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CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE INVESTIGACIONES CIENTÍFICAS

**PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **The Malaspina Expedition will arrive to Honolulu in its trip around the world**

- **Scientists travelling onboard the Spanish research vessel Hespérides are exploring the Atlantic, Indian, Southern Ocean and the Central Pacific**
- **They are also searching for traces of radioactivity emanating from Japan's Fukushima nuclear plant in the atmosphere, ocean waters and marine life in the central Pacific Ocean**

The Malaspina circumnavigation expedition is an interdisciplinary research project to assess the impact of global change on the oceans and explore their biodiversity, with a particular emphasis of that present in the deep ocean ecosystem. The scientists on board the Hespérides and Sarmiento de Gamboa are embarking on a seven-month expedition combining pioneering scientific research with training for young researchers, while advancing marine science and fostering the public understanding of science. The expedition is named after the Italian-born Spanish naval officer, Alejandro Malaspina, who commanded Spain's first voyage of scientific discovery in the 18th century, and who died some 200 years ago.

The oceanographic expedition Malaspina will arrive to Honolulu in its journey across the world, having worked in the Pacific Ocean between Auckland (New Zealand) and Honolulu. So far, the expedition will have completed more than a half of its world tour to assess the impact of global change on the oceans and explore its biodiversity. Researchers involved in this interdisciplinary project, led by the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), will reach Honolulu on May 8 onboard the Spanish Navy vessel Hespérides. On Friday, May 13, R/V Hespérides will begin the next stage of the circumnavigation expedition, which will bring the scientists to Panama.

As the Malaspina expedition will sail from South to North across the Pacific at about 170 W, scientists on board are going to investigate whether radioactive materials released accidentally from the Fukushima nuclear plant are reaching the central Pacific, taking samples of atmospheric particles, water and plankton to examine the presence of radioisotopes.

The expedition, led by Professor Carlos Duarte, CSIC researcher and Director of the UWA Oceans Institute, involves over 400 scientists from around the world. The Hespérides, a research vessel of the Spanish Navy, departed on the 15th of December 2010 from the Spanish city of Cadiz sailing to Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), and Cape Town (South Africa). The past 13th of March, the ship arrived at Perth (Australia), after completing the first Spanish scientific expedition across the Indian Ocean. After Sydney (Australia), Auckland (New Zealand) and Honolulu, the Hespérides will visit Panama (Republic of Panama) and Cartagena de Indias (Colombia). Finally the Expedition will complete the circumnavigation arriving to Cartagena (Spain) in mid-July 2011.

The modern-day Malaspina Expedition involves:

- a multi-disciplinary team of 400 researchers from 27 research groups, plus 21 partner institutions from 10 countries.
- two advanced oceanographic vessels, Hespérides and Sarmiento de Gamboa, sailing 42,000 nautical miles during the nine-month circumnavigation.
- more than 300 stations sampled while at sea, down to depths of 20,000 feet.
- 70,000 samples of air, water and plankton.
- 5,500 GB of disk storage space for the data produced.

## Malaspina's Events in Honolulu

The arrival of the Spanish ship to Honolulu is celebrated with a range of activities, including visits to the research vessel by the public, and lectures at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve and the Waikiki Aquarium. All the events are being published in the following webpage, which is being updated as soon as a new event is confirmed: <http://cmore.soest.hawaii.edu/events/malaspina.htm>:

- **Sunday, May 8 at 9 am:** Arrival of the R/V *Hespérides* to Honolulu Harbor. Pier 10, Aloha Tower Marketplace.
- **Wednesday, May 11 from 12– 5 pm:** Guided tours to the R/V *Hespérides*. Pier 10, Aloha Tower Marketplace. For group visits, please email Daniela del Valle.
- **Thursday, May 12 at 3pm:** Talk by **Rafel Simó**, Chief Scientist of the expedition.  
“The Malaspina 2010–11 Expedition: exploring the footprints of global change on the ocean and the biodiversity of the deep sea.” Marine Science Building Room 100, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.
- **Thursday, May 12 at 6.30pm:** Talk at the Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve by **Sandra Rebok** Vice President Scientific and Cultural Organization, Spanish National Research Council, and Commander **Juan A. Aguilar-Cavanillas**, Commander of the Spanish Navy's oceanographic research vessel “Hespérides”.  
“The challenges of oceanographic expeditions: Following in the footsteps of the 1789-1794 Malaspina campaign.”
- **Friday, May 13 at 7pm:** Talk by **Miquel Alcaraz**. “Old wine in new barrels: Science and art on the Malaspina 2010/11 Circumnavigation Oceanographic Expedition.” Waikiki Aquarium. Call (808-440-9020) or email ([volunteer@waquarium.org](mailto:volunteer@waquarium.org)) them to make a reservation.

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