

## Background information for the Greenpeace Deep Arctic Expedition, May/June 2026

The Arctic Deep Sea is a place we know less about than the surface of the moon.

For the first time, Greenpeace is conducting a deep sea expedition in the Arctic together with a team of expert scientists from various renowned European research institutions to explore life on the Arctic seabed. The expedition is focusing on gathering scientific evidence to strengthen the case to establish marine protected areas in the Arctic.

The Arctic Deep is home to unique wildlife – from deep diving whales and dumbo octopuses to ecosystems with deep sea corals and ancient sponge gardens, the oldest life forms on the planet. Scientists believe that the origin of life started in the deep sea, among the same volcanic hot springs and ecosystems that the Deep Arctic expedition is visiting.



The month-long expedition will leave May 8 and travel to the **Arctic Mid-Ocean Ridge** between Norway and Greenland. A place of volcanic activity and seamounts, where the deepest point is over 3,000 meters — deeper than ten Eiffel Towers stacked on top of each other.

### Why is this exciting?

The deep sea is in many ways more unexplored than space. The conditions are so extreme that we basically find new things every time we go there. We have a better understanding of the surface of the moon than of our own seabed; we are still discovering new underwater mountains



and do not have a full understanding of the topography. The habitats down there are ancient with animals that have been around longer than any shark, dinosaur or tree. Among other things, we will visit underwater volcanic hot springs (hydrothermal vents) where it is believed that life on Earth once arose. This is like space exploration, but we actually encounter “aliens” everywhere! At the same time, these ecosystems are threatened by plans for deep-sea mining, which makes the expedition highly relevant also from an environmental perspective.

### **Timeline**

- **8 May:** Research vessel leaves Ireland
- **15–30 May:** Active research phase. Remotely operated underwater **vehicle (ROV)** dives and livestreams from the deep.
- **3–5 June:** Arrive in Bergen, Norway. Press invited onboard to meet scientists and share findings.

### **This could be a suggested setup for broadcast media**

#### **Live broadcast from the deep (week 21):**

We can connect you directly to the ship and talk to the researchers live. We have researchers covering English, Spanish, German, French, and Norwegian.

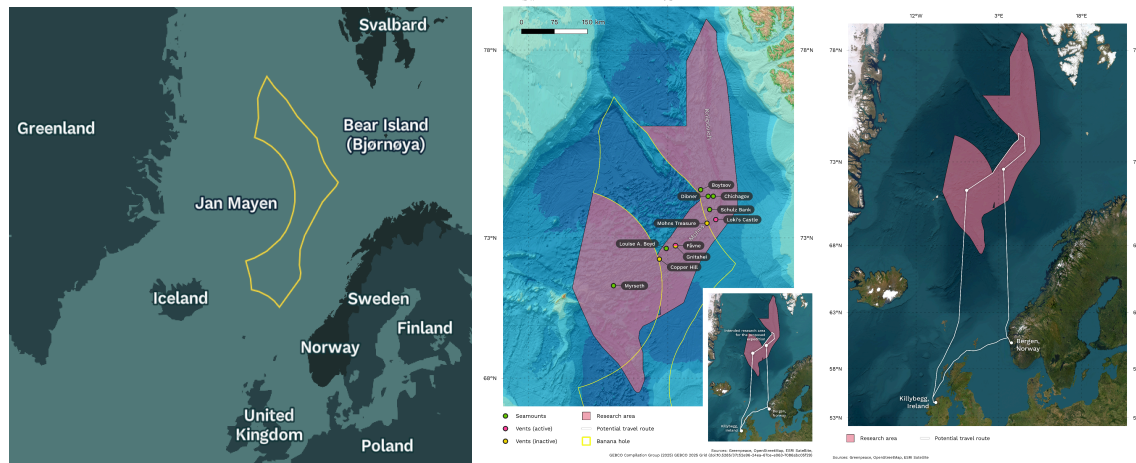
For example deep sea sponge expert Paco Cardenas from the Museum of Evolution at Uppsala University and Anne Helena Tandberg who is an expert in deep sea ecosystems and red listed species, from Bergen University

You can show the live stream from the robot as it explores the bottom. If so we suggest that we do this a bit into week 21 – by then we will have had time to collect exciting video materials from previous days, that will be a backup if the technology malfunctions or if the robot is currently in a transport phase.

«**The feeling of outer space**»: What you want to capture is the feeling that it is like connecting to a Rover on Mars and the control room in Houston – (although better, because the unknown in this case is not empty of life but full of «alien» organisms). For example, did you know that some deep sea sponges build skeletons of glass in zero-degree water? Something that requires 1,500 degrees for us humans to manufacture. Others are meat eating. We will see creatures that live and thrive in volcanic hot springs at several hundred degrees that would cook their equivalents on land. There are lots of interesting facts like these hiding in the deep.

## Where are we going?

We're going to the wonderfully named Banana Hole! It's an area in international waters between Greenland, Iceland, and Norway – a crossroads for migrating whales and unique volcanic life. It's especially relevant now with the new [UN global ocean treaty](#) having entered into force. A treaty that will be a tool to create marine protected areas in international waters.

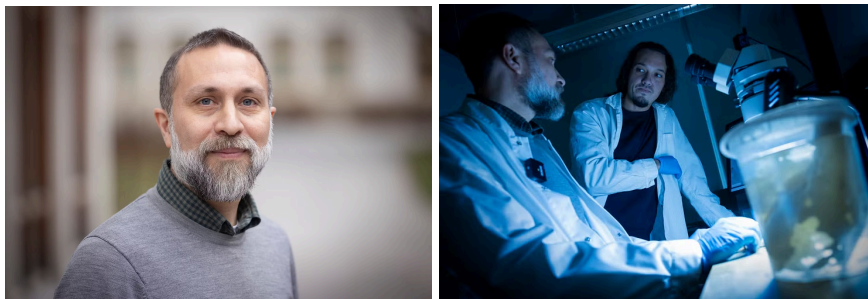


Scientists onboard the **Deep Arctic Expedition** will shine a light on life on the Arctic seabed – capturing and livestreaming video of animals and ecosystems that has never seen the light of day. The places we are going down to also have exciting names. Here are some of the places we are planning on visiting: Loki's castle's active vents, Mohn's treasure, Copperhills coral reef etc. The pink on the map is what has been proposed for deep sea mining.

# GREENPEACE



Our research vessel and remotely operated underwater vehicle (ROV) «Holly»



Two of the external scientists onboard:

Dr Paco Cardenas, Uppsala University [video example with Paco](#)

Dr Sergi Taboada Moreno, University of Madrid

## Media contact onboard

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