IOC Circular Letter No. 2358
(Available in English, French, Spanish, Russian)

To: Official National Coordinating Body for liaison with the IOC of IOC Member States
   IODE National Coordinators for Oceanographic Data Management
   IODE National Coordinators for Marine Information Management
   Directors of WDCs (Oceanography, Marine Geology & Geophysics), NODCs & DNA's

Cc: Co-Chairs of the IOC Committee on IODE
    Chairman of the Subsidiary Bodies of the Committee on IODE
    Chairman of the IOC Scientific & Regional Committees
    Co-presidents JCOMM
    Chairman of the GOOS Steering Committee
    Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee for GOOS (I-GOOS)
    Permanent Delegations/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
    National Commissions of IOC Member States
    Officers of IOC Major Subsidiary Bodies

Subject: TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE IOC COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OCEANOGRAPHIC DATA AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE (IODE-XXI), LIEGE, BELGIUM, 23-26 March 2011

I have the pleasure of inviting you to participate in the Twenty-first Session of the IOC Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE), to be held from 23 to 26 March 2011 in Liège, Belgium.

You are kindly requested to inform us at your earliest convenience on your participation in the above event and forward the names of your delegation. It would be appreciated if delegations would be composed of both experts in data management and experts in marine information management. We will be grateful if you can inform us of the names, contact addresses and e-mail addresses of your representatives so we can easily contact them and add their details to the IODE-XXI web page.
This Session of the IODE Committee is preceded by the “IODE 50th Anniversary International Conference” (Liège, 21-22 March 2011). The IODE Committee Session will therefore have a duration of 4 days (instead of the usual 5). It will be essential to focus the work of the Session on vision, strategy and work plan, rather than on informing the Committee of past activities. We would like to request that reporting on past activities is done well in advance in writing, and that participants study reports and other working documents prior to the Session and prepare their comments for brief constructive discussions at the Session. In this regard we wish to inform you that standard formats for National/WDC reports will be made available shortly (through the IODE website). A format for working documents will also be provided. This will follow the style of the IOC Governing Body meetings so we can make the most effective use of the time available.

All documentation will be made available through the IODE website through http://www.iode.org/iode21. You are kindly invited to download all documentation from the website. Only a limited number of copies of working documents will be available in printed form at the Session. Due to the considerable cost of simultaneous interpretation and limited funds it will not be possible to provide interpretation. An online survey of all IODE national coordinators was organized in this regard. The majority of respondents recommended that, bearing in mind the cost, neither translation of documents or simultaneous interpretation should be organized. We apologize sincerely for any inconvenience caused. The working language of the Session will therefore be English.

We remind participants that participation in IODE Committee Sessions is part of the national contribution to the IODE programme. IOC can regrettably not provide financial assistance for participation in IODE Sessions.

The Provisional Agenda is attached. Practical information on venue and hotel accommodation will be made available on the IODE website.

In order to enable us to make all necessary practical arrangements with the local host, we will appreciate your reply at your earliest convenience. Responses should be sent to Mr. Peter Pissierssens, Head of the IOC Project Office for IODE (e-mail: p.pissierssens@unesco.org or fax: +32-59-79 52 20).

Looking forward to a successful Session I remain, yours sincerely,

Dr. Wendy Watson-Wright
Assistant Director-General, UNESCO
Executive Secretary, IOC

Enclosure: IODE-XX Provisional Agenda