

BON VOYAGE!

Day 1

We have departed and so our adventure begins! It's the morning of Tuesday 31st January when we steam out from Aotea Quay in Wellington. First up, we're headed for Cook Strait to conduct sea trials on some of the scientific gear:

- DTIS (Deep Towed Imaging System)
- CTD Rosette (Conductivity, Temperature and Depth Rosette)
- MOCNESS (Multiple Opening/Closing Net Environmental Sensor System)

We dropped a few voyage participants off for the day, to make room for other scientists who get onboard to assist with the sea trials. The atmosphere on board was one of anxious anticipation. We were all eager for the trials to be successful in order to be on our way!



The DTIS (left) about to be deployed during sea trials. The CTD is on the right [Photo: Alan Blacklock, NZ IPY-CAML].

By 1800hrs, the trials had been a success and we had farewelled our day visitors and welcomed back our voyage participants. Then it was through the Wellington Heads and into our journey! To some, sleep came easy with the gentle rolling of the waves, and to others, sleep evaded them a little longer - thinking both of the loved ones we had left behind for 50 days and the untold adventures and discoveries which lay ahead.

Day 2

We woke for breakfast that morning to clear skies, gentle rolling seas, and wandering albatross. No land was to be seen. We were heading due south, already far out to sea, directly east from the Otago coastline. The team spent the day familiarising themselves with laboratories, equipment, the layout of the ship and one another. With 44 people onboard and 50 days in close proximity, getting to know one another was reasonably high on the agenda!

Day 3

Many of us are still getting our sea legs. We are still heading due south, now well east of the Pukaki Rise. There are varying degrees of sea sickness onboard, but for the most, we are faring well, with only a few physically ill. We have been very fortunate with good weather easing us into the continual motion of Tangaroa.



Tangaroa Master Andrew Leachman in the captain's chair [Photo: Alan Blacklock, NZ IPY-CAML].

We have a storm ahead of us though, and the skipper says we shall hit it tomorrow. "A Blow is a coming" is his description. One almost expects an "harrharrgh" to follow his comments -given his gruff, salty sea-dog/pirate-like character. He has been 17 years as skipper on this vessel, and one feels instantly at ease knowing we are entrusting our lives in his hands. He reassures us that it will only be a small "blow", with perhaps 5-7 metre swells