

PRESS RELEASE
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LAUNCH OF THE 17TH SCIENCE EXPEDITION ON BOARD THE CANADIAN RESEARCH ICEBREAKER CCGS AMUNDSEN

Quebec City, July 5, 2021 – On July 4th, the Canadian research icebreaker CCGS *Amundsen* left Quebec City for its 17th annual scientific mission. The multidisciplinary expedition will run until November 3rd and will allow a contingent of scientists from national and international research teams to study the marine and coastal environments of the Canadian and Greenlandic waters. From aquatic microorganisms to carbon cycle to melting glaciers and seabed mapping, all aspects of the northern environment will be studied during the 122 days of the expedition.

As we progressively emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation of the 2021 CCGS *Amundsen* scientific expedition is framed by all the appropriate measures to ensure the health and safety of Canada's northern communities and sea-going personnel.

The 2021 expedition will support 9 multidisciplinary research programs, consisting of almost all research programs that were postponed from 2020 in addition to new ones. Through partnerships with universities, governmental institutions, northern communities and the unparalleled support of the Canadian Coast Guard, the CCGS *Amundsen* will support operations in the Labrador Sea, Baffin Bay, the Northwest Passage and the Beaufort Sea.

"The fall-winter transition in the Arctic is a critical time for the Arctic ecosystem winter survival", says Marcel Babin, Chief scientist for the Takuvik program DarkEdge during Leg 5 of the 2021 Expedition and Scientific director of Amundsen Science. *"Our team of scientists will conduct multidisciplinary research from the state-of-the-art research icebreaker CCGS Amundsen to study key processes of the marine ecosystem with the help of an Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) and other robotic systems."*

In addition to the AUV deployed during Leg 5 by scientists from the DarkEdge Program, Amundsen Science's Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) will be deployed in Arctic conditions for the first-time during Leg 2 to offer a new perspective on Canadian Arctic's understudied corals and hydrocarbon seep habitats.

"The high-tech capabilities of the CCGS Amundsen such as the new Remotely Operated Vehicle will help us push the boundaries of knowledge and protect the fragile ecosystems of deep-sea corals. A multidisciplinary approach is needed to understand these complex and vulnerable habitats in the subarctic region of the Northwest Atlantic Ocean", says Owen Sherwood, Assistant Professor at Dalhousie University and one of the lead scientists on the 2021 Expedition.

The marine-based program of the ArcticNet Network, long-time user of the CCGS *Amundsen* platform, will also be onboard in 2021 to better understand the impact of climate change on

marine ecosystems and support the acquisition of baseline data to guide the development of the sustainable blue economy in the Canadian Arctic. With additional research programs studying the Arctic seabed, sediments, carbon cycle, contaminants and wildlife, we can truly say that the 2021 Amundsen Expedition is an ambitious, integrated and essential expedition for the advancement of Canadian and international knowledge of the Arctic.

About Amundsen Science

Hosted at Université Laval, Amundsen Science is the organization responsible for the management of the scientific mandate of the research icebreaker CCGS *Amundsen*. Mobilized for science in 2002 thanks to major grants from the Canada Foundation for Innovation and other partners, the *Amundsen* has been pivotal in revitalizing Canada's research effort in the study of the changing Arctic Ocean and the health of Canadian Inuit. Since 2003, the research icebreaker has accommodated over 115 Canadian and international teams in the deployment of no less than 45 major science programs, totalling nearly half a billion dollars in research investments. For more information on Amundsen Science and the CCGS *Amundsen*, please visit: www.amundsenscience.com

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