

Taiwan Boosts its Current Ocean Research With New Fleet



A new fleet of oceanographic research vessels is expected to be launched in the first half of 2020. This means a boost to Taiwan's ocean current research and homeland security protection. The fleet will comprise four ships, three of which are to be delivered by early next year, including two 500-ton vessels and one 1,000-ton vessel. The new ships are domestically developed and manufactured through a collaboration between academia and industry, sponsored by the Ministry of Science and Technology, reports [CNA](#), the Central News Agency of Taiwan.

Legend is Taiwan's fifth-largest research vessel and was built by Triyards Marine Service, a Singaporean company based in Vietnam. The vessel features a Remote Operated Underwater Vehicle (ROV) — capable of operating at depths of 3,000m — a Gravity Core

sampler that can work in waters 20 m deep and is equipped with a 360° electric propulsion system. Its building costs were nearly 30 million US dollars, the Taipei Times reported in 2017.

Operated by Universities

While the existing 2,000-ton vessel, *Legend*, is operated by the National Applied Research Laboratories (NARLabs), the new ships will be managed by National Taiwan University, National Taiwan Ocean University, and National Sun Yat-sen University.

Legend is tasked with national-level research missions, and the other ships will be fitted with equipment that reflects the needs of the academic institutes, said the report. A commission will be established to help coordinate operations and resources for the fleet.

The vessel managed by NTU, for example, will conduct missions that encompass oceanography, atmospheric sciences, biology, geology, physics, and chemistry, said Jan Sen, director of the Institute of Oceanography, National Taiwan University.

Photo courtesy [NARLabs](#), a Taiwanese non profit institute.