PRINCESS ELISABETH ANTARCTICA ON ITS WAY TO BREID BAY



© © International Polar Foundation

The moment has finally come for all to say farewell to the Belgian polar station. The Ivan Papanin, a Russian ice class cargo ship, left the port of Antwerp on November 6th, 2 pm.

The moment has finally come for all to say goodbye to the Belgian polar station. The Ivan Papanin, a Russian ice class cargo ship, left the port of Antwerp on November 6th, 2 pm.

A press conference was held on the port's pier by project manager Johan Berte and Defence coordinator Philippe Herman. A tour of the ship was then offered to the press, a chance to see where the ship crew and passengers are to spend their evenings and nights until arrival in Breid Bay around mid-December.

Carrying 106 containers of equipment and station elements, the Ivan Papanin will stop over in Cape Town for refuelling at the end of the month of November. After a first stop for equipment drop-off at the Norwegian station, Troll, the ship will end up in Breid Bay, where the station's containers will finally be disembarked.

In total, the team is composed of 57 members (including the ship crew), spread out over 9 departures. Members of the Belgian Defence will meet the ship in South Africa, from where they will pursue their trip by boat.

Over all, the Defence has been a tremendous help to the International Polar Foundation. They provided logistical support during the September inauguration of the station in Brussels and allowed the containers to be transported to Antwerp. Their technical assistance and lent equipment were also greatly appreciated. Their services will also be called upon for the transmission of satellite images, indispensable for portraying the state of the sea ice and for advancing within the dangerous Antarctic terrain.