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Aquatica Submarines leads a historic expedition alongside KONGSBERG to map the mysteries of Belize's Blue Hole with special guests Sir Richard Branson and Fabien Cousteau.

- *Full sonar survey of the world's largest marine sinkhole set to shine light on sea level and climate change over 100,000 years*



The Blue Hole, Belize

Kongsberg, Norway, 29th November 2018 – The Blue Hole Belize Expedition 2018 fleet has started its historic and scientifically important 3-week mission to map the world's largest marine sinkhole. Led by Aquatica Submarines, the team of scientists, explorers and film makers includes Ocean Unite co-founder and Virgin Group founder, Sir Richard Branson and world-renowned oceanographic explorer and documentary filmmaker Fabien Cousteau, grandson of the pioneering conservationist Jacques Cousteau.

A live broadcast from deep inside the Blue Hole is taking place in Aquatica's Stingray 500 submarine on Sunday 2nd December from 4-6 pm EST on Discovery Channel. Operated by the company's Chief Pilot, Erika Bergman, Sir Richard Branson and Fabien Cousteau will both be on board for the ride. Viewers can find more information on their respective Discovery Channel country websites.

Sonar expert Mark Atherton from KONGSBERG's Canadian subsidiary Kongsberg Mesotech is on the expedition as a key member of the science-based sonar and scientific data

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collection team. Mark will operate the KONGSBERG sonars aboard the Research Vessel Brooks McCall, contributing to an invaluable high-resolution map of the entire sinkhole.

"By understanding the geological history and geometric structure at the Blue Hole we can contribute new data to the global scientific community studying sinkholes and cenotes. I'm confident that our sonars and underwater positioning equipment will provide an accurate, high resolution picture of the secrets the Blue Hole hides," said Mark.

Organised by Vancouver-based submersibles company Aquatica Submarines, the Blue Hole Belize Scientific Expedition 2018 combines high-tech exploration, educational awareness and conservation. Aquatica Submarine's innovative Stingray 500 submarine will be used for sonar surveying, filming and VIP dives, while the expedition is led by the company's President and CEO, entrepreneur and adventurer Harvey Flemming.

"The sonar, camera and sensor data we collect from the Blue Hole is a key objective, but we also want to use the expedition to educate and inform the public on the critical issues of ocean awareness and conservation," said Flemming. *"We have professional film makers ready to capture the event with television documentaries and a live broadcast from the bottom of the Blue Hole all set to bring this amazing place to life for a global audience."*

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For further information, please contact:

Gunvor Hatling Midtbø, VP Communication
Kongsberg Maritime
Tel: +47 9921 4209
gunvor.hatling.midtbo@km.kongsberg.com

Saul Trewern
Saltwater Stone
Tel: +44 (0)1202 669244
s.trewern@saltwater-stone.com

About Kongsberg Maritime

Kongsberg Maritime is a global marine technology company providing innovative and reliable technology solutions for all marine industry sectors including merchant, offshore, subsea and naval. Headquartered in Kongsberg, Norway, the company has manufacturing, sales and service facilities in 20 countries.

Kongsberg Maritime systems for vessels cover all aspects of marine automation, safety, manoeuvring, navigation, and dynamic positioning. Subsea solutions include single and multibeam echo sounders, sonars, AUV/Underwater Robotics, underwater navigation, communication and camera systems.

Training courses at locations globally, LNG solutions, information management, position reference systems and technology for seismic and drilling operations are also part of the company's diverse technology portfolio.

In parallel with its extensive technology portfolio, Kongsberg Maritime provides services within EIT (Electro, Instrument & Telecom) engineering and system integration, on an EPC (Engineering, Procurement & Construction) basis.

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Kongsberg Maritime delivers solutions that cover all aspects of technology underwater and on the water, aboard new build and retrofit vessels, and on offshore platforms and rigs, often under a single supplier strategy called The Full Picture.

Kongsberg Maritime is part of Kongsberg Gruppen (KONGSBERG), an international, knowledge-based group that celebrated 200 years in business during 2014. KONGSBERG supplies high-technology systems and solutions to customers in the oil and gas industry, the merchant marine, and the defence and aerospace industries.

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