

1. Weekly Report - MSM94

The MSM94 expedition with RV Maria S. Merian started on Sunday August 2nd, 2020 in Emden / Germany. After 4 days in quarantine, which luckily resulted in a negative COVID-19 test for everyone, we were driven from Leer to Emden where the



Merian was moored. Emden is currently the meeting point of the German research fleet and besides RV Maria S. Merian, the RV Sonne and the RV Planet both are currently moored in Emden. In the afternoon the RV Meteor joined the trio, finishing a cruise into the North Atlantic, and moored right in front of RV Maria S Merian.

Meteor moored in front of Merian in Emden port
Photo: Conny Posern

Until the end of last year there was not even a single photo showing RV Meteor and RV

Maria S. Merian side by side. Within a few months the two ships are now regularly neighbors in Emden. Since the RV Meteor is also under quarantine requirements, visits could take place, an opportunity that was used by both ships.

The time in the port was used for loading and stowing and to set up the devices for the upcoming trip, meetings and a tour of the ship also took place. The free-fall lifeboat was tested for functionality in the afternoon.



After unmooring, which was supported by the RV Meteor Crew, we went through the lock towards the North Sea. This part also was memorable: since some of the crew members live in the Emden area, the opportunity was taken to take a Sunday trip to the lock and to say goodbye to Dad.

Test des Freifall-Rettungsboots,
Photo: Christiane Lösel

We now follow a westerly course, which ultimately will bring us into the Labrador Sea, north of Canada. We passed the English Channel and had a look at the beautifully glowing White Cliffs of Dover in the midday sun.

The set-up of equipment is progressing and everyone is well on board and highly motivated. In Corona times, the scientific crew of the RV Maria S. Merian is limited to 13 people from a maximum of 22 under normal conditions and everything appears somewhat calmer in these first days, compared to previous trips we had.

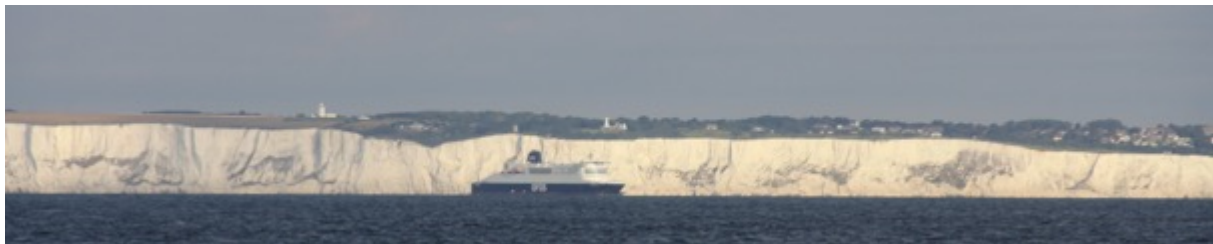
We are very grateful to be able to carry out this trip in times of Corona. The core program of this expedition is servicing long-term moorings in the Labrador Sea that have been installed in June 2018. A delay of such servicing carries the risk of data loss with unforeseen consequences for our research. Therefore, a big thank you goes to the German Research Fleet Coordination Centre in Hamburg, the shipping company Briese and the GPF panel of the German Science Foundation (DFG).

We expect to reach international waters on Wednesday afternoon and then start with the data acquisition, at least for underway data such as observations of currents and surface water temperature and salinity. For the underway data acquisition, we get help from the “underway data pilot project” of the German Alliance for Marine Research (DAM). The underway data is sent ashore every day and DAM takes care of the processing, monitors the quality and forwards the data to international data centers, where they are used, for example, to improve weather forecasts.

All feel well and the food is excellent.

With regards from the MSM94 participants,

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White Cliffs of Dover, *Photo C. Lösel*

Also note: www.oceanblogs.org/msm94/