

## **ESF Report**

### **Workshop „Arctic Ocean History: From Speculation to Reality“**

Alfred Wegener Institute Bremerhaven/Germany, November 03 to 05, 2008

(Convenor: Bernard Coakley/University of Alaska/US and Ruediger Stein/AWI Bremerhaven/Germany)

#### **Summary**

In order to discuss and plan the future of scientific drilling in the Arctic Ocean, an international workshop was held at the Alfred Wegener Institute in Bremerhaven, Germany, on November 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 5<sup>th</sup> of 2008. Convenors of the workshop were Bernard Coakley (Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks/US) and Ruediger Stein (Alfred Wegener Institute Bremerhaven/Germany). About 95 scientists from Europe, US, Canada, Russia, Japan, and Korea and observers from oil companies participated in the workshop. Funding of the workshop was provided by the Consortium for Ocean Leadership (US), the European Science Foundation, the Arctic Ocean Sciences Board, and the Nansen Arctic Drilling Program as well as by sponsorships from British Petroleum, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, Shell International, and StatoilHydro.

The first day of the meeting focused on presentations about the history of the Arctic Ocean, the legacy of high latitude ocean drilling, the existing site survey database, the possibilities of collaboration with industry and the process of developing ocean-drilling legs through IODP. The next day and a half was spent in thematic and regional break-out groups discussing the particular questions to be addressed by drilling and the particular targets for Arctic scientific drilling. Within the working groups, key scientific questions, site surveys (available and needed) as well as strategies for reaching the overall goals were discussed and – as one of the main results – core groups for further developing drilling proposals were formed. Based on discussions at this meeting, approximately ten new pre-proposals will be submitted to IODP for the April 01- 2009 deadline.

A community-wide (USA, Europe, Japan, and others), multidisciplinary and international conference – INVEST IODP New Ventures in Exploring Scientific Targets - is planned for September 2009 in Bremen/Germany to discuss future directions of scientific ocean drilling beyond 2013. We hope that the development of new scientific objectives through the pre-proposal process – as main goal of our workshop - will help reshape plans for scientific ocean drilling and direct the program north towards these critical priorities and advance exploration of the Arctic.

Reports of the workshop discussions will be published in the journals *EOS* (summary) and *Scientific Drilling* (extended version).

#### **Introduction and background**

Although major progress in Arctic Ocean research has been made during the last decades, the knowledge of its short- and long-term paleoceanographic and paleoclimatic history as well as its plate-tectonic evolution is much behind that from the other world's oceans. That means - despite the importance of the Arctic in the climate system - the data base we have from this area is still very weak, and large parts of the climate history have not been recovered at all in sedimentary sections. This lack of knowledge is mainly caused by the major technological/logistic problems in reaching this permanently ice-covered region with normal research vessels and in retrieving long and undisturbed sediment cores.

With the successful completion of IODP Expedition 302 (“Arctic Coring Expedition“ – ACEX), the first Mission Specific Platform (MSP) expedition within the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program - IODP, a new era in Arctic research has begun. For the first time, a scientific drilling in the permanently ice-covered Arctic Ocean was carried out, penetrating about 430 meters of Quaternary, Neogene, Paleogene and Campanian sediment on the crest of Lomonosov Ridge close to the North Pole (Backman, et al., 2006; Moran et al., 2006). ACEX was an outstanding success for two reasons. First, ACEX has proven that with an intensive ice-management strategy, i.e., a three-ship approach with two powerful icebreakers (*Sovetskiy Soyuz* and *Oden*) protecting the drillship (*Vidar Viking*) by breaking upstream ice floes into small pieces, successful scientific drilling in the permanently ice-covered central Arctic Ocean is possible. Second, the first scientific results comprise a milestone in Arctic Ocean research and brought new insights into the Arctic Ocean climate history and its global significance (Backman and Moran, 2008 and further references therein). The success of ACEX has certainly opened the door for further scientific drilling in the Arctic Ocean, and will frame the next round of questions to be answered from new drill holes to be taken during next two decades.

In order to discuss and plan the future of scientific drilling in the Arctic Ocean, an international workshop was held at the Alfred Wegener Institute in Bremerhaven, Germany, on November 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 5<sup>th</sup> of 2008 (see Appendix 1, final programme). Convenors of the workshop were Bernard Coakley (Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks/US) and Ruediger Stein (Alfred Wegener Institute Bremerhaven/Germany). For planning, organizing, and chairing the workshop, a Steering Committee was established, composed of the two convenors and Jan Backman (Stockholm University/Sweden), Henk Brinkhuis (Utrecht University/The Netherlands), Nick Kuszniir (University of Liverpool/UK), Naja Mikkelsen (Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland Copenhagen/Denmark), Kate Moran (University of Rhode Islands/US), and Jörn Thiede (Alfred Wegener Institute Bremerhaven/Germany).

The major targets of the workshop were:

- (1) to bring together an international group of Arctic scientists, young scientists and ocean drilling scientists to learn and exchange ideas, experience and enthusiasm about the Arctic Ocean;
- (2) to develop a scientific drilling strategy to investigate the tectonic and paleoceanographic history of the Arctic Ocean and its role in influencing the global climate system;
- (3) to summarize the technical needs, opportunities, and limitations of drilling in the Arctic;
- (4) to define scientific and drilling targets for specific IODP-type campaigns in Arctic Ocean key areas to be finalized in the development of drilling proposals.

About 140 applications were received for the 95 seats available at the meeting (see Appendix 2, list of participants). The European Science Foundation enabled support of about 40 European participants, and the Consortium for Ocean Leadership provided support of about 30 US participants through the U.S. Science Support Program associated with the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program and through the Nansen Arctic Drilling Program. The Arctic Ocean Sciences Board and contributions from six oil companies (British Petroleum, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, Shell International, and StatoilHydro) made it possible to extend travel support to Canadian, Russian, Japanese and Korean participants (12 in total). In addition, 10 observers from the sponsoring oil companies participated in the workshop. Concerning the participants, we tried to broaden the participation of young scientists in IODP/Arctic drilling. Recruiting „new blood“, the leaders of the next decade, will give them the opportunity to build their careers as they create the program. Given the time

line for developing Arctic drilling legs (5-10 years), a particular focus on early career scientists (post-docs and graduate students) is desirable.

## **Content and structure**

In planning this meeting, the conveners were acutely aware of the need to mesh the arctic science and the ocean drilling communities. As a result, the first day of the meeting focused on presentations about the history of the Arctic Ocean, the legacy of high latitude ocean drilling, the existing site survey database, the possibilities of collaboration with industry and the process of developing ocean-drilling legs through IODP. For these presentations, leading scientists in the different fields were invited to give overviews of the state of the art. Starting with an overall introduction about the history of Arctic geoscientific research (J.Thiede/Germany), presentations about the current status of Quaternary research based on coring (L. Polyak/US, R. Spielhagen/Germany), about the long-term Cenozoic history based on DSDP-ODP-IODP drilling in the High Northern Latitudes (K. Moran/US), and the knowledge from arctic shelf drilling (P. Rekar/Russia, C. Paull/US) followed. The second block of presentations concentrated on the tectonic history of circum-Arctic shelves and basins (J. Omma/UK, E. Miller/US), bathymetry (M. Jakobsson/Sweden), and seismic reflection data (Y. Kristoffersen/Norway, W.Jokat/Germany). In the afternoon, presentations dealing with organizational and technical needs (J. Schuffert/US, L. Lembke-Jene/Germany, F. Rack/US) and with collaboration between academia and industry (H. Brekke/Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, S. Paulson/British Petroleum) were scheduled. Finally, time was given to workshop participants to give short statements about unsolicited ideas, information, and speculation related to Arctic Ocean drilling.

The next day and a half was spent in break-out groups discussing the particular questions to be addressed by drilling and the particular targets for arctic scientific drilling.

In the discussions, we had two sets of break-out groups. The first was based on discipline: Paleoceanography (chaired by N. Koc/Norway and J. Zachos/US), plate tectonics (chaired by W. Jokat/Germany and V. Pease/Sweden), petrology/geochemistry (chaired by P. Michael/US), and gas hydrates (chaired by M. Torres/US). The objective of these groups was to frame important questions in a pan-arctic context. The product from these groups was a list of important questions that can be addressed by drilling in various locations across the Arctic. Major topics (hypotheses to be tested by drilling) are summarized by the following key words:

### **(1) Paleoceanography**

Cyclicity between oxic, sub-oxic, and/or euxinic/anoxic conditions during the Cretaceous and Paleocene-Eocene; greenhouse vs. icehouse climate; polar amplification of greenhouse warming; hydrological cycle during greenhouse warming; onset of Eocene cooling; impact of Eocene-Oligocene transition in global pCO<sub>2</sub> and sea level on the Arctic; onset and variability of sea-ice cover (seasonal vs. perennial ice cover); circum-Arctic ice-sheet/ice-shelf history and dynamics; opening of Bering Strait/Fram Strait and its paleoceanographic consequences; causes of extended mid-Cenozoic unconformities; nature of Arctic environment during periods of extreme events (warm/cold); test bipolar synchronous vs. asynchronous climate variability

### **(2) Tectonics**

Mode of crustal extension in the Laptev Sea shelf; development of Fram Strait gateway (mode

of extension); identification of plate boundaries (Chukchi Plateau); age of magnetic anomalies (Canada Basin); age and evolution of Alpha Ridge, Mendeleev Ridge, Makarov Basin, and Chukchi Plateau; correlation of on-shore and off-shore geology (Paleozoic sediments, Mesozoic magmatism); understanding the 'Amerasia' side of Lomonosov Ridge; along strike geologic variation of Lomonosov Ridge and consequences for Mesozoic evolution

### (3) Petrology/Geochemistry

Gakkel ridge mantle melting and geochemistry: western vs. eastern Gakkel Ridge (Global problem: how does continental lithospheric mantle contribute to melting of the asthenosphere? How does extent of melting change as spreading rate goes to zero?); nature and origin of the Chukchi Borderland volcanism; origin of Alpha Mendeleev Ridge (hotspot track? Part of a large LIP? Connection of volcanism between America and Asia?)

### (4) Gas hydrates

Pan-Arctic objective: Multiple sections that lie at different end-members and represent different aspects of gas hydrate (GH) questions and its relationship to climate and geologic history of the Arctic. MacKenzie shelf (most mature, representative of a deltaic end-member) vs. Russian shelf (Laptev Sea, excellent location, wide shelf, but not as mature; Siberia excellent candidate for GH aspect); deep-water observations of pockmarks and other seismic evidence for GH presence in Mendeleev Ridge area; role of GH in these areas (e.g., carbon cycle); operational issues (GH drilling requires pressure coring and other tools that are routinely used for GH programs, i.e., P-T measurements, lab facilities etc.; need for circulating mud systems); difficulty of achieving new surveys; compilation of existing data.

The second set of break-out groups had a geographic focus. Based on the thoughts of the conveners and the comments of the meeting applicants, we have selected these regions for break-out groups:

Lomonosov Ridge (chaired by K. St. John/US, Y. Kristoffersen/Norway)

Alpha-Mendeleev Ridge (chaired by H. Jenkyns/UK, L. Lawver/US)

Chukchi Plateau (chaired by L. Polyak/US, J. Hopper/Denmark)

Morris Jessup Rise and Yermak Plateau (chaired by S. Neben/Germany, F. Rack/US)

Eurasian Shelf Seas (chaired by H. Kassens/Germany, P. Rekant/Russia)

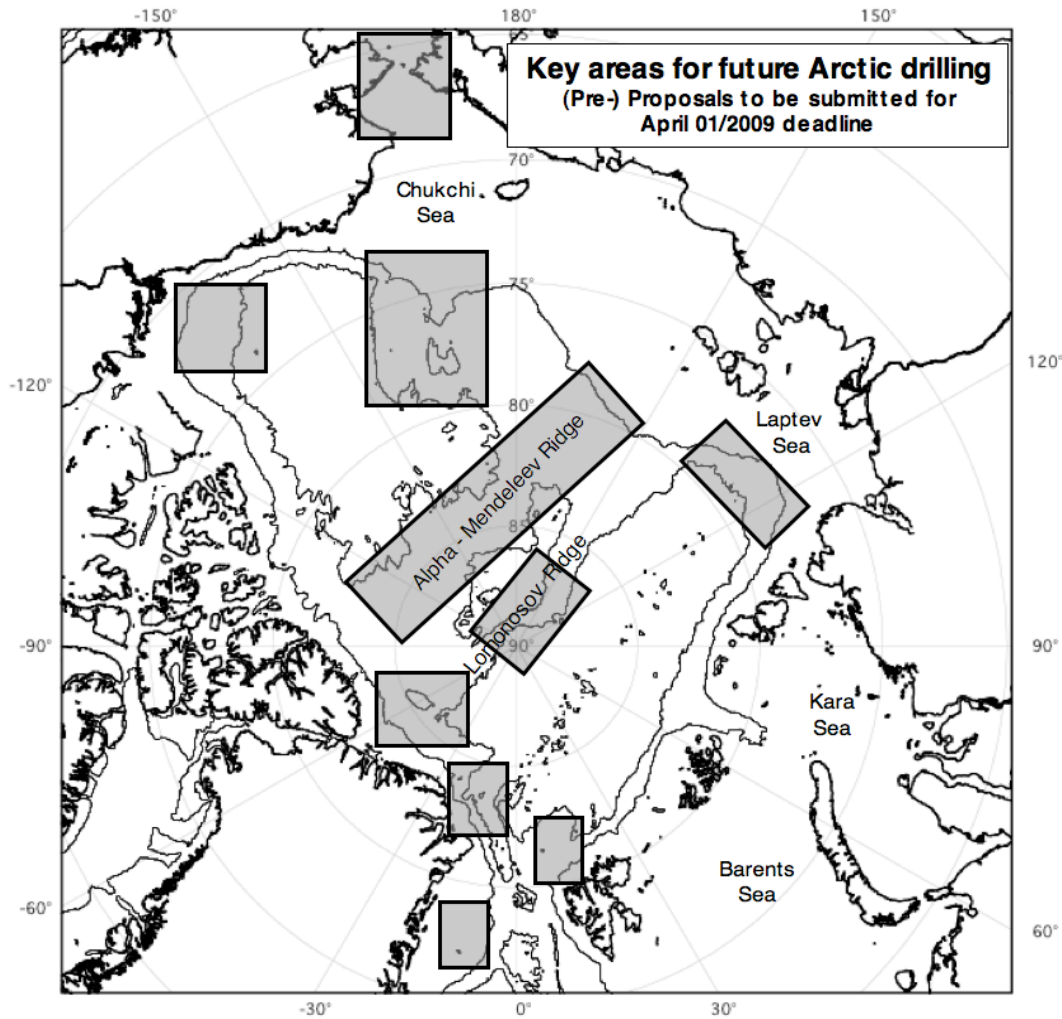
MacKenzie Delta (chaired by D. Schmitt/Canada)

Within these regional working groups, key scientific questions, site surveys (available and needed) as well as strategies for reaching the overall goals were discussed and – as one of the main results – core groups for further developing drilling proposals were formed (see below).

Summaries of the working group discussions were presented finally in a plenary session, followed by a joint discussion about future drilling activities in the Arctic Ocean.

## **Results and impact of the event on the future direction of the field**

The participants committed to develop new IODP pre-proposals for Arctic Ocean drilling. Based on discussions at this meeting, we believe approximately ten new pre-proposals will be submitted to IODP for the April 01- 2009 deadline (Fig. 1 for key areas). These proposals will be submitted at a critical time, both for the future of Arctic Ocean science and the future of scientific ocean drilling. Only in the last few years, through dedicated efforts of a number of research groups, sufficient data to pose specific testable hypotheses about much of the basin and to select drill sites on most of the significant bathymetric features, became available.



A community-wide (USA, Europe, Japan, and others), multidisciplinary and international conference – INVEST IODP New Ventures in Exploring Scientific Targets - is planned for September 2009 in Bremen/Germany (More information at <http://www.iodp.org>) to discuss future directions of scientific ocean drilling beyond 2013. The results of our workshop will contribute to develop new scientific objectives through the pre-proposal process. We hope that these plans will help reshape plans for scientific ocean drilling and direct the program north towards these critical priorities and advance exploration of the Arctic.

Reports of the workshop discussions will be published in the journals *EOS* (summary) and *Scientific Drilling* (extended version).

#### References

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- Backman, J., Moran, K., Mayer, L.A., McInroy, D.B., and the Expedition 302 Scientists, 2006. Proceedings IODP, 302, College Station TX (Integrated Ocean Drilling Program Management International, Inc.). doi:10.2204/iodp.proc.302.104.2006.
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## **Appendix**

Appendix 1: Final programme of workshop

Appendix 2: List of participants

# Workshop Agenda

(all events are in AWI Building D unless otherwise noted)

## Sunday, 2 November 2008

17:00-18:00 **Registration**

18:00-21:00 **Icebreaker**  
(drinks and snacks will be served)

## Monday, 3 November 2008

### Opening

08:30-08:35	Introduction	R. Stein
08:35-08:40	Welcome	H. Miller
08:40-08:45	Logistics	R. Stein
08:45-09:00	Workshop goals	B. Coakley

### Results (1): History, Stratigraphy, and Paleoenvironment

#### Plenary Session Chair: R. Stein

09:00-09:30 History and mystery of the Arctic Ocean J. Thiede

#### *Coring*

09:30-09:45	Current status of Quaternary research in the Amerasian Basin	L. Polyak
09:45-10:00	Quaternary history of the Eurasian Arctic Ocean from sediment cores	R. Spielhagen
10:00-10:30	Drilling in high northern latitudes from DSDP/ODP to IODP/ACEX	K. Moran

#### *Knowledge from arctic shelf drilling*

10:30-10:45	Shallow coring and drilling activity on the Eurasian continental margin	P. Rekant
10:45-11:00	Fate of methane released on the Arctic shelf from thawing permafrost and decomposing gas hydrate (co-authors: S. Dallimore and T. Collett)	C. Paull

11:00-11:30 **Coffee Break**

### Results (2): Tectonics

#### Plenary Session Chair: B. Coakley

11:30-11:50	Tectonic history of the circum-Arctic shelves: Observations and assumptions (co-author: R. Scott)	J. Omma
11:50-12:10	Outstanding questions about the origin and evolution of the Amerasian Basin	E. Miller

### Database (Site Survey)

#### Plenary Session Chair: B. Coakley

12:10-12:30	Bathymetry	M. Jakobsson
12:30-13:10	Seismic Reflections	Y. Kristoffersen and W. Jokat

13:10-14:10 **Lunch**

## **Organizational and Technical Needs**

### **Plenary Session Chair: N. Kuszniir**

- 14:10-14:40 How to navigate the waters of IODP J. Schuffert  
14:40-14:55 AURORA BOREALIS - European research icebreaker with  
drilling capability N. Biebow  
14:55-15:10 Scientific drilling in remote polar environments:  
Preparing for successful outcomes F. Rack

## **Collaboration Between Academia and Industry**

### **Plenary Session Chair: K. Moran**

- 15:10-15:25 EUREKA/EUROGIA development G. Marquette  
15:25-15:40 Arctic Ocean drilling in the context of resource assessment H. Brekke  
15:40-15:55 Understanding crustal inheritance: the key to Arctic hydrocarbon  
prospectivity (co-authors: L. Mackay and S. Matthews) S. Paulson  
  
15:55-16:25 **Coffee Break**

## **Unsolicited Ideas, Information, and Speculations**

### **Plenary Session Chair: H. Brinkhuis**

- 16:25-18:00 Participant Presentations  
  
19:00-22:00 **Joint Dinner at Alfred's (AWI Building E)**

## **Tuesday, 4 November 2008**

### **Working Group Discussion (I: Thematic Working Groups)**

- 08:30-08:45 Scientific key questions, key hypotheses, where to go? B. Coakley  
08:45-11:00 Thematic Working Groups:  
1. Paleoceanography N. Koç and J. Zachos  
2. Plate Tectonics W. Jokat and V. Pease  
3. Gakkel Ridge Petrology/Geochemistry P. Michael  
4. Methane Hydrates M. Torres

### **11:00-12:00 Coffee Break and Poster Session**

### **Working Group Reports (I: Thematic Working Groups)**

#### **Plenary Session Chair: L. Mayer**

- 12:00-12:30 1. Paleoceanography N. Koç and J. Zachos  
12:30-13:00 2. Plate Tectonics W. Jokat and V. Pease  
13:00-13:15 3. Gakkel Ridge Petrology/Geochemistry P. Michael  
13:15-13:30 4. Methane Hydrates M. Torres

### **13:30-14:30 Lunch**

### **Working Group Discussion (II: Regional Working Groups)**

- 14:30-14:45 Purpose/outcome of afternoon's group discussions K. Moran and R. Stein  
14:45-18:00 Regional Working Groups  
1. Lomonosov Ridge K. St. John and Y. Kristoffersen  
2. Alpha-Mendeleev Ridge H. Jenkyns and L. Lawver



- 3. Chukchi Plateau
- 4. Morris Jessup Rise
- 5. Yermak Plateau
- 6. Eurasian Shelf Seas
- 7. Mackenzie

L. Polyak and J. Hopper  
 N. Mikkelsen and S. Neben  
 F. Rack and M. Jakobsson  
 H. Kassens and P. Rekant  
 D. Schmitt

Coffee Break (any time)

19:00-22:00 **Conference Dinner at Atlantic Hotel Sail City (19th floor)**

**Wednesday, 5 November 2008**

**Working Group Reports (II: Regional Working Groups)**

**Plenary Session Chairs: B. Coakley and R. Stein**

09:00-09:30	1. Lomonosov Ridge	K. St. John and Y. Kristoffersen
09:30-10:00	2. Alpha-Mendeleev Ridge	H. Jenkyns and L. Lawver
10:00-10:30	3. Chukchi Plateau	L. Polyak and J. Hopper
10:30-11:00	4. Morris Jessup Rise	N. Mikkelsen and S. Neben

11:00-11:30 **Coffee break**

11:30-12:00	5. Yermak Plateau	F. Rack and M. Jakobsson
12:00-12:30	6. Eurasian Shelf Seas	H. Kassens and P. Rekant
12:30-13:00	7. Mackenzie	D. Schmitt

13:00-14:00 **Lunch**

15:00-17:00 **Meeting of Organizing Committee**

## Workshop Participants

Addison, Jason	University of Alaska Fairbanks	ftjaa1@uaf.edu
Badics, Balazs	StatoilHydro	balb@statoilhydro.com
Biebow, Nicole	Alfred Wegener Institute	nicole.biebow@awi.de
Brekke, Harald	Norwegian Petroleum Directorate	harald.brekke@npd.no
Brigham-Grette, Julie	University of Massachusetts-Amherst	juliebg@geo.umass.edu
Brinkhuis, Henk	Utrecht University	H.Brinkhuis@uu.nl
Brumley, Kelley	University of Alaska Fairbanks	fskjb20@uaf.edu
Bruvoll, Vibeke	University of Bergen	vibeke.bruvoll@geo.uib.no
Castillo, Paterno	University of California, San Diego	pcastillo@ucsd.edu
Channell, James	University of Florida	jetc@geology.ufl.edu
Clarke, Leon	Bangor University	l.clarke@bangor.ac.uk
Coakley, Bernard	University of Alaska Fairbanks	bernard.coakley@gi.alaska.edu
Cochran, James	Columbia University	jrc@ldeo.columbia.edu
Collett, Timothy	US Geological Survey	tcollett@usgs.gov
Colwell, Rick	Oregon State University	rcolwell@coas.oregonstate.edu
Darby, Dennis	Old Dominion University	ddarby@odu.edu
De Santis, Laura	Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale	ldesantis@ogs.trieste.it
de Vernal, Anne	Université du Québec à Montréal	devernal.anne@uqam.ca
Fahl, Kirsten	Alfred Wegener Institute	Kirsten.Fahl@awi.de
Firth, John	Texas A&M University	firth@iodp.tamu.edu
Forwick, Matthias	University of Tromsø	Matthias.Forwick@ig.uit.no
Fowell, Sarah	University of Alaska Fairbanks	ffsjf@uaf.edu
Gusev, Evgeny	VNIOkeangeologia	gus-evgeny@yandex.ru
Hanslik, Daniela	Stockholm University	daniela.hanslik@geo.su.se
Hoffmann, Sharon	Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution	shoffmann@whoi.edu
Holba, Albert	ConocoPhillips	albert.g.holba@conocophillips.com
Hopper, John	Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland	jrh@geus.dk
Jakobsson, Martin	Stockholm University	martin.jakobsson@geo.su.se
Jenkyns, Hugh	Oxford University	hughj@earth.ox.ac.uk
Johnson, G. Leonard	University of Alaska Fairbanks	len.Johnsoniii@verizon.net
Jokat, Wilfried	Alfred Wegener Institute	Wilfried.Jokat@awi.de
Kassens, Heidemarie	IFM-GEOMAR	hkassens@ifm-geomar.de
Koç, Nalan	Norwegian Polar Institute	nalan.koc@npolar.no
Kostygov, Sergey	Saint Petersburg State University	skostygov@googlemail.com
Kristoffersen, Yngve	University of Bergen	yngve.kristoffersen@geo.uib.no
Krupskaya, Viktoriya	Russian Academy of Science	vi.krupskaya@gmail.com
Krylov, Alexey	VNIOkeangeologia	akrylow@gmail.com
Kusznir, Nick	University of Liverpool	n.kusznir@liverpool.ac.uk
Larsen, Geir Birger	StatoilHydro	gbla@statoilhydro.com
Lawver, Lawrence	University of Texas at Austin	lawver@ig.utexas.edu
Lebedeva-Ivanova, Nina	Uppsala University	Nina.Ivanova@geo.uu.se
Mackay, Laura	British Petroleum Exploration	laura.mackay@bp.com
Marquette, Gabriel	Eurogia/Schlumberger	marquette@paris.sl.slb.com

März, Christian	ICBM Oldenburg	cmaerz@icbm.de
Matthiessen, Jens	Alfred Wegener Institute	Jens.Matthiessen@awi.de
Mayer, Larry	University of New Hampshire	larry@ccom.unh.edu
McAllister, Niall	ExxonMobil	niall.w.mcallister@exxonmobil.com
Michael, Peter	University of Tulsa	pjm@utulsa.edu
Mikkelsen, Naja	Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland	nm@geus.dk
Miller, Elizabeth	Stanford University	elmiller@stanford.edu
Moran, Kathryn	University of Rhode Island	kate.moran@uri.edu
Mueller, Juliane	Alfred Wegener Institute	Juliane.Mueller@awi.de
Mukasa, Samuel	University of Michigan	mukasa@umich.edu
Naafs, David	Alfred Wegener Institute	david.naafs@awi.de
Nam, Seung-II	Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources	sinam@kigam.re.kr
Neben, Soenke	Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources	soenke.neben@bgr.de
Noergaard-Pedersen, Niels	Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland	nnp@geus.dk
Omma, Jenny	University of Cambridge	jeo29@cam.ac.uk
Onodera, Jonaotaro	Kochi University	jm-jo@kochi-u.ac.jp
O'Regan, Matthew	Cardiff University/ University of Rhode Island	oregan@gso.uri.edu
Pälike, Heiko	University of Southampton	heiko@noc.soton.ac.uk
Paull, Charles	Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute	Paull@mbari.org
Paulson, Shira	British Petroleum	Shira.Paulson@bp.com
Pease, Victoria	Stockholm University	vicky.pease@geo.su.se
Polyak, Leonid	Ohio State University	polyak.1@osu.edu
Portnov, Alexey	VNIOkeangeologia	z-23-z@yandex.ru
Rack, Frank	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	frack2@unl.edu
Rashid, Harunur	Ohio State University	rashid.29@osu.edu
Reichow, Marc	University of Geology	mkr6@le.ac.uk
Rekant, Pavel	VNIOkeangeologia	rekant@mail.ru
Ruppel, Carolyn	US Geological Survey	cruppel@usgs.gov
Sangiorgi, Francesca	Utrecht University	f.sangiorgi@uu.nl
Saukel, Cornelia	Alfred Wegener Institute	Cornelia.Saukel@awi.de
Schmitt, Douglas	University of Alberta	doug@phys.ualberta.ca
Schreck, Michael	Alfred Wegener Institute	Michael.Schreck@awi.de
Schuffert, Jeff	Consortium for Ocean Leadership	jschuffert@oceanleadership.or
Scott, Robert	University of Cambridge	robert.scott@casp.cam.ac.uk
Sluijs, Appy	Utrecht University	a.sluijs@uu.nl
Spielhagen, Robert	IFM-GEOMAR	rspielhagen@ifm-geomar.de
St. John, Kristen	James Madison University	stjohnke@jmu.edu
Stein, Ruediger,	Alfred Wegener Institute	Ruediger.Stein@awi.de
Stenlokk, Jan	Norwegian Petroleum Directorate	jan.stenlokk@npd.no
Stoker, Martyn	British Geological Survey	mss@bgs.ac.uk
Takahashi, Kozo	Kyushu University	kozo@geo.kyushu-u.ac.jp
Tarduno, John	University of Rochester	john@earth.rochester.edu
Thiede, Joern	Alfred Wegener Institute	joern.thiede@awi.de

Tocher, Bruce	StatoilHydro	BRUCE@statoil.com
Toro, Jaime	West Virginia University	jtoro@wvu.edu
Torres, Marta	Oregon State University	mtorres@coas.oregonstate.edu
Tripathi, Aradhna	University of Cambridge	atri02@esc.cam.ac.uk
Tuchkova, Marianna	Geological Institute Russian Academy of Science	tuchkova@ginras.ru
van Oosterhout, Cees	Shell International Exploration and Production R&D	C.VanOosterhout@shell.com
Vaughan, Alan	British Antarctic Survey	apmva@bas.ac.uk
Vogt, Christoph	University of Bremen	cvogt@uni-bremen.de
Wannier, Mario	Shell International Exploration and Production R&D	Mario.Wannier@shell.com
Waszczak, Ron	ConocoPhillips	Ron.F.Waszczak@conocophillips.com
Zachos, James	University of California, Santa Cruz	jzachos@pmc.ucsc.edu
Zarikian, Carlos	Texas A&M University	zarikian@iodp.tamu.edu
Zhao, Xixi	University of California, Santa Cruz	xzhao@pmc.ucsc.edu