



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact, Marieta Francis, 562-598-4889 marieta@algalita.org

**ALGALITA MARINE RESEARCH FOUNDATION JOINS
5 GYRES TRIUMVIRATE TO STUDY GLOBAL PLASTIC MARINE POLLUTION VIA ATLANTIC EXPEDITIONS**

LONG BEACH, CA - January 7, 2010. A group of marine scientists propose the world's oceans are filling with plastic. Today they will set sail from the US Virgin Islands to prove their hypothesis with the "5 Gyres Project." This collaborative effort between Algalita Marine Research Foundation (AMRF), Livable Legacy and Pangaea Explorations marks the first global study of plastic marine pollution which will expand on AMRF's groundbreaking research in the North Pacific Gyre where current and wind patterns circulate untold volumes of plastic particles.

"Plastic pollution is a global issue", says AMRF's Founder and plastic marine debris expert, Captain Charles Moore. "We've seen the so-called garbage patch of plastic accumulating in the North Pacific Gyre, but there are four other gyres worldwide, each with its own patch and we don't know yet what we will find in them."

The first expedition will cross the Sargasso Sea between the West Indies and the Azores where plastic debris is accumulating. The crew will make port in Bermuda giving public lectures, meeting the American Ambassador to Bermuda and picking up new crew members. The second expedition will cross the South Atlantic Gyre from Rio De Janeiro to Cape Town, South Africa in August 2010. To date, little research in this field has been conducted in the southern hemisphere. The ultimate goal of these voyages is to gather a global snapshot of plastic marine pollution by 2011.

From these two research expeditions, together with sampling conducted via research equipment on loan to volunteer sailors on other oceanic journeys, 5 Gyres will gather international data on plastic marine pollution, as well as collecting surface samples and foraging fish for evidence of plastic ingestion. Directing the research and outreach for the Project, husband-wife team, Marcus Eriksen and Anna Cummins will oversee both expeditions.

For additional information about 5 Gyres, visit www.5gyres.org

Project Director: Anna Cummins annacummins@gmail.com

Research Coordinator: Marcus Eriksen, PhD marcuseriksen@hotmail.com

For additional information about Algalita Marine Research Foundation, Captain Charles Moore, and ORV *Algalita's* 009 North Pacific Subtropical Gyre expedition, or to learn more about our mission, outreach programs, and research projects, please visit www.algalita.org or call 562.598.4889.

#####