

1. Introduction

BIODEEP Project proposes the exploration of unique habitats, namely the deep-sea hypersaline anoxic basins (DHABs) of the Eastern Mediterranean, and the isolation and culture of marine microorganisms. The geological/geochemical tasks of BIODEEP are related to the precise knowledge of inorganic parameters like elemental composition of sediments and suspended matter and their respective fluxes to the anoxic basins. Additionally, the total amount and concentrations of C and N in organic compounds are important to assess potential substrates for microbial life. To accomplish this, one main target of the cruise was the recovering and the remooring of sediment traps which are deployed in Urania and Bannock basins. Other planned work included suspended matter and sediment sampling in the brines, sampling at the seawater/brine interface, all tasks that had partially been performed during previous Biodeep cruises. However MO did not permit but the recovery and remooring of the sediment traps, thus all other work must be postponed to a future occasion.

Future perspectives

It was very unfortunate that important work planned for the research cruise could not be accomplished due to the limited technical capabilities of the substitute vessel DPV Mare Oceano. Especially the sampling of suspended matter from the brines (with washed filters for accurate elemental analysis) and detailed brine/seawater interface sampling should therefore be done on the next Biodeep cruise which is scheduled for autumn 2003.



DPV Mare Oceano