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Dear Members of the Ocean Drilling Community,

### **Postponement of IODP Expedition 373: Antarctic Cenozoic Paleoclimate**

The European Consortium for Ocean Research Drilling (ECORD) Science Operator (ESO) regrettably announces the postponement of IODP Expedition 373: Antarctic Cenozoic Paleoclimate, originally scheduled for December 2017 to February 2018.

Expedition 373 was to use the British Geological Survey Rockdrill 2 (RD2), deployed from the *RVIB Nathaniel B. Palmer*, operated by the Lockheed-Martin Antarctic Support Contract (ASC) for the U.S. National Science Foundation's United States Antarctic Program (USAP).

Since October 2015, the BGS RD2 has conducted two offshore projects, IODP Expedition 357: Atlantis Massif and the EU-funded Blue Mining Project. On both these projects, the RD2 experienced coring performance issues and was unable to core to its full penetration of 50 mbsf - the penetration required to fully meet the scientific objectives of Expedition 373.

ESO has been working with the BGS to identify and remedy the technical issues underlying the RD2's recent performance and, although improvements in next 6 months are expected, ESO cannot guarantee the level of performance required to fully deliver Expedition 373 or make a final commitment to the operators of the *Nathaniel B. Palmer* for an expedition starting in December 2017.

ESO will work with USAP and the ASC to reschedule the expedition, most likely in the 2019-2020 Antarctic season. Further announcements will be made via IODP-related channels in due course, and it is envisaged that a new Call for Scientists will be issued in late 2017 or early 2018.

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