

Forum: Environmental Commission 1 (EC1)

QUESTION OF: Assessing the implications of undersea infrastructure on underwater ecosystems

SUBMITTED BY: Finland

CO-SUBMITTED BY: Austria, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Iran, Lebanon, Peru, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates

THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 1

Acknowledging that the undersea infrastructure leads to chemical pollution, noise pollution and affecting the habitat of marine life. Furthermore, creating chemical pollution results in affecting human life.

Recognizing the negative outcomes of undersea infrastructure in local marine life and local communities, urgent intervention on this issue is crucial in order to resolve the effect of this type of infrastructure to the world as a whole

Underlining the effects of previous undersea infrastructure attempts to achieve oil extraction in marine areas, necessary changes are required to overcome the current long term outcomes of such incidents and new methods of prevention are crucial to limit the possibility of such incidents reoccurring

Emphasizes the need to develop the current form of undersea infrastructure used in the field of communication, due to the degradation of materials which could possibly lead to water pollution of the marine region, as well as noise pollution affecting the state of life of marine wildlife

Expressing concern that inadequate assessment and management of undersea infrastructure may lead to habitat destruction;

1. Requests member states to provide funding for initiatives aiming to render future projects more sustainable, such as but not limited to:
 - a) producing sound-proofing materials which will reduce noise pollution, in order to avoid negative consequences for marine species that rely on echolocation,
 - b) manufacturing filters that will minimize the chances of chemical pollution in case of an accident,
 - c) researching new, advanced techniques, methods, and materials, in order to:
 - i. enhance the infrastructure's performance,
 - ii. minimize its damage to the environment;

2. Calls for the establishment of an international working group under the authorities of the United Nations to develop comprehensive guidelines for assessing the environmental impact of undersea infrastructure on marine ecosystems, which would include:
 - a) standardized Assessment Protocols:
 - i. Establishing criteria for conducting environmental impact assessments prior to the construction and installation of undersea infrastructure,
 - ii. developing tools and methodologies for monitoring ecological impacts installation,
 - b) Ecosystem-Based Approach:
 - i. Promoting an ecosystem-based management framework that incorporates the protection of marine biodiversity as a fundamental principle,
 - ii. encouraging the identification of critical habitats and biodiversity hotspots that should be avoided or specially protected during development;
3. Encourages the incorporation of sustainable practices in the design and operation of undersea infrastructure to minimize ecological impacts, including:
 - a) promoting the use of environmentally friendly materials and technologies in the construction of undersea installations,
 - b) designing infrastructures to enhance marine habitats, such as artificial reefs that can support local biodiversity;
4. Seeks to ameliorate collaboration between all member states in research through collaborative platforms in order to:
 - a) enhance the knowledge about underwater infrastructure from past mistakes and actions,
 - b) influence the development of new technology and the creation of ideas;
5. Emphasizes the need for supervision of infrastructure to prevent and resolve functional errors through the following means:
 - a) ensuring that building pipes devices are incorporated for the purpose of detecting problems in the pipes,
 - b) materials should be assessed by each country's government every 6 months by a specialized crew which should have been:
 - i. trained professionally,
 - ii. provided with the latest technological equipment;

6. Urges countries to implement laws that prohibit the construction of undersea infrastructure in specific areas, such as but not limited to:
 - a) Areas of more than 5-10% of the Exclusive Economic Zone,
 - b) Protected marine wildlife areas.