



Press Release

다시, 대한민국!
새로운 국민의 나라

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The low-carbon survey vessel "Seomnurim" is scheduled to depart soon to conduct a thorough investigation of the creatures living on the island

- The Seomnurim will be the first vessel of a public institution in Korea and the fourth overall in the country to have a hybrid propulsion system (combining electricity and diesel)
- The ship aims to enhance research and investigation of new unidentified species in Korean islands.

Sejong, May 10 – On April 28, the Ministry of Environment (Minister Han Wha-jin) and Honam National Institute of Biological Resources (President Taechul Ryu) held a ceremony to launch a new boat called "Seomnurim" for surveying island creatures. The event took place at Namhang Port Pier in Mokpo. It was attended by approximately 70 people, including local officials such as Vice-Governor of Political Affairs Park Chang-hwan, Mokpo Mayor Park Hong-Sul, Shinan-gun Mayor Park Woo-yang, and community members.

The launch ceremony began by recognizing the Seomnurim shipbuilders with commendation awards. A commemorative speech, a ribbon-cutting ceremony, and a special champagne-breaking¹ event followed this. During the event, Minister Han smashed a champagne bottle against the hull to wish for the safe navigation of the Seomnurim. The name of Seomnurim was chosen through a nationwide contest and meant "explore and investigate marine life while enjoying the island and the coast."

The Seomnurim vessel weighs 61 tons and can accommodate up to 20 people. It has a length of 30 meters, a width of 5.4 meters, and a height of 2.6 meters. With a maximum speed of 31 knots (which translates to 57.4 km/h), it is equipped with a protruding bow to allow researchers to disembark even in places without docking facilities. Onboard, various tools, such as a diving lift and a sampler crane, can easily obtain biological resources. The Seomnurim is expected to

overcome the limitations of biological research in Korea's island areas, which have many uninhabited islands.

Seomnurim is the first public institution vessel in Korea that utilizes a hybrid propulsion system consisting of both electric motors and diesel engines. This system reduces greenhouse gas emissions by over 25% compared to traditional diesel engines. Additionally, the vessel uses its electric motor to prevent air pollutant emissions and environmental pollution when approaching and leaving ports. Seomnurim is also the first public institution vessel to employ environmentally-friendly plastic (HDPE)² in its manufacturing process, which helps minimize waste.

Minister Han Wha-jin said in her congratulatory speech, "Seomnurim, which is powered by a hybrid system that reduces carbon emissions, will spearhead the expansion of low-carbon shipping." She added, "We hope that Seomnurim will play an important role in discovering excellent biological resources from unexplored areas in Korea's island regions, as we hope for safe navigation."

President Taechul Ryu of Honam National Institute Biological Resources stated in his speech commemorating the arrival of Seomnurim, "With Seomnurim, we will do our utmost to conduct research and surveys on biological resources in the under-researched island regions."

¹ Traditionally, when a boat is launched, a champagne bottle is smashed against its hull to mark the event and wish for a safe journey. In Western culture, it is common for women, particularly the shipowner's wife or the ordering agency's director, to perform this act.

² HDPE (high-density polyethylene): Environmentally-friendly plastic that is 100% recyclable with excellent mechanical strength and thermal resistance that does not release endocrine disruptors