



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 25, 2020

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Woods Hole Group Supports Groundbreaking SEA-KIT USV Voyage

Bourne, MA - Woods Hole Group, Inc. was proud to support SEA-KIT with ocean current forecasting services for the 22-day voyage of their Uncrewed Surface Vessel (USV) 'Maxlimer' in the Northeast Atlantic Ocean. The 12m Maxlimer USV safely returned to Plymouth, UK on 14th August after successfully completing remote survey operations on Europe's Atlantic margin. The ocean current forecasts aided SEA-KIT's pilots in their conservation of energy to ensure mission duration while surveying at speeds that provided quality bathymetric data.

Since late July USV Maxlimer has mapped over 1000sq. km of ocean floor, controlled around-the-clock by SEA-KIT via satellite communications from its Remote Operation Centre in Tollesbury, Essex. Notably, the uncrewed vessel also returned to Plymouth with its fuel tank still around a third full.

The successful completion of this project is a major achievement for the British SME, clearly demonstrating the capabilities of their remotely-controlled USV design in terms of over-the-horizon operation, endurance and ocean-going ability.

The UTAS (Uncrewed Trans-Atlantic Survey) project co-funded by the European Space Agency under its Business Application program, was originally planned to be trans-ocean. However, due to travel restrictions and other planning complications resulting from COVID-19, this was ultimately not possible.

SEA-KIT worked collaboratively with a number of industry partners on the UTAS project. Fugro, Global Marine Group, Map the Gaps, Teledyne CARIS, Woods Hole Group and The Nippon

Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 project all played a part in its successful completion, contributing towards Seabed 2030's mission to have 100% of the ocean floor mapped by 2030.

Neha Groves, Metocean Forecasting Services Team Leader at Woods Hole Group said: "Woods Hole Group and our parent company, the CLS Group, were pleased to be able to provide operational ocean forecast support for this unique and successful test of the SEA-KIT USV capability. We have a strong interest and commitment in the ongoing development of USV technology, and its application in operational oceanography and marine environmental monitoring."

The proven ability to conduct remote survey operations with USVs has many beneficial applications across the offshore sector. For example, critical tasks such as trans-ocean cable route surveys (needed to meet the increase in demand for data communications) can be completed without risk to personnel and with significant savings on mobilization and operational costs when compared to executing the same task with crewed vessels.

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About Woods Hole Group:

Woods Hole Group is an international, environmental scientific and engineering consulting organization headquartered in Bourne, Massachusetts. With its breadth of vision and emphasis on a sustainable future global environment, Woods Hole Group is focused on resilient solutions for shorelines, wildlife, sustainable fisheries, and healthy oceans in a changing climate.

For more information, visit: www.woodsholegroup.com.

About SEA-KIT International:

SEA-KIT International is a British SME providing hi-tech, USV (uncrewed surface vessel) solutions to the maritime and research industries for deployment in harsh offshore environments. With expertise in the design and build of hybrid vessels from its parent company, Hush Craft, SEA-KIT aims to be the UK's leading USV designer and developer, focused on over-the-horizon deployment of systems and sensors for a number of use cases. These include maritime logistics, environmental management and the security and monitoring of offshore assets, as well as marine inspection and efficient survey of the earth's ocean floors. Through its collaboration with industry partners, SEA-KIT is sharply focused on driving down the cost of geo-data collection and reducing the sector's carbon emissions.

For more information, visit: www.sea-kit.com

IMAGES:



Image Credit: Rich Edwards, ENP Media