



PRESS RELEASE

'ABNORMAL' APRIL RAINFALL A BIG SURPRISE AT HIGH ARCTIC ICE BASE

*Catlin Arctic Survey Ice Base reports 'unheard of' April rain - a surprise
for experienced polar team*

The scientists and staff at the Catlin Arctic Survey Ice Base in the high Arctic off Ellef Ringnes island in the Canadian High Arctic have reported an abnormal occurrence at the weekend: it rained.

Paul Ramsden, the Catlin Arctic Survey Ice Base Manager, reported big raindrops fell during the shower. "I had to look twice. Snow flurries we expect, not rain. It is obviously quite worrying when you are camped out on ice! I felt distinctly nervous for a while because the consequences of getting wet here can be serious - but eventually it stopped and we are all safe" he said.

April rain in more southerly climes may be common, but according to the metrological services at Environment Canada - rain in the high Arctic around 79 degrees North in April is extremely rare.

Experienced Arctic explorer Pen Hadow, who is Expedition Director of the project said: "Rain that far north is not at all normal at this time of year. According to the Canadian met services there was also some rain at Borden Camp a hundred miles away. We're told that southerly winds to the west of a strong high pressure that's been sitting south of Resolute Bay have been pumping very warm air from way down south up over Borden and Ellef Ringnes Islands for the past week. It is pretty unusual for such a strong southerly to push warm air over this area in April."

The Canadian weather office website quotes the following 'normals' at Isachsen which is just some 20 miles to the east of the Ice Base.

Canadian Climate Normals 1951-1980

Isachsen: April

Extreme maximum temperature: -1.1

Rainfall: Nil



Pen Hadow added "We have been told there will be more unpredicted events like this as the climate of the region warms. Our team up there have already reported many local people at Resolute have also been commenting on the unusual warmth of the winter this year."

"Expeditions don't expect to be confronted by rain and Arctic gear - clothing and tents - are certainly not made for rain. Polar clothing is made to be breathable not waterproof and if it gets wet it just freezes making it less effective in keeping body heat inside. The Arctic is normally very dry, but of course very cold, so I'm really pleased for the team that it didn't rain for too long."

The Ice Base is part of a scientific expedition which is sponsored by Catlin Group Limited, an international specialty insurer and reinsurer. It is located in the high Arctic where its international team of scientists is studying the impact of rising carbon dioxide levels on the Arctic Ocean.

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MEDIA CONTACT

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PHOTO AND VIDEO

Photos are available from www.catlinarcticsurvey.com/press.aspx. Access Passwords can be obtained by calling the media team. Broadcast Video footage is available at our FTP site: <http://filestore.indigopapa.tv/CatlinArcticSurvey2010>

ICE BASE LOCATION

The Ice Base is 78 degrees 43 minutes 11.2 seconds N - 104 degrees 47 minutes 43.5 seconds W

Check for temperature normals on Canada's weather office website.

http://www.climate.weatheroffice.gc.ca/climate_normals/results_e.html?Province=ALL&StationName=Resolute&SearchType=BeginsWith&LocateBy=Province&Proximity=25&ProximityFrom=City&StationNumber=&IDType=MSC&CityName=&ParkName=&LatitudeDegrees=&LatitudeMinutes=&LongitudeDegrees=&LongitudeMinutes=&NormalsClass=A&SelNormals=&StnId=1776&&autofwd=1>

<http://www.climate.weatheroffice.gc.ca>



NOTES TO EDITORS

CATLIN ARCTIC SURVEY

The 2010 Catlin Arctic Survey connects scientists and explorers in the quest to advance scientific understanding of the natural world . Bringing together marine biologists, oceanographers and polar explorers, it aims to study the impact of increased carbon dioxide absorption by our seas. This is changing the chemistry of the water, leading to 'ocean acidification'. Within only a few decades, an increase in ocean acidity may cause seawater to become corrosive to the shells, skeletons and armour-plating of many marine life forms, and could seriously undermine the growth of coral reefs.

ABOUT CATLIN GROUP LIMITED

Catlin is the title sponsor for Catlin Arctic Survey. Catlin Group Limited is an international speciality insurers and reinsurer. Catlin operates six underwriting hubs -- London, Bermuda, US, Asia-Pacific, Europe and Canada - which allows it to provide innovative risk management solutions and superior levels of service to clients and their brokers worldwide. Catlin is the principal sponsor of the Catlin Arctic Survey, which aims to produce scientific data to increase our knowledge about the impact of climate change and other changes to the environment.

ABOUT GEO MISSION LTD

Geo Mission Ltd originates, organises and delivers the Catlin Arctic Surveys. Founded in 2009 by explorer Pen Hadow, Geo Mission's objective is to advance scientific and public understanding of the natural world. It achieves this by bringing together scientists, explorers and academics to collaborate on pioneering research programmes which are communicated to specialist and global audiences.