forecasting, Marine biodiversity, Marine spatial planning, and Identification of HABs
(vii) Establishment IOCAFRICA Group of Experts on Capacity Development and Awareness to assist in the development and coordination of relevant activities
The following activities are planned under Public Awareness and Science Policy interface

i) Support for activities to mark World Ocean Day and African Day of Oceans and Seas
(ii) Developing partnerships and linkages with other organizations, programmes and projects
(iii) Public awareness and advocacy activities
(iv) The organization of a Pan African Conference on Marine Science and Technology in October 2018. This will provide an opportunity to take stock on the progress that has been made in marine sciences in the region in the twenty years since the Pan African Conference on Sustainable Integrated Coastal Management (1998, Maputo, Mozambique) and chart the way forward for the region, taking into account the frameworks that have been adopted such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the African Unions Agenda 2063 and the 2050 African Integrated Maritime Strategic Plan of Action (AIMS2050).

The session welcomed the offer of Egypt to host the conference in Sharm El Sheikh.
We hope that this brief overview has provided you with a useful insight on the activities of IOCAFRICA. We hope that you will be able to play an active role in the activities of UNESCO and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.

One Ocean – One Planet

Thank you!

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