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Director-General establishes UNESCO-Cousteau Chair with Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA

The Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, today established the UNESCO-Cousteau Ecotechnie Chair in Coastal Resources at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, USA, during a signing ceremony held at UNESCO Headquarters.

"This is the second UNESCO-Cousteau Chair established since the return of the United States to UNESCO one year ago," said Mr Matsuura. "The help of Ms Cousteau has been essential in establishing these Chairs in the important area of coastal management," he added.

The UNESCO-Cousteau Echotechnie Chair in Coastal Resources at Rutgers will work to develop programmes, workshops and information services to improve management of coastal resources, such as fisheries. It will also organize interdisciplinary courses, seminars and field experience for students on issues related to management of coastal resources.

Fred Grassle, Director of the Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences at Rutgers expressed his satisfaction with the new Chair, saying, "UNESCO is an important laboratory of ideas in the sciences. We look forward to strengthening cooperation with UNESCO with a view toward enhancing our activities at the international level."

The UNESCO-Cousteau Echotechnie Programme was established as a collaborative effort between the late Jacques Cousteau and UNESCO in 1994. The objective of the programme is to promote interdisciplinary education, research and policy making in the field of the environment and development. The network now numbers 12 participating Ecotechnie Chairs in Argentina, Bahrain, Belgium, Egypt, India, Lebanon, Moldova, Romania, Sweden, Vietnam and the United States.

For her part, Ms Francine Cousteau, President of "Equipe Cousteau", said "this signing is the outcome of a long collaboration in science education. The captain would be proud."