

Weekly Report No. 4
SO260/1 & 2
29.01.2018 – 04.02.2018



On Monday January 29, 2018 we continued our surface-sediment sampling program with the grab corer and box corer on the upper continental margin off Argentina in water depth of 600 to 800 m. Most of the sampled sites are characterized by strong erosive conditions. Samples with rock fragments with sessile organisms, cold-water coral pieces, and other macro faunal organisms such as solitary corals, mollusca, bryozoans, and sponges were retrieved (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Grab corer sample with macro faunal organisms such as corals, crustaceans, sea urchins, and molluscs among others (Photo: Janina Bösche).

Coring activities of RV SONNE cruise Leg SO260-1 were completed January 29 at noon and we left the working area towards Montevideo, Uruguay. After reaching the pilot station at 6 am, we entered port in Montevideo at 8 am on January 30. The harbor smell – a result of cargo loading including dump material, live sheep, and frozen fish – was quite a contrast to the fresh sea breeze we were accustomed to. Briefly after the arrival in Montevideo, the MARUM-MeBo Team came on board to set up the seafloor drill rig MeBo70 (Figure 2). The work on the MeBo continued through

January 31, and was successfully completed February 1 with a practice run in the harbor.



Figure 2: Assembly of the seafloor drill rig MeBo70 on the RV SONNE in Montevideo. In the back is the cruise liner NORWEGIAN SUN (Photo: Sabine Kasten).

The first leg of our research cruise was dominated by seismic surveys; the second leg will focus on the retrieval of long sediment cores using the seafloor drill rig MeBo70. We therefore had to say goodbye to 15 of our first leg colleagues, including most of the seismic group from the Faculty of Geosciences, University of Bremen (Figure 3). In return, 15 new scientists came onboard the ship, including 9 members of the MeBo Team.

Besides preparation and device assembly work for the second leg of RV SONNE expedition SO260, a ship tour was carried out on February 1, for invited guests and the press initiated by the German ambassador in Montevideo, Ingo von Voss. In the evening of February 1, a reception was hosted by Ambassador von Voss in a nearby Hotel for members of SONNE crew and of the scientific party. It was a very nice evening with stimulating conversations with, among others, Uruguayan scientists and Naval officers, and other ambassadors in Montevideo.



Figure 3: Scientific Party of the first leg of cruise RV SONNE SO260 (Photo: Wolfgang Borchert).

In the morning of February 2, we disembarked for our second leg of the research expedition and arrived after a 12-hour transit at our working area on the continental margin off Uruguay. After sampling two sites with the gravity corer and multi corer, we headed towards our first MeBo station off Argentina, where we arrived Sunday, February 3.

The spirits are still high among our team and in addition to the scientific work we also enjoy the wonderful warm and sunny weather.

All the best from the SONNE crew and scientific party of expedition SO260,
Sabine Kasten (Chief Scientist)