



## Earthquakes, Climate Change & Rivers of Sand Media conference JOIDES Resolution in Lisbon

In the late morning of January 16 the US drillship the *JOIDES Resolution* entered the mouth of the Tejo River following 8 weeks at sea carrying out drilling operations for the IODP Mediterranean Outflow Expedition. Shortly after, the ship passed the historic Torre de Belem watchtower before berthing at the docks of Alcantara, a few hundred metres upriver of the famous Ponte 25 de Abril, which very much resembles the Golden Gate Bridge (*front cover*).

In the weeks leading up to this, many emails had been exchanged between the vessel, Ocean Leadership and ECORD colleagues who were busy organising the port-call activities, including a reception (*below and page 6*) and a media conference.

The intense and smoothly running cooperation yielded a lot of fruit. The media conference held in the Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau was very well attended. Four TV channels, including a Spanish station, all major Portuguese newspapers, the national Portuguese and Spanish news agency plus one radio journalist attended the media conference. The event was also attended by staff of the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology and the press attaché from the German Embassy.

The speakers were introduced by Albert Gerdes following which Patricia Maruéjol presented information about IODP and ECORD. Fernando Barriga from Lisbon University added insight on Portugal's role within ECORD and IODP, then Co-chief Scientists Dorrik Stow (Heriot Watt University Edinburgh) and

Javier Hernandez-Molina (University of Vigo) presented the first findings of the Mediterranean Outflow Expedition, which drilled both on the west Iberian margin and in the Gulf of Cadiz. During their lively presentations Dorrik and Javier touched on climate history issues, the closing and reopening of the Straits of Gibraltar, and the so-called contourite sands, which were deposited in that area.

The presentations were followed by a Q&A session during which some journalists wanted to learn more about different aspects of the cruise. A number of individual interviews were held with the Co-chief Scientists (*photo*).

There was not much time left before the group had to board the bus and head to Alcantara docks and a tour of the *JR*. Ocean Leadership colleagues Jay Miller and Leslie Peart, expedition scientist Antje Voelker, and Education Officer Helder Pereira welcomed the journalists to the ship's conference room. After a brief introduction, the journalists were divided into two groups and enjoyed a tour of the vessel. Two hours later the last participant stepped off the gangway and checked out at the port security gate.

An interesting and successful day came to an end. As Sarah Saunders, the Director of Science Communication at Ocean Leadership put it: "I have rarely seen so many journalists on board during a *JR* port call!"

*Albert Gerdes, ESO Press Relations*



*After the media conference, Javier Hernandez-Molina, Co-chief Scientist, gave an interview onboard the JOIDES Resolution (photo J. Beck & IODP).*

## ECORD-IODP sessions and reception in Lisbon

ECORD Portugal, together with the ECORD Managing Agency worked with the US Implementing Organization (USIO) to take advantage of the *JOIDES Resolution* port call in Lisbon.

High-level representatives from ECORD member countries, as well as top senior politicians, members of the media and university colleagues from Portugal, were invited to a reception on January 18, 2012. The programme included a tour of the ship (*photo page 5*) and a special session dedicated to a presentation of IODP and the first results of Mediterranean Outflow Expedition. At the same time, ECORD Portugal, in consultation with the NSF (National Science Foundation-USA), decided to pay tribute to key individuals to whom ECORD and IODP are greatly indebted. Those chosen were Mário Ruivo (Portugal) for his lifelong dedication to marine science and technology, and for his key role in Portugal becoming a founding member of ECORD; Gerold Wefer (Germany), Catherine Mével (France) and John Ludden (UK), for their outstanding roles in establishing and managing ECORD; and Jamie Austin (USA) for his lifelong involvement in DSDP, ODP and IODP.

The reception and special sessions held at the Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, were a great success, as they gathered about 150 people, including a former President of Portugal, 3 Parliament Members, 2 Secretaries of State, one advisor to the President, the former Minister of Higher Education and Science, several University Rectors, Presidents of learned societies and many others, especially scientists and decision makers from Portugal, Spain and other ECORD countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany and Poland).

The success of these events speaks eloquently for the positive and extensive interest that exists at all levels in Portugal regarding ocean drilling affairs. We are sure that the participation of Portugal in ECORD was strengthened by Expedition 339 and the associated events in Portugal. Providing the opportunity to actually assess the remarkable facilities offered to scientists by the *JOIDES Resolution* came at the right time, as funding agencies in Europe are about to decide on the continuation of ECORD post-2013.

*Fernando J.A.S. Barriga (Council Delegate), Olga Dias (Council Alternate), Luis Pinheiro (ESSAC Alternate) and Antje Voelker (ESSAC Delegate)*