



NOTE TO THE MEDIA
Geneva, 27 April 2021

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC AND ROLEX PERPETUAL PLANET TUPUNGATO VOLCANO EXPEDITION

Through its Perpetual Planet initiative Rolex has supported an expedition to install a weather station on one of the highest mountains in South America to help build climate change science on vulnerable water towers.

A National Geographic team of explorers and scientists has installed a weather station – the highest in the Southern and Western Hemispheres – just below the summit of Tupungato Volcano, in the Southern Andes.

The exploratory mission to Tupungato Volcano, one of the loftiest peaks in the Americas, is the latest in a series of National Geographic expeditions, known as Perpetual Planet Expeditions, which are supported by Rolex through its Perpetual Planet initiative.

PERPETUAL PLANET INITIATIVE

Exploration is inextricably linked to the history of Rolex. As early as the 1930s, company founder Hans Wilsdorf began to test his watches using the world as a living laboratory.

As the 21st-century unfolds, the company has moved from championing exploration for the sake of discovery to one of safeguarding the planet and reinforced its commitment by launching the Perpetual Planet initiative in 2019. It supports individuals and organizations using science to understand the Earth's environmental challenges.

The Rolex Perpetual Planet initiative for now focuses on three key areas: supporting individuals who contribute to a better world through the Rolex Awards for Enterprise; preserving the oceans through the company's association with Mission Blue; and understanding climate change through data as part of its enhanced association with National Geographic, a Rolex partner since 1954.

BUILDING CLIMATE CHANGE SCIENCE

Undertaken in cooperation with Chile's government, the Tupungato Volcano project builds on the National Geographic and Rolex Perpetual Planet Expedition in 2019 to Mount Everest, the largest scientific expedition ever undertaken to the world's highest mountain, which made history with the installation of the world's highest weather station.

Members of the Tupungato Volcano Expedition were equipped with the Oyster Perpetual Explorer II, an essential instrument for every explorer. The Explorer was developed in collaboration with legendary mountaineers and has constantly evolved to meet explorers' needs.



THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC AND ROLEX
PERPETUAL PLANET TUPUNGATO VOLCANO EXPEDITION

The goal of the National Geographic and Rolex Perpetual Planet Expeditions is to provide scientific information that can help communities take action to protect themselves in the face of climate change impacts on vulnerable water towers, the most important mountainous and glacial regions of the world that act like giant storage tanks and provide fresh water to billions of people.

Co-led by Dr Gino Casassa, a National Geographic Explorer and the Head of the Glaciology and Snow Unit of the Chile Ministry of Public Works, the Tupungato Volcano Expedition, which began on 19 February and ended on 5 March, was established to examine the mountain's water tower.

Commenting on the significance of the expedition, climate scientist Dr Baker Perry, Professor of Appalachian State University in North Carolina, United States, and co-lead of the Tupungato Volcano expedition, said: "With the installation of the highest weather station in the Americas, scientists will have a window into atmospheric processes in the high Chilean Andes. One of the most vulnerable water towers in the world, these mountains provide critical freshwater to more than 6 million inhabitants in nearby Santiago. The expedition is contributing to a Perpetual Planet by pushing the limits of scientific discovery and exploration to the highest reaches of the planet."

Located on Tupungato's summit, at a height of 6,505m, the new weather station will collect data to be used to analyse weather modelling and water-resource management. It will now function alongside lower stations that were installed in December 2019 with support from National Geographic – one at 4,400m (at the upper Aconcagua basin 70 km northeast of Santiago); and two on neighbouring volcano Tupungatito at 4,400m and 5,750m.

The historic Perpetual Planet Everest Expedition, which ran from April to June 2019, examined the role that the mountain system plays in providing water resources to 1 billion people. A team of more than 30, including scientists from Nepal's Tribhuvan University, successfully set up a network of automated weather stations (with the highest located at 8,400m above sea level) reaching the sub-tropical jet stream, a band of powerful winds that circle the globe at high altitudes and are extremely difficult to track. Significantly, the weather stations provide a stream of data, helping to determine projections of snow and ice. The National Geographic and Rolex Perpetual Planet Expeditions to fragile mountain environments such as the Tupungato Volcano are a continuation of the brand's long-standing links to exploration and to supporting those who find solutions to the challenges confronting our fragile ecosystems.



This project goes to the heart of the commitment Rolex has made to a Perpetual Planet and to future generations, by supporting individuals and organizations in their efforts to preserve the natural world and the systems that sustain life. It is essential to base solutions on reliable data. The insights from these expeditions will be invaluable to informing decisions on how the world can best tackle the planet's most pressing environmental challenges.

Nicole Alexiev, Vice President of Science and Innovation at the National Geographic Society, recognizes the synergy of the two organizations: "Through our partnership with Rolex to study and explore Earth's critical life support systems, our ultimate goal is to use the new information and data gathered from the expeditions to support and elevate solutions that will restore balance to our ecosystems," she said.

ABOUT ROLEX

An unrivalled reputation for quality and expertise

Rolex is an integrated and independent Swiss watch *manufacture*. Headquartered in Geneva, the brand is recognized the world over for its expertise and the quality of its products – symbols of excellence, elegance and prestige. The movements of its Oyster Perpetual and Cellini watches are certified by COSC, then tested in-house for their precision, performance and reliability. The Superlative Chronometer certification, symbolized by the green seal, confirms that each watch has successfully undergone tests conducted by Rolex in its own laboratories according to its own criteria. These are periodically validated by an independent external organization.

The word "Perpetual" is inscribed on every Rolex Oyster watch. But more than just a word on a dial, it is a philosophy that embodies the company's vision and values. Hans Wilsdorf, the founder of the company, instilled a notion of perpetual excellence that would drive the company forward. This led Rolex to pioneer the development of the wristwatch and numerous major watchmaking innovations, such as the Oyster, the first waterproof wristwatch, launched in 1926, and the Perpetual rotor self-winding mechanism, invented in 1931. In the course of its history, Rolex has registered over 500 patents. At its four sites in Switzerland, the brand designs, develops and produces the majority of its watch components, from the casting of the gold alloys to the machining, crafting, assembly and finishing of the movement, case, dial and bracelet. Furthermore, the brand is actively involved in supporting the arts and culture, sport and exploration, as well as those who are devising solutions to preserve the planet.

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