



AirNav Systems announces collaboration with University of the Azores

San Diego, CA - October 21, 2012 - AirNav Systems (www.airnavsystems.com) provider of real-time global flight and ship tracking solutions and the owner of the ShipTrax worldwide AIS network is announcing a collaboration with University of the Azores, Azores, Portugal, where data provided by AirNav Systems will enable not only identifying the main shipping routes traversing the Azores region, but also to quantify the maritime traffic and know the nature of ships and cargoes. This data will be invaluable in assessing the potential hazards posed by maritime traffic and aid in the creation of policies that couple the continuation and progress of this important activity with the preservation of the marine environment..

Maritime transportation has been the backbone of global trade for millennia. It is estimated that over 90% of the current world trade is hauled by ships and the world merchant fleet is estimated to be over 50,000 vessels. The worldwide maritime network is crucial for the world economy and thus the prospects for this industry's further growth are strong. Albeit indispensable in the modern world, intense shipping causes degradation of the marine environment at several scales, thus damaging ecosystems, threatening some marine species and creating hazards for human livelihoods, health and local economies.

Hazards from shipping range from the newsworthy oil and chemical spills to the less-publicized emissions of pollutant and green-house effect gases, introduction of noise in the oceans (which can affect the communication of cetaceans and other animals) and spread of invasive species. Ship collisions can also cause direct mortality of marine organisms, such as cetaceans, seals, marine turtles and other, and destroy fragile habitats such as coral reefs. In fact, ship collisions can be so harmful that entire ship lanes have been moved in order to protect highly endangered species such as the North Atlantic right whale.

Thus, understanding shipping dynamics is crucial in creating policies for the management of marine ecosystems. The Azores Archipelago has the largest exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in Europe, with 1.1 million km², and is in the way of some of the busiest shipping routes in the world. The islands and surrounding seamounts, deep waters and hydrothermal vents in the region create diverse habitat types that are a heaven to a myriad of species. Nevertheless, currently there is no knowledge about the ship traffic in the region and how it can impact those habitats and organisms.

Currently the Department of Oceanography and Fisheries of the University of the Azores is running several projects that aim to assist the regional authorities in devising policies that can mitigate and reverse harmful effects of human activities over the marine habitats and species.

Through a protocol with AirNav Systems, researchers at this institution will resource to data relayed by ships using the Automatic Identification System (AIS) in order to characterize the maritime traffic in the region.

AirNav ShipTrax is one of the world's best-selling and most advanced Real Time AIS receiver. By decoding AIS (Automatic Identification System) signals, users are able to track thousands of ship movement worldwide. Ship name, callsign, IMO and MMSI numbers, dimensions, heading, speed are all updated in real-time. Included with ShipTrax is the award winning AirNav ShipTrax windows client software interface developed by the world's leader in flight tracking and monitoring solutions, AirNav Systems.

About AirNav Systems: Headquarter in San Diego, CA, AirNav Systems has been developing software and hardware solutions for the aviation world since 1996. AirNav Systems offers a complete set of flight and ship tracking and monitoring tools for all kinds of users from research companies to enthusiasts.

Always with high quality standards and innovative features not found in any other similar programs, AirNav Systems products have been reviewed in more than 100 magazines, newspapers and on TVs and Radio worldwide.

About Azores University: The University of the Azores is the only public university in the Autonomous Region of the Azores, It was founded on January 9, 1976. The University is a public institution dependent on the Portuguese Ministry of Science, Technology & Education, and was established in order to advance sustainable development and higher education in the Azores.

The Department of Oceanography and Fisheries - the only unit located on the Faial island, it was created in order to foster "scientific understanding, the conservation of marine life and the sustainable use of the Atlantic Ocean in the region of the Azores. Since 1991, DOP/UAç has been a founding member of IMAR (Institute do Mar) and in 1996 joined the network of European Association of Research Stations, EurOcean, the European Network of Excellence on Marine Biodiversity (MarBEF) and European Seas Observatory Network (ESONET). Further, DOP/UAç are participants in Steering Committees for three great initiatives by Census of Marine Life program: ChEss (Biogeography of Chemosynthetic Ecosystems), MAR-ECO[1] (Patterns and Processes of the Ecosystems of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge) and CenSeam (A Global Census of Marine Life on Seamounts). There is also participation on international initiatives as part of the OTN (Ocean Tracking Network).

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