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Eco Boat Earthrace get official recognition of round the world speed record as plans are announced to join Sea Shepherd whaling protest

- *Earthrace finally awarded official UIM world record one year on*
- *Skipper Pete Bethune calls for legislation on conventional marine fuel*
- *Earthrace will join Sea Shepherd as part of whaling protest in Antarctic in December*

Almost exactly one year on from the 100% biofuel eco-boat, Earthrace, crossing the finish line in Spain on 27 June 2008, her international crew of volunteers have been officially named as world record holders by the Union Internationale Motonautique (UIM).

The worldwide governing body for powerboating have confirmed that the team did break the ten year old round the world speed record previously held by British boat, Cable & Wireless Adventurer, smashing the record by almost two weeks.

The wave-piercing trimaran began the challenge from Sagunto, Spain on 27 April 2008. She travelled 23, 497 nautical miles, through the Panama and Suez Canals, with ten other refuelling stops around the world. The journey, skippered by Earthrace founder, New Zealander, Pete Bethune, took 60 days 23 hours 49 mins (1,463 hours, 49 minutes) finishing back in Spain.

Call for governments to act on conventional marine fuels

Pete Bethune said, "Obviously we're over the moon. It's great to finally get the official recognition.

"My goal in starting this project five years ago was to make a positive impact on the environment by increasing awareness of renewable fuels. We have shown that a marine craft using 100% biofuel can travel as fast and efficiently across the oceans as anything using conventional fuels.

"It's about time governments and the global shipping industry put in as much effort as we have by funding further research into sustainable biofuel production and bringing in legislation that will ensure our oceans and seas are protected from the damage caused by conventional fuels."

Earthrace to join Sea Shepherd in December

At the same time as the announcement from the UIM, skipper Pete Bethune has revealed that the next stop for Earthrace will be the Antarctic ocean as the boat plans to join the Sea Shepherd organisation in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary in December as part of the protest against Japanese whaling fleet.

New Zealander Bethune said he decided to become involved because "this is happening in my backyard and it really pisses me off. I'm going to make a stand alongside Sea Shepherd – the whaling fleet will find it hard to get away from us."

He said he planned to add half a tonne of Kevlar to the vessel to toughen it against the ice. Earthrace has been built to have the endurance to go half way round the world on one tank of fuel.

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World record crew

Earthrace is run as a not for profit project with a team of international volunteers.

The boat crew for the world record were skipper, Pete Bethune (New Zealand); navigator Adam Carlson (Sweden); Engineer Mark Russell (UK) and cameraman Rob Drewitt (UK).

The ground crew, who travelled ahead of the boat to prepare each race stop, was headed up by CEO, Fiona Clark (UK) with head of operations, Adrian Erangey (Ireland) and chief engineer, Tino de



Freitas (Guyana). Base crew were Bev Bailey (UK), Alison Bradshaw (UK), Sharyn Bethune (NZ) and Karolina Romanic (Hungary).

Eco-Earthrace

Earthrace completed the journey using only 100% bio diesel made from sustainable sources including waste cooking oil. All the fuel for the record was provided by SGC Energia, Portugal.

Since July 2007, Earthrace has been run as a carbon neutral project, offsetting all emissions through Down with Carbon (UK) and Carbon South (NZ). This included all ground crew travel, transport of the bio diesel to the fuel stops, and crew and refit subsistence.

World tour

Pre and post record, Earthrace undertook a world tour, taking in 185 cities in over 40 countries. Over ¼ million people have gone on board the boat to find out more about the project.

Boat designer

Earthrace was built by New Zealand company, Calibre Boats, and designed by Craig Loomes at the request of Pete Bethune, specifically to break the official UIM 'Round the World Speed Record by a Powerboat'

Sponsors and supporters

Earthrace was funded by Pete Bethune, his family and friends as well as through sponsorship and services from major supporters including SGC Energia in Portugal (biofuel provider), Cummins Mercruiser (engines), and ZF Marine (gear boxes). Many thousands of individuals around the world have also supported the project.

Biofuels

Earthrace is committed to the promotion of renewable fuels such as biodiesel and ethanol, and to encouraging healthy debate on the adoption of such fuels on an international scale. One of the great advantages of biofuels is that countries and their regions can utilise the resources and crops most suited to their area to produce them. Some countries can potentially harvest a large percentage of their needs locally, while others can harvest less depending on their needs.

Overall however, the planet simply does not have enough land to grow our total transport energy requirements. So biodiesel and ethanol will only ever be a part of the transport energy mix - they should certainly not be considered as a silver bullet. We should ensure we use waste and by-products first (such as used cooking oils and tallow), and adopt dedicated energy crops with caution. The industry must also research new feedstocks such as algae that, in the long term, may take away the pressure on farmland.

For more about biofuels, see <http://www.earthrace.net/index.php?section=80>

Media notes

- Official world record status confirmed at:
<http://www.uimpowerboating.com/vsite/vnavsite/page/directory/0,10853,4916-151354-168570-nav-list,00.html> (**record no: 3701**)
- Further details, including high res photos, broll footage, and highlights from the global circumnavigation, are available from <http://www.earthrace.net/index.php?section=2>
- To arrange an interview with skipper Pete Bethune and other crew members, contact Chatsworth Communications; E: nick@chatsworthcommunications.com
T: +44(0) 20 7 4409780

Or Earthrace Head of Media, Beverley Bailey, E: bev@earthrace.net
T: +44 (0) 208 870 4301 M: +44 (0) 7711 482 572