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HELMHOLTZ-ZENTRUM FÜR POLAR-  
UND MEERESFORSCHUNG

## Expedition

# An international team of young researchers on board the Polarstern

Exploring interactions between the ocean, atmosphere and climate, in theory and practice

[03. June 2019] 25 young scientists from around the globe are currently taking part in a month-long expedition from the Falkland Islands to Bremerhaven on board the research icebreaker Polarstern as part of a summer school. On the 'South-North Atlantic Training Transect' they will gain unique insights into the marine sciences and engage in short projects on interactions between the ocean, atmosphere and climate.

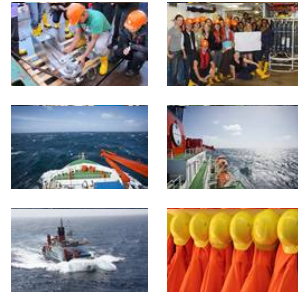


"We have to train young scientists from around the globe to become the marine research experts of tomorrow, so that we can sustainably shape the future of the Earth and its oceans," says Prof Karen Wiltshire. The biologist, who works at the Alfred Wegener Institute, Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research (AWI) facilities on Sylt, coordinates the 'floating summer school', which is the third of its kind: in 2015 and 2016, similar training was offered during Polarstern's voyage south. The expedition began on 2 June 2019 in Port Stanley (Falkland Islands) and is scheduled to end on 29 June in Bremerhaven.

The group met in late May in Punta Arenas (Chile) for a two-day preparatory workshop. On board the Polarstern the young researchers, divided into groups of five, will spend several days each working on various topics. Led by a total of 16 experts from nine German and international institutions, they will chiefly focus on the climate system, oceanography, remote sensing methods for the ocean and atmosphere, marine organisms and microplastic, and data processing. These investigations will be particularly exciting because, in the course of the voyage, the Polarstern will traverse various climate zones, and both shallow coastal waters and deep oceans. Accordingly, the summer school participants will encounter a diverse range of organisms, which have adapted to the characteristic temperatures and salinities of their respective habitats. When combined with satellite observations, the data collected on board will allow the students to view their findings in a global context.




"During our expedition, we won't just be teaching the young researchers to determine parameters like ocean warming and pollution. We also want to show them how problems can be effectively approached and managed," explains Karen Wiltshire. The summer school offers a valuable contribution by training young scientists in preparation for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030. The programme also helps achieve one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development).




## Downloads



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A further topic will be science communication. In this regard, the participants will report on the expedition using social media. In addition, they'll be in contact with partner schools in Great Britain, Germany, Ireland and Japan. The students there will receive materials on ocean observation, including historical data and live observations from the expedition. Tentatively, Skype links and text and video messaging will allow them to directly ask the expedition participants about their research and life on board.

### Background on SoNoAT (South-North Atlantic Training Transect):

More than 800 graduates applied for the 25 slots on board, which were jointly offered by POGO (Partnership for Observation of the Global Oceans); the Alfred Wegener Institute, Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research (AWI); the Nippon Foundation; and the EU project AtlantOS. The participants selected hail from 22 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, Oceania, and South and Central America. Alongside education, promoting networking among young researchers from all disciplines of marine research is a key priority for all partners. At the end of the expedition in Bremerhaven, the summer school participants will meet with colleagues from the Centre of Excellence in Observational Oceanography, which has been jointly operated on Helgoland and Sylt by the Nippon Foundation, POGO and the AWI since 2013.



**The Institute**

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The Alfred Wegener Institute pursues research in the polar regions and the oceans of mid and high latitudes. As one of the 19 centres of the Helmholtz Association it coordinates polar research in Germany and provides ships like the research icebreaker Polarstern and stations for the international scientific community.

