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"sun21" weathers its first storm

"sun21", on its way to become the first solar-powered vehicle to cross the Atlantic, has successfully weathered its first storm. Travelling from Chipiona (Spain), the last stop-over on the Continent of Europe, to the Canary Islands, the boat encountered stormy weather with winds up to force seven on the Beaufort scale and waves up to five metres high.

Like other small vessels, "sun21" sought refuge in the harbour of Casablanca (Morocco). The crew are in good state and are satisfied with the boat's behaviour in extremely difficult conditions. Prior to this security stop-over, "sun21" had covered around 200 nautical miles.

"sun21" survived the storm very well – it has passed another serious test," said Martin Vosseler, a crew member and President of the transatlantic21 association.

At the weekend, weather conditions between Casablanca and Lanzarote were too critical for the voyage to be continued. Treacherous waves over seven metres high (cross-sea conditions) were churning up the sea.

The weather has since calmed down and "sun21" will probably be able to resume its voyage tomorrow (Tuesday) under only slightly cloudy skies and a moderate northerly wind. Already today, the crew are able to recharge the solar batteries. If all goes well, they should reach the island of Lanzarote by the coming weekend.

This unplanned stop-over has caused a delay of one week against the original schedule. However, with sufficient time reserves budgeted, the delay should have no adverse impact on the attempt to make this a record-breaking voyage. The boat's arrival in New York is still planned for 8 May 2007.

Further information and visual material at:

www.transatlantic21.org/media-relations/

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