

Advancing Dark and Quiet Skies in COPUOS

Permanent Mission of Chile: C. Mila Francisco

Credit: Pablo Carrillo - ALMA (ESO/NAOJ/NRA)

Efforts to Bring Dark & Quiet Skies into COPUOS's Formal Agenda

STSC **2023 CRP** jointly introduced by:
Chile, Spain, South Africa, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Dominican Republic, Peru, IAU, ESO, SKAO

Two proposals: - Dedicated Agenda Item on Dark & Quiet Skies.
- Expert Group with participation from science, observatories & industry

Broad support, but no consensus → discussions continued

The issue intersected with **security, sovereignty and strategic uses** of large constellations



Credit: J. C. Muñoz-Mateos/ESO



Observers, industry and the scientific community: Participation Matters

COPUOS is
intergovernmental →
States decide

But decisions need
**scientific & technical
substance**

Participation
strengthens—not
weakens—the
intergovernmental
process

Chile & Spain:
**Long-term mitigation
requires working *with*
the satellite industry**



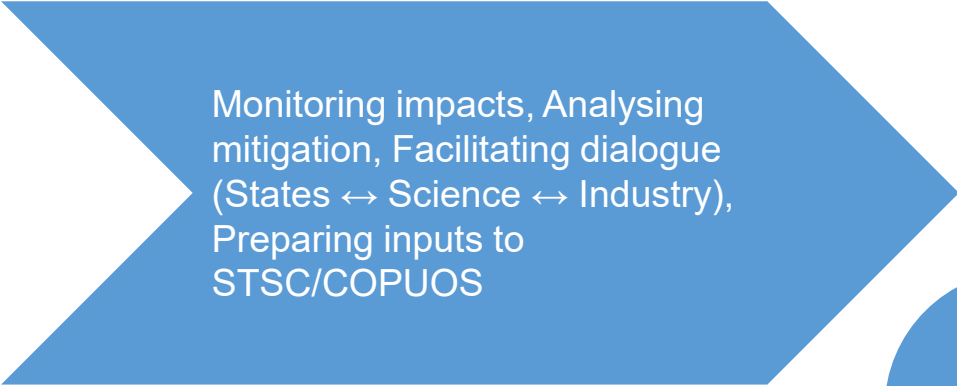
Credit: Pablo Bello, *Let's go team* -ALMA (ESO/NAOJ/NRAO)

If a path is blocked, we must chart another: The Group of Friends (GoF)

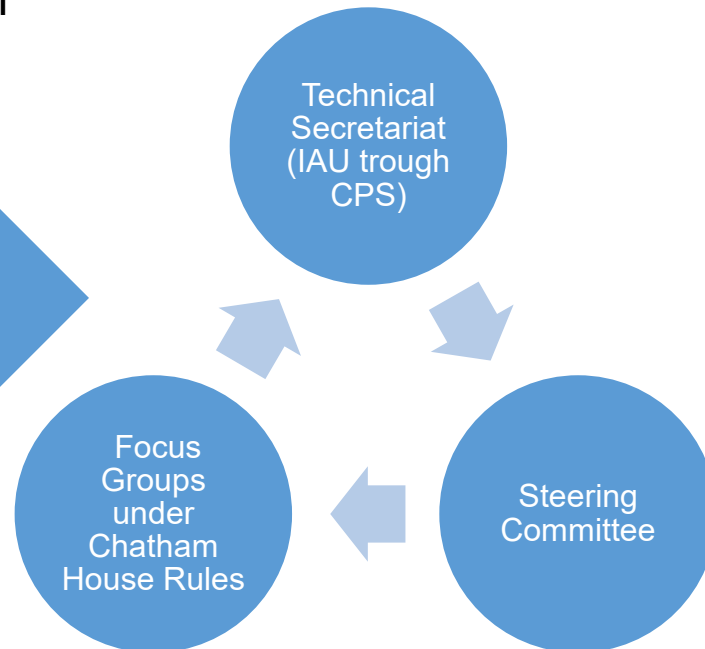
Expert Group was not feasible → concerns over non-government participation

The GoF ensured:

- **Technical work continues**
- **Broad participation** remains possible
- **Continuity** despite diplomatic rotation



Monitoring impacts, Analysing mitigation, Facilitating dialogue (States ↔ Science ↔ Industry), Preparing inputs to STSC/COPUOS



GoF is informal but **feeds its outputs** into COPUOS



Group of Friends (GoF) on Dark & Quiet Skies



GoF WebPage

GoF: Has currently 22 MS and 10 Obs.

“Participation in the Group of Friends for Dark and Quiet Skies for Science and Society is informal, voluntary, and open to all Member States and Permanent Observers that have supported or are interested in exploring support for the initiative of Dark and Quiet Skies for Science and Society.”



Looking ahead : From Awareness to Cooperative Standards

Next steps:

- Further awareness raising: AG
- Develop **cooperative guidelines/standards** with science + industry

Key principle:

Solutions require all relevant actors — not only governments



Credit: Pablo Carrillo- ALMA (ESO/NAOJ/NRAO)



Conclusions

COPUOS advances through patient diplomacy, even the most technically solid proposal requires political space to evolve

Observers, Science and Industry provide the expertise that gives decisions substance: Sustainable solutions require all relevant actors, not only governments.

The GoF proved to be a practical tool to organise that expertise

COPUOS: We need to find ways and means to keep pace with the fast-evolving nature of space affairs





Credit: Sergio Otárola - ALMA (ESO/NAOJ/NRAO)