



Committed to sustainable tourism, PONANT partners IUCN World Conservation Congress



France is set to host the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) World Conservation Congress in Marseille from 3-11 September 2021. PONANT is a member of the partners and patrons Club of the Ministry for Ecological Transition which is organising it. The partnership is part of PONANT's commitment since its launch to sustainable tourism in promoting protection of the ocean and polar regions, and connecting with indigenous peoples.

Held every four years, the IUCN World Conservation Congress brings together leaders and government-level decision-makers, civil society and indigenous peoples, companies and academics, the aim being to mobilise participants to rise to the most pressing challenges facing our planet. For the first time, in a French initiative, the general public is invited to take part through Generations Nature Areas which are giving over 350 institutional, private and associative projects the opportunity to present their initiatives and actions in favour of biodiversity. Major decisions to protect nature and sustainable development are expected to come out of this 26th Congress.

Modern fleet at the heart of PONANT's commitment

The choice of Marseille to host the event is particularly relevant to PONANT, as this is where the headquarters are of a company which for 30 years has been inviting guests to discover treasures of the land by sea and to respect them. The Congress's core values, respect and conservation of the environment, are an integral part of the company's *raison d'être*.

The NGO NABU, an ecology reference in Europe, put PONANT at the top of its 2020 ranking of cruise companies that most respect the environment. Indeed, PONANT is the first international cruise company member of the Green Marine (Alliance Verte) environmental certification programme for the maritime industry – an initiative that recognises those committed to measuring their environmental performance every year and reducing their ecological footprint.

For PONANT, it translates as a massive investment of over a billion euros to build a modern 13-strong fleet of small capacity ships with reduced environmental impact, including the hybrid-electric high polar exploration ship *Le Commandant Charcot* which is powered by liquified natural gas (LNG) and equipped with cutting edge environmental technologies.

PONANT has also taken major steps to reduce fuel consumption, such as limiting the average speed, linking to dockside connections, and using biofuels. Heavy fuel oil has not been used since 1st January 2019, while the entire fleet's carbon missions are offset through Verified Carbon Standard certified projects.

Aboard, a policy of controlled, responsible consumption has eliminated single-use plastics and implemented actions from short circuit supply chains to desalination and waste water treatment. PONANT has also invested across the board to raise guests' awareness of the need to protect and preserve the ecosystems visited.

"Going beyond our responsibility as an industry and our commitment to promote sustainable tourism, we want to invest more in several areas that we hold dear: protecting the oceans and poles, and encouraging exchanges between local peoples," stresses Hervé Gastinel, CEO at PONANT. Executive member of IAATO (International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators) and AECO (Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators), the company makes every effort to ensure its activities take into account the biodiversity and cultural heritage of the regions visited.

About the PONANT Foundation

For over 30 years, PONANT has been taking guests to the most secret places on the planet where nature reigns supreme. This choice brings with it responsibilities towards the environment and the indigenous people encountered on expedition cruises. Not only does it take its profession and commitment to promote sustainable tourism seriously, PONANT also wants to further its efforts in areas that are close to the company's heart. That is why the PONANT Foundation was set up in 2019 to protect the oceans and polar regions and encourage exchanges between peoples. Its aim is to support projects focusing on research, awareness-raising and conservation.

ABOUT PONANT

Founded in 1988 by merchant navy officers, PONANT offers a new style of cruises under the French flag through its own concept of sea travel and its commitment to promoting sustainable and responsible tourism. Centred around sailing to exceptional and unusual destinations aboard deluxe design yachts, where lifestyle and excellent cuisine take pride of place, the promise of a voyage with PONANT is that it will be truly unique and authentic. For more information: www.ponant.com

As business resumes, PONANT is working with the IHU (Institut Hospitalo-Universitaire) Méditerranée Infection in Marseilles, a world leader in the field of infectious diseases, and with the Bataillon des Marins-Pompiers de Marseille (fire and rescue service, a branch of the French Navy). The "Covid-safe" protocol developed by PONANT, thanks to the small size of its ships, and the facilities and medical equipment on board, is based on health standards that exceed international regulations.

For more information, visit www.ponant.com

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