

Expedition SO286 - IceDivA2

05.11. - 08.12.2021, Emden - Las Palmas

2nd Weekly Report

08. - 14.11.2021



150 challenges to reach station

As previously feared the weather on our route to station (and indeed across the entire North Atlantic) has been atrocious, with moments of up to 14 m waves and 11 Beaufort winds, meaning that it has been imperative to put safety first but also get creative with our route to be able to complete sampling on the west side of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge (MAR). Together with the Captain of RV SONNE, the chief scientist team has been monitoring developing weather patterns provided from the Deutscher Wetterdienst (German Meteorological Service), and meeting daily (sometimes multiple plans) to adjust and update the current plan of action.

Upon successfully completing the Parasound test and calibration on Monday morning we travelled to the beautiful port capital of the Faroe Islands, Tórshavn. Here we were

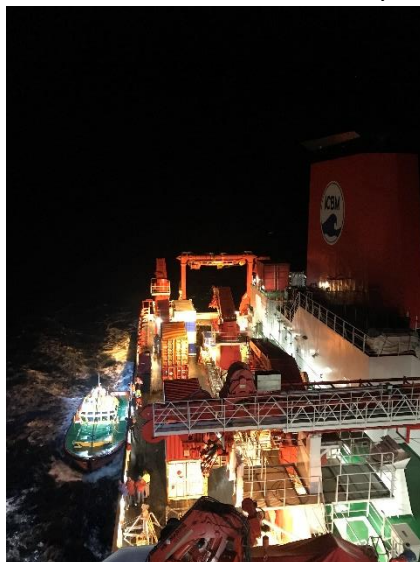


Figure 1. Pilot boat collecting our Parasound technician to bring him to shore

met by a pilot boat in the evening for our Parasound technician to be picked up for his return to Germany. From this point, after consulting the weather forecast, the decision was made to make our way west via an alternative route North of Iceland. Whilst far from the most direct route, we were able to avoid the aforementioned wind and waves and also have a “bunkering down” location for safety towards the end of the week, when the weather would again turn for the worst.

Since Monday we have been steadily and safely steaming west along the North Coast of Iceland, reaching our safe haven location by the Northern fjords on Saturday, where we bunker down waiting for the worst of the next storm to pass. A track has been planned to steam from Sunday night towards our work area 2 in the Labrador Sea, as for working our original area 1 is completely inaccessible due to continuous high waves and wind. Next week the weather forecast currently displays the potential to complete full station work at work area 2, something that everybody on board is hungry for and looking forward to.



Figure 2. A view of the beautiful Faroe Islands in a brief moment of calm

Whilst we continue to get battered by the bad weather, time on board is far from being wasted. We have brought samples to work from previous experiments, as we were aware of the potential of weather disruptions and long transits. Also, we have been hosting a series of seminars in which all students on board have been invited to present their bachelors/masters/PhD topics, training them in public speaking and informing the entire ship on a diverse range of topics, from microplastics to light pollution.



Figure 3. Aurora Borealis (Northern lights) whils off the coast of Iceland - photo Dr. Simon Gütl

And of course, we have been extremely busy preparing for our UN Ocean Decade satellite event "A floating classroom" which will take place next Thursday between 16:30 - 19:00 CET. RV SONNE feels like a floating TV studio some days with people running around preparing pre-recorded material for use during our event, as well as back up material in case of connection issues. Our event will be broadcast at the following address:

<https://www.senckenberg.de/en/athome/sgn-live/a-floating-classroom/>

With the promise of station work on the horizon, the presence of the beautiful Aurora Borealis, and our Satellite Event coming up, spirits on board remains high. We look forward to greeting you all live on Thursday as well as reporting our scientific endeavors next week!

Sunday November 14th 2021, North Icelandic Coast,

Saskia Brix & James Taylor
Cruise Leader team, Senckenberg am Meer