

Fugro acquires SEA-KIT for marine robotics leadership



Fugro has reached a binding agreement for the acquisition of the remaining shares in SEA-KIT International, a long-standing partner in the development of hi-tech uncrewed surface vessels (USVs) for low carbon emission maritime operations and research.

For several years, Fugro and SEA-KIT have collaborated closely to push the boundaries of USV technology, achieving

numerous breakthroughs and milestones along the way. This includes the delivery of the first commercially available remotely operated USV and electric-powered remotely operated vehicle (ROV) combi solution to the offshore asset inspection and monitoring market. Additionally, they secured approvals from various authorities in Europe, the Middle East and Australia to operate the jointly developed USV and ROV combi solution through a global network of remote operations centres.

Fugro also accomplished the delivery of five Fugro Blue Essence 12-metre USVs spread across all key regions. Moreover, they completed the world's first fully remote inspection of offshore wind farm assets carried out by a USV and integrated ROV, winning multiple awards globally for their innovations contributing to safer, faster and more sustainable offshore operations.

Autonomous pioneers

Ben Simpson, CEO and founder of SEA-KIT International, has been a key leader in the partnership, playing a fundamental role in reshaping the maritime industry. His entrepreneurialism was instrumental in the growth and success of the SEA-KIT business. Under Simpson's leadership, SEA-KIT has fostered a culture of innovation, excellence and adaptability, propelling the company to the forefront of the autonomous maritime industry.

"We are excited to welcome the talented [SEA-KIT](#) team into the Fugro family," said Henk van Dalen, director Blue Robotics at [Fugro](#). "We look forward to leveraging their knowledge and growing the SEA-KIT product offering to the maritime industry as we continue to drive innovation in this space. We are committed to ensuring a smooth integration process and will work closely with our new team members to maximize the value delivered to our combined customer base."

The transaction is expected to be completed before the end of 2023, subject to customary closing conditions. SEA-KIT will continue to provide clients with high-quality USV products for cost-effective operations with enhanced safety and significantly reduced carbon emissions. New advancements to look forward to in the wake of this acquisition include the launch of the next generation of USVs, the Blue Eclipse® 18-metre USV specially designed for fast pipeline and deep-water asset inspection activities, as well as a zero-emissions hydrogen-powered USV.



The Fugro Orca, an uncrewed survey vessel, is designed for independent seabed mapping and features on-board robots for efficient platform inspections. (Image courtesy: Fugro)