PRINCESS ELISABETH ANTARCTICA WELCOMES FIRST SCIENTISTS OF THE SEASON



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On December 2nd, Princess Elisabeth Antarctica (PEA) welcomed the first scientific team of the season. Comprising four scientists, three pilots, and technicians from the Alfred Wegener Institute (AWI) in Germany, they arrived with their specialised Polar 6 Basler aircraft equipped with an Ultra Wide Band (UWB) radar beneath the wing.

From December 2nd until December 9th, weather permitting, they'll focus their research along the QueenMaud Land Coast and the Antarctic Plateau, conducting six flights from PEA. They're using the Ultra Wide Band (UWB) radar to measure ice thickness and patterns, which assists in determining the bedrock structure and age of the ice. Specifically, their goal is to collect comprehensive data for three international research projects based in Germany, Japan, and Switzerland:

- QUASNO (Alexandra Zuhr, University of Tübingen): Quantifying the anthropogenically induced change in snow accumulation in Antarctica;
- RINGS DML (Kenichi Matsuoka, NIPR): Getting a better understanding on how much ice is discharged over Antarctica‘s Grounding line;

- CHARISO (Johannes Sutter, University of Bern): Calibration of ice-flow models via dated internal reflection horizons from radar.

Meanwhile, IPF's team of engineers and plumbers continue to work on installing the stations' new water treatment system, while a team is preparing a second traverse to the coast to prepare for the cargo ships' arrival at the beginning of 2024.

Live online presentations from PEA

Henri Robert, biologist and Deputy Station Manager of the Princess Elisabeth Antarctica, has been fascinating audiences worldwide with live presentations showcasing IPF's work in Antarctica and the scientific research being carried out there. Streamed directly fromthe station, his online presentation offers a unique glimpse into resaerch conducted at and near the station.

So far this season, he's spoken to an audience of nearly 100 people (mostly children during a Swiss polar event). He also successfully gave a presentation to an online audience of about 50 people during Flemish Science Day, and hosted an online university class from the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), which was very well received.

Henri's next live session from PEA is scheduled with students aged 12 to 15 at the Royal Hospital School in Ipswich, England, a school he speaks to every year.

Next team will arrive soon!

Meanwhile, the current PEA team is busy preparing, ensuring everything's set for the next wave of researchers. On December 16th a new scientific team along with two IPF members will arrive at the station. More information about this incoming scientific team will be available next week, so stay tuned for updates!