

PICTURE STORY RELEASE

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British Explorer Casts Election Vote from Arctic Sea Ice

Ann Daniels will be closer to the Pole than the Polls on Election Day, so she's casting her vote by proxy from the Arctic Ocean!

If you are a polar explorer just a hundred miles or so from the Geographic North Pole, it's hard to cast your vote in a General Election. However, enterprising support staff rallied to help Ann Daniels by taking her proxy vote forms to complete when they organised her expedition's re-supply flight. With a makeshift 'Ballot Box' hastily made, they were able to offer Ann the privilege of voting in what must be 'the northernmost polling booth in the world'. As far as Arctic Ocean sea ice history, it is almost certainly a first.



Caption: Ann Daniels (L) posts her proxy vote form into a 'ballot box' made by Ian Wesley (R), to make the event special when he landed to resupply Ann's Catlin Arctic Survey expedition team.

High Resolution Photo available from <<http://www.catlinarcticsurvey.com/press.aspx>>
www.catlinarcticsurvey.com/press.aspx (Access PASSWORD can be obtained by
calling the media team)



The renowned explorer, who is leading a scientific expedition investigating how increasing atmospheric CO2 may be changing the chemistry of the seawater, will still be out on the ice on 6th May. Instead of losing her chance to vote, she is using a 'proxy' which allows a trusted individual to vote on her behalf.

Ann explains: "It's obviously a bit more complicated than just putting an 'x' in the box at your local polling station, but I didn't want to miss out on the opportunity to have my say. The necessary forms were printed out, flown out on our final resupply, witnessed, signed and sealed here on the ice and returned to the UK just in time for my vote to be registered."

Polar expert Ian Wesley, who helped organize the resupply mission managed to get the forms back in the nick of time beating the deadline in Devon by minutes.

Ann commented that trekking in bone-chilling cold over the ice was an extreme way of avoiding the usual electioneering tactics adopted by candidates in the constituency of East Devon where she's lived for nine years.

As to her voting intentions, she remains tight-lipped: "That's for me to share with my Proxy. Let's just say I'm hoping that anyone who gets into power embraces the environmental issues we currently face. It's very easy to ignore the potential impacts we may be having on Earth, but as I gaze out across the stunning icescapes offered up by the Arctic, I am also mindful of what we may lose as a result of our actions."

Ann and her teammates Charlie Paton and Martin Hartley are continuing on their journey North, collecting water samples that will help scientists form a fuller picture of how greenhouse gases are affecting our oceans and the microscopic life that inhabits them. The project is supported by Catlin Group Limited an international specialty insurer and reinsurer.

The explorers will be returning to the UK in mid-May.

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BACKGROUND

In the time-honoured tradition of exploration, the 2010 Catlin Arctic Survey connects scientists and explorers in the quest to advance scientific understanding of the world we live in.

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.

Three teams are instrumental to this mission: a group of leading scientists operating from our polar Ice Base under the guidance of Arctic experts; an Explorer Team gathering complementary data over a much greater area across the floating sea ice and a 24/7 Operations Team based in the UK.

MEDIA CONTACTS

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NOTES TO EDITORS

INTERVIEWS

Pen Hadow, the Survey Director, is available for interview in London. Interviews with the scientists at the Ice Base and the Explorer Team can be arranged via the Media Team.

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>

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