

Cables for Climate!

Contact us
greenstandard@itu.int

Consider ways to further promote the implementation of the legal regime, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and other instruments, for the protection of submarine cables, including awareness building and mobilization of support at the national and global levels;

Organize similar workshops to report on the progress;

Ensure that the outcomes of the above efforts/ activities take into account and are consistent with international law, as reflected in UNCLOS;

Invite ITU to consider providing secretariat support for the joint task force.

We encourage ITU, UNESCO/IOC and WMO to bring this Call to Action to the attention of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the States Parties to UNCLOS and the United Nations Secretariat.



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Moving the agenda forward

Joint Task Force to investigate using submarine telecommunications cables for ocean and climate monitoring and disaster warning

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU); the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO/IOC); and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) organized a workshop on “Submarine Cables for Ocean/Climate Monitoring and Disaster Warning: Science, Engineering, Business and Law” on 8-9 September 2011. This workshop, attended by all sectors of the cables for climate community, closed with the adoption of a Call to Action inviting ITU, UNESCO IOC and WMO to establish and coordinate a Joint Task Force to explore the potential of a submarine climate monitoring and disaster warning system.

The Joint Task Force will be composed of experts from the science, engineering, business and law communities.

Under the secretariat support of ITU, the Joint Task Force will, inter alia, develop a strategy and roadmap that could lead to enabling the availability of submarine repeaters equipped with scientific sensors for climate monitoring and disaster risk reduction (tsunamis). It will also analyze the potential renovation and relocation of retired out-of-service cables in this realm.

We, the participants at the ITU, UNESCO/IOC, WMO Workshop on “Submarine Cables for Ocean/Climate Monitoring and Disaster Warning: Science, Engineering, Business and Law” in Rome, Italy from 8 to 9 September 2011 call upon the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO/IOC) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to establish and coordinate a joint task force composed of world renowned experts from science, engineering, business and law, which will:

Study and evaluate scientific, engineering, business, and societal benefits, opportunities, challenges and risks associated to the use of submarine telecommunications cables for ocean and climate monitoring and disaster warning, as well as legal aspects of such use;

Develop a strategy and roadmap that could lead to enabling the availability of submarine repeaters equipped with scientific sensors for climate monitoring and disaster risk reduction such as pressure, temperature, salinity/ conductivity, seismic, hydroacoustic and cable voltage in the near future;

Analyze the development of projects that could include renovation and relocation of retired out-of-service cables for disaster warning, ocean and climate monitoring;

Cooperate closely with the International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC) to investigate and report on the technical feasibility of incorporating the required scientific sensors into the design, manufacture, installation and operation of submarine repeaters in a safe manner without affecting cable systems and telecommunication signals, and avoiding risks that could affect the normal operation of the cables;

Consider a business model of how sensor data from submarine cables could be provided and could be made available for scientific purposes and societal benefit;

Identify financing models and opportunities to promote the development of ocean climate monitoring and disaster warning systems by the use of submarine cables;