

**MEMBER COUNTRY:**  
**National Report to SCAR for year:**

**Australia**  
 2010-11

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<b>Scientific Research Program</b>						
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<b>ICESTAR</b> 1) 2) 3) 4)						
<b>SALE</b> 1) 2) 3) 4)						
<b>AAA (2010-)</b> 1) 2) 3) 4)						



#### **A BRIEF SUMMARY OF SCIENTIFIC HIGHLIGHTS\*:**

The Australian Antarctic science program undertook a total of 107 science projects from 30 institutions involving collaboration with a further 244 institutions from 27 countries. The program supported 112 higher degree students, including 85 PhD students. During the 2010 calendar year 257 publications were produced within program, with a 130 published in peer-reviewed international literature.

Highlights include: A world first, the sex life of Antarctic Krill in the wild was caught on camera by Australian Antarctic Division scientists, 507 metres off East Antarctica.

A 78km piece of the Mertz Glacier tongue broke off in February 2010 exposing a section of the Southern Ocean previously covered in hundreds of metres of ice. A major research expedition of nearly 40 Australian and international scientists set off on the Aurora Australis in January 2011 to continue marine measurements over latitudinal transect and within in the region. Because this transect has been revisited several times over the past two decades, the measurements form one of the most complete records of change in the Southern Ocean. The variations in temperature, salinity, oxygen and carbon dioxide concentration will help track how rapidly the climate is changing. The break-off of the glacier tongue is predicted to influence bottom water formation.

The loss of the glacier tongue also allowed researchers to reach parts of the continental shelf that had previously been inaccessible. As they undertook oceanographic measurements, the team used a camera system to observe the benthic (sea floor) communities at 75 sites over the Antarctic continental shelf and slope is one of the 'biological hotspots' of the Antarctic and Southern Ocean ecosystem.

\* Please include any scientific activities you believe might be considered bioprospecting (<http://www.scar.org/treaty/atcmxxxiii/> see WP2)