

Resolution XXVI-6

DATA BUOY VANDALISM: INCIDENCE, IMPACT AND RESPONSES

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission,

Noting:

- (i) UN General Assembly Resolutions on Oceans and Law of the Sea (A/Res/64/71, paragraph 172) and on Sustainable Fisheries (A/Res/64/72, paragraph 109), which urged States, appropriate UN agencies and relevant organizations to take necessary action and adopt measures to protect ocean data buoy systems and cooperate to address intentional and unintentional damage to platforms used for ocean observation and marine scientific research, such as moored buoys and tsunameters,
- (ii) the *Abridged Final Report with Resolutions of the Sixty-second Session of the WMO Executive Council* (WMO-No. 1059) which, *inter alia*, expressed concern about the significant occurrence of intentional or unintentional damage to ocean observing systems, and urged Members to help promote understanding of the impacts of such damage, which seriously undermine efforts to establish national and regional ocean hazard warning systems,
- (iii) Resolution XXV-13 on Global Coordination of Early Warning and Mitigation Systems for Tsunamis and Other Sea-Level-Related Hazards, which recognized the value of collecting and exchanging data and information, and which called for:
 - (a) an inventory and assessment of the problem of ocean observing platform vandalism globally
 - (b) an assessment of the impacts of such vandalism, including on the functionality of tsunami warning systems
 - (c) information on the annual cost of ocean observing platform vandalism to Member States
 - (d) recommendations for IOC and Member State action,
- (iv) the Data Buoy Cooperation Panel (DBCP) and the International Tsunameter Partnership (ITP) Technical Document (TD) No. 41, Data Buoy Vandalism – Incidence, Impact and Responses,
- (v) WMO Resolution 15 (Cg-XVI) – Implementation of the WMO Integrated Global Observing System (WIGOS),
- (vi) WMO Resolution 25 (Cg-XVI) – Data Buoy Vandalism: Incidence, Impact and Responses,
- (vii) Resolution EC-XXXI.4, “Support of Efforts to Reduce Vandalism of Oceanographic Equipment at Sea”,

Acknowledging that:

- (i) Member States and the global community increasingly rely on a rapidly expanding ocean observing network of critical infrastructure, necessary to detect storm surges and tsunamis and to improve understanding of weather, climate, and ecosystems,
- (ii) ocean data buoy networks are an integral component of a sustainable, integrated, and comprehensive global ocean observing system serving multiple applications, and have proved essential to provide timely and geographically specific data for decision making,
- (iii) moored ocean buoy stations are especially susceptible to human-caused damage, which has resulted in extensive outages and data loss, often at critical times,

Recognizing that vandalism and damage to ocean observing networks take many forms including from ship impacts, incidental damage, direct exploitation of moorings as fish aggregation devices, intentional damage, and theft,

Encouraged by:

- (i) recent action of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission and the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission to protect moored ocean observing systems, including through regional and local education and training,
- (ii) the Regional Workshop on Establishing a Cooperative Mechanism for Protection of Met-ocean Data and Tsunami Buoys in the Northern Indian Ocean Region (Chennai, India, May 2011), which made important recommendations regarding possible new legal instruments on the topic,
- (iii) the fourth meeting of the IOC Working Group on Tsunamis and Other Hazards Related to Sea-Level Warning and Mitigation Systems (IOC/TOWS-WG-IV, Paris, 21–22 March 2011), which, *inter alia*, proposed to the IOC Assembly at its 26th Session to adopt a resolution on the topic of vandalism of ocean data buoys and associated underwater instrumentation,

Urges Member States and **invites** relevant international and intergovernmental organizations:

- (i) to develop, in collaboration with educators and the global media, communication plans to raise public awareness of the critical value of the services provided by ocean observation networks and warning systems, and of the related disaster risk-reduction benefits; promote education and outreach, especially to recreational, artisanal, and commercial fishers; broaden support of community stakeholders, and enable proactive engagement at regional and local scales;
- (ii) to adopt strategies for the strengthening of ocean observing networks and systems and other damage prevention and mitigation practices, including the enhanced engineering of station and infrastructure design;
- (iii) to work with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and regional fisheries management organizations and bodies, as appropriate, especially those with the competence to manage highly migratory species, to educate and

encourage stakeholders to adopt binding measures to prevent and minimize vandalism and damage to ocean observing networks and data systems;

Requests the Executive Secretary and **invites** the Secretary-General of WMO:

- (i) to promote the collection of more consistent and systematic statistics on vandalism;
- (ii) to increase capture and exchange of damage records and performance measures for ocean observing networks;
- (iii) to conduct comprehensive cost-benefit assessments and risk-value analyses taking into account life, health, social and economic impacts of vandalism and damage to ocean observing networks and data systems;
- (iv) to encourage and assist, where appropriate, the development of specific regional efforts and solutions in addressing the vandalism of ocean data platforms;
- (v) to present the Report on Ocean Data Buoy Vandalism – Incidence, Impact and Responses, to the United Nations General Assembly, with a view to promoting an integrated UN approach to address this critical issue.