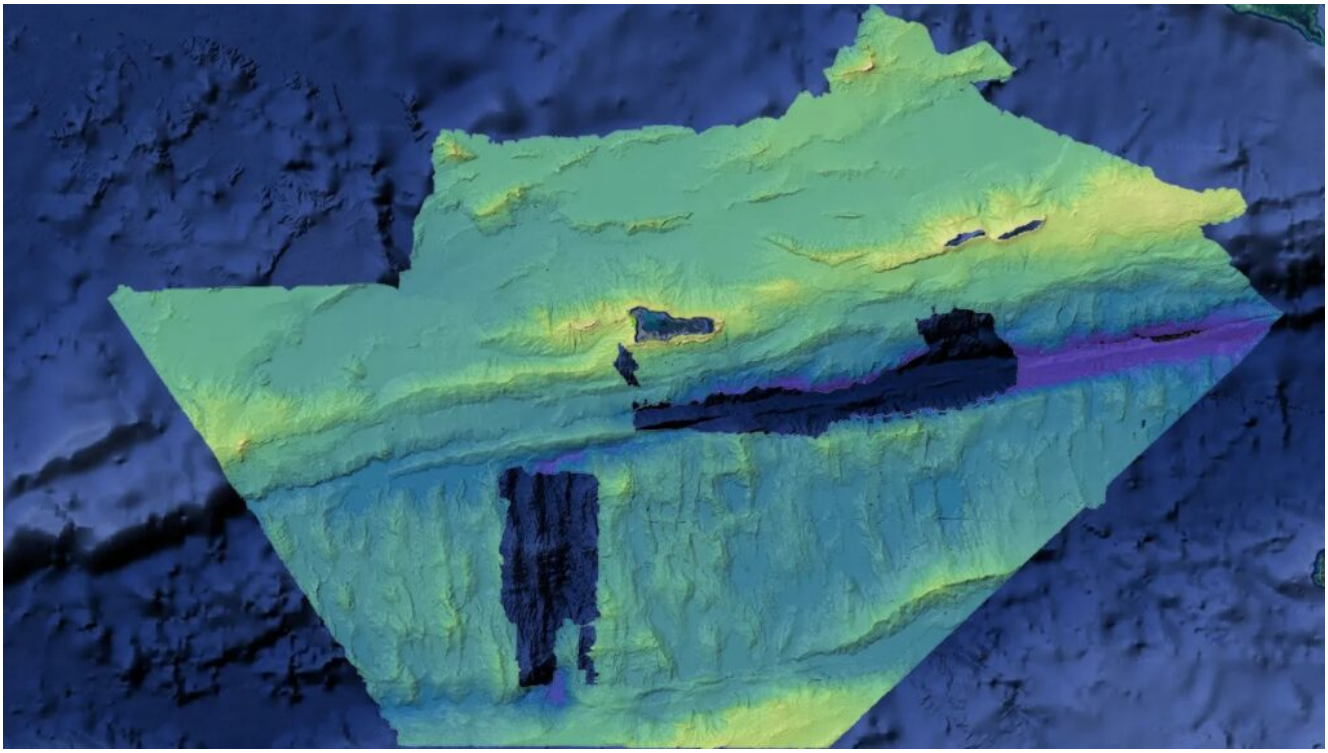
Saildrone Completes Pioneering Mapping Mission of Cayman Islands' EEZ



The Cayman Islands is the first country in the world to have its exclusive economic zone mapped using autonomous systems, unlocking opportunities to expand its Blue Economy.

Saildrone, the global leader in autonomous deep water mapping solutions, has completed its mission to map the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Cayman Islands, using a Saildrone Surveyor uncrewed surface vehicle (USV). Over the course of approximately 300 mission days, Saildrone surveyed approximately 90,000 square kilometers of seabed, in depths ranging from 20 meters to 7,000 meters, executing over 900 sound-velocity profile casts to ensure accurate bathymetric data. One of the priorities of the mission was to survey four fishing banks—60 Mile Bank, Lawfords Bank, Pickle Bank, and 12 Mile Bank—which serve as crucial hotspots of biodiversity supporting fisheries, tourism, and recreation, and are an indicator of the health of the Cayman Islands' marine

ecosystem.

The mission was philanthropically funded by the London & Amsterdam Trust Company Limited, a Cayman-based organization that wants to leave a lasting legacy to the Cayman Islands.

Prior to the Saildrone survey, the Cayman Islands had limited data available of its EEZ; the extent to which the Cayman EEZ had been surveyed with modern multibeam sonar technology was only 20,000 sq km of seafloor concentrated around the deep water of the Cayman Trench.

For small island nations such as the Cayman Islands, ocean mapping unlocks critical opportunities in the Blue Economy: A high-resolution bathymetric map of a country’s EEZ is a prerequisite for exploring and managing natural resources in waters extending up to 200 nautical miles from its shores.

With the newly acquired seabed data, the Cayman Government will be better positioned to support:

- enhanced maritime safety, navigation, and charting
- sustainable fisheries
- offshore energy planning
- responsible seabed mining and marine mineral exploration
- conservation of vulnerable marine ecosystems and habitat management.

All raw bathymetric, backscatter, and ocean-profile data will

now be handed over to the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO), which will process data under its role as the Primary Charting Authority for the Cayman Islands, before the final data sets are formally delivered to the Cayman Government. The UKHO intends to update its nautical chart portfolio of the Cayman Islands by incorporating the collected data. Additionally, a low-resolution dataset will also be provided to Seabed 2030 to support its goal of mapping the entire global seabed by 2030.

During the mission, Saildrone faced numerous operational challenges, including unprecedented sargassum blooms and severe weather threats, which exacerbated the operational difficulties of delivering high-resolution seabed mapping in the open ocean. However, these challenges also presented important opportunities to develop new techniques and tools for overcoming them. Saildrone responded with new approaches to clearing the sound velocity profiler (SVP) and enhanced remote diagnostics to detect biofouling early. Operating safely and consistently during severe weather helped validate the Surveyor's proven capability to remain on survey up to sea state seven.

"This mission is a testament to the power of Saildrone vehicles in delivering ocean mapping at a scale and resolution that was previously prohibitively expensive for small island nations. Delivering mission-critical operations in sargassum-filled, hurricane-exposed waters demonstrates the resilience of Saildrone's unmanned mapping services and the prospects it holds for nations worldwide," said Saildrone VP Ocean Mapping, Brian Connon.

Following the success of this mission, Saildrone is looking forward to opportunities to map the EEZs of additional Caribbean nations.