Press release

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NATO Mediterranean Exercise Features New NURC Technologies

Exercise Proud Manta 12 (POMA 12), which includes participating ships and aircraft from nine NATO nations, will be held from 14 to 26 February off the coast of Sicily. POMA 12 will include major scientific tests during the exercise. Scientists from the NATO Undersea Research Centre (NURC) will be testing technologies and software that have been developed at the Centre to study detection and tracking of objects in the marine environment using sonar.

Participation in this large-scale exercise enables NURC to test cutting-edge systems in a realistic environment. It is also an opportunity to see how new advances in research and technology, such as autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs), can be applied to NATO missions in the future.

POMA 12 will also be the first time the NATO Research Vessel (NRV) *Alliance* will participate in a MANTA-series exercise. The 93-metre NRV *Alliance*, which is the quietest, purpose-built research vessel in its class, is one of two ships jointly owned by NATO nations. During the exercise NURC scientists onboard the *NRV Alliance* will set up an underwater surveillance network using two AUVs towing sonar arrays. Data from the two AUVs will be fused using complex software algorithms to develop a comprehensive picture of the undersea environment.

Last year, NURC participated in Proud Manta 11 with three autonomous undersea gliders which gathered data prior to the exercise, helping NATO plan their operations. Following that success, NURC's role has expanded this year to include three experiments: (1) detection and tracking using AUVs, (2) testing NURC-developed software for real time sonar performance prediction, and (3) monitoring the test area with gliders prior to and during operations to better understand the presence of marine mammals and their behaviour during the exercise.

For more information, please contact the NURC Public Affairs Office

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