

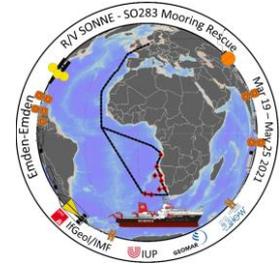
R/V SONNE

SO283 "Mooring Rescue"

Emden - Emden, 19.03. - 25.05.2021

1. Weekly Report

19. - 21.03.2021



It's really starting!

Every research cruise has its special challenges and peculiarities. Already, however, cruise SO283 will be one of the most extraordinary expeditions I have ever participated in or led. No doubt, in pandemic times, it is an even greater privilege to be able to conduct such research cruises at all. But the multitude of difficulties and challenges that have confronted everyone involved in recent weeks and months have dwarfed any preparation known to date. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved and responsible, i.e. the participants, the ship's crew, and especially Briese Research and the German Research Fleet Coordination Centre, for the fact that we are now actually on our way to the South Atlantic, despite all the hurdles and after 10 days of strict hotel quarantine. This was and is really not a matter of course.



R/V SONNE passes the lock in the port of Emden (© Universität Hamburg/Niko Lahajnar)

Mooring Rescue - what is this research cruise all about? In 2019, before the outbreak of the pandemic, various mooring systems were deployed in the southern Atlantic - mainly off the coast of South Africa, Namibia and Angola - to collect data and obtain samples for the TRAFFIC, EVAR and BANINO research projects. These moorings were to be recovered during research cruises in 2020, which were already firmly scheduled at that time. In addition, it was also firmly planned to deploy new moorings in the South Atlantic in the second phase for the DFG program TRR181. Then came Corona - and all research vessels were ordered back to their home ports. No one could justify intercontinental flights anymore either. Everyone hoped for an improvement of the general situation, but neither the virus nor the vaccination progress allowed research trips in the regions again. Since a gigantic loss of data and samples was imminent and also all devices and

instruments were in danger of not being able to be recovered, this SONNE cruise was created at short notice. A total of 13 scientists from the Universities of Hamburg and Bremen, GEOMAR in Kiel and the Leibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research Warnemünde (IOW) started their long journey from Emden to the South Atlantic on Friday, March 19, 2021. Right on time at 12:58 o'clock it was time to cast off!



R/V METEOR in the harbor basin of Emden (© Universität Hamburg/Knut Heinatz)

And then immediately a small highlight at the exit through the lock: we pass R/V METEOR. It seems as if the circle is already closing in the harbor basin of Emden. Because in 2019, during the research voyages with R/V METEOR, we laid out the moorings in the southern Atlantic, which we now want to recover with R/V SONNE. A total of almost 15,000 nautical miles, i.e. approx. 28,000 km, or 67 days on board R/V SONNE lie ahead of us before we return to Emden at the end of May. Non-stop and without a stop in port, this SONNE cruise is already one of the longest voyages in the long history of all SONNE expeditions. We have already settled in very well during the first days, are excellently supported in all aspects and are looking forward to an exciting and hopefully successful research cruise. And after the long hotel quarantine, R/V SONNE now seems even bigger than usual. The weather conditions are optimal: calm sea and sunshine. Perhaps this is an appropriate compensation for the very intensive preparation phase on land. All are well and greet the people at home!

At sea, 21.03.2021

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