



Sustainable Seas Expedition Includes YSI 6600 Sonde



In 2001, the Sustainable Seas Expeditions (SSE)—a joint five-year collaborative project between the National Geographic Society (NGS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)—began

conducting a comprehensive expedition of the coral reef and hard bottom communities of the Gulf of Mexico and the Florida and Georgia coasts. The Loop Current, its associated gyres in the western Gulf of Mexico, and the Gulf Stream connect this large ecosystem. The expedition intends to explore protected and non-protected coral and hard bottom communities that connect the different habitats. Oceanographic measurements will help researchers assess water quality conditions entering and exiting marine protected areas. Both deep and shallow water habitats will be examined.

The expedition is a unique opportunity for the governments and scientific communities of Belize, Mexico, and the United States to work together, exploring and researching these unique habitats and obtaining valuable information—digital video and still photography, water quality information, oceanographic and atmospheric data, and more.

Using the latest in single-person research submersible technology, SSE gathers information to enhance current efforts to assess, characterize, and manage natural and cultural resources in the marine environment. By exploring and documenting new areas within the existing system of National Marine Sanctuaries, as well as other unique marine habitats, SSE seeks to increase U.S. and international recognition of the need to protect, conserve, and sustain the natural integrity of ocean ecosystems.

YSI sonde provides water quality data

Since April 1999, SSE has conducted operations in ten National Marine Sanctuaries and has explored several unique features on the West Florida Shelf. Using the DeepWorker 2000 submersible for video and photo documentation, sample collections, and ambient-condition measurements, scientist pilots have been studying habitats and species as well as collecting data to support critical research projects.

To help it do so, DeepWorker was equipped with a YSI 6600 multiparameter water quality monitoring sonde. The 6600 accurately and reliably measures temperature, conductivity, salinity, dissolved oxygen, pH, turbidity, and depth. And it is programmed to sample data at 4-second intervals for the duration of a dive.

With the conclusion of field operations in 2003, SSE is prepared to apply the lessons learned to a much more complex and ambitious project.



An SSE DeepWorker 2000 submersible vehicle with a YSI 6600 Multiparameter sonde.

For additional information on the Sustainable Seas Expedition, please visit www.sustainableseas.noaa.gov

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