

**Expedition Log for IODP Expedition 325**  
**Week 8**  
**Great Barrier Reef Environmental Changes**

**5<sup>th</sup> April 2010**

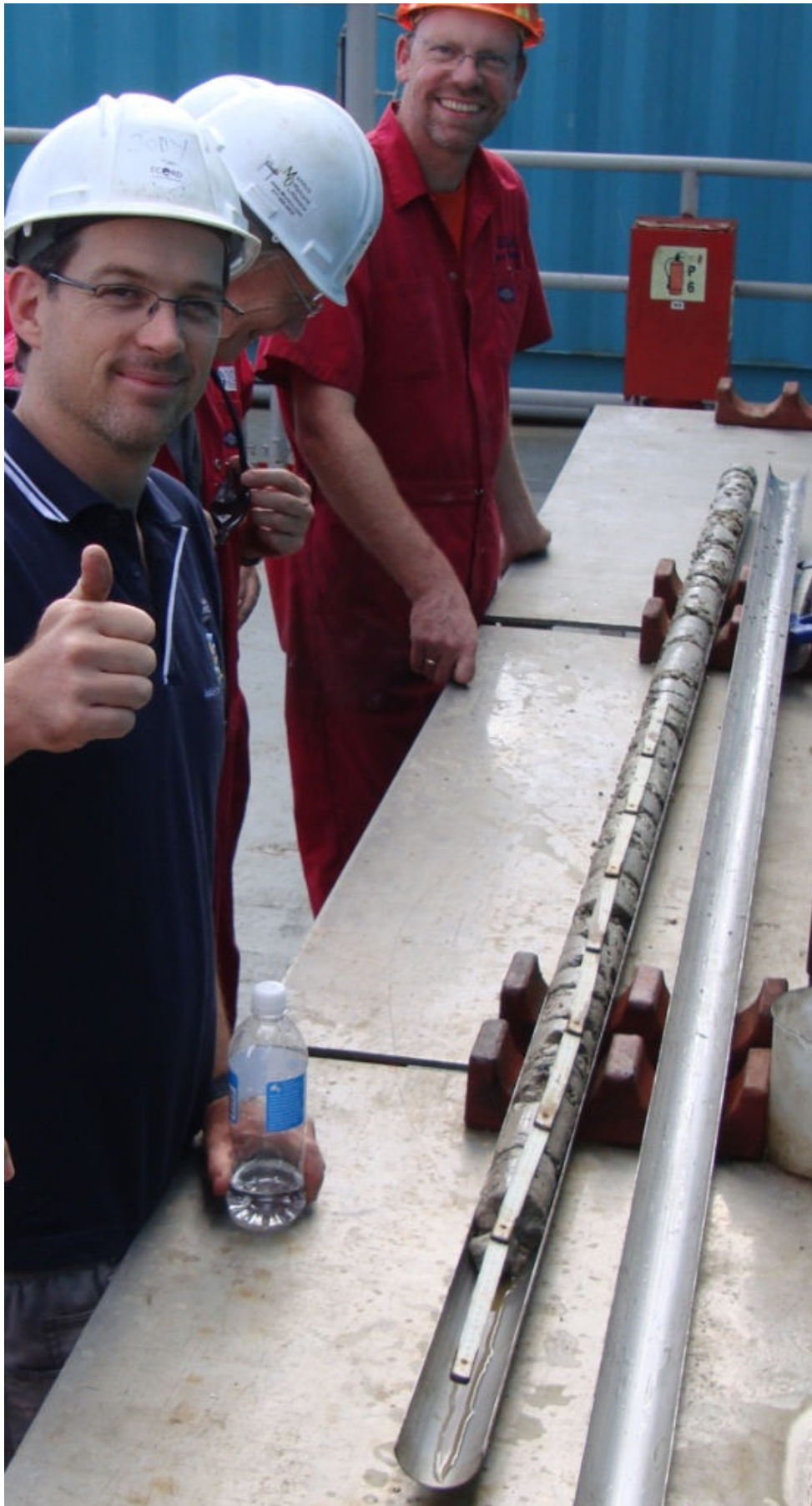
**Farewell to the Great Barrier Reef by Sophie Green**

Day 54 on the Greatship Maya and the end is in sight. On Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> the offshore phase of Expedition will be over as we return to Townsville to demobilise. Despite our proximity to the end, everyone is working hard and trying to keep focussed despite the thoughts of ice cream, beer and proper beds!

The last few days have seen some excellent cores arrive on deck with many intact sequences of lithified carbonate material. This has been met with lots of smiles and applause from the Scientists and big pats on the back for the Drilling Crew!



Caption: A\_Suzuki@ECORD\_IODP; Thumbs up all round! Juan Carlos, Alex and Yusuke with some curated core



Caption: D\_Smith@ECORD\_IODP; Jody, Graham Lott and Alex at the core bench

These cores have been collected using the HQ coring system. For this system the pipe has a smaller diameter and is used inside the wider API pipe so that it effectively acts as a casing. The cores are collected in metal splits instead of plastic liners. This prevents any damage to the liner tubes which can limit coring rates and facilitates the maximum possible core recovery. Once on deck, the curators transfer the cores from the metal splits to the plastic liner tubes. It is important not to lose any material during this transfer so Alex and Christian (Curators) split the plastic liner tubes before sliding them over the core contained in metal splits. The core is then turned over and the metal splits can be slid out. There is usually a gaggle of scientists keen to help out and do their bit to ensure the core makes it to Bremen.



Caption: Curation at the core bench. M\_Mowat@ECORD\_IODP

As we prepare to leave the Great Barrier Reef it feels very much as if the seasons have changed. Back in February we had sunny skies and plastered ourselves in sun



screen. Now we rarely get sun and the weather is dominated by rain and overcast skies. It is still warm though so I guess it beats the UK winter!



Caption: Recent weather.D\_Potts@ECORD\_IODP-Another dark stormy dawn



Caption: D\_Potts@ECORD\_IODP-Wet dawn and a rainbow

We have seen little in the way of wildlife recently but a couple of dips with ERIC the ROV have confirmed that the action is all going on beneath us! These dives have produced some fantastic footage of the seabed with a range of encrusting biota and corals. In addition there are lots of fish, including angel fish and puffer fish. The start of one dip saw a shark, beating a hasty retreat (apparently it was huge and right up beside the ROV just before recording started, or so say the ROV operators!



Caption: ECORD\_IODP; Still taken from one of Eric's dive