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Press release By the Ocean we Unite – Expedition Scotland May 2017

The By the Ocean we Unite foundation will set sail on the 15th of May from Rotterdam, the Netherlands across the North Sea to northeastern Scotland. After a successful first expedition to Stavanger, Norway in August 2016, this expedition will focus on the northwestern area of the North Sea. The goal of this expedition is to conduct scientific research, thereby increasing knowledge on plastic pollution in the North Sea and to share this knowledge with a wide public audience.

International cooperation

To increase the knowledge we have on marine plastic pollution, the research is performed in collaboration with Herriot-Watt University, the University of the Highlands and Islands, Leiden University, as well as The Ocean Cleanup and the 5 Gyres institute. By The Ocean We Unite investigates plastics on the water surface, in beach sediments, in jellyfish and a common form of marine plankton.

The research will be performed by a team of three biologists. To spread their findings to the general public, they will be accompanied by photographer Jasper Doest, and a Scottish filmmaker. There will also be live coverage of the expedition through social media. The expedition team is completed by five people from varying backgrounds, enriching the discussions on board to broader societal dialogues on the causes and potential solutions to plastic pollution.

While visiting towns along the coast, like Ivernass and Aberdeen, By The Ocean will meet up with local initiatives and inhabitants to discuss their experiences of plastic pollution in their own local environment and to exchange ideas on how to combat it. As marine plastic pollution is an issue that ignores borders, we will to cooperate and unite across borders to come up with effective solutions.

Real-time data

To support the project, ABB has installed its maritime digital application aboard the expedition vessel 'Fantastiko'. This application is part of a suite of products that are designed to make operations at sea as safe and efficient as possible. In addition to this, The Fantastiko will also have access to the weather routing program SPOS from MeteoGroup, in order to select the most optimum route during the voyage. The system enables By The Ocean We Unite to share their first research data from the North Sea through their website, enabling their followers to keep track of the ship and its research progress. To follow the team, go to www.bytheoceanweunite.org