PRESS RELEASE 26/09/12

CATLIN SEAVIEW SURVEY TO REVEAL SCIENCE OF CORAL REEFS

And invites the world to take a virtual dive in Google Maps

Sydney, Australia, Wednesday 26th September 2012: Millions of people arond the globe are invited, for the first time in history, to take a virtual dive on the Great Barrier Reef from wherever they are in and experience the first groundbreaking scientific expedition of the Catlin Seaview Survey.

This unique underwater experience will capture the eyes of the world through a global partnership established by the Catlin Seaview Survey and Google.

The Catlin Seaview Survey, a series of scientific expeditions to explore and survey the world's coral reefs, can be followed on www.catlinseaviewsurvey.com and content collected on expedition is now available in the Street View feature of Google Maps.

Using specially designed, cutting-edge technology and the world's first tablet-operated underwater camera, the SVII camera will bring the experience to life by taking up to 50,000 images that will be collected through continuous high-resolution, 360-degree panoramic imagery. When stitched together, these images will allow people to choose a location along the Great Barrier Reef, dip underwater and go for a viewer-controlled virtual dive in Google Maps.

The Catlin Seaview Survey is sponsored by Catlin Group Limited, an international specialty property/casualty insurer and reinsurer.

As the project's chief scientist, Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg from the Global Change Institute at The University of Queensland said all the scientific data gathered would be made public in a Global Reef Record database.

“The Global Reef Record is a game-changing scientific tool that scientists around the world will have at their fingertips. They will be able to monitor change in marine environments now and in the future. Marine scientists researching any aspect of the reef will be able to study these environments from any of the surveys we conduct – Shallow Reef or Deep Reef,” Professor Hoegh-Guldberg said.

“It’s incredibly rewarding and exciting to be leading a talented team of scientists as the first Catlin Seaview Survey expedition begins. The possibilities of what we will discover about coral reefs are almost endless. And right now, information on how these endangered ecosystems are responding to climate change is incredibly important, given that almost 25 percent of marine species live in and around coral reefs,” Professor Hoegh-Guldberg concluded.

“We are partnering with the Catlin Seaview Survey to make this amazing imagery available to more than one billion monthly users of Google Maps across the world. Together we want to make these special underwater locations as accessible to people as the roads and landmarksthey explore in Google Maps each day,” Jenifer Austin Foulkes, Manager, Google’s Oceans Program.

This special collection of underwater imagery highlights areas in the Great Barrier Reef and several other underwater spots in the Philippines and Hawaii. Please visit Google’s Street View Gallery to explore these unique reef locations: Heron Island, Great Barrier Reef; Lady Elliot Island, Great Barrier Reef; Wilson Island, Great Barrier Reef; Apo Island, Philippines; Oahu, Hawaii: Hanauma Bay; Maui, Hawaii, Molokini Crater.

To demonstrate just how unique this experience will be – the announcement will be made in front of audiences at the Blue Ocean Film Festival in Monterey, California today. Audiences online globally will be treated to the first Catlin Seaview Survey live night dive via a Google+ Hangout on Thursday September 27th at 3.30am AEST time.

To view the Google+ Hangout live please visit: plus.google.com/+catlinseaviewsurvey or youtube.com/catlinseaviewsurvey.

CATLIN SEAVIEW SURVEY EXPEDITION FACTS

The first Catlin Seaview Survey expedition on the Great Barrier Reef set off on 16th September 2012. The survey on the Great Barrier Reef and the Coral Sea runs until the end of December and will visit 20 separate coral reefs along the 2,300km reef on an unprecedented scale and depth range – including sections of the reef that have never previously been seen or studied. It will then continue on to selected global locations in 2013 including Hawaii, the Philippines and Bermuda.

SURVEY SCIENCE

- **Shallow Reef Survey**: Using state-of-the-art digital technology to capture approximately 50,000 360-degree panoramic images of the reef, the visual imagery will be linked to create a virtual dive experience. Each image will be geo-located, with automated technologies for rapidly assessing the amount of coral cover and other life forms from locations at 20 separate coral reefs along the entire length of the Great Barrier Reef. This will provide a broad scale baseline for understanding change on coral reefs.

- **Deep Reef Survey**: Using diving robots and other innovative instrument packages, the Catlin Seaview Survey Team will begin to explore deep water reef systems that are very rarely visited by humans, yet may hold some of the secrets of whether or not coral reefs could survive rapid climate change. Using a

ABOUT CATLIN

Catlin Group Limited is a global specialty property/casualty insurer and reinsurer, writing more than 30 classes of business. Catlin operates worldwide through six underwriting hubs: London/UK, Bermuda, the United States, Asia Pacific, Europe, and Canada. The Catlin Seaview Survey is the fourth scientific expedition it has sponsored following three Catlin Arctic Surveys investigating environmental changes in the Arctic (2009-2011). Catlin believes that insurers must take a leading role in improving our understanding of potential changes to our environment, changes that could affect how risks are managed in the future. Catlin's contribution is to sponsor independent, impartial research that is freely distributed to the world's scientific community.

ABOUT GLOBAL CHANGE INSTITUTE

The Global Change Institute at The University of Queensland, Australia, in collaboration with private and public sector partners, is an independent source of high-impact, game-changing science. The Global Change Institute seeks to advance scientific discovery and identify solutions for meeting the challenges presented by climate change, population change and technological innovation. The Global Change Institute is the science partner in the Catlin Seaview Survey.

EXPEDITION ENGAGEMENT

Join the 1.4 million people are already following the Catlin Seaview Survey on Google+

The Catlin Seaview Survey website: **http://www.catlinseaviewsurvey.com/**

Google Street View Gallery: **maps.google.com/ocean**

A live program of content will be available for people to follow the expedition – including Google Hangouts and videos. See **plus.google.com/+catlinseaviewsurvey** for more information.

Heron Island, Great Barrier Reef – http://goo.gl/maps/3mPy0

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