

Earthrace fights storm to power into Palau 2400 miles ahead of world record



London/Palau, 31 May 2008:

Earthrace, the world's fastest eco-boat, is due to power into Koror, Palau today, Saturday 31 May, as part of its attempt to break the round-the-world speed record for a powerboat. The boat will stop for refuelling at the Royal Belau Yacht Club, Malakal Harbor.

Skipper Pete Bethune and his crew are currently over 2400 nautical miles ahead of the pace set by the round-the-world record-holder, Cable and Wireless, in 1998.

Earthrace is a 24m tri-hull wavepiercer that is currently in day 34 of its attempt to smash the world record for a powerboat to circumnavigate the globe, running renewable biodiesel fuel, and with a net zero carbon footprint.

The 24,000 nautical mile route has so far taken in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and the crew has already overcome obstacles such as fuel leakages and a huge backlog of traffic in the Panama Canal. On their current leg from the Marshall Islands to Palau they have had to battle through stormy weather to stay on target to beat the record.

"We've been thundering through the Pacific amidst massive cracks of lightning," says Bethune, "Each one turning the sky completely white for a split second, and then pitch black again. Rain has been pelting down for hours, and all we have to guide us is the large blob on the radar letting us know we're still in the middle of the thunderstorm. Luckily it hasn't had too much of an effect on the waves, and we're averaging 22 knots and making good progress to arrive in Palau on Saturday evening.

"We're looking forward to a swift refuelling in Koror and then we're off on our ninth leg to Singapore.

"The goal of Earthrace is to show the world that the best technology can also be sustainable. Earthrace stopping here along the race route will be a chance for the people of Palau to see an example of a vehicle that is 100% carbon neutral but does not skimp on performance or design."

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Notes to editors:

High resolution, copyright-free photographs and video footage are available to download from our FTP site: <ftp://assets.earthrace.net>

Please contact news@earthrace.net for login details.

PRESS RELEASE



About Earthrace

Earthrace is a 24m (78ft) tri-hull wavepiercer that has been designed and built specifically to get the record for a powerboat to circumnavigate the globe. She is an advanced endurance vessel, capable of submarining up to 7m (23ft) underwater as she powers across oceans.

The goal of Earthrace is to set a new world record for a powerboat to circumnavigate the globe, running 100% renewable biodiesel fuel, and with a net zero carbon footprint.

From the start in Sagunto, the boat will cross the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans and travel through the Panama and Suez Canals as it thunders around the planet's circumference at a maximum speed of 40 knots, attempting to break the round-the-world speed record. The full record route is as follows:

Sagunto (Spain) – Horta (Azores) – San Juan (Puerto Rico) – Colon (Panama Canal, Panama) – Manzanillo (Mexico) – San Diego (USA) – Maalaea Harbor, Maui (Hawaii) – Majuro (Marshall Islands) – Koror (Palau) – Singapore – Kochi/Cochin (India) – Salalah (Oman) – Port Said (Suez Canal, Egypt) – Sagunto (Spain)

Earthrace is run as a not-for-profit venture, with a boat, ground and London HQ crew made up of international volunteers.

You can find out in real time exactly where Earthrace is now by going to www.earthrace.net and clicking on the 'Where is Earthrace' globe.

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