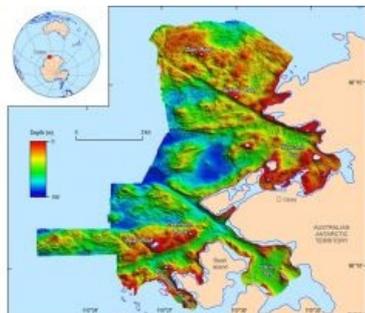


New Icebreaker to Boost Australian Science



Geoscience Australia welcomes the Government's investment in a new Antarctic icebreaker for Australia. Equipped with world-class technology, the new icebreaker will enhance Australia's seafloor mapping capability — enabling Geoscience Australia and its partners to develop a greater understanding of Antarctic geoscience.

The new icebreaker is the single biggest investment in the history of Australia's Antarctic programme and will be essential for Australia to support a world-class science programme in Antarctica into the future.

20 Year Action Plan

Assistant Minister for Science Karen Andrews has welcomed the Federal Government's investment in a new world-leading Antarctic icebreaker for Australia. This icebreaker will enable Australia to conduct seafloor mapping and charting in the Southern Ocean, in support of the Australian Antarctic Strategy and 20-year Action Plan, also announced this week by the Government.

The Australian Antarctic marine jurisdiction represents about 2.2 million square kilometres, roughly 15% of Australia's marine estate, yet less than one percent has been adequately mapped by modern seafloor mapping techniques.

Mrs Andrews adds that the information collected through seafloor mapping is essential for the development of evidence-based environmental management and monitoring, supporting the Government's commitment to the Antarctic Treaty System and its marine environmental protocols.