

Ukraine Acquires Research Vessel James Clark Ross



After 30 years of service with British Antarctic Survey, the RRS *James Clark Ross* has been sold to the Ukrainian National Antarctic Scientific Centre. This is the second time that a UK research asset has transferred to Ukrainian research colleagues – the first being the transfer in 1996 of the former Faraday station that is now known as *Vernadsky*.

For the past three decades, the [JCR](#) has fulfilled her role as a world-leading research platform for biological, oceanographic and geophysical research. She contains some of Britain's most advanced facilities for oceanographic research in both Antarctica and the Arctic.

Built by Swan Hunter Shipbuilders in Wallsend, UK, and launched by HM the Queen in 1990, the RRS *James Clark Ross* was part of the first international, multi-vessel survey to estimate the biomass of krill in the Atlantic sector of the Southern Ocean – a figure still used today in krill management models. The ship is also a platform for deploying ambitious sediment coring technologies in previously unstudied locations, pushing coring technologies to its limits. Groundbreaking work in the Arctic provided insights into the

scale and impacts of climate change in one of the most rapidly changing environments on the planet.



James Clark Ross in Northern Marguerite Bay off Adelaide Island. (Courtesy: British Antarctic Survey)

Oceans and Climate Change in the Polar Regions

The ice-capable ship is a new asset for Ukraine and opens up new research opportunities for its National Antarctic Scientific Centre, in particular research into oceans and climate change in the polar regions. The purchase of the ship comes ahead of the COP26 Conference in November, where representatives from every signatory party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) come together to discuss climate change action.

Director of British Antarctic Survey Professor Dame Jane Francis FRS said: "The RRS *James Clark Ross* is much admired by all who have sailed in her. She has enabled scientists from the UK and overseas to make discoveries that help make sense of our changing world. We will miss her greatly, but I am delighted that our research colleagues will use her to carry out important scientific investigations. We wish them well."

Director of the [National Antarctic Center of Ukraine](#) Dr Evgen Dykyi said: "For Ukraine, the purchase of the RRS *James Clark Ross* opens a world of opportunities. For the last 20 years, Ukraine hasn't had a vessel for Antarctic research, significantly impeding our work there. For us, the icebreaker *James Clark Ross* has a symbolic value as well, as it brought the first Ukrainian mission to the former British station Faraday (now [Vernadsky](#)) in 1996. With this vessel, Ukraine has ambitions for large-scale research in the Southern Ocean and possibly starting surveys in the Arctic.



Weddell Sea: Emperor penguin on sea ice in front of James Clark Ross. (Courtesy: British Antarctic Survey)