Fugroâ€™s Ultra-deepwater Surveys Support Seabed Mining Exploration

Fugro has commenced its first project supporting deep sea polymetallic nodule mining under a contract awarded by seafloor mineral exploration company Nauru Ocean Resources Inc. (NORI), a subsidiary of DeepGreen Metals Inc. In the deep waters of the eastern Pacific Ocean, Fugro's specialist marine geoscience team will perform detailed site characterisation surveys.

The project, which began on 19 April, will advance NORI's polymetallic nodule project. Polymetallic nodules are potato-sized concretions enriched in nickel, copper and cobalt. These nodules also contain metals and non-metals important to 'green-tech' enterprises, such as electric vehicles and wind energy production.

Deepwater data acquisition

The site characterisation surveys will involve acquisition of high-resolution imagery and geophysical data, and sampling of minerals from the seafloor. Fugro will also measure geotechnical properties, catalogue the mineral resource and help NORI to determine optimal mining areas. The data acquisition and sampling will take place in water depths of up to 4,500 metres over a 400-square-kilometre-area between the Clarion and Clipperton fracture zones. The field work will be accomplished using the company's *Echo Surveyor VII* autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) and specialised seafloor sampling equipment

“Fugro's sector leading technology, technical capabilities and track record of success make it the perfect partner to assist DeepGreen and Nauru Ocean Resources Inc. to begin producing metals for our future,” said Gerard Barron, CEO of DeepGreen Metals Inc.

Dan McConnell, Fugro's global product manager for gas hydrates and marine minerals added, “Fugro has much to offer in terms of specialised ultra-deepwater survey, resource assessment and oceanographic and environmental studies. We look forward to working with NORI and DeepGreen Metals Inc. and demonstrating value through this, our first ever project to support deep sea polymetallic nodule mining.”