# Ukrainian Undersea Drones Damage Russian Warships in Black Sea



### Ukrainian Undersea Drones Target Russian Warships

Ukraine is deploying undersea drones to lay mines in the Black Sea, causing damage to Russian naval vessels. Brig. Gen. Ivan Lukashevych from Ukraine's Security Service reported that "Sea Baby" drones are used to place 400-pound mines that detect ships via sound and electromagnetic signals. Approximately two dozen Russian ships, including four warships, have been affected.

The strategy gained momentum after Russia fortified defenses around Sevastopol and moved its naval headquarters to Novorossiysk, making traditional drone attacks less effective. Additionally, drones damaged the Crimean Bridge last July, disrupting key military transport routes.

### Vulnerability of Undersea Cables and Pipelines

In January 2022, a significant incident damaged undersea fiber optic cables linking Svalbard to mainland Norway, highlighting the fragility of global communications infrastructure. This and similar events, including attacks by Yemen’s Houthi rebels and the Nord Stream pipeline sabotage in September 2022, underscore the strategic target that undersea cables and pipelines present.

NATO has responded by forming an undersea infrastructure coordination group based in Northwood, London. This group integrates military and civilian efforts to protect critical infrastructure. They are developing a massive alert system that relies on data from software interfaces and sensors to monitor thousands of miles of cables in Northern Europe.

### Increasing Threats and Response Measures

Russia has reportedly mapped European undersea infrastructure as part of its strategic planning. Incidents such as the suspected sabotage of the Balticconnector pipeline between Finland and Estonia in 2023 demonstrate the ongoing threat. Some NATO countries are considering burying pipelines and cables in the seafloor to reduce vulnerability.

Norway, in particular, is mapping its undersea infrastructure extensively to protect oil, gas, and communication lines. These efforts are coordinated with the private sector to enhance industry-government cooperation in safeguarding critical assets.

The historical context shows the long-term strategic importance of undersea cables, dating back to World War I, emphasizing the need for ongoing vigilance and technological innovation in their protection.