

Paris, December 21st 2023

DAKAR FUTURE - MISSION 1000: MARCH OF THE TRAILBLAZERS

Key points:

- *The Dakar, a test bed for new technologies, is rolling out a new challenge to give alternative-fuel vehicles the chance to tackle the tracks and dunes of Saudi Arabia. It is not a competition, but the riders and crews will have their performances rated over a distance of about 100 kilometres every day.*
- *The Mission 1000 competitors will have the honour of getting the ball rolling on the Dakar ahead of the prologue in AIUla on 5 January. Six motorbikes, four cars and a truck are revving up to write the first verses of the future.*

Now that is a win-win proposition! At its core, the Mission 1000 challenge is an adventure for the daring riders and crews who choose alternative-fuel engines to blaze a trail and perhaps even shape the future of the sport. In their dual role as pioneers and ambassadors for their technologies, the Mission 1000 participants are heading to AIUla confident in the knowledge that their vehicles have got what it takes. Among the six motorbikes on the entry list, those from the Tacita team are the latest instalment of a project that began in 2012, when the Italian maker fielded an electric motorbike in the Merzouga Rally. The current version has been improved and revamped from the ground up. It has a nominal range of almost 300 kilometres and will be entrusted to two seasoned riders: the Frenchman **Sylvain Espinasse**, who showed his abilities when he finished the 2016 Dakar on a 125 cc mount, and the Italian **Oscar Polli**, one of the leading riders at the turn of the 2010s. Meanwhile, the Chinese manufacturer Artic Leopard picked the swashbuckler **Willy Jobard** to lead its contingent of three motorbikes in the 2024 Dakar. For his seventeenth Dakar, the Frenchman is banking on a range of more than 150 kilometres, which should be enough on paper, as well as an incredible amount of power on the dunes: "It's a rocket". On his side, the Spaniard **Francisco Gómez**, who entered the Dakar eight times between 2000 and 2018 (53rd in 2006), will be defending the colours of the Green Power Race Team.

Tackling the varied terrains of the Dakar is just as technically complex on four wheels as on two, if not more. One of the four crews that have risen to the challenge is that of **Jean-Michel Paulhe**, who works for Airbus Helicopters and has put his technical nous to good use to create a hybrid-engine SSV. His vehicle combines an electric engine and an internal combustion engine running on bioethanol, for a 90% drop in the carbon footprint and a probable range of more than 200 km. Another SSV, racing under the codename "HYSE-X1", burns hydrogen and is a joint project of the Japanese makers Toyota, Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamaha! The man in charge of fine-tuning it was none other than **Jean-Marc Fortin** (Overdrive Racing), who knows a thing or two about winning in the Dakar and is hedging his bets at the start of this adventure: "The 2024 Dakar is the starting point". **Camelia Liparoti**, who became the first woman to finish the Dakar in a quad back in 2010, also finds it hard to turn her back on a challenge. This time round, she will be driving a third American-designed SSV that also runs on hydrogen and which she already piloted in the Sonora Rally. Finally, **Jordi Juvanteny** will also be part of the hydrogen posse in his 32nd Dakar, seated at the wheel of an Epsilon truck to which he has given the cuddly name "The Beast". The 100 kilometres on the daily menu will be just an appetiser

[Access to the media area](#) / Photos for an editorial use only.

More information: www.dakar.com

PRESS CONTACT: pressedakar@aso.fr