IOC Circular Letter No.2222
(Available in English only)

To: Members of the IOC Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms (IPHAB)
IOC Member States Action Addresses;

cc.: Chairman, Vice-Chairmen IOC
Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen IOC Intergovernmental Subsidiary Bodies
Permanent Delegations/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
President and Executive Director SCOR
Executive Director ICSU
Relevant Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations

Subject: Eighth Session of the IOC Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms

Dear Madam/Sir,

On behalf of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) I have the pleasure
in inviting you, in your capacity as representative of your country, to take part in IPHAB-VIII,
which will be held 17-20 April 2007, at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France.

The Panel was formed in accordance with Resolution XVI-4, adopted by the Sixteenth
Session of the IOC Assembly (March 1991). At its Twenty-third Session (July 2005), by its
Resolution IOC-XXIII.2, the IOC Assembly decided to convene an eighth session of the IPHAB in
order to maintain and accelerate momentum in the development and implementation of the HAB
Programme.

.../...
Resolution IOC-XXIII.2 with Annexes, and the Terms of Reference of the IPHAB, are enclosed herewith.

The basic reason to form the IPHAB was the need to improve the managerial, scientific and financial resources available for implementation of a global HAB Programme. A primary task is still to identify the required resources, so that we the international community jointly can continue to implement activities addressing capacity building, international cooperative research, and communication networks.

For those Member States who have not already (as a response to IOC Circular Letter 1323 of 12 November 1991) provided the Secretary IOC with a letter of intention to participate actively in the HAB Programme as well as help provide adequate support and resources, we would in particular want to bring attention to the composition of the IPHAB as in Annex XVI-4 (revised):

"The membership of the IPHAB is open to Member States of IOC which have declared to the Secretary IOC their involvement or intention to participate in the development and implementation of the HAB Programme on a global, regional, or national scale. The Panel shall include representatives of IOC Regional or other subsidiary bodies, and other interested international organizations particularly SCOR. Invitations to participate in the IPHAB activities may be extended to scientific experts at the request of the Panel and with the approval of Secretary IOC."

Member States, who did not provide the Secretary IOC with a letter of interest and a nomination of their representative to the IPHAB, are hereby invited to do so.

Member States who wish to change their nomination for the IPHAB are invited to inform the Secretary IOC accordingly.

It is crucial to the effectiveness of the IPHAB that the representatives to be nominated do have responsibilities for national HAB science or management activities, and that their seats on the Panel are acknowledged at the appropriate national level. It is through the nominations for IPHAB that Member States decides how strong and visible the Panel gets.

We also want to bring to your attention section 3 of the Annex to Resolution XVI-4 on the organization of the sessions and especially its paragraph 3.2. In accordance with the name of the IPHAB, it is intergovernmental and the meeting will be considered as a UNESCO category II. Members of the IPHAB participating in the capacity of national representatives are expected to support their travel and per diem expenses from national sources.

IPHAB Sessions will be conducted and documentation be furnished in English. Reports of the Session will be prepared in English and in other working languages of the IOC as appropriate and required. The draft Provisional Agenda is attached. The Provisional Agenda and other documents for the Session will be sent to Members of the IPHAB in due time, and will also be available at the IPHAB home page at http://ioc.unesco.org/hab/act2.htm.
The major focus of the Eighth Session of IPHAB is tentatively:

1. **Capacity building:** Based on the strategic plan for capacity building adopted by the Sixth Session of the Panel, assess progress and actions to be taken to its further implementation;

2. **The GEOHAB Research Programme:** Assessment of advances in GEOHAB implementation and identification of IPHAB assistance required;

3. **Biotoxin Regulation:** Identification of priorities 2008-2009 for the IPHAB Task Team on Biotoxins Regulation. This will be based on a review of the inter-sessional activities of the IPHAB Task Team on Biotoxins

4. **HAB Databases:** Status and priorities 2008-2013 for HAB related data and meta databases including HAE-DAT, MON-DAT, HAB-DIR and the IOC Reference List of Toxic Microalgae. Included herein how to strengthen regional ownership in these databases where relevant and assessment of interaction and cooperation between the IPHAB Task Team on Taxonomy and HAE-DAT with the ISSHA HAB-MAP initiative. Discussion of strategy for cooperation and integration with products of the International Ocean Data Exchange programme of IOC, IODE;

5. **Formulation/endorsement of specific objectives for regional activities:** Strengthening of regional HAB Programme components though formulation and endorsement of specific objectives for regional activities based on input from regional HAB Working Groups;

6. **HAB observations and their inclusion in GOOS Regional Alliances:**

The Agenda is furthermore open to the priorities of Member States.

Based on its discussions the IPHAB will recommend to the IOC Assembly a work plan for the IOC HAB Programme for 2008-2009.

**We would be grateful to be informed as soon as possible, and preferably not later than by 1 March 2007, of your Governments position with regard to:**

1. **Attendance at the Eighth Session of the IPHAB**

2. **Comments to the draft Agenda, and suggestions for additional items requiring intergovernmental attention.**

3. **Nominations for Chair and Vice-chair IPHAB**
Thank you for your interest and co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Patricio Bernal
Assistant Director-General, UNESCO
Executive Secretary, IOC

Enclosures: Resolutions IOC-XXIII.2 with Annexes and Terms of Reference of the IPHAB.
Resolution XXIII-2

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE IOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS (IPHAB)

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

Having considered the Executive Summary Report of the 7th Session of the IOC Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms (IPHAB) and the Workplan for 2006-2007 adopted at the Session (IOC/IPHAB-VII/3),

Accepts the Report, including the four Resolutions and six Recommendations of IPHAB-VII;

Decides to act on the following Recommendations:

Recommendation IPHAB-VII.1: GEOHAB Development

Urges Member States to provide resources for the establishment of an International Programme Office for GEOHAB;

Recommendation IPHAB-VII.2: Assessment of the Potential Effect of Tsunamis on the Temporal and Spatial Changes in Ciguatera Occurrence

Calls on the IOC Executive Secretary to take this IPHAB Recommendation fully into account in IOC follow-up of the tsunami catastrophe of 26 December 2004 in the Indian Ocean;


Endorses the proposed HAB Workplan 2006-2007 within the limits of the relevant resources in the Regular Programme and of the extra-budgetary resources identified for this purpose;

Recommendation IPHAB-VII.6: Operation of the IOC Intergovernmental Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms

Instructs the IOC Executive Secretary to convene the 8th Session of the Panel prior to the 24th Session of the Assembly.

Identified funding (2006–2007):

US$ 52,000 from MLA 1*
US$ 543,000 from expected Extra-budgetary resources
US$ 370,000 from Extra-budgetary resources to be identified

* this funding depends on the approval of the IOC budget for 2006–2007 by the UNESCO General Conference at the level currently reflected in the draft 33 C/5 (Draft Programme and Budget for 2006–2007).