

Oceans and the Law of the Sea

Report of the Secretary General

Contribution from the Intergovernmental  
Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC)

January 2015

### Summary

UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) promotes international cooperation and coordinates programmes in marine research, services, observation systems, hazard mitigation, and capacity development in order to understand and effectively manage the resources of the ocean and coastal areas. By applying this knowledge, IOC aims to foster sustainable development of the marine environment, in particular in developing countries through its activities in the following

to providing information and data exchange on the physical, chemical, and biological aspects of the ocean. The development of GOOS is driven by the data and information requirements for sustainable development.

(ii) Ocean assessments to support decision making

As part of a new project the Development of Information Products and Services for Ocean Assessments (DIPSOcean Assessments), IOC will develop methods and tools for obtaining indices on marine biodiversity u





have typically focused on well-studied vertebrate taxa, because these are the species for which we have sufficient data to robustly detect trends. While such indices have proved to be useful scientific and policy tools, they ignore most of Earth's biodiversity that exists in poorly studied taxonomic groups.

As part of a new project called the Development of Information Products and Services for Ocean Assessments (DIPS4-Ocean Assessments) under the framework of the UNESCO/Flanders Fund for the support of UNESCO's activities in the field of Science (FUST), IOC will develop methods and tools for obtaining indices on marine biodiversity using the largest open-access database on the diversity, distribution and abundance of all marine life forms, the IOUNESCO's Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS). The information resulting from this project will serve major global assessments on the state of the marine environment, such as the UN World Ocean Assessment and those that assess the state of the world's oceans.

assessment and management of the marine environment such as the World Ocean Assessment and Regional Seas Programmes.

