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Oceans Unmanned and The Ocean Cleanup Join Forces in Fight Against Marine Debris

Oceans Unmanned, Inc. announced a new partnership with The Ocean Cleanup to utilize unmanned technologies to evaluate and improve ongoing efforts to capture and remove marine debris in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Later this summer, a team of Oceans Unmanned operators equipped with several UAS will deploy offshore with The Ocean Cleanup researchers for a six-week campaign to conduct daily aerial surveys in an attempt to quantify the distribution and abundance of marine debris in the target area.

It is estimated that over five trillion pieces of plastic currently litter the ocean and accumulate in five ocean garbage patches, with the largest one being the Great Pacific Garbage Patch located halfway between California and Hawaii. Founded in 2013 to address this issue, The Ocean Cleanup is developing technologies to capture and retain at-sea marine debris to bring it back to shore for recycling. In July, the organization will head back out to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch to deploy the third iteration of their ocean cleanup design. The first system was deployed in 2018, and the second, improved version in 2019. “We successfully performed a feasibility assessment on UAS-based remote sensing for the quantification and detection of floating plastic in 2018,” stated Robin de Vries, The Ocean Cleanup Geospatial Analyst. “When we decided to ramp up this area of our work, we turned to Oceans Unmanned because of their years of proven maritime UAS expertise.”

“We’re very excited about this partnership,” said Matt Pickett, Director of Oceans Unmanned. “We’ve been following the great work of The Ocean Cleanup for several years, and we’re looking forward to supporting their efforts. We’re big believers in the power of technology to address longstanding environmental challenges and marine debris is an area where we think we can make a big impact.” The waterproof Aeromao Talon Amphibious UAS will be launched from the ship, survey for approximately two hours, then perform a water landing and be recovered by a small boat. Imagery captured by the UAS will be analyzed through an automated neural network for object detection which can direct on-site collection efforts and evaluate recovery system efficiency.

Oceans Unmanned, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that facilitates the use of unmanned technologies and promotes their safe and environmentally conscious operation to protect the ocean and coastal marine environment.

The Ocean Cleanup is a non-profit organization (“Stichting” in the Netherlands and 501(c)(3) in the US) developing advanced technologies to rid the oceans of plastic. Their purpose is to drive the largest ocean cleanup in history by stemming the inflow of floating plastics via rivers and cleaning up what has already accumulated in the ocean gyres.

MEDIA: Images and video available on request

ONLINE: www.oceansunmanned.org
www.theoceancleanup.com