

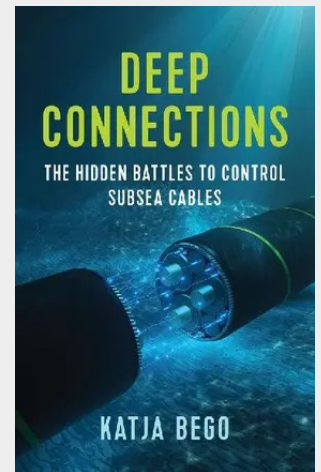
Deep Connections

The Hidden Battles to Control Subsea Cables

Deep beneath the world's oceans lurks a threat with the potential to cause major disruption and conflict: a network of cables through which almost all global internet traffic runs. These invisible but vital assets, spanning almost 1.4 million kilometres, are increasingly under siege by tech giants fuelling an AI bubble and state actors vying for control and seeking to undermine their geopolitical adversaries. We are currently witnessing a dramatic uptick in mysterious cable cuts, from the Arctic to the South China Sea. NATO ships patrol the seas to protect chokepoints. Intelligence agencies are raising the alarm about backdoors and wiretapping. While the United States and China are racing to muscle each other out of the cable network, others like Europe are rushing to reduce their dependencies and achieve tech sovereignty. Yet this battle over cables is not new. Britain's dominance over global communications helped it win the First World War. American submarines engaged in daring operations to tap Soviet cables during the Cold War. In *Deep Connections*, Katja Bego traces the past, present and future of this complex sub-sea infrastructure to show how its weaponization risks fragmenting the network, the open Internet – and with it, the global order.

Deep beneath the world's oceans lurks a threat with the potential to cause major disruption and conflict: a fragile network of cables through which almost all internet traffic runs. These invisible but vital assets spanning almost 1.4 million kilometres are increasingly under siege by non-state and state actors vying for control and seeking to sabotage their geopolitical adversaries.

We are currently witnessing a dramatic uptick in mysterious cable cuts, from the Arctic to the South-China Sea. NATO ships patrol the seas to protect chokepoints, while undersea drones roam the ocean floor. Intelligence agencies are raising the alarm about backdoors and wiretapping. The United States, China and Europe are racing to reduce their dependencies on global cable supply chains, while competing for influence over the network. Yet this battle over cables is not new. Britain's dominance over global communications helped it win World War I. American submarines engaged in daring operations to tap Soviet cables during the Cold War. In *Deep Connections*, Katja Bego traces the past, present and future of this complex sub-sea infrastructure to show how its weaponisation risks fragmenting the network, the open Internet - and with it, the global order.



64,50 €

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*vorbestellbar, Erscheinungstermin ca.
November 2026*

Artikelnummer: 9781509565870

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-1-5095-6587-0

Verlag: Polity Press

Erscheinungstermin: 24.11.2026

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: 1. Auflage 2026

Produktform: Gebunden

Seiten: 348

