

ANT XXII/2 Weekly Report No. 1 6.11. - 14.11.2004

The arrival of all ISPOL-Expedition members at Cape Town was without incident. This was true for the Germans as well as for those coming from different continents. Some of us used the few hours between arrival in sunny and warm Cape Town and departure with Polarstern in the evening of Saturday to visit the „Docks“ at the waterfront.

Sunday, our first day at sea, started with a gentle swell. First instructions on life onboard the ship were given and the first scientific meeting was scheduled. The following days, scientists and crew were busy unloading their equipment, setting up in the laboratories, testing of instruments and taking part in our regular morning information sessions, during which the individual groups presented their scientific projects. Thursday brought the first indication that we were heading for Antarctica, when the first iceberg was sighted. Cameras clicked busily since we have quite a number of newcomers to the South.

Simultaneously, the weather deteriorated, and we were heading directly into a heavy gale. By changing our course more to the South we avoided the worst and experienced „only“ wind force 8 and waves up to 7m. The different course gave us an additional benefit; Bouvet Island was to be passed in close proximity. Bouvet Island supposedly is the most remote island on our planet. Partly blue skies, lots of storm petrels and albatrosses, and an island almost free of hiding clouds and surrounded by numerous stranded icebergs were a rare view. More films and digital chips were filled.

On Saturday we were behind the storm depression with temperatures around -2°C and few snow showers. During the evening we met first streaks of sea ice which changed to a more or less solid sea ice cover during the night with our heading further to the southwest. Finally the sea ice zone was reached, which is so important to all the scientific groups on board of the ship.

Everybody on board is fine and well (although some suffered from the waves). Intensive use of the fitness gear gives proof of the food quality.

With best wishes to those having remained at home.

In the name of all expedition members
Michael Spindler