

ANT XXII/5 Weekly Report No. 1 23 May - 30 May 2005

We are now sailing since more than a week while bringing the long cruise ANT XXII of POLARSTERN back from the southern hemisphere and to its end. The journey of the newcomers on board to Argentina was (almost) eventless. The predecessor party headed by Dr H-W Schenke faced significant problems while disembarking from the ship at sea. A blend of unfavourable weather conditions and management problems of the port authorities prevented the ship from reaching a pier in Bahia Blanca on time. Only after the leaving group had checked in the hotel for a couple of hours they were urged to leave again for the airport to travel home via Buenos Aires. Their flight tickets dared to expire on the same day.

Another problem occurred and was solved when it became clear that the five-day visa from Argentina of our Chinese member of the scientific party would expire on 23 May as well. In a unprecedented concerted action between the ship's agent in Bahia, Prof A Körtzinger in Kiel, and the Argentine consulate in Hamburg an extension of the visa could be arranged within only a couple of hours.

Nevertheless, the group of newcomers embarked in the night 23/24 May at an oil pier far outside from the city of Bahia where POLARSTERN had docked unexpectedly in late afternoon. The distance to town and the shortness of the ship's port call allowed practically no visit of the crew to town.

As part of the scientific equipment we returned two of the ship's gravimeters on board. They had been used for a reference observation on land in favour of the geophysical measurements during the past cruise leg.

We were not too sorry to leave land the next morning heading for the region of Vema Channel. The group from Kiel runs long-term observations at this site since the early days of the World Ocean Circulation Experiment in 1991.

Both moorings on the eastern and western flanks of the Vema Sill were recovered and redeployed successfully without any losses. Last time they had been launched in December 2003 from the RRV DISCOVERY. Hydrographic observations with the CTD probe were part of the work plan of our first week at sea.

In one of the following Weekly Reports we will send a description of the scientific background of our work on board.

As for today we send greetings to all relatives, colleagues, and friends who follow our activities with interest.

Walter Zenk  
Chief Scientist  
31° S, 39° W