

Press Releases in 2009

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26. March 2009: **Research plane Polar 5 on Arctic campaign**



The research aircraft Polar 5 belongs to the Alfred Wegener Institute. It will start on Monday March 30th at 10 o'clock from the regional airport Bremerhaven on an Arctic measurement campaign which will last about four weeks. Measurements of sea ice thickness and atmospheric variables in an area between Spitsbergen, Greenland, northern Canada and Alaska are at the centre of the project PAM-ARCMIP (Pan-Arctic Measurements and Arctic Climate Model Inter comparison Project).

[To press release: Research plane Polar 5 on Arctic campaign](#)

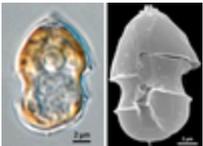
23. March 2009: **Lohafex provides new insights on plankton ecology - Only small amounts of atmospheric carbon dioxide fixed**



The Indo-German team of scientists from the National Institute of Oceanography and the Alfred Wegener Institute has returned from its expedition on research vessel Polarstern. The cooperative project Lohafex has yielded new insights on how ocean ecosystems function. But it has dampened hopes on the potential of the Southern Ocean to sequester significant amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and thus mitigate global warming.

[Lohafex provides new insights on plankton ecology](#)

19. March 2009: **Cause of mussel poisoning identified**



The origin of the neurotoxin azaspiracid has finally been identified after a search for more than a decade. The azaspiracid toxin group can cause severe poisoning in human consumers of mussels after being enriched in the shellfish tissues. The scientific periodical European Journal of Phycology reports in its current issue (Vol. 44/1: p. 63-79) that a tiny algal species, the dinoflagellate *Azadinium spinosum*, is responsible. Researchers from the Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research in the Helmholtz Association have isolated and described the hitherto unknown organism as a new genus and species of dinoflagellate. They successfully isolated the organism and multiplied it in pure laboratory cultures, subsequently identifying it as the producer of azaspiracid toxin.

[To press release: Cause of mussel poisoning identified](#)

18. March 2009: **Western Antarctic was ice-free during interglacials - Geological data signal dynamic developments of the ice shield three to five million years ago**

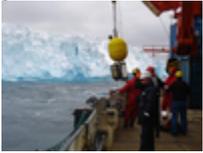


The ice cap of the Western Antarctic has apparently deglaciated completely many times three to five million years ago. The periodical nature reports in its current issue (vol. 458) that these regular deglaciation phases have been caused by changes in the tilt of the Earth's rotational axis in times of increased atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations. This is the result of a sediment core drilled under German participation below the Antarctic Ross ice shelf in the framework of the international drilling project ANDRILL (ANtarctic geological DRILLing).

[To press release: Western Antarctic was ice-free during interglacials - Geological data signal dynamic developments of the ice shield three to five million years ago](#)

27. February 2009: **The end of the International Polar Year 2007/2008: Scientists from all over Germany draw a**

positive conclusion



The International Polar Year 2007/2008 nears its end. Today, about 120 people celebrate two years of intense and internationally coordinated scientific campaigns in earth's two Polar Regions in the Klimahaus Bremerhaven. During the German closing event of the International Polar Year 2007/2008, they did not only look back upon new insights and successful German contributions. The researchers from all over Germany emphasized the future importance of Polar research.

[To press release: The end of the International Polar Year 2007/2008: Scientists from all over Germany draw a positive conclusion](#)

20. February 2009: **The Federal Minister of Education and Research inaugurates new German Antarctic station - Neumayer Station III starts scientific operation**



The Federal Minister for Education and Research, Dr Annette Schavan, inaugurated Neumayer Station III today at noontime. The new German research facility thereby starts its scientific operation. It is located 6.5 km south of the old Neumayer Station on the Ekström ice shelf in Dronning Maud Land in the Antarctic. The station serves as a base for scientific observatories as well as logistic centre for inland expeditions and polar aircraft.

[See Press Release: Inauguration of Antarctic Neumayer Station III](#)

26. January 2009: **Polarstern expedition "LOHAFEX" can be conducted**



The Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research in the Helmholtz Association can conduct the ongoing Polarstern expedition „LOHAFEX“. Independent scientific and legal reviews sought by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety concluded that the iron fertilisation experiment LOHAFEX is neither against environmental standards nor the international law in force. There are thus no ecological and legal reasons to further suspend the iron fertilisation experiment LOHAFEX.

[To press release: Polarstern expedition "LOHAFEX" can be conducted](#)

15. January 2009: **Outer shell of the Neumayer Station III completely assembled**



The new German research base Neumayer Station III can be seen in its final form for the very first time. A new milestone in the construction of the station is reached after the successful completion of the outer shell. The Shell protects the upper two floors - which are comprised of container modules - from exterior weather conditions.

[To press release: Outer shell of the Neumayer Station III completely assembled](#)

13. January 2009: **LOHAFEX: An Indo-German iron fertilization experiment - What are the effects on the ecology and carbon uptake potential of the Southern Ocean?**



The German research vessel Polarstern is currently on its way to the Southwest Atlantic Sector of the Southern Ocean. The team of 48 scientists (30 from India) on board left Cape Town on 7th January to carry out the Indo-German iron fertilization experiment LOHAFEX (LOHA is Hindi for iron, FEX stands for Fertilization EXperiment).

[To press release: LOHAFEX: An Indo-German iron fertilization experiment - What are the effects on the ecology and carbon uptake potential of the Southern Ocean?](#)