

Bering Sea Ice Expedition Studies Climate Change

By **Gaelin Rosenwaks**
Guest Contributor

Editor's Note: Gaelin will speak at our June happy hour. She sent us this report straight from the Bering Sea.

On March 29, 50 scientists set out from Dutch Harbor, Alaska as part of the International Polar Year (IPY) aboard the United States Coast Guard Cutter Healy to try to elucidate the effects of climate change on the Bering Sea Ecosystem. The second cruise of a six-year, \$50 million study funded by the National Science Foundation and North Pacific Research Board, cruise number HLY0802 focused on the animals and plants at the base of the food chain.

The Bering Sea is one of the world's most prolific bodies of water, providing more than half of the seafood caught in the United States. These waters are home to King Crab, Alaskan Pollock, Cod and many other commercially valuable species. The productivity of these waters is largely

influenced by seasonal sea ice. The research conducted on this cruise focused on how the seasonal sea ice affects productivity in the Bering Sea in order to have a more complete understanding of how the ecosystem functions and will function if the degree of sea ice changes.

We have traversed the Bering Sea in and out of the sea ice, sampling along the way and collecting valuable data that will be used to understand the possible effects of climate change on this system. To read the expedition blog and learn more, visit: www.globaloceanexploration.com.



Photo courtesy of Gaelin Rosenwaks

The International Year of the Reef

What's "IYOR"? No, not a character in Winnie the Pooh's Hundred Acre Wood. IYOR = the International Year of the Reef. And it's this year—did you know? So we challenge you to ask yourself: "How can I help coral reefs?" The answer is, there are many ways, quite a few of which you can do from right here in New York City.

- Educate yourself and others about coral reefs and the creatures they support.
- Don't use chemically enhanced pesticides and fertilizers. These products end up in the watershed, and ultimately, the ocean.
- Volunteer for a reef cleanup. Don't live near a coral reef? Visit a coral reef on your next vacation.
- Be an informed consumer. Only buy marine fish and other reef organisms when you know they have been collected in an ecologically sound manner.
- Visit your local aquarium or zoo. Ask what they are doing and how you can help conserve coral reefs.
- Support reef-friendly businesses. Ask what your tour operator, dive shop, hotel and other businesses are doing to save coral reefs.
- Recycle. Conserve water. Report illegal dumping. Stay informed.
- Don't touch! Take only pictures, leave only bubbles.

Find more ways you can help at:
<http://iyor.org/resources/tips.asp>.

Top 5 Tips for Safe Diving

- (1) Check your gauges regularly: air, depth, dive time, dive computer.
- (2) Equalize early and often. Never hold your breath!
- (3) Dive **with** your dive buddy, not just in the same general vicinity!
- (4) Know your limits—and stay within them.
- (5) Ascend slowly! Do your safety stop.