

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION

Bureau and Consultative Committee

Second Meeting, Moscow, 6-8 May 1963

Summary Report

The meeting was convened in rooms of the USSR State Committee for the Coordination of Scientific Research, under the chairmanship of Dr. William Cameron, Chairman of the Commission. A list of the participants is attached (Annex I). The agenda for the meeting was approved (Annex II). A summary of the discussions and decisions of the Bureau follows.

1. Current Status of Implementation of IOC Resolutions

a) Coordination of the International Indian Ocean Expedition

In accordance with Resolution 3, many of the countries participating in the Expedition have appointed national coordinators. Experts in several fields of physical and biological oceanography have been appointed by SCOR to review the status of work in these fields, and preliminary reports have been presented to SCOR. Although no expert has yet been appointed in the field of geology and geophysics, there appear to be several problems concerning the preparation of bathymetric charts which would merit review by a specialist. A subject leader for the fisheries aspects of the Expedition has been appointed.

The Bureau considered that one of the principal requirements for coordination was to facilitate the exchange of information between participants. This exchange could be effected in part by the Secretariat, and participating countries were urged to supply such information for distribution. It was agreed that a meeting of the national coordinators and appointed experts should be held in order to improve inter-communication. The exchange of data is an important element of this problem, and the Bureau decided to hold the coordinating meeting at about the same time as the meeting of the working group on data exchange, before the next session of the Commission and preferably in late January, 1964.

A proposal of the USSR, concerning geological and geophysical studies along one or two meridional sections in the Indian Ocean, was referred to national coordinators for their review and subsequent discussions at the coordinating meeting.

In connection with the Unesco plan to issue collected reprints of the Expedition, the representative of the United Kingdom suggested that these should be accompanied by lists of available translations of the papers into other languages.

b) International Cooperative Investigations of the Tropical Atlantic

A report from the International Coordinator was transmitted by a representative of the United States. The first phase of the investigations, EQUALANT I, has been completed. Preliminary results will be discussed at a coordinating meeting in July. Plans are proceeding satisfactorily for EQUALANT II, and an additional survey is being considered for the mid-winter period of 1964. The Bureau noted with satisfaction the accomplishments to date, and commended the Coordinator and participants for their outstanding work.

c) General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans

Implications of the proposal of the USSR to prepare and publish GEBCO at its own expense were discussed. It was recognized that time is required for IHB to circulate this proposal among its member states. Support appears to be widespread among the countries represented on the Bureau and Consultative Committee. The Bureau hoped that IHB would find it possible to accept the USSR proposal, and a small working group of hydrographers was appointed to draft a statement on this matter (Annex III).

It was noted that plotting sheets on the scale 1/1,000,000, prepared by the hydrographic services of cooperating countries, are required however GEBCO is to be produced, and the more rapid production of GEBCO will require a more rapid completion of these sheets. The USSR is prepared to study in detail the possibility of assuming responsibility for plotting sheets in the IHB areas B III, C III and C IV, and of furnishing data to hydrographic services responsible for other areas.

d) South Atlantic Cooperative Investigation

Captain Capurro reported that two cruises had been completed under this program and a third was about to begin. Data have been processed by the National Oceanographic Data Center in Washington, and a classical study of the results is underway. The circulation in the region is complex, and time variations are significant. Principal needs are for a physical oceanographer to assist in the evaluation of data and the planning of future cruises, and for a ship equipped with modern current-measuring devices (such as recording buoy systems) to carry out studies in the region of the convergence.

It was proposed that Unesco's provision for a physical oceanographer in Latin America be used to provide this assistance, and that the Secretary try to find a suitable vessel to carry out the current-measuring work. The representative of the USSR indicated that a Soviet ship and oceanographers might be made available. A representative of the USA also indicated that his country would consider the possibility of assistance. It was considered desirable that the South Atlantic Investigations be closely related to those in the tropical Atlantic (ICITA) where practicable.

e) Cooperative Study of the Kuroshio and adjacent regions

The representative of Japan reported that plans were proceeding for a November meeting to develop a program for consideration by IOC. The meeting would be sponsored by Unesco, IOC, the Japanese National Commission for Unesco, the Japanese National Oceanographic Committee, and the Oceanographic Society of Japan. A one-day symposium at which present knowledge of the Kuroshio system would be summarized, would be followed by several days of discussions on the details of possible joint studies of the region. No work at sea is proposed before 1965 at the earliest. This scheme was endorsed by the Bureau, and the Secretary was instructed to proceed with the necessary arrangements.

f) ICNAF environmental study

Action of the Secretariat on this study has been limited to an exchange of information with the ICNAF coordinator. The Bureau considered that this exchange should be continued and that the ICNAF coordinator should be kept fully informed of the development of the ICITA project.

g) Fixed Oceanographic Stations

The study of the legal aspects of fixed oceanographic stations being carried out by the legal services of Unesco and IMCO is proceeding satisfactorily, although so far only a few countries have submitted information concerning domestic legal procedures pertaining to fixed oceanographic stations. Information on existing facilities is being received from members, and it appears that preparation of the world chart of the existing network and accompanying reference publication will soon be possible. The representative of the United Kingdom stated that the British Admiralty was prepared to print both the world chart and the accompanying publication.

The safety aspects of fixed oceanographic stations have been brought to the attention of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Secretary-General of IMCO. It now seems likely that positive action will be taken on this matter by the Maritime Safety Committee before the next session of IOC.

In view of the satisfactory progress being made in this field, it was decided that no meeting of the working group would be required during 1963.

h) Communications

The Bureau acknowledged with gratitude the important assistance given by the International Frequency Registration Board in developing a sound procedure for solving the technical problems, and in urging its members to assist the oceanographers in meeting their requirements.

Resolution 16 of the Second Session called for the convening of a meeting of experts representing national telecommunication, oceanographic and meteorological authorities. In view of the proposal that frequencies

be allocated within the frequency bands of the maritime mobile service it is desirable that maritime authorities also be included. The meeting should coordinate the allocation and use of specific radio channels among the members of IOC, and prepare the case for the international allocation of these and other frequencies for oceanographic purposes for consideration by the appropriate body of the International Telecommunications Union. The Bureau considered that it would be difficult to convene the meeting as early as contemplated, and instructed the Secretary to convene it at the earliest possible date after 1 September 1963.

A decision on convening a working group to discuss the coordination of meteorological and oceanographic data transmission from fixed oceanographic stations was deferred until the next session of the Bureau.

i) Data Exchange

Reports have been received from both WDC-A and ICES concerning their acquisitions of oceanographic data collected since 1 January 1960. Similar information has not been received from WDC-B. A representative of the USSR explained that a recent meeting of the International Geophysical Committee (March 1963) had adopted a new guide for World Data Centers and had endorsed the position that the exchange of oceanographic data should be accomplished in accordance with the technical specifications of the IOC. This approval by IGC provides the authorization required by WDC-B, and that Center is now preparing a list of acquisitions to be sent to the IOC Secretariat. The desirability of having data sent simultaneously to both Centers was emphasized.

The Secretary was instructed to circulate copies of the Provisional Guide for Exchange of Oceanographic Data to members asking for their review of its contents, in preparation for revision at the next meeting of the Working Group on Data Exchange. The meeting should be held in late January, 1964, and all members and relevant organizations should be asked to participate.

National programs have been received from many members, and are being published in the newsletter International Marine Science. The Bureau encouraged members to continue sending such information, so that the national programs of each country from 1 January 1960 would be available to all members and interested organizations.

j) Other Resolutions

Progress in implementation of other resolutions was reviewed. The following received particular attention :

Resolution 6 : The desirability of conducting international synchronous "standard sections" was the subject of much discussion at the SCOR symposium on the General Scientific Framework. In view of this discussion and the great interest of several members of the Commission, the Secretary was instructed to collect additional information from members on the possibility of their participation in an international network of such "standard sections".

Resolution 10 : A representative of the USA reported that nine countries were now participating in the Seismic Sea Wave Warning System, but that there was a serious gap in tidal and seismic information from the Kurile-Kamchatka region. A representative of the USSR indicated that there were observational stations in this region, and that the possibility of USSR participation in the system was under study.

Resolution 14 : The establishment of a working group on the speedy utilization of synoptic oceanographic data by the ACMRR of FAO was reported. The daily transmission of oceanographic data has been attempted on an experimental basis during EQUALANT I. Members were encouraged to submit information on the status of work in this field, as recommended in the Resolution.

Resolution 22 : The problem of how members could best assist the Secretariat in performing its tasks was discussed. It was concluded that most useful assistance could be provided by the temporary secondment of specialists at the members' expense to aid the Secretary in the organization and preparation of working papers for meetings of the IOC and its subsidiary organs. This proposal was warmly endorsed by representatives of several countries present. It was noted that the forthcoming meetings of working groups on communications and data exchange would provide a good opportunity for such assistance.

2.1 Activities of SCOR

The Secretariat's report on the recent meeting of SCOR in Halifax was noted. The following points were discussed :

b) General Scientific Framework

In commencing its work in this problem, SCOR obtained comments from some of its national committees, and then organized a symposium at which the scientific aspects of the problem were discussed. A SCOR working group, consisting of Drs. Revelle, Deacon and Kort, was established with the following task :

- 1) to report on the Symposium on GSF conducted at Halifax;
- 2) to have further contact with national committees and scientists so that the discussions at Halifax can be further developed;
- 3) to report on the value of a GSF;
- 4) to prepare a statement for transmission to IOC.

The Bureau expressed its hope that the Working Group would present a statement in time for consideration by the next Bureau meeting.

The representative of the United Kingdom drew the attention of the Bureau to the view expressed by some participants of the SCOR meeting that "... the GSF, if improperly drawn or inadequately kept up to date, could be used to influence governments to give their support entirely to large-scale cooperative programmes to the detriment of individual scientific research".

c) Standardization and Intercalibration

A symposium on this subject was held by SCOR which made the following recommendations (as summarised by the Secretary) to the Bureau :

1. National committees should be encouraged to continue their work on the examination of oceanographic techniques.
2. Provision for international tests for the intercomparison of methods should be made in the Unesco programme for 1965/66. The Scripps Institution of Oceanography may be able to provide the use of a research vessel and shore facilities for this purpose.
3. Unesco should consider the publication of a series of monographs on various aspects of oceanographic methodology. Only methods which have been internationally endorsed or recommended by a national committee should be included. The purpose of Unesco publication would be to give international backing and distribution to these methods and to encourage their widespread use.

These recommendations were accepted by the Bureau which commended the work of SCOR and Unesco and the interest now being shown by members on this problem. The Secretary was instructed to draw these recommendations to the attention of Unesco. The representative of Japan suggested that the experience of participants in the IIOE on the use of various methods should be reported to the Secretary and made available to all members.

d) Second Oceanographic Congress

The IOC Bureau warmly endorsed the draft programme of the 2nd International Oceanographic Congress prepared by SCOR (see Annex IV). The Bureau's opinion is that this draft provides a good basis for further work in organizing the Congress; as a preliminary programme it is, of course, still open for discussion and suggestions by IOC members.

The Bureau was informed by representatives of the USSR concerning their readiness to study in detail the possibility of holding the Second Oceanographic Congress in the USSR upon receipt from the Bureau of a formal proposal to have the Congress there, and to report the results of this study to the next Bureau meeting. As to the date of the Congress, an opinion was expressed that it should be selected so as not to conflict with the Pacific Science Congress scheduled for late 1965 in Tokyo, or with the IUGG Assembly scheduled for 1966.

2.2 FAO Advisory Committee on Marine Resources Research

Conclusions and recommendations of the first meeting of ACMRR (Rome, 28 January to 2 February 1963) were examined. The Bureau noted with pleasure the serious consideration of IOC problems given by the Committee, and expressed its desire for continuing close cooperation between ACMRR and IOC.

A representative of the USSR stated that the report was being studied by fishery authorities in his country, who considered it to be a most constructive and useful document. With regard to participation in the work

of the Committee, the Soviet authorities were prepared to make available two Soviet scientists, as suggested in Resolution 15 of the Second Session of IOC. The Bureau then decided to recommend the following scientists for consideration by the Director-General of FAO :

Dr. G.K. Izhevsky, All-Union Research Institute of Marine Fisheries and Oceanography,

Dr. A.P. Alekseev, Polar Research Institute of Marine Fisheries and Oceanography.

3. Other General IOC Problems

Details of Unesco marine science program for 1963 were examined and approved. It was noted that the general framework of this program for 1963/64 was established by action of the Unesco General Conference, and could not be significantly modified. The Secretary was requested to submit a report on the proposed program for 1965/66 at the next meeting of the Bureau.

It was recognized that many of the delays in implementation of recommendations of IOC and its Bureau could be attributed to inadequate dissemination of information by official addressees of IOC communications. Members were urged to take the necessary action to improve the distribution of information on the national level. The Secretary was instructed to explore ways and means of developing better communications between his office and members.

The relationship between IOC and Unesco was examined. The Secretariat presented an estimate of the total cost to Unesco of support for IOC activities which was of the order of \$ 80,000 per year. The Bureau recognized with appreciation the magnitude of Unesco support. Although some scientists have expressed the belief that ultimately it may be desirable to establish an independent agency for marine science within the UN system, members of the Bureau and Consultative Committee felt that the present arrangements were working very well, and that the association of IOC and Unesco was of great value to both organizations. However, it was considered important to keep under review the relation between the Unesco marine science program and IOC activities as it effects the ability of the Secretariat to cope with its responsibilities to IOC.

The Chairman read a letter from the Chargé d'Affaires of the German Federal Republic in Moscow, expressing his regret that due to delays in the granting of visas, the German delegation was unable to attend the meeting. A representative of the USSR reported that the visas had been authorized on 4 May.

The Bureau noted the plan of SCOR to hold the next meeting of its Executive Committee in association with that of the IOC Bureau. It was decided that the meeting of the Bureau and Consultative Committee should be at Unesco House in Paris, and that the dates of 28 to 31 October would be suitable. Provision of simultaneous English-Russian interpretation would do much to increase the efficiency of the discussions.